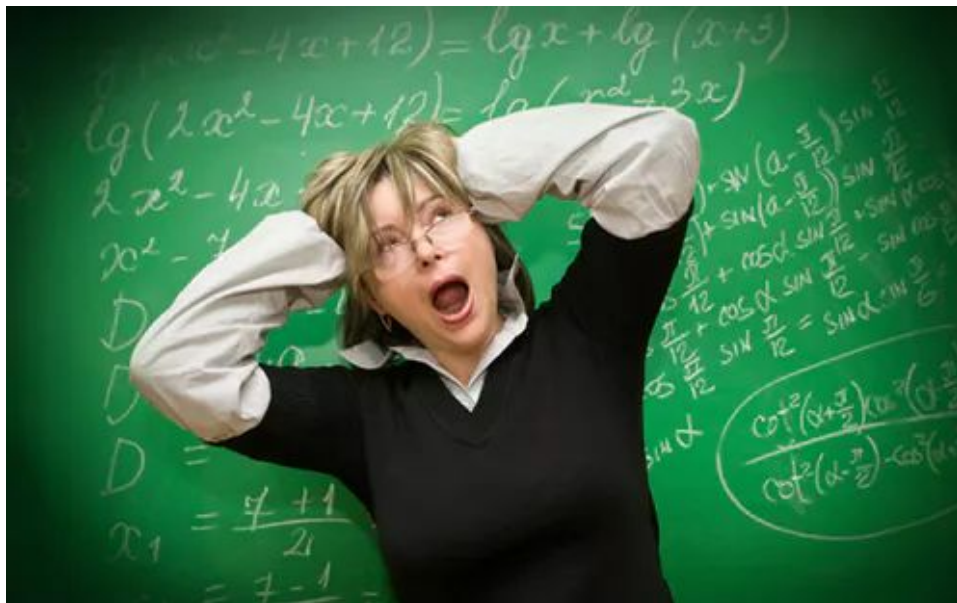


# Superheroes in the Classroom:

*How to Train and Support Paraprofessionals*

Jessica Nelson, EdD, BCBA  
Missouri State University

Scott Fluke, PhD, LP  
Olathe Public Schools



**Failure to Plan is Planning to Fail**

**Be Intentional in Training your Paraprofessionals**

# Philosophy of Ongoing Training

- Build a better SPED team through a *culture of continual improvement*
- Clear expectations for performance are explicitly taught
- Training conducted with *intentionality* and *purpose*



August

January

May



# A Framework for Continual Training

- Initial Training
  - Para Handbook
  - Rules and procedures
  - Classroom- and school-level tasks
- Scheduled Para Meetings
  - Ongoing problem solving
  - Regular performance feedback
- Frequent Trainings on Behavioral Principles
- Explicit Instruction on Individual Behavior Plans
- Effective Day-to-Day Supervision



# Objectives

- Walk away with practical strategies to effectively manage paraeducators in all types of classrooms across the placement continuum
- Gain an understanding of how to train paraeducators in evidence based practices and implementing those practices with students.
- Gain knowledge and skills on implementing strategies to maximize the fidelity of interventions such as self-monitoring strategies.
- Understand how to provide active and effective supervision to paraeducators.

# Supervising Paraeducators

1. Define roles for paraeducators
2. Train paraeducators to carry out the responsibilities
3. Evaluate paraeducators performance on classroom roles and responsibilities
4. Collaborate with paraeducators and provide performance feedback

Maggin, D. M. , Wehby, J. H. , Moore-Partin, T. C. , Robertson, R. , & Oliver, R. M. (2009). Supervising paraeducators in classrooms for children with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Beyond Behavior* 18, 2–9.



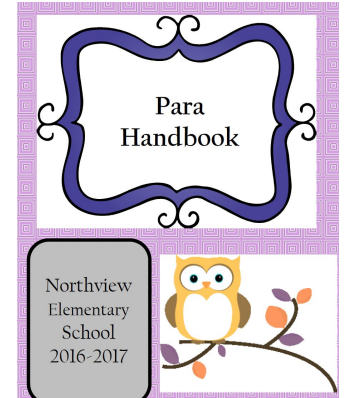
# Para Handbook

- Code of Ethics
- Dress Code
- Para Roles and Responsibilities
- Bully Rubric
- Love and Logic

- Progress Logs
- Dos and Don'ts for Paras
- Questions to Ask Classroom Teacher
- Absences
- Confidentiality

\*\*

Link is on MSLBD website





# Para Handbook

- Exceptionalities
- Dealing with Behaviors
- Communication
- Curriculum and Program Information
- Service Models
- IEP
- Modifications and Accommodations
- Reflection Sheets
- Incident Reports
- ABCF

# Para Handbook

- Seclusion and Restraint
- Daily Report
- MANDT
- Chain of Command
- Paraeducator Evaluations
- Classified Evaluation
- Internet Resources
- Emergency Plans
- Suicidal Thoughts/Suspected Abuse
- What do you want to know more about?

# Morning Meeting

## Why it is important

- Whose observation day is it?
- Daily Schedule
- Student Concerns

## Data Collection Review

- In-service Opportunities
- Questions and Concerns





# What Should I Teach my Paraprofessionals?

Creating Effective and Ongoing Professional Development

# Training your paraprofessionals in behavior basics:

*Teach this skill!!*

Antecedent --> Behavior --> Consequences

A: What happens before the behavior

B: specific details of the behavior

C: What occurs immediately following the behavior



# Behavior Momentum

*Teach this skill!!*

- The use of a series of high-probability requests to increase compliance with lower-probability requests (Ray, Skinner & Watson, 1999).
- Antecedent Strategy
- Students gain success on easy tasks, which increases the likelihood they will perform a harder task.

Video to use when training:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hkMrDzq8L4&feature=youtu.be>

# Prompting

*Teach this skill!!*

\*Teaching Least to Most is imperative here.

Verbal prompt – verbal or written command to perform a step within the task

Gestural prompt – movement that directs a student's attention toward an object or act that constitutes a step in the task

Model prompt – a demonstration of the desired behavior for that step

Partial physical prompt – brief touching, tapping, or nudging to help the student perform that step in the task

Full physical prompt – full physical guidance WITHOUT force to help the student perform the step in the task



# Data Collection

*Teach this skill!!*

Explicit instruction on using YOUR data sheets:

- Observations and narratives
- Frequency, duration, rate, intensity
- Behavior definitions



# Behavior Specific Praise

*Teach this skill!!*

Behavior-specific praise should include:

1. The student behavior is observable (i.e., walking quietly in the hall)
2. The one giving praise tells the student how this behavior affects them (i.e., “I feel” statements)

This type of statement reinforces what you want to see from the student and always build the relationship with the student.

Examples:

Instead of good job: I love the way you kept trying on that math problem even when it got harder.

Instead of thank you: It is so helpful when you pick up the area around your desk.

# Positive to Negative Interactions

Teach this skill!!

Use with students who need lots of attention.

Think of times in the students day when you can reinforce the behavior you want to see.

Remember 4:1 ratio-every negative needs four positives.

Coaching Classroom Management

REPRODUCIBLE FORM  
5.6

Ratio of Interactions Monitoring Form Clear Form

(20 minutes)

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

**Coding system (if used)**

M = Male    \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
F = Female    \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
C = Classwide    \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
I = Individual    \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

Attention to Positive	Attention to Negative

Actual Ratio of Interactions: \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

Goal is 3:1 or better.

- ▶ It is the student behavior that is occurring at the time the interaction is initiated, *not the tone of the interaction*, that determines whether an interaction is positive or negative.
- ▶ When a teacher interacts with a student who is exhibiting appropriate behavior, count the interaction as positive.
- ▶ When a teacher interacts with a student who is exhibiting inappropriate behavior, count the interaction as negative. Responses to "negative" behavior do not mean the teacher is responding poorly.

A word on respect...

Next Up: Teach your Teams to Follow the Plan



# How to Teach your Team to Follow the Plan

Training Paraprofessionals to implement behavior plans with high fidelity

# EBD Paras Have it Tough

- Challenging students with challenging plans
- Plans can change frequently
- Inconsistency leads to plan failure
- Plans interrupted by crisis calls

It is a tough job, and it is our responsibility to set them up for success!



# Hearing it Once is Not Enough

Adults do not learn from reading something once

Adults do not learn from hearing something once

*Key Point:* Treat every new plan as a skill to be taught





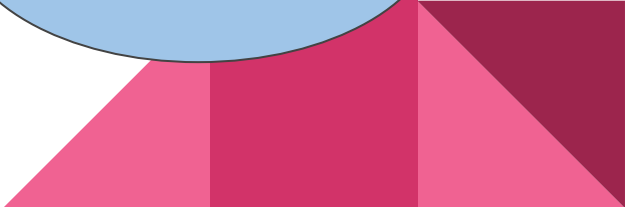
# What Makes for Good Instruction?



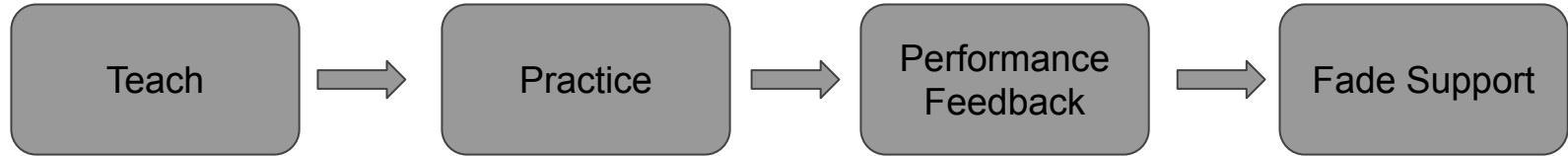
Direct Instruction

Practice

Performance  
Feedback



# A Behavioral Approach to Para Training



**“I do, We do, You do”**



# Teach the Plan

Teach

*Key Point:* Create protected, uninterrupted time to teach the plan

- Direct Instruction
  - Individual or small group
  - Provide full written plan
  - Provide “One-Pager” with most critical step-by-step instructions
  - If possible, do this in the setting where the plan will be run
  - Discuss each step and prompt for questions
    - “What questions do you have?” instead of “Do you have any questions?”
- ← **Your Hardest Job**

Practice the Plan

Practice

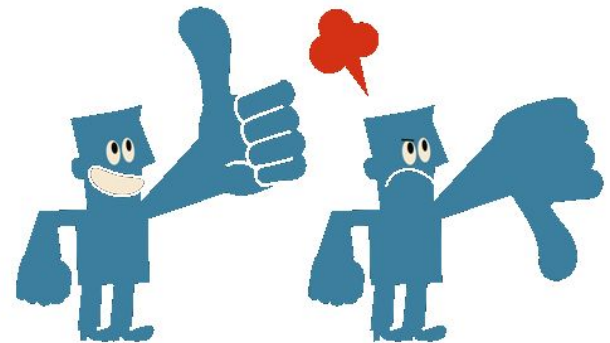
Model      Role Play  
Live Practice



# Performance Feedback

- Provide immediate feedback during practice
- Aim for at least a 4:1 praise to correction ratio
- Debrief and prompt for their feedback
  - What worked?
  - What was ineffective?
  - What was too burdensome?

Performance  
Feedback



# Fade Support

- Fade yourself off, allowing for increasing independence
- Continue spot checks on the plan
- Time can now be spent on other parts of your job!

Fade Support



# Supervision Toolkit





Changing Adult Behavior

```
graph TD; A[Changing Adult Behavior] --> B[Antecedent Interventions]; A --> C[Consequence Interventions];
```

The diagram is a flowchart with three gray rounded rectangular boxes. The top box is centered and contains the text 'Changing Adult Behavior'. Two arrows point downwards from the bottom corners of this box to two separate boxes below it. The left box is positioned lower and further to the left, containing the text 'Antecedent Interventions'. The right box is positioned lower and further to the right, containing the text 'Consequence Interventions'. The background features a dark blue horizontal bar at the bottom and a decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of several overlapping triangles in shades of pink and red.

Antecedent Interventions

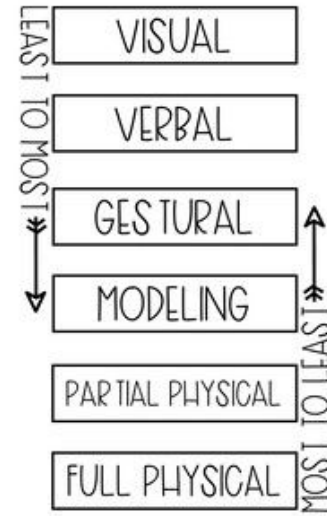
Consequence Interventions

# Prompts

## A strategic reminder of the desired behavior

- Prompt just behavior the toughest behavior step
- Select least intensive type of prompt necessary
- Build into data sheets, plan documents, etc.

## PROMPT HIERARCHY



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# Build Prompts Into Materials

## My Goal Sheet

Name: _____	<b>Rating Scale</b> 2 = Met expectation with no reminders (Great job!) 1 = Needed 1-2 reminders (Good work) 0 = Needed more than 2 reminders (Try harder tomorrow)
Date: _____	

Prompt!



	Safe Body	Complete Work	Stay in Area
Morning Work – 8:15	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Reading – 8:45	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Break Time! – 10:00	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Math – 10:15	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Recess – 11:00	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Lunch – 11:15	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Resource – 12:00	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Daily 5 – 12:45	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Break Time! – 2:00	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Science – 2:15	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Social Studies – 2:45	0 1 2	0 1 2	0 1 2
Add up Points! 3:15			

Prompt!

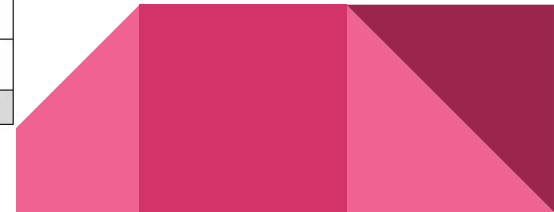


Prompt!



Points Earned: \_\_\_\_\_ Points Possible: 60 Today's Percentage: \_\_\_\_\_

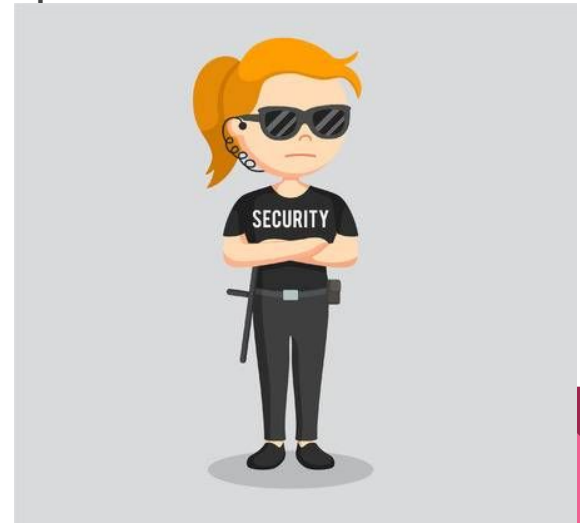
Goal: 80% Goal Met? YES NO



# Supervise by Moving Around

Don't think of yourself as a patrolling boss, but...

- Paras are human, and humans do better when supervised
- Positive and supportive
- Surprise pop-ins
- Random and unpredictable



# Checklists

\_\_\_\_\_ Effective Redirection

\_\_\_\_\_ Effective Warning

\_\_\_\_\_ Follow through on Consequence

\_\_\_\_\_ Behavior Specific Praise when Positive Behavior is Shown

\_\_\_\_\_ Point Sheet Given in First Hour

\_\_\_\_\_ Performance Feedback Given Every Period

\_\_\_\_\_ Precorrection for Expectations Given before Every Assignment

\_\_\_\_\_ 2x10 Relationship Building Time Given at 9:45 and 1:30

# Re-Teaching

Accept that you will need time for this, and plan to have that time

- Scheduled formal re-teaching during para meetings
- In-the-moment, informal re-teaching through performance feedback
- Paras teach one another
- One-on-one, intensive re-teaching when needed



# Acknowledgment

Combine frequent, small acknowledgment with less frequent, larger acknowledgment

4 : 1 Ratio



## Communication / Collaboration Self-Evaluation Checklist

**Key**

- 1 = No problem      I have done this or do it regularly
- 2 = Minor problem    I could improve on this
- 3 = Major problem    This definitely needs attention

Activity	Rating 1-3	How can I improve in this area?
I have a clearly defined role for my paraeducator.		
I have checked that my paraeducator understands this role.		
My paraeducator(s) knows the school district, and state guidelines regarding the paraeducator roles.		
I have clear priorities for student learning		
I have communicated these to my paraeducator (s)		
I understand my paraeducator's preferred work style.		
I have clear priorities for student learning and have communicated these to my paraeducator.		
I schedule regular time to meet and communicate with my paraeducator.		
I foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals.		
I encourage and assist individual students and their families to become active participants in the educational team.		

(Virginia Department of Education, 2002)

# Solicit and Accept Feedback



# Superheros Are Not Born - They Are Made!



- Set High Expectations
- Provide Effective Training
- Treat as Professionals Worthy of Respect
- Acknowledge Success
- Build a Positive Workplace Culture

# Resources for your district

CEC Guidelines:

<https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Paraeducator-Preparation-Guidelines>

National Education Association:

<http://www.nea.org/home/51550.htm>

# Paraeducator Webinar Series

<https://dese.mo.gov/paraeducator-webinar-series>



# Questions?



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