

Talking points related to the Restriction of Scope for Behavior Analysts in NY for ASD Advisory Board 2/22/18

1. Issues facing our most vulnerable youth in NY: Youth living in poverty or involved in child welfare:
 - a. MANY youths living in poverty or served in the child welfare system do not receive timely diagnosis of autism. There are MANY reasons for this, however one of the primary reasons is these are our most vulnerable youth in the entire state and there are not always the advocates and service providers who can support these youths. That means, despite needing a behavior analyst as much as any youth with ASD they cannot receive these services unless they are “lucky” (used very sarcastically) enough to be placed out of their home in an exempt residential setting and/or in a school that has these services built in regardless of diagnosis.
 - b. Some of the in-home services available to these youth, such as the OCFS IDD B2H waiver don’t typically employ behavior analysts because BAs can only work with individuals with autism, significantly restricting their ability to work in these kinds of programs.
2. Behavior Analysts do not want to either stay in NY or move to NY due to the scope restriction.
 - a. The number of new behavior analysts continues to decrease since the license. Many students are choosing to leave after graduation. They report that they want to work where they can engage in the work they were trained.
 - b. Recruiting behavior analysts to NY is very difficult. Many only will come to NY if they need to move back to where their families are from due to family illness or need for family support.
3. The cost to new behavior analysts and to organizations to train behavior analysts is VERY prohibitive. Despite taking the SAME exam and completing 1500 practice hours individuals will become BCBA’s but CANNOT become licensed behavior analysts. Often, they still have a significant number of autism specific practice hours left to complete before they can apply for licensure. This is a significant cost to both the individual AND the organization working towards increasing capacity because this means that even though it shouldn’t be necessary, the person continues to need 2 hours per week individual supervision for the entire time the person they are supervising is accruing hours above and beyond the hours they already accrued to become a BCBA.
4. University programs are going to continue to struggle to identify practicum sites where their students are getting ONLY autism hours at the necessary rate.
5. Students will continue to be less well trained than anywhere else in the country because it is important to not be trained in only one diagnosis to be good at understanding the differences in learning between individuals diagnosed with autism and those not.
6. Families are working VERY hard to get their child a diagnosis of autism when they do not have autism so they can get the services. There are many cases (and these folks will not be vocal out of fear) where kids are getting autism diagnoses that do not have autism!