



DENISE OKAFOR

Teacher Assistant

ABOUT ME

Teacher assistant with 12 years in special education and general classrooms across elementary and middle school. Strong record supporting students with autism, learning differences, and behavior plans, and mentoring newer paraprofessionals.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Lead Paraprofessional, Substantially Separate Classroom | Birchwood Middle School, Worcester, MA
2019 – Present

- Support 8 students with autism and intellectual disabilities across academics, life skills, and community-based instruction.
- Collect ABC behavior data and graph weekly progress on 14 IEP goals for the special education teacher.
- Trained 6 new paraprofessionals on physical restraint protocols, sensory de-escalation, and toileting routines.
- Coordinated with two BCBAs to run discrete trial sessions four times per week.
- Cut classroom incident reports by roughly half year over year by adjusting morning sensory schedule.

1:1 Paraprofessional | Holden Street Elementary, Worcester, MA
2016 – 2019

- Served as one-on-one aide for a 3rd grader with cerebral palsy across all academic and specials classes.
- Implemented AAC device programming with speech therapist to expand vocabulary from 40 to 180 core words.
- Adapted classroom materials with picture supports, larger print, and switch-accessible buttons.
- Attended IEP meetings and contributed daily data logs that informed annual goal revisions.

Inclusion Aide, Grades 1-2 | Cedarbrook Elementary, Springfield, MA
2013 – 2016

- Pushed into two classrooms supporting 9 students with IEPs and 504 plans.
- Ran daily Wilson Reading System sessions for students two or more grade levels behind.
- Co-led morning meeting and social skills lessons twice a week using Zones of Regulation.
- Built behavior charts and earned token systems for 4 students with ADHD.

Teacher Assistant, Pre-K | Little Sprouts Learning Center, Springfield, MA
2011 – 2013

- Supported lead teacher in a mixed-age pre-K classroom of 16 students.
- Ran centers, snack, nap, and outdoor time and tracked daily milestones for each child.
- Maintained daily family communication app with photos and notes for 16 families.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

- B.S. in Human Services, Worcester State University, 2011
- Massachusetts Paraprofessional Certification, 2011
- Safety Care Behavioral Safety Training, recertified 2024
- Registered Behavior Technician (RBT), 2020

KEY SKILLS

- Autism support and ABA principles
- AAC devices (TouchChat, Proloquo2Go)
- ABC data collection and graphing
- Wilson Reading System
- Zones of Regulation
- Crisis prevention and Safety Care holds
- IEP and 504 implementation
- Paraprofessional training and mentoring
- Toileting and feeding support
- Adaptive materials creation