PATHS Courses

Fall Courses:
• DSP Content
• Child Care Content
• Practicum Preparation
• Communication
• Professionalism

Independent Study:
• Attend 3 hours each week with instructional assistants

Volunteer:
• 5 hours per week at assigned location
• Additional community opportunities throughout the semester

Observations:
• Connected to Practicum Preparation
• 3-5 different sites throughout the semester

Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living (BVCIL):
• 2 BVCIL Events each week (money management; cooking; assistive technology, etc.)

Trainings:
• Person Centered Practices TAMU CDD
• CPR/First Aid – TAMU EMS
• QPR (Suicide Prevention) – TAMU Student Counseling Services
• Communication Workshops – TAMU PhD Students
• Benefits Counseling – BVCIL
• Medicaid Waivers – BVCIL
• TAMU Disability Services Presentations
• TAMU Career Center Presentations and Workshops
• TAMU Student Life Health Promotion Presentations and Workshops

Spring Semester:
• 135 practicum hours
• Core Competency Course

Quick Facts

- People with disabilities and their families overwhelmingly choose community settings over institutional settings in which to live.
- Qualified, proficient direct support professionals and child care professionals are in constant demand.
- Community service providers are willing to pay more for a direct support professional who is already trained.

“There is a critical need for qualified professionals to support people with disabilities to live in a variety of community settings. As a statewide employer of Direct Support Professionals, I am very excited about the PATHS certificate program and believe the graduates will make excellent employees.”

— Nancy Newberry, President and CEO American Habilitation Services

For More Information Or To Apply
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PATHS is a certificate program offered through the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M’s College of Education & Human Development and is supported by a partnership with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services.
What is PATHS?
PATHS stands for Postsecondary Access and Training in Human Services. The PATHS Certificate Program prepares individuals for jobs as Direct Support Professionals and Child Care Professionals. After completing two semesters at the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University’s College of Education and Human Development, participants earn a certificate that combines classroom instruction with practical career building experiences.

What can PATHS graduates expect?
PATHS graduates will be well equipped for employment as a Direct Support Professional or as a Child Care Professional.

What is a Direct Support Professional?
Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) support people with disabilities and older people to live in their homes, with their families, or in other community settings. A DSP can be employed by a provider of community services, a family member, or a person with a disability who needs support and assistance. DSPs play key roles in the lives of the people they serve and their families. DSPs are instrumental in supporting a person to live a valued life in his or her community. As a part of their job, DSPs may:
- Assist a person with mobility needs to complete everyday tasks
- Help a person to become active in community settings of their choice (for example: workplace, recreational activities and social functions)
- Assist a person in developing independent living skills (for example: shopping, acquiring transportation and preparing meals)
- Support more than one person with disabilities in a community home

What is a Child Care Professional?
The PATHS Child Care Professional (CCP) track is available to students who have been accepted into the PATHS program who have an interest in working with children ages 0-5 in a child care program. This track will closely align with the six competency standards set by the CDA Council (CDACouncil.org). Upon graduation, graduates will have knowledge to begin/continue working with children ages 0-5 in the classroom setting.

How do I earn a Certificate?
People who have a sincere career goal to support people with disabilities, older people in community and children in child care settings should apply to be considered for admission to the PATHS Certificate Program. Successful candidates in the program will take one semester of required coursework. During the second semester, our goal is that PATHS students will be placed in a supervised, paid practicum in our community. Students are on-site, learning hands-on skills to prepare them for their career. PATHS instructors provide a broad base of training based on professional experience.

The Child Care track prepares students for responsibilities:
- Supervise and monitor the safety of children in their care
- Organize toys and materials to ensure a tidy activity area
- Help children keep good hygiene
- Change the diapers of infants and toddlers
- Teach children to use touch screens and computers
- Develop schedules and routines to ensure that children have enough physical activity, rest, and playtime
- Keep records of children’s progress, routines, and interest

Are you ready to get on the PATH?
http://paths.tamu.edu