

Research Project Opportunity for Teachers and Paras! Free Training!

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I hope you are staying healthy and well. I am writing to see if your school is interested in participating in a new research study entitled “Supporting Paraeducators of Autistic Children to Engage! (SPACE! Study)” for the 2021-2022 school year. We were recently awarded a grant to examine the effects of a paraeducator-delivered **intervention for elementary autistic students and disruptive behavior**.

This study has been approved by our university IRB and the Seattle Children’s Hospital (forms attached). **All research activities (e.g., training, coaching) will be done remotely to increase access and reduce the potential exposure of COVID-19.**

What is the purpose of the study?

The goal of this study is to look at how a new intervention, the RUBIES program, works when paraeducators use it with their autistic students who have disruptive behaviors in the classroom.

What is required for participation?

We are currently looking for elementary school paraeducators (grades K-2 or 3-5) who support autistic students who have co-occurring disruptive behaviors. If they choose to take part, they would be in the study for approximately 24 weeks. Only two paraeducators, one from the K-2 grade band and one from the 3-5 grade band can participate from each school.

For Paraeducators: Paraeducators will be randomized to either the RUBIES program or Psychoeducation in Autism. Each program involves participating in eight training sessions over 12 weeks. The sessions will be approximately 45-60 minutes, scheduled at their convenience. Paraeducators will be asked to fill out study questionnaires at approximately four different timepoints and have a research staff member observe them working with their student (over Zoom) in the classroom. If they participate in the RUBIES program, they also will be asked to complete a 30-minute interview to learn about their experiences with the RUBIES program. Paraeducators receive \$10 at the screening visit, \$20 for three study assessment visits, and \$50 for the RUBIES feedback interview.

For Teachers and Caregivers: Teachers and caregivers will be asked to fill out brief study questionnaires at approximately four different timepoints. Teachers and caregivers will be paid \$10 per data collection period.

Autistic Students: Autistic students need to spend at least 4 hours per week in a general education setting and exhibit disruptive behaviors such as non-compliance, mild verbal or physical aggression, off-task behavior, and “tantrums.”

What is RUBIES?

RUBIES is an 8-module training (over Zoom) for paraeducators to learn ways to address challenging behaviors seen in their autistic student in the classroom.

What is Psychoeducation in Autism?

Psychoeducation in Autism is an 8-module webinar series that will teach paraeducators about autism as well as different tools to support social skills in their autistic student.

You can learn more about **RUBIES** and **Psychoeducation in Autism** in our Information Study video here: https://www.powtoon.com/online-presentation/fll7yCJpyuM/?utm_medium=SocialShare&utm_campaign=studio-share%2Bshare%2Bby%2Bowner&utm_source=studio-share-button&utm_content=fll7yCJpyuM&utm_po=38066015&mode=movie

How does this benefit my school?

While a direct benefit cannot be guaranteed, we will either provide intervention training and a manual in RUBIES or psychoeducation in autism at no cost to the family or school. The paraeducator will receive clock hours for their participation in RUBIES or Psychoeducation in Autism.

We recognize that you and your colleagues are professionally and personally impacted by our current crisis and understand if you are unable to participate in research at this time. I would be delighted to provide more information at a convenient time for you. Thanks very much for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions or are interested in participating in our study.

We ask interested paraeducators to please complete our informational form found here: https://uwsmart.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a4tbQRySCvSe0Lk

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