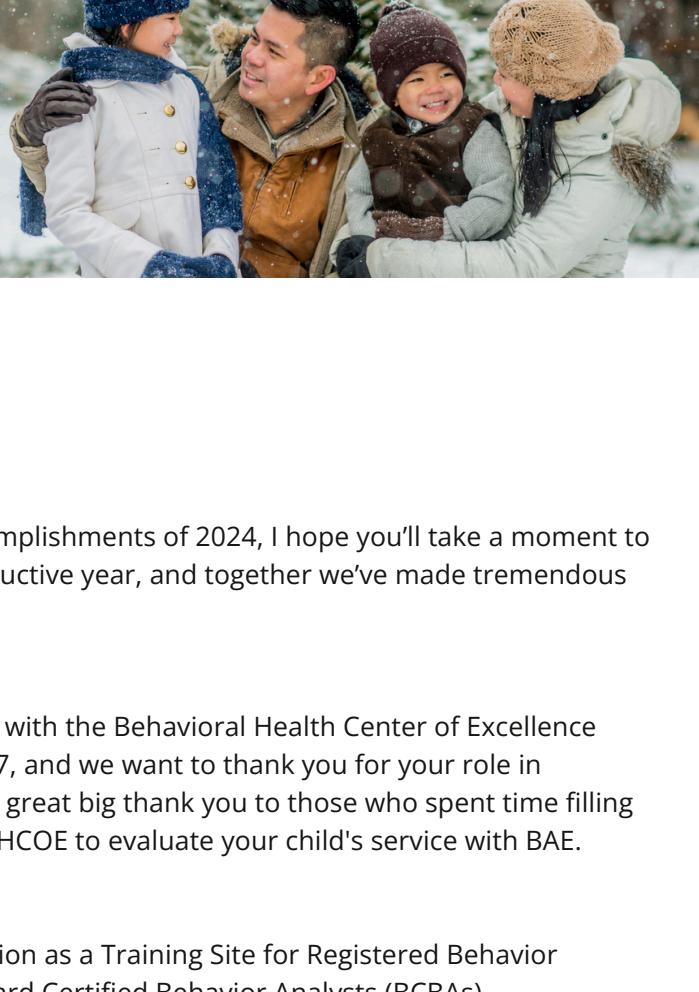


# Family Connection



Dear BAE families,

## Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

This year has truly flown by, and as we reflect on the accomplishments of 2024, I hope you'll take a moment to celebrate your own successes. It's been an incredibly productive year, and together we've made tremendous strides. Let's take a look at some of BAE's 2024 highlights.

### BHCOE Accreditation

Our team takes great pride in our continued accreditation with the Behavioral Health Center of Excellence (BHCOE). BAE has been accredited continuously since 2017, and we want to thank you for your role in participating in this evaluation process. I'd like to extend a great big thank you to those who spent time filling out the survey, offering valuable feedback, and allowing BHCOE to evaluate your child's service with BAE.

### BHCOE Training Site Accreditation

We're thrilled to announce that BAE has earned accreditation as a Training Site for Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) and a Supervised Fieldwork Site for Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs).

### BAE Initiatives

Every year, our Leadership and Executive Teams work behind the scenes to improve service quality and address areas for growth. Here are some 2024 initiatives and their progress:

- 1. Assent and Withdrawal.** Provider trainings this past year have centered largely around the idea of client assent. Similar to consent, assent indicates a willingness to participate. It is an ongoing assessment and is complex to integrate into a standard ABA program. Our team is focused on identifying signs of assent, non-assent, and withdrawal of assent and respecting the client's preferences. This required some adjustments in how we integrate this within the practice of ABA, and is an initiative that will continue over time.
- 2. Parent Engagement** is a passion of mine. We made it a goal to have parents and caretakers at the center of the table and for you to contribute to the conversation. You may have noticed an increase in parent meetings and the inclusion of topics like cultural influences and family values in treatment planning. ABA can take many different paths, and our team has been learning to customize programs according to household dynamics, cultural identity, and family values. We have challenged ourselves to listen and use critical thinking to shape truly individualized programs, developed together with you and not just for you and your child. I hope you are feeling empowered as an active member of your child's ABA team. There is more work to be done, but I am proud to see that our delivery of parent training services is among the top 20% in our industry.
- 3. New Parent Orientation and Parent Training Series.** After a year of development and refinement, we are thrilled to introduce our Parent Training Series. We'll address meaningful topics such as communication, sleep, toilet training, IEP preparation, sibling interactions, and more. I am excited to host one myself and talk about parent stress and integrating family values into ABA therapy. I hope you'll join us!
- 4. Provider Attendance and Communication.** In this past year we've continued our efforts to improve provider attendance and advance communication when they are absent. We've made it a focus for substitute coverage to be meaningful and beneficial and have made significant improvements to ensure seamless services when providers are absent.
- 5. Retention and Consistency.** Provider retention allows for greater consistency for clients. This is important, and perpetually challenging given the climate of turnover by ABA treatment providers. In an analysis of exits, the primary reasons for providers to leave BAE is due to burnout and pay requirements. Burnout is part of the journey for a care provider, and BAE has put intentional effort into employee satisfaction in many ways, such as promoting a growth mindset and keeping pace with the acceleration of provider pay rates. This has translated to a significant decrease in turnover, producing retention rates that are greater than 80% of industry benchmarks. Over 15% of our staff have been with BAE for over 5 years, and 4% of our team has been with BAE for 10-15 years!! We have become a career home for many, and are committed to maintaining a positive working environment for our each of our team members to thrive and flourish.
- 6. Documentation and Service Records.** Internal audits at the beginning of the year revealed that the quality and quantity of our service notes required improvement. Internal audits and accountability measures were put in place, and have produced substantial improvements in our session records, which is critical for health insurance auditing and approvals, along with numerous clinical benefits. You have direct access to all session notes through the parent portal. If you are not currently active in the parent portal, please ask for a tutorial and our team will be happy to help.
- 7. People-First.** All people are deserving of respect and acceptance. Our lessons throughout the year have challenged our team to embrace this mentality and to treat all people with the level of care and compassion that we have for our clients.

These are a few of the initiatives that we have dedicated time, training, and resources to improving upon this past year. I hope some of these areas are translating into gains for your child and your family. Please share your feedback as often as you'd like. We appreciate all feedback - positive and constructive - and your priorities become ours as well.

### Looking Ahead: New 2025 Initiative

As we move into 2025, I want to share a new initiative that will be receiving attention in the year to come. BAE is introducing **Mandatory Breaks** during sessions lasting **3 hours or longer**.

Why? Because regular breaks are a protective measure against burnout. Breaks are a means of maintaining high motivation, boosted energy, and an overall better quality of learning. Learners experience burnout in the same way that providers do, and they also need downtime to decompress. We may not prioritize our own downtime as often as we should, but it is universally needed.

I'd like to humbly ask for your help in achieving this initiative. These 10-minute, uninterrupted rest breaks are vital for both providers and clients to decompress, recharge, and maintain motivation.

**Your role.** During session breaks, the parent, caregiver, or teacher/instructional assistant supervises but does not offer direction or place demands. The goal is downtime and allowing your child to decompress. They may want to:

- Eat a snack
- Spend time with family members or friends
- Use screen time
- Play video games
- Engage in sensory-rich activities
- Get fresh air
- Play or exercise
- Stim (yes, stimming is ok)
- Take time alone in a quiet space

During this time, providers are encouraged to go outside, take a walk, sit in their car, and take the time to focus on themselves and to decompress. They'll be nearby and you can call on them in case of an emergency. If they choose to stay put, please offer space during their break time, knowing how important it is for your child's learning. While social conversation feels like a break, it is not a substitute for the downtime that is needed for high session energy and attentiveness.

### A Final Note: Give yourself grace

As my final note of the year, I'd like to leave you with a simple message. Give yourself grace. It's natural to feel like you are falling short and to feel overwhelmed by the amount of to-do's, particularly at this time of year. Remind yourself of your accomplishments and achievements. You do so much, you care so much, and you try so hard. Focus on those positives during times of stress, and know that you've got this. We've got this together.

Wishing you and your loves a special and magical holiday season,

*Barbara Endlich,*

PsyD, BCB-A-D

BAE Founder and Chief Clinical Officer

## REMINDER

Let us know about any **December or January plans** that may affect your sessions. This helps us stay informed and adjust your schedule as needed. Thank you!

## CLOSURES

**Christmas Eve:** Dec. 24, 2024

**Christmas:** Dec. 25, 2024

**New Year's Day:** Jan. 1, 2025

## LET'S GET SOCIAL!

Follow us on social media for news, behind-the-scenes glimpses into BAE, and to connect with us!

**@bae\_therapy**

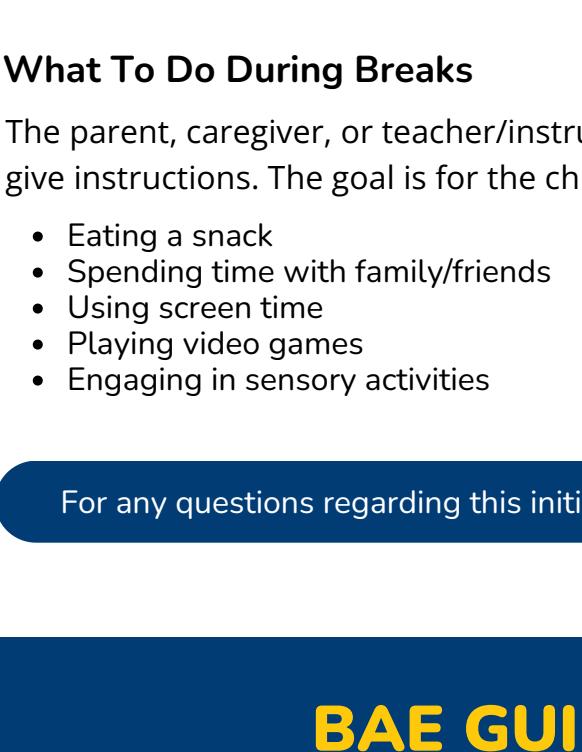
on all platforms

## ACE Events

We proudly hosted several ACE (Authorized Continuing Education) events to empower our therapists with the latest in ABA techniques and best practices. These events helped our team build skills, earn credits, and collaborate to deliver the best care for our clients!

## LOOKING BACK ON 2024

## A YEAR OF GROWTH, SMILES, AND SUCCESS!



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### Summer Staff Picnic

Our team enjoyed sunshine, great food, and fun at our company picnic, celebrating teamwork and the vibrant community we've built together. It was a perfect reminder of the connections that make our work so rewarding.

### Resource Fairs

We attended local resource fairs to connect with the community and spread the word about BAE! It's been a great opportunity to build relationships and share what we do with those around us.

### Trick-or-Treat Event

One of our favorite events of the year! Clients and their families joined us for a fun-filled day of games, arts and crafts, and a chance to practice their trick-or-treating skills before Halloween. It was a spooktacular time full of creativity, laughs, and plenty of treats!

### BHCOE Accreditation

This accreditation is voluntary and time-intensive, but it is important to us and worth the effort. Quality care, meaningful outcomes, and employee satisfaction is the priority upon which BAE was built and remains our top priority today. This accreditation is a testament to our team's commitment to our mission and guiding our principles, and the critical role our parent partnerships play in service design and delivery.

### BHCOE Training Site Accreditation

As an agency that deeply values supportive learning environments and continued education, this accreditation is so important to us. We have considered BAE a training site for many years, and the evaluation process has strengthened our practices further in our ability to mentor aspiring providers into professional behavior analysts and technicians. This accreditation allows us to expand and access to high-quality training through rigorous training and supervision.

### WHAT'S NEW FOR 2025

## LOOKING AHEAD AT NEW INITIATIVES



### Growing Together: Conversations to Guide Families Beyond ABA Services

Join us for our new monthly parent training series on the 2nd Saturday of each month, designed to support and empower parents. These sessions feature expert-led trainings, interactive discussions, and open forums.

Trainings will be hosted by our Training Director, Leadership, and Executive teams, with topics including parenting challenges, stress, and integrating family values into ABA therapy.

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