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Educational Assistants Association

The Front Line

March 2024

Sara, an Educational Assistant, worked with a student who often experienced behavioral challenges, including aggression, defiance, and meltdowns. Despite the difficult situations she encountered, she remained dedicated to providing the student with the support and care they needed. One day, during a very challenging moment, the student became overwhelmed and started to exhibit aggressive behavior. Instead of reacting with frustration or anger, Sara remained calm and used her crisis intervention training to de-escalate the situation. She spoke to the student with empathy and compassion, helping them navigate their emotions and find a sense of calm. As weeks passed, Sara continued to work closely with the student, using a combination of patience, understanding, and specialized techniques developed with the Child and Youth Worker. Through her unwavering dedication and resilience, Sara was able to build a strong rapport with the student and help them develop coping strategies to manage their emotions and behaviors. Over time, the student's meltdowns decreased, and they began to engage more positively in their learning and social interactions. Sara's commitment to providing compassionate care and using other members



empathy serves as a shining example of the vital role that EAs and CYWs play in supporting students with diverse needs. This story highlights the importance of empathy, resilience, and skilled intervention in the work of EAs and CYWs, showcasing the positive outcomes that can be achieved through dedication and compassion in the face of challenging circumstances.

Union Support Ensures Workplace Safety:

Cindy was working in an ACE classroom, where a fail to fill meant the ratio was too low and there was a safety concern. She was feeling uneasy when she was informed that her classroom EA partner was going to be absent the next day and there was no plan in place. She reached out to the Educational Assistants Association office and told the President and Vice President her scenario, asking for advice. Not long after, an Email from Vice-President Lisa came back, advising Cindy the steps to take in order to claim unsafe work. The next day the ACE class was inevitably short handed and the teacher was told that there was nobody that could come. Cindy jumped into action and emailed her Administrator, along with the union executive, that she felt unsafe for herself and the students because safety plans could not be implemented without another EA. Almost immediately, the Principal was there in the room with her, supporting students for 45 minutes while a plan was put in place. Throughout the rest of the day there was always enough support provided by other teachers in the school. Cindy, the Teacher and students in the ACE classroom were able to feel safe and supported during the absence of the regular EA because Cindy advocated for herself and was able to make informed decisions. This story is a perfect reminder that through the unwavering support of our Union, workplace safety is not just a promise but can also be a reality for all members.

As we approach International Women's Day on March 8th, 2024, the Educational Assistants Association is gearing up to celebrate the achievements and contributions of the dedicated individuals within our organization. While our membership is predominantly made up of women, we also deeply appreciate and value the contributions of our members who are not women.

This year, our focus is on the theme of "Inspire Inclusion," emphasizing the importance of fostering a culture where all members feel empowered, valued, and included. At the Educational Assistants Association, we are proud to have a diverse membership that brings a wealth of perspectives, experiences, and talents to our organization.

As Educational Assistants and Child and Youth Workers, our members play a crucial role in shaping the education sector and supporting the growth and development of students. As we embrace the theme of "Inspire Inclusion" this International Women's Day, we are committed to promoting gender equality, diversity, and inclusivity within our organization and the broader community.





On this special day, let us take a moment to celebrate the achievements of all members of the Educational Assistants Association and commit to fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment for everyone. Together, we can inspire inclusion, break down barriers, and empower all members to reach their full potential in the education sector and beyond. IWD belongs to everyone, everywhere. Inclusion means all IWD action is valid. Together we can forge women's equality. Collectively we can all #InspireInclusion. Celebrate women's achievement. Raise awareness about discrimination. Take action to drive gender parity.

Important Dates:

Ramadan March 10-April 9
World Down Syndrome Day- March 21
Central Negotiations March 26-27
Health and Safety virtual Town Hall March 28
Good Friday March 29
Easter Sunday March 31
Easter Monday April 1
World Autism Day - April 2
EAA Professional Development Day - Virtual April 10
Eid al-Fitr April 10
Local Negotiations April 11
Posting/Staffing process Town Hall April 16
Local Negotiations April 18
First Postings May 6

Health and Safety Town Hall: March 28th, 6:30pm
(Pre-register here)
Learn the difference between incident reports and safe schools reports, the work refusal process, and how to advocate for your health and safety.

Posting/Staffing Process Town Hall - April 16th, 6:30pm
(Pre-register here)
First Postings come out May 6th, 2024. Join the zoom meeting to get all your questions answered.

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