Behavior Services

In many cases, behavior acts as a learned communication system for individuals to have their needs met. At times, behavior can have a negative impact on how individuals interact with their home and communities. Examples include but are not limited to physical/verbal aggression, property destruction, hurting self or others, and escaping non-preferred activities identified in the Individual Program Plan (IPP) as important to/for the individual. Behavior services are intended to decrease behavior with a negative impact and teach behavior that meets the individual's needs in a positive and supportive manner.

Behavior services utilize Applied Behavior Analysis. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a scientific approach for understanding and changing behavior by observation, data collection, evaluation and treatment through changing the environment of the individual. The goal of ABA is to reduce behavior with a negative impact and increase socially significant behaviors that improve the life of the individual.

Funding for behavior services requires the following criteria be met:

- Initial consultation with Westside Regional Center's Autism Behavioral Specialist.
- Medical and mental health needs have been addressed as a potential cause of the behaviors identified.
- All generic resources, such as Medi-Cal, the local education agency, and private insurance have been pursued. A copy of the insurance denial letter may be requested, if applicable.
- The behaviors are determined to significantly impact the individual's ability to access their community and natural supports.
- The behaviors pose a threat to the health and/or safety of the individual or to others.
- The services will meet a need identified in the IPP goals.

General behavior services requirements:

- Behavior services are time-limited.
- Regional Center funded behavior services will take place in the individual's

natural environment(s) except for school settings. Regional Center funded behavior services may not take place in the school setting, with the exception of observations determined to be necessary by the IPP Planning Team.

- Behavior services are not to be used in lieu of respite, day care, or school services.
- Prior to the start of services, the IPP Planning Team will discuss what outcomes are desired through behavior services and an initial assessment must be completed by a certified professional as defined in Title 17 § 59050 (a) (35).
- Recommendations for services are individualized and takes into consideration the individual's strengths, behaviors, skill abilities, and family culture.
- Programs are strongly encouraged to include goals for the parent/caregiver to optimize effectiveness of the service.
- While Westside Regional Center does not require parent participation to access behavior services, it is strongly encouraged that all caregivers take advantage of the provided clinical training of strategies to promote generalization of positive behaviors across people and environments.
- Behavior services should only include evidence-based practices that have been demonstrated to be effective in managing behaviors with a negative impact.
- Behavioral progress reports are completed by the provider at least every six months to determine progress and continued need and effectiveness.
- Family/caregiver and agency will review the progress reports before submission to Westside Regional Center and confirm the accuracy of the information provided every six months.
- A clinical behavior specialist from Westside Regional Center will review all requests for services, assessments, and progress reports and render a clinical opinion regarding effectiveness of the program and necessity for continuation of services to achieve the stated goals and objectives.
- Proposed interventions must conform to all local, state and federal statutes in addition to the policies and codes of ethical conduct of relevant professional organizations.

Continuation of services is dependent on:

1. Submission of a progress report outlining:
   a. Progress towards individual and family/caregiver goals.
   b. Potential barriers to progress on goals.
   c. Any changes to the program to address barriers.
   d. As appropriate, individual and family/caregiver participation and engagement in behavior services.
   e. Family/caregiver and agency agreement on the accuracy of the information provided.
2. A review and determination through the IPP planning process that this service continues to be the most effective means of intervention for the individual.
3. Other generic resources continue to be unavailable to fund the service.

Westside Regional Center recognizes that some individual needs are so unique that they may not be addressed in this Service Standard and may require an exception. Such requests for an exception to a Service Standard will be made through Westside Regional Center's Purchase of Service Committee.