



Services Available at the Autism Center for Education

INTRODUCTION

The Autism Center for Education (ACE) provides services based on the principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA) and recommends intensive 1:1 behavior therapy be implemented to replace challenging behaviors with new adaptive behaviors (e.g., language & communication, play, social, etc.). All of ACE's services are currently provided in the home or school setting.

The ACE program follows a tiered model of services that consist of a behavior consultant (i.e., supervisor) and behavior therapists. The behavior consultant is responsible for designing & monitoring each child's ABA program, as well as providing training and supervision to behavior therapists. Behavior therapists are responsible for the daily implementation & data collection of a child's ABA program and work directly under the supervision and guidance of the behavior consultant. ACE does not currently provide behavior therapists, but is happy to assist families in finding the right staff to work with their child.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

The first step in developing your child's individualized behavior program is to assess what skills are currently present & deficient in their repertoire and any behavioral excesses that are present. A treatment program cannot be developed without an Initial Assessment. As such, all new clients are required to complete the Initial Assessment process.

An Initial Assessment includes the following:

- *Parent Interview*
Parents will be asked to complete a questionnaire and meet with the Autism Center for Education to provide additional foundation information that is essential in providing a thorough and complete Initial Assessment.
- *Skills Assessment*
A skills assessment is conducted to determine what appropriate skills are already present in your child's repertoire and which skills are deficient. Skills are considered appropriate if they are within the range of those displayed by their same-aged peers and are often referred to as "age-appropriate". Those skills that are deficient are those that fall below this range. Skills are tested informally across the domains appropriate for your child.
- *Functional Behavior Assessment*
Prior to being able to design an effective behavior intervention plan for your child a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) needs to be conducted. During the FBA the supervisor will conduct direct observations of your child and collect data on their behavior and interactions with the environment. Once a functional behavior assessment is conducted the supervisor will make a reasonable hypothesis as to what the function of the observed behavior(s) may be and there by design an appropriate & effective Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). Following the Initial Assessment, FBAs will be conducted as new behaviors arise as part of the ongoing supervision of your child's program.
- *Initial Assessment Report (optional)*
An Initial Assessment Report includes the findings from the Parent Interview, Skills Assessment, and the Functional Behavior Assessment. Specifically, it will include the following:
 - Identified strengths and weakness across the tested skill domains
 - Identified behavioral excesses & hypothesized functions
 - Suggested Goals & Objectives
 - Program Recommendations



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PROGRAM DESIGN, CONSULTATION, & SUPERVISION

Based on the results of a completed Initial Assessment an individualized behavioral program will be designed for your child. The treatment plan will be based on your child's identified repertoire of adaptive skills, deficient skills, and behavioral excesses and will consist of an individualized curriculum and behavior intervention plan.

Once the initial program is implemented your supervisor will ensure your child's program continues to be effective by doing the following:

- **CONDUCTING BI-WEEKLY TEAM MEETINGS:**
Team meetings are held every other week in the child's home and typically last 2 hours in duration. At least one parent and all therapists working with the child under the supervision of the Autism Center for Education are required to attend all meetings. During these meetings your child's supervisor will review the acquisition data and graphs for each program and will make changes based on the data and feedback from the team. Team Meetings are working meetings in which therapists are required to work with the child to demonstrate current levels of functioning within all programs.
- **OBSERVATIONS & TRAINING OVERLAPS:**
Supervisors observe individual therapists conducting their 1:1 therapy sessions. These observations of 1:1 therapy sessions provide the supervisor with an opportunity to 1) ensure consistency across the therapy team, 2) provide individual therapists with constructive feedback 3) provide ongoing training and support to therapy team, 4) provide each therapists the opportunity to ask individual questions so they can provide the best quality services to your child, and 5) provide your supervisor the opportunity to trouble shoot difficult programs and test skills for future programming needs.

In addition to observations of the home therapy sessions your supervisor may request to observe your child in other settings. For example, if your child is school aged and attends school in the morning hours, it will be beneficial for your child's supervisor to also do regular observations in the school setting to ensure that there is consistency and collaboration between the home and school environments.

BEHAVIOR THERAPIST TRAINING

The Autism Center for Education provides comprehensive training for behavior therapists. Because the Autism Center for Education does not employ behavior therapists it is essential that all therapists working under the supervision of the agency receive thorough training before being permitted to implement your child's home program. Training is required to ensure that therapists have a firm foundation in the underlying behavioral principles guiding your child's program, are able to effectively and consistently implement your child's skill building programs, effectively manage challenging behaviors, and are competent at collecting behavior and acquisition data. Specifically, training will include the following:

- Basic ABA Principles
- Behavior Management Strategies
- Data Collection
- Hands-On Training with your Child

It is the Autism Center for Education's goal to ensure that behavior therapists working with children supervised by our agency receive the same intensity of quality training and supervision that would be provided if they were to be employed by an agency.



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This ensures that our families are able to access the same quality of services for their children but at a cost that is more reasonably within reach.

In addition, because of our commitment to provide families with quality services the Autism Center for Education will provide ongoing training on special topics that will be made available only for behavior therapist working under the agencies supervision.

PARENT & FAMILY TRAINING

Parent involvement is a critical factor in the success of your child's program. While informal parent training opportunities are embedded within each intensive home-based program parents may also desire more formal parent training. Formal Parent Training typically occurs over a series of training sessions and consists of the program supervisor working directly with the parent(s) or family to address target skills or behaviors in which they need assistance. After the initial training session follow-up sessions will be conducted as needed to answer your questions, modify the intervention, provide training in additional areas, and to help ensure that you are equipped with the skills needed to assist your child in using his or her learned skills in the context of everyday activities.

SCHOOL DISTRICT & PROFESSIONAL CONSULTATION & TRAINING

The Autism Center for Education provides both formal training and consultation to school districts, preschools, and other professional organizations. Formal training can be conducted on a variety of topics that will benefit teachers, school staff, and professionals such as what is autism?, managing challenging behaviors in a variety of settings, effectively teaching our children in the school setting, and strategies for successfully including children into the general education settings. Trainings can be tailored to each school's or organization's individual needs and can be a general training or child specific. In addition, the Autism Center for Education can provide ongoing behavioral consultation services and support for teachers and staff in the schools.

FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT & BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT (ISOLATED SERVICE)

Conducting Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) prior to implementing a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) to reduce a challenging behavior ensures that a reasonable hypothesis as to what may be setting the occasion or maintaining a behavior can first be identified and thus result in a more effective intervention.

Autism Center for Education provides FBA services for families, school districts, and other organizations that need assistance in managing challenging behaviors either in the home or classroom setting.

This includes the following:

- Direct observation(s)
- Collection of Behavioral Data
- Parent and/or Teacher Questionnaire
- Report to include:
 - FBA results & data
 - Hypothesized function(s)
 - Recommendations



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WORKSHOP SERVICES

Workshop services are available for those families who live outside the local services area and are structured similarly to the local service model in that families are required to hire their own therapists. The Autism Center for Education will train the behavior therapists hired by the family, conduct an initial assessment, and design an individualized program for the child. Workshop supervisors will maintain your child's program through quarterly visits, video reviews, phone consultations, and email correspondence.