

# THE ROLE OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL

The role of the paraprofessional is to serve pre-diagnosed preschool children with severe to moderate disabilities in Head Start/Child Care collaboration programs. The additional full time staff person is necessary since the regular classroom staff are not adequately prepared to meet the significant needs of these children as well as the group needs of the other children in the classroom. The project is in collaboration with DFSS, delegate agencies and CPS Office of Special education and Support (OSES).

The project will focus on providing paraprofessionals through delegate agencies to support children placed in Head Start collaboration classrooms. These children are receiving their primary services from the Chicago Public Schools in instructional and blended classrooms for approximately 2.5 hours per day. This project allows for the selected Head Start collaboration programs to have an opportunity to recruit and serve these children for the remainder of the day in their full day/full year programs. At least three children will be assigned to each site with a paraprofessional.

General training on the duties of the paraprofessional will be provided through STARNET Region V and the CPS/DFSS Disabilities Team. Extensive training will be conducted for the paraprofessionals in all area of disabilities in young children and offer certificates of attendance to those who qualify.

The project will focus on paraprofessionals as delegate agency staff to support children with disabilities who are placed in Head Start collaboration classrooms. These children are receiving their primary services at Chicago public Schools in instructional and/or blended classrooms for approximately 2.5 hours per day. This project allows for the selected Head Start collaboration programs to have an opportunity to recruit and serve these children for the remainder of the day in their full day/full year programs.

The expected outcome of the role of the paraprofessional will be a positive experience for the children, families and the delegate agency staff.

*\*Paraprofessionals are not intended to be individual aides nor should they be responsible for any other duties outside of the classroom. Para's should not be left alone, at anytime, in the classroom. Delegate Agency's are required to hire a Teacher and a Teacher Assistant for every classroom.*

*Para's are there to support the classroom staff and the delegate agency.*

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