

A Guide to Working With Your Paraprofessional

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The Various Roles of the Paraprofessional and What to Expect From a:

- 1:1 Para: Responsible for the needs of one student
- Classroom Para: Responsible for the needs of the class and room, can include cleaning, administrative work, and helping out in organizing the classroom
- Early intervention Para: Para for early childhood students, can be a 1:1 para or classroom para
- Health Para: Responsibilities range from monitoring allergies and any health related services
- Crisis Para: Responsible for restraining a student and is covered to handle a crisis situation
- Mobile Para: Responsible for students with wheel chairs
- Transit or Bus Para: Responsible for transporting students to and from the bus

****NOTE:** These various paraprofessional roles can be fluid if paras decide to work together or notice that the environment demands different things (e.g. if a para has met all their responsibilities and have extra time, they can be a classroom para to help out the other paras)

Professional Development (How to help your para grow)

- Provide opportunities for collaboration with other professionals and with students (e.g. Making a cookbook for the class and school based on family recipes)
- Suggest workshops they can attend
- If you have attended a workshop share the information that you received with your para. This can help the para help you implement new ideas and strategies in the classroom more effectively.
- Let them sit down and lesson plan with teachers or other service providers
- Let paras get to know each other so they can bounce ideas off of how, for example, a previous para assisted a child they currently have under their care



Professionalism

(How to establish good rapport, respect, and expectations for your para)

- *Expectations for working with the teacher*
 - Ask the paraprofessional how they would like to be referred to by you and students
 - Ask the paraprofessional if they have any specific areas of expertise, skills or hobbies that they may want to share with the students that you can integrate into the curriculum.
 - Be honest, open, and establish good communications structures
 - Do not assume paraprofessionals are your assistants, they are professionals who also should garner respect from you and students
 - Get to know your paraprofessional and what are their specialties and proclivities
 - Be clear about classroom and student goals.
 - Be organized and communicate changes to the day's schedule so as to set expectations, knowing that if the teacher is organized, so can the para.
 - Know that paraprofessionals have varying degrees of interaction with children, some may want to be very involved, while others are only minimally involved. Respect their decisions, but make sure there are always clear, open, and honest channels of communication between you and the paraprofessional if discrepancies come up.
 - Allow your paraprofessional to be a part of the lesson planning process so that they are aware of what is going on in classroom.
 - If your paraprofessional cannot attend lesson planning meetings, provide them with lesson plans before you teach so that they know what the students are going to learn
- *Expectations for working with the students*
 - Know that 1:1 paras also want to get to know other students and should not be "velcro"ed to a child
 - Capitalize on, acknowledge, and praise the strengths a para has to help a child

