



Parent Training and Therapists' Competencies

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Parent Training – What is it and Why is Needed?

- Parent training includes teaching techniques to address challenging behavior such as analyzing antecedents and consequences or implementing strategies to reduce challenging behavior.
- ABA parent training is an important part of any ABA program .
- It involves teaching parents' critical skills to ensure generalization.
- Improve functioning in the natural environment.
- Reduce parent's stress level.
- Makes life more enjoyable for everyone.



How to Prepare for Parent Training:

- Develop a partnership with parents.
- Identify appropriate parent training goals.
- Teach a skill to the parents didactically, without the client there.
- Model the skill with the client.
- Allow the parents to practice the skill either through role play or with the client.
- Encourage the parent to be present during an appropriate amount of the session.
- Observe the parent utilizing the skill during the session and further sessions.

Parent Training Topics

Parent training addresses many different aspects of the family's life and interactions. Include goals that address any of the following topics:

- . Participation in parent training.
- . Understanding the context of behavior using the ABC framework.
- . Delivering reinforcement.
- . Following through with utilizing interventions.
- . Collecting data.
- . Understanding functions of behavior.
- . Demonstrating prompting techniques.
- . Utilizing generalization and maintenance procedures.


Barriers to Effective Parent Training

- Therapists, especially ones who are new to the field may struggle with translating ABA jargon into language parents can understand.
- Parent motivation may be low due to unrealistic expectations for progress or a lack of intermediate goals that show progress.
- Therapists might not have the time to prepare materials or create lessons for parents causing them to just “wing it” when it comes time for parent training.
- Parent training may lack structure which can lead to parents trying to address the crisis of the week.
- Therapists might have difficulty getting parents to “buy-into” using recommended strategies.
- Parent stress limits the parents’ ability to participate in parent training, learn new skills and utilize skills taught independently.



Factors that Impact Parent Stress

- Disruptive behaviors.
- Expectations for long-term care.
- The severity of their child's impairments.
- Difficulties with relating to their child.
- Overwhelming care-taking demands.
- The need to interact with a large pool of professionals or difficulties with accessing services.
- The need to gather and make sense of an overwhelming amount of information about diagnosis and interventions.



Factors that Impact Parent Stress:


- Sorting through alternative treatments some of which might provide conflicting information.
- Monetary stress due to a loss of time at work or additional costs of therapies.
- A limit on family opportunities which might evoke a sense of loss over what the parent expected they would be able to do with their child.

Allen and Warzak Findings (2000 Study):

- Parent Stress interferes with relationships and often leads to failure to follow through with the ABA team recommendations. Some of the reasons include:
- Failure to identify intermediate outcomes.
- Trouble keeping up momentum towards a long-term goal.
- Competing social approval when family and friends express disapproval on therapist's recommendations.




Therapy Quality and Therapist Competence

- Therapy **quality** refers to the standard of implementation of treatment, best known as **treatment fidelity** or treatment integrity. Adherence to treatment is whether the right therapeutic procedures were used.
 - Therapist **competence** refers to how well the chosen procedures are implemented. This requires evaluating the therapist's knowledge of the treatment and its use, and the therapist's ability to implement it.
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Traits of a Competent Therapist




Rate yourself from 1 to 4 (not sure, slightly sure, somewhat sure, strongly sure).

1. Are you a good listener?
2. Can you keep confidential information?
3. Do you genuinely care about others?
4. Are you naturally inquisitive?
5. Do you know yourself well?



Traits of a Competent Therapist

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6. Are you comfortable with talking to all types of people?
 7. Are you generally a stable individual?
 8. Are you a tolerant person?
 9. Are you good at solving puzzles and riddles?
 10. Are you creative?
 11. Are you flexible?
 12. Do you have a good sense of humor?

What a Therapist Should Not Do – Red Flags

1. Skip building trust or rapport
2. Lack empathy
3. Act unprofessionally
4. Be judgmental or critical
5. Do anything other than practice therapy
6. Lack confidence
7. Talk too much or not at all
8. Give unsolicited advice
9. Share confidential information




What a Therapist Should Not Do – Red Flags

- 10. Seem bored or uninterested
- 11. Avoid admitting mistakes or accepting feedback
- 12. Talk in technical or academic language
- 13. End sessions without action items
- 14. Fail to explain when therapy is no longer needed
- 15. Make promises or guarantees
- 16. Answer phone calls
- 17. Show insensitivity to culture, religion, orientation, race, age, etc.

What a Therapist Should Not Do – Red Flags

- 18. Use different therapy methods without permission
- 19. Seem overwhelmed
- 20. Forget basic details
- 21. Support the wrong decisions
- 22. Fall asleep
- 23. Keep telling the client they're right for them.






What is Exactly a "Good" Therapeutic Relationship?

- Mutual trust and, respect, and caring.
- General agreement on the goals and tasks of the therapy.
- Shared decision-making.
- Mutual engagement in the "work" of treatment.
- The ability to talk, share and correct any problems that may arise during treatment.
- It is also considered very important to "expand" the relationship to significant others in relation to the client, as we indicate in ABA, parent involvement being crucial to treatment success.



Analyze Parent Training Challenges

- Identify a client and his caregivers.
 - Analyze the variables affecting parent resistance to parent training or interventions. What is going on in the family?
 - Take time to carefully consider what is impacting the parents' motivation to follow through with your recommendations.
 - What can you do to increase the likelihood the parents will follow through with recommendations?
 - Do an outline of your plan.
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