

October, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

I am very happy to write this letter of recommendation for Sara Kraft. Sara has worked with my son and me since September, 1999 at Doherty Elementary School.

My son, Matthew, has significant learning, social and speech needs. Sara was an extremely valuable individual for me to have at Doherty. She was very accessible and always made time to speak with me or Matthew regarding any issue which arose. She is very open minded and a well balanced individual who was easy to talk to and brainstorm various situations with. Sara often acted as mediator in addressing situations between school personnel and me. She has a fair, empathetic way about her which allowed for me and others to trust and respect her judgement. I always felt very comfortable knowing that Sara was available and willing to help Matthew and me handle any academic or social situation which we were confronted with.

During these past two years, Sara has worked with Matthew every week and supported him in his classroom. Sara facilitated weekly social skill lessons in his classroom which focused on various self help skills. Matthew would often use these approaches to handle social difficulties in and out of school. These lessons provided Matthew and his classmates with increased self esteem, techniques to problem solve peer conflicts, and ways to develop healthy friendships. Matthew enjoyed these lessons and looked forward to them each week.

In addition, Matthew was involved in a school wide program known as "Peer Pals". Matthew had five peer pals who would take turns playing with him each day of the week. Matthew was guaranteed to have a lunch friend to eat with and socialize with on the playground. These peer pals were students from his classroom who volunteered to be his buddy at lunch time. This program was very helpful in providing a consistent, reliable friend for Matthew to interact with. It allowed him to not feel isolated or lonely at lunch recess. Also, Sara met with Matthew and his peer pals each month (or as needed) to discuss any issues which may have transpired. Matthew truly enjoyed and benefited from this program.

Sara was constantly trying to be creative to meet Matthews's needs. She was extremely invested in her job and always willing to try new suggestions. I feel she will be successful in any field of social work she chooses. I highly recommend her.

Sincerely,

Linda Stephens  
Parent