

## CHECKLIST FOR PROFESSIONALS

School professionals should work towards:

- collaborating with other members of the IEP team.
- demonstrating an awareness of and respect for the culture, language, values, and parenting styles of the families they serve.
- evaluating the school environment they create. Are behavior analytic principles applied throughout the school day? Are methods of instruction varied and individualized to the student? Do motivational systems generalize outside of one setting? If you're not sure, seek out professional development.
- observing other professionals who run similar programs to incorporate great ideas into your own.
- setting goals and timelines for the school year. Decide when you will reevaluate what has worked and what hasn't.
- providing parents with information about child development, fostering coordination of efforts between school and home, supporting the family in reducing challenging behavior, and enabling parents to acquire their own skills to support their child's IEP goals and to teach their child new skills. (APQI)
- evaluating their own progress and needs.

BCBAs consulting in a school setting should remember to:

- articulate their role at the outset. Understanding who the client is, the reason consultation is necessary, their specific responsibilities, and that their primary ethical obligation is to the student first will help guide the relationship. Setting these guidelines from the beginning will avoid difficult conversations later.
- be upfront about their scope of competence.
- navigate delicate professional relationships using empathetic behaviors (Taylor, LeBlanc, Nosik, 2018).
- "Condition yourself as a reinforcer." Become either positive reinforcement because you're fun, bring snacks, and solve problems or negative reinforcement because when everyone follows the plan, the BCBA won't bug them anymore (Mumford and Theroux, 2014).
- find something in the classroom to compliment - the more the better. Teachers and school staff work hard to create their classroom resources, programs, and structures. They will appreciate you noticing.
- deliver reports and subsequent interventions in a timely manner. When BCBAs are called, staff is in crisis mode. Many times student placement and sometimes even presence in school depends on these evaluations. Be thorough but as efficient as possible.
- use language that people can understand - avoid the jargon. Less response effort in the long run, more efficient. And ethically, it's in the code. It's enticing to make yourself look more professional but do that instead by creating awesome plans.
- recognize school staff as local experts. "Affirm the teacher's role as the expert in the classroom and discover helpful, respectful ways to influence teacher and para behavior. Rely on teachers' feedback. Build collaborative relationships" (Mumford and Theroux, 2014).
- be flexible whenever you can. Seek team input on goals, strategies, measurement, mastery - there is more than one way to achieve goals. Figure out in which aspects of your plans you can accommodate other people's suggestions.
- teach staff how to become the students' reinforcers and how to foster independence.
- make themselves available for consultation and schedule regular visits.
- understand the school district's policies, school culture, hierarchy, and union practices (Luiselli 2002, Mumford and Theroux 2014).
- discuss with administration what they should do if staff members won't collaborate or follow plans.
- engage in frequent, ongoing discussions with supervisor about caseload, priorities, and progress.
- "be honest, be humble, be human," but also be nice. Talk to people, listen to their answers, when you ask them how they are doing, care enough to focus on, listen to, and remember their answer. As BCBAs, we are so apprehensive to make personal connections because we don't want to violate the ethical code but we forget that we are human first. And human connections are what drives buy in which helps staff set up environments that will help the learner meet success more quickly.