



# **Client Handbook**

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## **Mission**

The mission of the Brent Woodall Foundation is to empower parents of children with autism and developmental disabilities and to encourage their involvement in their children's therapy by providing educational training, customized academic and behavioral plans, psychological assessments, and modest financial support.

## **Philosophy**

While there is no cure for autism, there are many treatments available. The Brent Woodall Foundation (BWF) uses the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to teach and improve the level of functioning in children with autism. Children with developmental disabilities often have serious deficits (i.e. none or limited expressive/receptive language, limited social skills, limited independent living skills, etc.) and ABA has been used to teach a variety of skills to overcome such deficits. In addition, ABA has been shown to successfully decrease behavioral excess (i.e. aggressive behaviors, tantrum behaviors, etc.) often demonstrated by children with autism. ABA uses rewards to engage children and teach them new skills. The therapy involves a breaking down of skills into small, discrete, and measurable tasks that are taught through a highly structured clinical method. ABA is the only intervention empirically proven to provide results. What makes our approach unique is not only are the programs clinically individualized to address each child's particular cognitive problems, social deficits, and behavioral issues, but they also take into consideration the roles various family members can play in the treatment of the child. All services provided by the Foundation are offered at little to no cost. Our programs show families how to connect with their children not only by educating them about autism and other developmental disabilities, but also by providing them with the technical training necessary to understand their children's treatment programs and how to carry these programs out at home.

# Clients Rights and Responsibilities

Brent Woodall Foundation for Exceptional Children is committed to respecting the rights and responsibilities of all clients and their family.

Client and family rights are:

- Right to reasonable access to care and treatment and/or accommodations that are available regardless of one's race, color, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ethnic affiliation, disability, or age
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Interactions that are sensitive to his/her culture
- Religious freedom
- Personal dignity
- Personal safety including freedom from unnecessary restraint, and freedom from physical and psychological abuse and neglect
- Accept or refuse services
- Inspect and review the personal records
- Internal and external grievance procedures
- Provision of services in the most appropriate, least restrictive environment
- Receive information in an understandable manner on the results of evaluations, examinations, and treatments

Client and family responsibilities are:

- To notify the practitioner when a cultural situation exists concerning the care process
- To participate in individual planning, decision making, and implementation
- To provide, to the best of their knowledge, accurate and complete information and to report any changes in client's condition to the practitioner
- To ask questions and participate in discussions about their plan of care
- To inform the care team if they do not clearly understand a contemplated course of action and what is expected of them
- To provide accurate personal identification information
- To provide updated financial information and meeting any financial obligation
- To Provide updated medical/educational records
- To adhere to the company waiver and indemnity agreement, and client policy acknowledgement, including but not limiting to:
  - Parent involvement requirements
  - Monthly meeting with client's BCBA
  - Didactic monthly parent involvement
  - Financial and billing policy and agreement set by the BWF
  - Filming and photography participation
  - Registration and scheduling policy including cancellation and sick day policy
  - Duplication of service policy
  - Adult code of conduct policy
  - Observation policy
  - Child safety policy including freedom from unnecessary restraint and freedom from physical and psychological abuse and neglect

# Registration & Scheduling Policy

The Brent Woodall Foundation provides therapy year round, within a three Cycle format.

- Spring Cycle- January - May
- Summer Cycle- June - August
- Fall Cycle- September – December

Parents must register for their child’s therapy for each Cycle. When completing the registration form, parents will indicate their top 2 preferred session schedules. No schedule is guaranteed; therefore, it is required an alternate schedule be provided. Sessions are given out on a first come, first served basis. There is a waiting list for Saturday sessions, and these are not guaranteed. Once reviewed, parents will receive an email confirmation of their approved schedule. Please note, requested schedules are not guaranteed until they are confirmed in email by a director. Changes in the client’s insurance authorization may require changes in schedule and those changes will be made accordingly.

Registration forms are due December 1<sup>st</sup> for the Spring Cycle, May 1<sup>st</sup> for the Summer Cycle, and August 1<sup>st</sup> for the Fall Cycle. The Registration Fee of \$50 will be waived for all who turn in their registration form on or before the due date. Any forms turned in after the due date will incur the \$50 registration fee. Please turn the registration form in to the black money box located on the wall in the waiting room. Please do not turn them into any staff members. Any schedule changes that occur without 30 days’ notice will incur the Registration Fee of \$50. All accounts must be up to date and paid in full before schedules will be confirmed.

Sessions are scheduled by the hour. We do not provide half-hour sessions. Sessions are available Monday-Friday from 8am-6pm and Saturday 9am-5pm.

## Center Hours

The Brent Woodall Foundation is open Monday-Friday from 8:00am-6:00pm and Saturday 9:00-5:00pm. Children must be escorted into the waiting room. Their therapist will pick them up in the waiting room at the time the therapy session is scheduled to begin and bring them back out to the parent when the session ends. Parents are responsible for their child while in the waiting room until the behavioral technician takes them for their session.

## Waiting Room Policy

The BWF waiting room is intended as a quiet place for parents and other family members to wait while their child attends therapy. Children under 14 should not be left in the waiting room unattended. Parents should monitor their children closely while in the waiting room. Please, no climbing on the furniture or playing with the blinds. There should be no food or beverages, with the exception of bottled water.

## Center Closings

The Brent Woodall Foundation is closed for the following days each year:

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Memorial Day     | Thanksgiving Holiday (Thursday-Saturday) |
| Independence Day | Winter Break (TBD)                       |
| Labor Day        | Staff Development Days (TBD)             |

Please visit our website for our complete calendar for specific closing dates.

# Cancellation Policy

Regular attendance is essential for each child's growth in therapy. A cancellation policy has been put in place to ensure smooth operations and keep costs as low as possible. Scheduled sessions are reserved especially for your child based on the Service Agreement. Therefore, that time cannot be used for another child and is time lost to the office. Children who miss more than 2 weeks of therapy, may lose their slot on the schedule. Please note, if a child does not use all of the therapy hours authorized by their insurance company, the insurance company will likely decrease the number of authorized hours in the next authorization period.

Sick Day Cancellations: Each child will receive 10 Sick Day Cancellations (regardless of makeup sessions) per calendar year. Notification of Excused Cancellations due to illness must be made by 8am the day of the absence. Notifications should be made via email to [tracy@woodallkids.org](mailto:tracy@woodallkids.org). If a child is sent home sick, this absence will be counted as a Sick Day Cancellation. Any cancellations for illnesses beyond the 10 allowed days will be considered an unexcused cancellation and the cost of the session will be charged to the parent.

Excused Absences: Children may take an Excused Absence with 30 days' notice. These can be used for vacations, doctors' appointments, and religious holidays. There will be no charge for these missed sessions. Notification of Excused Cancellations due to vacations must be made 30 days in advance.

Unexcused Cancellation: All cancelled sessions beyond the 10 Sick Day Cancellation sessions will be considered Unexcused Cancellations. If proper notice is not provided before a cancellation, it will be considered an Unexcused Cancellation. The client will be charged a Cancellation Fee in the amount of \$25 per hour missed. This fee cannot be billed to an insurance company or a grant organization. The Cancellation Fee cannot be used to pay for makeup sessions.

Make up sessions: Makeup sessions are provided as a courtesy to ensure children are able to receive the recommended therapy hours; however, they are not guaranteed. Makeup session will be provided upon request and based on schedule availability. **Makeup sessions must be requested by emailing [tracy@woodallkids.org](mailto:tracy@woodallkids.org) within 10 days of the missed session.**

# Sick Policy

If a child becomes ill while at our office, parents will be called to pick him/her up immediately. **Children must be fever, diarrhea, and vomit free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication** before returning to the office after being ill. Following serious or extended illnesses, the BWF may require a note from a doctor allowing the child to return to therapy. Children may not come to therapy if they have had any of the following within 24 hours:

- |                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Chickenpox (Varicella) | Meningitis viral          |
| Common Cold            | Salmonellosis             |
| Fever                  | Shigellosis               |
| Gastroenteritis        | Streptococcal sore throat |
| Giardiasis             | Scarlet fever             |
| Influenza              | Undiagnosed rash          |
| Meningitis bacterial   |                           |

In cases of an infectious disease outbreak, the office may be closed for a short time to sanitize before reopening. The proper health authorities as well as parents will be notified. Any child who is ill will not be admitted to the center unless approved in writing by a doctor.

## **Late Policy**

Therapy sessions have a specified start and end time. It is important children be on time for their session or group. It is disruptive for children to arrive late and they miss out on their therapy time. There will be no proration or make-ups for late arrivals. Children who are more than 30 minutes late to their scheduled session will be allowed to begin their session upon arrival; however, the hour will not be billable to your insurance company. In this case, the parent will be charged the full amount of the session.

We cannot accommodate children left past their scheduled therapy sessions. If parents are late picking their child, parents will be charged one dollar (\$1) for every minute you are late. The charge will be added to the next invoice. Insurance companies and grant agencies cannot be billed for these charges and therefore the family will be financially responsible for the charges.

## **Duplication of Services**

In order to have a successful ABA program, it is important there are not competing programs in place. It can become confusing and impede a child's progress to have two ABA providers. The Brent Woodall Foundation does not allow for a duplication of services, meaning that if the child is receiving ABA from another therapist or therapeutic center, the Foundation will not provide ABA therapy.

## **Health and Safety**

Prior to starting services, families must submit a written statement from a licensed physician who has examined the child within the past year. Current immunization records for each child are required prior to starting services. The child's immunization record should include date of birth, number of doses and type, and dates the child received the immunization. Compliance with this policy is measured by one or more of the following for each child enrolled:

- A dated record that the child has been immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella.
- A dated statement from a licensed physician or other authorized health professional stating that immunizations have begun. The immunization cycle must be completed as is medically feasible.
- A certificate signed by a licensed physician stating that the required immunizations would be injurious to the child's health.
- A notarized statement, signed by the parent, stating that immunizations conflict with religious beliefs and practices.

## **Medication and Supplement Policy**

The staff at the BWF is not permitted to administer medications or supplements to any client. Parents may issue medications and/or supplements to their children, but the medication and/or supplements cannot remain with the BWF staff. Parents must keep medication and supplements with them at all times. Medications and supplements cannot be put into a child's food or drinks. Epi Pens and other

emergency medication can be given with orders from a doctor. These medications must be kept in a locked medication box in the Director's office and a protocol for their use must be provided by a doctor.

## **Nut Free Environment**

The Brent Woodall Foundation is a nut-free zone. Clients cannot bring food that contains nuts of any kind. If items containing nuts are brought into the office, the BWF staff will be required to discard them immediately. For the safety of our children, we ask that anyone who has eaten or handled nut products prior to entering the BWF office to wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water.

## **Child Safety Policy**

In order to prevent any incidents due to a child's medical condition, it is mandatory for all clients to wear medical information tags at the BWF at all times. The information on the tag must include but is not limited to: child's name, diagnosis, medical conditions, food or drug allergies, and emergency contact number. Tags can be worn in the form of a medical bracelet or a necklace. Tags for tennis shoes are also available for children who resist any jewelry on their body. Parents may purchase the tags online or at a local store. All services will be withheld until the possession of the tag is confirmed.

## **Medical Forms**

A full medical history and list of current medications and supplements is required to be on file for each child. Please notify a Director of any changes in medications or supplements. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency, Directors depend upon up to date information.

## **Incidents and Emergencies**

Any time a client requires first aid for any reason, an incident report will be completed and a parent will be notified. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency, the BWF will notify parents after 911 has been called.

## **Disaster Plan**

In case of fire emergencies, all children will be escorted out of the building with their Behavioral Technician. Each child will have an emergency plan to ensure their safety should the occasion arise. Emergency contacts will be taken out and parents will be notified by phone as everyone waits in a safe location together.

In case of weather related emergencies, all children and any other people in the facility will be escorted to the innermost room. Weather will be tracked while staff maintains supervision. All emergency contacts for children will be notified by phone.

The BWF may close unexpectedly due to inclement weather or other emergencies in order to provide the safest environment for the children and families we serve. In the event of inclement weather, we will give information regarding closing on our outgoing voicemail. If parents are unsure if the BWF is open, they can call 972-756-9170 to get that information. The BWF staff will post closings with the major news stations. You should also check our Facebook page for up to the minute updates at [www.facebook.com/woodallkids](http://www.facebook.com/woodallkids).

In case of a natural disaster in which the BWF center is unable to be used, the BWF may close for a short time for repairs or to find an alternate location. In such case, parents will be notified and kept informed of plans to reopen the center and maintain therapy for clients.

## **Mandated Reporters**

All employees are mandated to report any suspicion of child maltreatment and must immediately notify their supervisor who will contact the appropriate authorities.

## **Background Checks**

As a precaution to our clients and to comply with all federal and state regulations, the BWF conducts background checks on all employees and contractors who work with our clients. Employment with the BWF is contingent on a clear background check.

## **Adult Code of Conduct**

The Brent Woodall Foundation (“BWF”) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct in its operations and activities, and particularly as it achieves its Mission. It expects all persons who either enroll a student with BWF or who enter the premises (including the courtyard and adjacent parking lot) to maintain the highest ethical standards with an eye single to the child’s therapy and well-being. The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all Adults and visitors to be expected to conduct themselves in a safe and positive way to create a suitable environment for our students.

Any and all parents, guardians, or other persons (“Adults”) must at all times maintain compliance with this and all policies in the Client Handbook. Clients who authorize non-client Adults to enter the premises or to interact with the Client’s child(ren) are responsible for the non-client Adult’s adherence to this and all policies in the Client Handbook both on and off the premises. A violation of this policy or any policy in the Client Handbook can lead to immediate termination of services. BWF has the sole and absolute discretion to determine whether this policy or any policy in the Client Handbook has been violated.

All Adults must use appropriate language and exhibit appropriate behavior at all times while at BWF. Should BWF determine in its sole and absolute discretion that an Adult has engaged in any behavior, conduct, or language that it deems inappropriate and in violation of this code of conduct, BWF reserves the right to ask the Adult to leave the premises and/or to prohibit the Adult from re-entering the premises in the future. BWF has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy regarding behavior that it deems inappropriate or harmful to the child (either on the premises, off the premises or otherwise through social media), and a violation of this policy can lead to immediate termination of services or otherwise prohibit the Adult from attending on premises classes with the child. BWF further reserves the right to seek legal remedies against an Adult it deems to be in violation of this and other policing including, but not limited to, procuring a restraining order against the Adult to prevent future occurrences of inappropriate or harmful behavior.

BWF takes all threatening, disparaging, inflammatory, and/or defamatory language and behavior seriously, even if purportedly made in jest, and will consider such language and behavior to be a violation of this policy. Examples of inappropriate behavior that would violate this policy include, but are not limited to:

- The use of language, words, or other communications that involve negative, threatening, accusatory, and/or disparaging language about a child, Client, other Adult, BWF Staff member, Behavioral Technician, or Case Manager;
- The use of foul language or cursing;
- The use of phone calls, text messages or social media as mediums to facilitate negative, threatening, accusatory, and/or disparaging language regarding BWF, its staff or its students;
- The use or display of tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, vaporizers or “vape pens” and the like;
- The use or display of any illegal drugs or alcohol;
- The use or display of weapons or any object that can be perceived as a weapon;
- Standing, parking, or other unauthorized use of a handicap parking zone without a state-authorized license plate or temporary tag appropriately displayed on the vehicle;

The above list is not exhaustive, and the BWF reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion to determine whether this or any policy in the Client Handbook has been violated. The above behavior on BWF premises may be reported to the appropriate legal authorities, even ban the offending Adult from entering BFW grounds.

The use of physical aggression towards another Adult or students is strictly prohibited, which includes physical punishment or corporal punishment against another adult or child – some actions may constitute assault with legal consequences. BWF trusts that all Adults will assist BWF with the implementation of this policy and thank you for your continuing support.

## Technology Policy

Children often times use technology (i.e. iPad, tablet, iTouch, portable DVD player) as reinforcement or as an augmentative communication system. Parents are responsible for labeling the device with their child’s code. Devices should be charged and come with a charger. The BWF will not be responsible for damage to any devices. It is recommended all devices have shock proof cases to protect them if dropped. Please download all aps and videos to the device as it cannot be connected to the BWF Wi-Fi.

## Service & Therapy Dogs

Children who have registered Service Dogs are permitted to bring them with them for therapy. Parents of children with Service Dogs should contact Tracy Pierce Bender in order to discuss and create a Service Dog Protocol. The Brent Woodall Foundation is home to Raven, a Therapy dog. She is a miniature poodle, hypoallergenic, and very friendly. Raven is often times used as reinforcement for children and has been used within programming.

## Communication Policy

Email is our main point of contact with each family. Invoices and important notifications will be sent through email. It is also the most efficient way for parents to communicate with the BWF. All appointments, schedule changes, and meeting requests must be made to Tracy Pierce Bender via email at [tracy@woodallkids.org](mailto:tracy@woodallkids.org). Please make sure your email account will accept email from the following: [info@woodallkids.org](mailto:info@woodallkids.org), [development@woodallkids.org](mailto:development@woodallkids.org), [carley@woodallkids.org](mailto:carley@woodallkids.org), [tracy@woodallkids.org](mailto:tracy@woodallkids.org), [irina@woodallkids.org](mailto:irina@woodallkids.org), [c.cole@woodallkids.org](mailto:c.cole@woodallkids.org) and [yurmea@woodallkids.org](mailto:yurmea@woodallkids.org).

# Observation Policy

Observation of ABA therapy is welcomed as a time for the parent to observe their child's progress and take notes on therapeutic procedures/programs. Parents are welcome to observe their child's entire session or observe only a part of the session. A waiting room is available when parents are no longer observing their child or they may leave and return to pick their child up when his/her session is finished. Siblings are not permitted in the therapy rooms during observation. Please, do not leave children of any age unattended in the waiting room. Parents should plan to make arrangements for siblings during observation. Cell phones must be put away and turned to silent while in the therapy room. Cameras or any form of recording device are not permitted in the therapy room. Any violation of the rules stated for observation may result in the parent not being permitted to observe again.

Please note parent observations remain as a time for parents to observe their child and take notes. Parents should not ask the Behavior Technicians working with the child questions during this time. Parents are welcome to ask questions directly to their child's Case Manager or BCBA during their scheduled meetings or via email.

In order to preserve confidentiality of all our clients, parent observations are available by appointment only. In order to observe their child's session, parents must check in with the front desk and attain a Visitor's Pass. The safety, privacy, and quality of service for each child are the top priority. If at any time a Director feels these are being compromised for any reason, parents may be asked to leave. Once granted a Visitor's Pass, the parent must stay with their child and the Behavioral Technician. Parents are not permitted to walk around the office or to observe or talk to other children.

# Required Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is essential to the success of each client. Parents will work with their BCBA to develop parent goals to be completed at home. Parents will have a binder with their goals. Data must be collected and submitted weekly to the Case Manager. These goals are developed and training will be provided during individual parent meetings and Group Parent Trainings.

All BWF parents are required to attend at least one (1) meeting per month with their child's Case Manager. Monthly parent meetings will be scheduled on a fixed day and time of the month (e.g. every second Tuesday at 4:00 or every last Monday at 10:00, etc.) during the child's scheduled session. This will give parents the opportunity to be informed of the programs their child is working on. Meetings with your child's BCBA will be scheduled as needed without the child present. In order to reschedule or cancel a regularly scheduled parent meeting, parents must provide notice 48 hours prior to the meeting. This meeting can only be rescheduled once a month.

In addition to individual parent meetings, parents are required to attend at least 3 hours of Group Parent Training per month. These Group Parent Trainings will be offered for free at the BWF office. The goal of these Group Parent Meetings is to facilitate the sharing of information, skills, experiences, and resources intended to strengthen, improve, and enrich family life. The schedule for these meetings will be given out in advance and will be posted on our website and in the waiting room. If parents choose not to attend our Group Parent, they must bring a certificate of attendance from an outside conference or workshop to fulfill this requirement.

Failure to meet the parent involvement policy may result in suspension of client services or changes in authorization from the insurance company. Failure to follow recommendations of the BCBA may result in lack of progress or regression.

## **BCBA Supervision**

BCBAs provide program supervision for each client. The standard rate of supervision is 1 hour per 10 hours of therapy. The number of supervision hours may vary from client to client based on need. Supervision hours will be set based on recommendations from the BCBA and approval from the parents.

## **Confidentiality of Information**

All employees must abide by all state and federal laws, rules, and regulations as well as the BWF's policy on respecting and keeping confidential information. Employees will not divulge any information concerning any client-family member to any unauthorized person.

## **Staff Interaction Policy**

When your child begins therapy at the BWF, they will be assigned a Case Manager. The Case Manager will be responsible for updating the programs, training Behavioral Technicians on issues specific to each child, and meeting with and updating parents on the program. If you have any questions, please direct them to your child's Case Manager, not the Behavior Technician.

Often times, parents wish to give gifts to our staff members. We ask that parents not give individual gifts. We are a team and each member of our team is important to the success of each and every client. While it is not necessary, if you wish to give a gift to our staff, we ask that it be something we can enjoy together as a team.

It is our policy that our staff does not communicate with clients outside of our office via social media. Additionally, they are not permitted to accept outside work (i.e. babysitting) as it can be a conflict of interest.

