



# Parent Handbook

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## **Welcome to Graham Behavior Services!**

Graham Behavior Services provides quality, comprehensive, evidence-based therapy services to clients with any behavior challenges or an autism spectrum disorder, to create effective behavior change in themselves, while empowering their families to help them pursue productive, purposeful, and fulfilling lives.

## **Diversity and Cultural Competency Policy**

Knowing that we are better together, Graham Behavior Services welcomes individuals of all ages, abilities, gender identities, races, ethnicities, religions, spiritual practices, and sexual orientations. It is our policy to act in a way that recognizes, affirms, values, respects the worth of, and protects and preserves the dignity of every individual. Graham Behavior Services adheres to the equal employment opportunity policy and non-discrimination practices.

Graham Behavior Services recognizes Cultural Humility as the process by which we continually build Cultural Competence. In Conners & Capell 2021, defines Cultural Humility as “examining culture and recognizing continual learning as practitioners from other cultures and accepting that we don’t know everything and need to learn from the client. It involves the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance where the practitioner is “other” oriented and is learning about cultural identity that is most important to the client. This also encompasses self-reflection and personal critique and is an ongoing, lifelong process.”

Graham Behavior Services policy is implemented by the practices and actionable steps.

- Graham Behavior Services seeks employees that are committed to their community, represent a variety of cultural backgrounds, and are capable of interactions in cross-cultural situations.
- Translation services will be provided to any recipient, when necessary and requested. The interpreter will assist with translating any intake, treatment plans, evaluation, or other documents shared with family.
- Graham Behavior Services will also seek professional assistance to handle the needs of any individual with a speech and hearing impairment.
- Graham Behavior Services will work closely with our clients and their families to ensure that their cultural values are represented throughout all aspects of service delivery.
- Graham Behavior Services will provide diversity and cultural competency trainings, offer group discussions, and make resources widely available.

## **Clients' Rights**

Graham Behavior Services follows the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) guidelines. Within these guidelines, clients have the right to effective behavior treatment, which includes individual's rights, professional relationship, and informed consent.

An individual has a right to....

- A therapeutic environment
- Services whose overriding goal is personal welfare
- Treatment by a competent behavior analyst
- Programs that teach functional skills
- A behavior assessment and ongoing evaluation
- The most effective treatment procedures available

A professional relationship requires:

- Confidentiality
- Protecting the client's dignity, health, and safety
- Helping the client select outcomes and behavior change targets
- Maintaining records
- Advocating for the client
- Providing necessary and needed services
- Evidence-based practice and least restrictive alternatives
- Not a conflict of Interest

*Guideline for "Informed Consent" is as follows:*

Informed consent means that the potential recipient of services gives his/her (in our case the parent/ guardian) explicit permission before any assessment or treatment is provided. Informed consent requires more than obtaining permission. Permission must come following full disclosure and information is provided to the participant. For consent to be valid:

- The person must demonstrate the capacity to decide
- The person's decision must be voluntary
- The person must have adequate knowledge of all salient aspects of the treatment.

More information can be found at [www.BACB.com](http://www.BACB.com)

## **Our Team**

### **Employee Descriptions**

*Clinical Director:* The Clinical Director, working in collaboration with the Executive Director, oversees clinical operations, including the development of all treatment plans, ABA programs, service delivery, as well as business development activities and special projects. Additionally, the Clinical Director serves as a part of your child's treatment team and can address questions or concerns regarding your child's services.

*Clinical Supervisor:* The Clinical Supervisor, who is also a BCBA, serves as an additional support and resource for the BCBA working with your family. The Clinical Supervisor conducts monthly Site Visits, in person or via telehealth, to observe your child's therapy session and look

over the treatment plan and programming. Additionally, the Clinical Supervisor may hold clinics for the team to troubleshoot any issues or provide additional training.

*BCBA:* The BCBA serves as the primary contact person for your family and the professionals working with your child. The BCBA will help ensure that the Behavior Therapists are very well trained and that they implement your child's program as prescribed. The BCBA conducts assessments, writes treatment plans, conducts parent training, and provides ongoing supervision to the Behavior Therapists. The treatment provided utilizes the data collection and review procedures required for evidence-based ABA practices.

*Behavior Therapists:* The Behavior Therapist works directly with your child several times each week and is fully trained by Graham Behavior Services. The Behavior Therapist ensures that the BCBA has all the information they need to manage your child's program effectively.

### **Clinical Staffing**

Everyone works together to make sure that your child is receiving the best possible program based on individual goals. Duties and responsibilities of team members may vary and are not limited to the roles as stated above.

There is no guarantee that the same therapist/BCBA will be assigned to your child's case for the entire time you receive services at Graham Behavior Services. Graham Behavior Services may change employees assigned your child's case at any time as needed, however efforts are made to ensure consistency whenever possible.

### **Contact Information**

Communication is vital for many reasons. Our goal at Graham Behavior Services is to respond to all emails, phone calls, or texts within 24 hours during regular business hours. If in the event that we need more time to respond to your inquiry or concern we will let you know.

We request that parents acknowledge receipt of communications by replying to phone calls or emails from employees within 24 hours. If you do not have time to fully respond to the communication from an employee within 24 hours, email, call or text to indicate when you will be able to respond so that we are aware that you received the communication.

Below is a list of contact information and common reasons for communication between Graham Behavior Services and the families it serves.

### **For Home Based Services**

Your BCBA

- Notify the team of an illness or cancellation
- Notify team about unusual incidents (injuries, sleep/feeding needs, etc.)
- Request schedule change

- Ask questions about schedule
- Notify the team of scheduled dates/time your child will not be available

### **For Clinic Based Services**

Operations Coordinator at [clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com](mailto:clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com)

- Notify the team of an illness or cancellation
- Notify team about unusual incidents (injuries, sleep/feeding needs, etc.)
- Request schedule change
- Ask questions about schedule
- Notify the team of scheduled dates/time your child will not be available

Cathy Dougherty at [billing@grahambehavior.com](mailto:billing@grahambehavior.com)

- Ask questions or discuss concerns about your invoice, balance, etc.
- Request tax documents invoices, statements, receipts
- Discuss any issue regarding insurance, CPT codes, etc.

Cara Graham at [cara@grahambehavior.com](mailto:cara@grahambehavior.com) or Jilian DeTiberiis at [jilian@grahambehavior.com](mailto:jilian@grahambehavior.com)

- This email is only seen by the Executive or Clinical Director
- Voice concerns or discuss any matter in which you would like to keep confidential.

### **Our Services**

#### **Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy**

Graham Behavior Services provides a range of services, derived from the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is the application of behavior principles to everyday situations that will, over time, increase or decrease target behaviors. By breaking skills down into small steps, clients have more opportunities to be successful.

ABA is the only scientifically validated treatment for individuals on the autism spectrum. Anyone can use applied behavior analysis to increase socially significant behaviors or decrease the future frequency of an unwanted behavior.

“The goal of ABA is two-fold: to increase useful behaviors that improve quality of life and decrease those that are harmful or interfere with learning or relationships. It is a structured teaching approach that can be implemented in many settings to teach skills from many domains (communication, self care, academic, play/leisure, social skills, etc.). It involves understanding patterns of behavior and examining the influence of environmental factors including what happens before and after the behavior” (autismnj.org).

ABA targets a variety of skills including: academic, leisure/play skills, self care, communication, job skills, social skills, feeding, imitation, desensitization, tolerance training, toileting, sleeping, self management, and to decreasing challenging behaviors.

Client goals are based on assessments conducted by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and then individualized programs are written based on scientific research. Data is collected and analyzed to track progress.

## **Program Offerings**

*ABA Therapy:* ABA therapy is for clients with Autism Spectrum Disorders or Developmental Disabilities. Direct therapy is provided to the client and family by BCBA's and behavior therapists. All services are individualized. As such, ABA therapy sessions are conducted in locations best-suited for the clients and families (e.g. home, clinic, job placement, etc.). Graham Behavior Services utilizes the Practical Functional Assessment (PFA) and Skills Based Treatment (SBT) model for assessment and teaching during ABA therapy sessions. ABA therapy at Graham Behavior Services also involves parent training. This service is offered for the early intervention\* school age, and adults\*.

*Parent and Family Coaching:* Graham Behavior Services provides the only comprehensive parent coaching program that pairs live workshops, online courses, and customized in-home support. As a positive, research based approach to learning how to teach your child pro-social behavior and resolve problem behavior, Graham Behavior Services' Purposeful Parenting program teaches positive parenting strategies that are supported by over 50 years of research. These include five key parenting skills: attending, effective rewarding, ignoring, delivering effective instructions, and providing breaks.

*\*Adult Services:* Graham Behavior Services provides ABA therapy to individuals with autism across the lifespan, consulting with clients' families to provide custom programming based on individualized needs.

Graham Behavior Services is approved to provide the following DDD services for adults:

- **Community Based Supports:** Services that provide direct support and assistance for participants, with or without the caregiver present, in or out of the participant's residence, to achieve and/or maintain the outcomes of increased independence, productivity, enhanced family functioning, and inclusion in the community.
- **Individual Supports:** Services that provide direct support and assistance for participants, with or without the caregiver present, in or out of the participant's residence, to achieve and/or maintain activities of daily living to support independent living.
- **Behavioral Supports:** Behavioral interventions provided to individuals to target a reduction in challenging behaviors.

- **Community Inclusion Services:** Services provided outside of a participant's home that support and assist participants in educational, enrichment or recreational activities that are intended to enhance inclusion in the community. Community Inclusion Services are delivered in a group setting of no more than 6.
- **Pre-Vocational Training:** Services that provide learning and work experiences, including volunteer work, where the individual can develop general, non-job-task-specific strengths and skills that contribute to employability in paid employment in integrated community settings.

*School-Based Services:* Graham Behavior Services offers school-based consultation and training, working with an individual student, a classroom, a school, or an entire school district.

*Social Skills:* Graham Behavior Services' Social Skills groups provide ABA-based social skills programming to clients with varying social needs (including ASD, ADD/ADHD, communication disorders) in a group setting. Groups are formed with 3-5 clients based on age, need, and skills. This service may be provided in person or via telehealth.

*\*\*Integrated Social Skills Community Groups:* Graham Behavior Services' integrated social skills community groups are aimed at providing clients of all ages with the opportunity to participate in leisure activity groups, such as yoga, cooking, exercise. The principles of applied behavior analysis are used to teach appropriate engagement, adaptive skills, and social skills within these activities. Skills are then generalized, allowing clients to access and participate in similar group activities in the community.

*Advocacy and IEP Services:* Graham Behavior Services offers parent navigation services, including advocacy and IEP guidance. A family's BCBA may attend a client's IEP meeting when requested for up to one hour of attendance. The BCBA may provide updates of the Graham Behavior Service program and progress on the goals that are targeted at home or in the clinic location. If a family feels additional services are required, such as advising on their child's school program or goals, assessing appropriateness of a school placement, or something else similar, advocacy services may be requested. Advocacy at Graham Behavior Services aims to provide support to parents and caregivers to help them navigate the educational system in New Jersey and to assist in ensuring the best school program for individuals with autism, special needs, and challenging behaviors.

*Sleep Consultation:* Graham Behavior Services offers sleep consultation services including an initial sleep assessment, development of a full individualized sleeping plan, and ongoing support via zoom and/or phone.

\*Also offered at our clinic location.

\*\*Only offered at our clinic location.

## **Clinic Participation Guidelines**

### *Early Intervention*

In order to show significant, meaningful progress, we require at least five, 3-hour sessions per week. Sessions times are 8:00AM - 11:00AM or 11:45AM-2:45PM.

### *Adult Services*

Our required hourly commitment for adults is three, five-hour sessions, per week. Session times are 9:00AM-2:30PM.

## **Lunch and Snacks**

Adults will either bring or order lunch from a restaurant. Please be sure your adult child comes with the funds for payment. This will be communicated to clinic staff at the start of the day. Graham Behavior Services expects parents and caregivers to allow for flexibility and honor the choices of the adult clients as independent living skills are taught.

As part of the teaching process, break room and mealtime policies are modeled after “real world” work environments. As such, Graham Behavior Services sets kitchen rules, including but not limited to, the following:

1. All food and drink must be labeled with your name.
2. Don't eat food that doesn't have your name on it.
3. If someone eats your food, tell your supervisor.
4. If there is anything left in the refrigerator on Friday at 5:00PM it will be thrown out.
5. If someone brings in a snack for the group, you can try it as long as you don't have an allergy or dietary restriction\*.

\*Clients with allergies and dietary restrictions will be taught to advocate for themselves by learning to identify the individual who made the snack, finding that person, asking about the ingredients, and so on.

## **Clothing Policy**

Graham Behavior Services asks that you dress your children in comfortable clothes and close-toed shoes. Teaching in multiple contexts and environments can occasionally result in minor stains or other signs of wear, so please be mindful of this when choosing clothing.

Graham Behavior Services requires parents to bring an extra set of clothing, including a long sleeve shirt or sweatshirt, short sleeve shirt, pants, underwear, and socks, to leave at the clinic. If your child is sent home in their extra clothes, please send replacements the next day.

All clothes and seasonal accessories must be clearly labeled with your child's name.

## **Toileting Policy**

### **Clinic Based Services**

It is recommended that all adults receiving clinic services be toilet trained. If your adult child has issues with toilet training, please contact the director to further discuss this.

If children under 18 are not toilet trained please inform your child's BCBA so it can be targeted for skill acquisition when appropriate. You will be responsible for providing diapers, wipes, and multiple spare clothes including shoes. If toilet training is being targeted for skill acquisition your BCBA will give you a specific list of items needed.

### **Home Based Services**

The BCBA and/or behavior therapist will be responsible for managing using the bathroom and bathroom accidents if there is a toileting program in place and data are being collected on this skill. In the event of a bathroom accident and the lack of a toileting program in place, the staff will alert the parent that the client needs help in the bathroom if he/she cannot clean themselves or change their clothes. If the staff are managing bathroom accidents, GBS will provide gloves for the staff. The parents will provide wipes and other materials required that will be used ongoing at the home.

## **Parent Involvement**

### **Parent Meetings**

If your child is receiving clinic services only, Graham Behavior Services requires that parents meet with their child's BCBA or clinical supervisor at least once per month. These meetings help to maintain an open line of communication and allow for collaboration within the team.

### **Parent Notification Policy**

#### *Purpose:*

To define the conditions under which parents will be notified of an incident involving other clients that occurs during the clinic program. Due to the nature of services and the social-based format of the program, there may be contact between children that is within the normal range of play interaction. To establish what would be considered outside that normal range and would warrant parent notification, the following policy has been created.

*Policy:*

Parents have a right to be informed about any issues involving the wellbeing of their child. We make every effort to have transparency with parents so that they can be comfortable and confident in their child's care while they are at Graham Behavior Services. Parents will be notified by an employee within the same day of any contact occurring between their child and another if the contact meets any or all the following criterion:

You will be notified immediately with a text message and photo if your child experiences any of the following:

- Contact (bite, hit, kick, scratch, fall, etc.) that leaves a mark
- Involvement in any incident that draws blood
- An incident resulting in any loss of consciousness

You will **not** be notified immediately if your child:

- Falls
- Gets touched, pushed, or hit by another child not resulting in any physical mark or one of the conditions listed above.
- Is touched or otherwise contacted but does not experience any of the other conditions listed above.

### **Social Media Policy**

Graham Behavior Services is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all clients and staff. Be mindful that everything posted online has the potential to be seen by millions of people, particularly if you are posting photos or information related to another GBS client.

Our staff are prohibited from accepting clients, client's parents, or other family members as friends on social media as this could create a dual relationship and a potential breach in confidentiality and professional conduct.

If you have any concerns about the services you receive from Graham Behavior Services we ask that you contact a supervisor directly before posting any issues on social media.

### **Clinic Camera Policy**

Cameras will be placed around the clinic to promote transparency and ensure everyone's safety. If you have questions about your child's services, please email [clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com](mailto:clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com) for more information.

## **Non-Cohabiting Guardians Policy**

In many situations a child's legal guardian is their birth parents, mother and father. As a legal guardian, you have a duty to maintain and protect the child in your care. Along with those duties, legal guardians also have the right to make decisions about the child's health, welfare and general well-being.

Married, cohabiting, parents of a child are considered joint guardians and have equal rights in relation to the child. This arrangement allows ease in care and decision-making abilities by both guardian parents.

Likewise, non-cohabiting parents also have equal rights with regard to their child but their guardianship and its decisions are separate. In these cases, specific authorizations must be on file with Graham Behavior Services to ensure that the needs and requirements of both the child and the non-cohabiting guardians are met.

Graham Behavior Services requires written authorization for consent, treatment and the release of personal health information for both non-cohabiting parents and/or guardians of any minor child. All authorizations must be on file prior to the commencement of any treatment program.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up**

At drop off and pick up, parents/caregivers will pull up to the side of the building, where they will be met by their behavior therapist or BCBA. The Graham Behavior Services staff will escort the child into the building where they will be checked in.

Graham Behavior Services requires copies of photo IDs from the designated parents/caregivers who have your permission to be involved in drop off and pick up. Also required are photo IDs of anyone who does not have your permission to pick up your child. After a few weeks of services photo IDs will be referenced as needed.

At drop off, your child's behavior therapist will ask a couple quick questions about how your child's morning and if there's been anything out of the ordinary. This helps keep an open line of communication between home and clinic.

Adults who drive themselves to the clinic will park in the clinic parking lot and enter the building and check in with the appropriate supervisor. At the end of the day, the client will check out and return to their car.

## **Late Pick Up Policy**

If you are running late for pick-up, please call the Operations Coordinator at [CLINIC PHONE NUMBER] as soon as possible and provide the time you expect to arrive. Upon your arrival, your child will be escorted to your car by a staff member.

If you are more than 15 minutes late to pick up your child on three occasions, you will be charged a late pick up fee of \$25.00.

### **Scheduling and Cancellations**

#### **Running Late**

If for any reason you are running late for a session, please notify the staff member coming to your home. The therapist will leave after 15 minutes, unless they hear otherwise and you will be charged for a full session. This would count as a 'less than 24-hour fee' and you will be charged directly. If you arrive within 15 minutes please know that the full session may not be met because other clients may be scheduled after your session.

If you are receiving clinic based services and are running late please email [clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com](mailto:clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com) with your estimated arrival time. Excessive late arrivals may result in termination of services or transition to home based services.

#### **Schedule Change Requests**

To request a general schedule change or to discuss any scheduling concerns, send an email to your BCBA. We request that families give us at least two weeks' notice on significant changes in their plans for in-home ABA sessions scheduling, to facilitate consistency in service delivery. This includes vacation and travel plans.

#### **Graham Behavior Services Employee Cancels or Running Late**

If your child's session will be canceled or rescheduled by Graham Behavior Services, you will be contacted. If the therapist assigned to the session is running more than 15 minutes late, you will be contacted as soon as possible. The therapist may stay later than scheduled to make up the time missed or make time up on another day. You will only be charged for the time we work with your child.

Please notify the BCBA or Supervisor of excessive tardiness. We may need to re-evaluate schedules (re: drive time, traffic, time of day, etc.). Graham Behavior Services requests that clients report any instances of excessive lateness and/or tardiness to Graham Behavior Services supervisors immediately.

## **Clinic Based Cancellations and Missed Sessions**

**If you receive both home and clinic based services and are cancelling session you must alert both separately.**

Keeping your scheduled sessions with Graham Behavior Services is a vital part of the treatment process. When you schedule services with Graham Behavior Services, you are asking a professional to hold a specific block of time for you. To efficiently serve you and others, Graham Behavior Services has instituted a 24-hour notification policy for cancelling an session.

In order to be respectful of the needs of our clients, Graham Behavior Services kindly requests that you email [clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com](mailto:clinic.wlb@grahambehavior.com) promptly if you are unable to attend a session. You may also use this email to inquire about making up missed sessions.

Failure to give the proper 24- hour notice will result in billing you directly for the missed appointment. Your insurance cannot be billed for services that are not rendered. You will be billed \$75.00 per hour for the missed session with the credit card on file when an appointment is cancelled with less than 24 hours notice or you fail to attend a scheduled appointment without notification.

Emergency cancellations are assessed by the Graham Behavior Services employees, and fees may be waived when appropriate.

If two (2) or more sessions are missed consecutively, we will schedule a meeting to discuss continuing services. If after the meeting missed sessions continue, Graham Behavior Services respectfully reserves the right to terminate our relationship with the client. If a client does not comply with this policy or refuses to pay a late cancellation/missed appointment fee, the client hereby gives Graham Behavior Services, permission to seek payment for said fees.

**If the family cancels more than 10% of sessions in a month, or is cancelling the services of only a certain therapist, the supervisor will reach out to the family for a meeting.**

## **Home-Based Cancellations and Missed Sessions**

**If you receive both home and clinic based services and are cancelling session you must alert both separately.**

Keeping your scheduled sessions with Graham Behavior Services is a vital part of the treatment process. When you schedule services with Graham Behavior Services, you are asking a professional to hold a specific block of time for you. To efficiently serve you and others, Graham Behavior Services has instituted a 24-hour notification policy for cancelling an appointment.

In order to be respectful of the needs of our clients, Graham Behavior Services kindly requests that you contact the therapist and BCBA directly if you are unable to hold session.

Failure to give the proper 24- hour notice will result in billing you directly for the missed appointment. Your insurance cannot be billed for services that are not rendered. You will be billed \$75.00 per hour for the missed appointment with the credit card on file when an appointment is cancelled with less than 24 hours notice or you fail to attend a scheduled appointment without notification.

Emergency cancellations are assessed by the Graham Behavior Services employees, and fees may be waived when appropriate.

If two (2) or more sessions are missed consecutively, we will schedule a meeting to discuss continuing services. If after the meeting missed sessions continue, Graham Behavior Services respectfully reserves the right to terminate our relationship with the client. If a client does not comply with this policy or refuses to pay a late cancellation/missed appointment fee, the client hereby gives Graham Behavior Services, permission to seek payment for said fees.

**If the family cancels more than 10% of sessions in a month, or is cancelling the services of only a certain therapist, the supervisor will reach out to the family for a meeting.**

## **Health and Safety**

### **COVID-19 Daily Health Screening**

All clients and staff will receive a daily health screening upon arrival. You will be asked:

- Has fever reducing medication been administered?
- Are you or anyone in your household waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test?
- Has the child or anyone in your household had close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?
- Does the child or anyone in your household have any of the following symptoms – cough, shortness of breath, trouble breathing, headache, fever, muscle pain, chills, shaking, new loss of taste and smell?

Additionally, temperature will be taken with a no-touch thermometer. If your child has a temperature of 100.0 or above, the session will be cancelled. Therapy sessions may resume after the client has been fever and symptom free without medication for 24 hours.

\*Please contact the director for the most up-to-date COVID-19 protocols.

## **Sanitization**

Toys and materials are sanitized daily between sessions.

## **Shoe Policy**

Shoes are not to be worn in the early intervention space. Please send your child with socks or slippers if preferred.

## **Accidents**

In the case of minor accidents on site, there are a total of 2 First aid kits and all employees are required to have up to date CPR training. Any non-emergency accidents will be documented on an incident report, including the date, time, place, and cause of any injury (if known); any treatment provided; name(s) of employees providing treatment, and persons contacted. The child's parent or caregiver will be contacted and presented with the incident report to review and sign. One copy will remain on site in the child's file, while the other will be given to the parent.

## **Medical and Dietary Needs**

If your child has medical or dietary needs, please discuss them in detail with the supervisor during the intake process. All food allergies are to be documented, including effects and treatment and signed by both the parent/caregiver and the child's doctor. This information must remain in the child's file, as well as in the food preparation area, and be updated annually. The employees of the clinic will take appropriate precautions based on information provided by the client. If at any time your child develops an allergy, please let us know immediately. If your child has individual medical needs (e.g. allergy, epipen), notify us immediately. We will develop an individualized plan/accommodation, for your child.

## **Illness**

To minimize the spread of illness, if the child displays one or more of the following symptoms, they are required to inform the employees immediately to reschedule their therapy session (24-hour cancellation fees do not apply.)

- Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Temperature greater than 100 degrees
- Respiratory problems - severe coughing, rapid breathing, croup, or whooping sound after coughing
- Thick, discolored discharge from nose
- Rash or infection of the skin (e.g., ringworm, poison ivy)
- Evidence of lice, including nits
- Communicable diseases - conjunctivitis (pink eye), influenza, measles, chicken pox, strep throat, etc.

The client must be free of infection and other symptoms, without the aid of medication, for 24 hours before resuming program sessions. If the client is sent home, or remains home, from school the client must reschedule sessions for that day. If anyone else in the household is sick, please contact your child's therapist so they can make a determination about coming to your home. Sessions may resume when the incubation and contagious period have passed, and the client is well enough to resume normal activities. If the client becomes ill during a session, the session will be immediately cancelled. Parents agree to notify the employees within 24 hours of the diagnosis of a serious contagious illness or parasitic infestation.

We follow the guidelines developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association. Parents who repeatedly fail to follow policies related to keeping children at home when they are ill may lead to dismissal from clinic-based services.

### **Infectious Diseases**

When a communicable disease has been introduced into the clinic, parents will be notified. The clinic also will report these occurrences to the state and local health departments when required. Parents are urged to notify the clinic when their child is known to have been exposed to a communicable disease outside the clinic.

The supervisor may determine that a child who does not appear to be fully recovered from an illness cannot be readmitted to the clinic without a statement from a physician stating that the child can return and participate in the activities of the clinic or is no longer infectious.

We reserve the right to refuse services due to illness.

In the case of impetigo, lice, ringworm, pinworms, rashes, chicken pox, thrush, etc., your child must be NON-CONTAGIOUS before returning to the clinic.

### **Clinic-Based Vaccine Policy**

Graham Behavior Services requires clients to follow the New Jersey School Immunization Requirements set forth by the New Jersey Department of Health, Vaccine Preventable Disease Program. This information can be found at: [https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/imm\\_requirements/k12\\_parents.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/imm_requirements/k12_parents.pdf). Immunization records should be provided. Religious exemptions and medical exemptions are accepted with proper documentation.

### **Injurious Behavior**

If at any time a client engages in injurious behavior to employees, him/herself, or other clients and/or engages in dangerous behaviors (e.g. property destruction, elopement, etc.) the supervisor is notified, and an incident report is created.

The supervisor will decide how best to minimize the potential harm to the client, employees, and others. If the supervisor feels there is a possibility of serious harm to the client or others, the parents will be contacted to pick up the client as soon as possible.

If severe problem behavior becomes a trend while receiving clinic-based services, Graham Behavior Services might require a period of crisis management in the home. If so, Graham Behavior Services will work with your family to put a crisis plan in place in your home and a system to monitor severe behaviors. A criteria will be set for severe behaviors, and once met, the client will be invited back to the clinic setting.

### **Medical Emergencies**

When a medical emergency arises, every effort will be made to contact parents, guardians, or an emergency contact. If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the supervisor will decide the next step, which may consist of calling 911. In an extreme emergency, the employee may, at their discretion, call 911 before contacting the parent or guardian of the child. An authorized representative from the clinic will accompany the child and remain with him/her until their caregiver arrives. Our emergency information form, filled out at the time of enrollment, serves as consent for your child to be transported by ambulance to a local medical facility to receive emergency care. Graham Behavior Services assumes no responsibility for the costs associated with emergency care. Graham Behavior Services employees do not transport children to medical facilities at any time.

### **Medications**

Graham Behavior Services' employees do not administer prescription medications of any kind.

#### Children

If your child needs any medication during the session, a parent or guardian must come back and administer it.

#### Adults

Adult clients may self-administer medication. The medication will be added to the client's schedule and/or a staff member will prompt the client to administer the medication at the correct time. If your child refuses to take the prescribed medication, you will be contacted immediately. During the client's time at the clinic, the medication must remain in a locker.

## **Pandemic**

In the event of a pandemic within the area, Graham Behavior Services may close for an undetermined amount of time to ensure prevention of further spread of disease. We will follow any requirements issued by the Centers for Disease Control, Department of Public Health, as well as state and local government officials.

Upon CDC recommendation, symptom checks will be performed prior entry to the clinic.

## **Pets and Animals**

Graham Behavior Services recognizes that some workers are either allergic to or afraid of certain animals; and, to prevent unpredictable behaviors or situations, we ask that you keep your pets in a secured separate room, space or area, or outside during all home visits. Please follow this policy regardless of an individual therapist's comfort level or pet's behavior.

This policy includes the arrival or departure of the therapist.

This policy refers to, but is not limited to: dogs, cats, birds, snakes, reptiles, rabbits, rats, hamsters, guinea pigs, etc. This policy excludes service animals.

In the case of non-compliance, the therapist will immediately leave the premises and notify the supervisor and will not be able to return until this policy is followed. If there are repeated non-compliance issues, or the client is unable to follow this policy, then other arrangements will be made for sessions outside of the home.

## **Aggressive Behavior**

Graham Behavior Services employees have the right to work and provide services in a safe environment that supports personal worth and dignity through mutual respect, cooperation, and understanding. As such, Graham Behavior Services will not tolerate any violent or aggressive behavior, discrimination, or harassment towards any of our workforce members.

Any adults in the home are expected to treat employees working in their home with dignity and respect and Graham Behavior Services will not tolerate behavior that would be considered offensive, intimidating, sexual, or unwelcome in any way.

Violence and aggression, such as physical force, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse are strictly prohibited toward the employee, client, or other members or animals within the household. If the employee feels that they or anyone else is subject to violence, harassment or discrimination in any way, they will leave the premises at once and immediately notify the Supervisor, who will then notify appropriate authorities if necessary. If an investigation confirms the employee's perceptions, Graham Behavior Services may have to discontinue service.

## **Smoking**

Smoking in a place of work poses serious health risks and fire hazards to workforce members. It is the employer's duty to ensure a safe, smoke-free environment for all employees.

During support services with Graham Behavior Services's therapist, the client's home automatically becomes a workplace for the duration of the visit. As such, smoking inside the home is strictly prohibited during, and at least 15 minutes before the provision of services. The term smoking includes, but is not limited to: cigarettes, tobacco, marijuana, e-cigarettes, pipes, etc.

In the case of non-compliance, the therapist will immediately leave the premises and notify the Supervisor and will not be able to return until this policy is adhered to. If there are repeated non-compliance issues, or the client is unable to follow this policy, then other arrangements will be made for sessions outside of the home.

## **Illegal Activity**

During support services with Graham Behavior Services's therapist, the client's home automatically becomes a workplace for the duration of the visit. As such, any illegal activity inside the home is strictly prohibited during the provision of services. The term illegal activity includes, but is not limited to sale, possession of, or taking of illicit controlled substances, vandalism, prostitution, theft, assault, etc.

In the case where the therapist witnesses illegal activity in the client's home, the therapist will immediately leave the premises and notify the Supervisor or Director, who will then notify the appropriate authorities.

## **Safety Drills**

Graham Behavior Services conducts regular fire evacuation and lockdown drills, for both safety purposes and as part of life skills programs. Depending on your child's plan, modifications will be made (e.g. announcing the drill ahead of time, using a soft tone instead of an alarm, practicing and building tolerance first).

## **Inclement Weather Policies and Procedures**

The following statements pertain to the policies and procedures regarding appointments and or travel during inclement weather.

Inclement weather is defined as weather that has the potential to cause injury or harm when traveled in. Examples of inclement weather can take many forms and can include, but should not be limited to the following:

- Unplowed snow-covered roads, roads inadequately plowed, or icy roads
- Flash flood warnings, or flooded areas
- Severe thunderstorm warnings, tornado warnings, or sightings for a related area.

The Graham Behavior Services employees will make any decisions regarding the weather and safety risks from the agency's standpoint. However, the client has the right to reschedule appointments if there is a reasonable risk to safety as opposed to an attempt to merely cancel the appointment. If the employees believe that the weather presents a reasonable risk to the health and safety of the client or employees, any scheduled appointments, to include home visits, planned trips, etc., shall be rescheduled. In the event of a need to reschedule an appointment, the employee shall notify the client as soon as possible by means outlined between the employee and client during the initial stages of the case. It should be the understanding of the client that inclement weather and the dangers presented as a result can, and will, include areas that lead to the client's home or location of the planned trip. Safe conditions at the client's place, residence, or at the location of the planned trip do not exclude the dangers present in the areas that must be traveled to reach these destinations.

Parents acknowledge that it is their responsibility to provide viable contact information, which would include a method of contacting the client in the event of an emergency-type situation.

Graham Behavior Services follows the client's public school district schedule. If the client's school district is closed due to weather or closes early, services do not occur and therefore are not eligible to be made up. If the employee believes they can continue with the scheduled appointment, they will inform you that they still intend to provide services. If a therapist cancels a scheduled session, all efforts will be made to reschedule.

Services received at the clinic will generally follow the West Long Branch School District inclement weather closure schedule. An email will be sent to all families to communicate delayed openings or closures.

### **Snow Removal**

In the event of a weather event Graham Behavior Services employees will evaluate conditions to determine the necessary action from the agency's standpoint. This will include snow removal and de-icing of all walking paths, sidewalks, driveways or other access points. Graham Behavior Services also expects clients to evaluate conditions present in their personal residence and alert Graham Behavior Services employees if unsafe or impassable conditions are present. It should be the understanding of the client that inclement weather and the dangers presented as a result can, and will, include areas that lead to the client's personal residence. Safe conditions at the client's personal residence do not exclude the dangers present in the areas that must be traveled to reach these destinations. If roads at or near the client's personal residence are deemed unsafe or impassable Graham Behavior Services has the right to reschedule appointments. If Graham Behavior Services employees believe that the weather presents any

additional reasonable risk to the health and safety of the client or employees, any scheduled appointments, to include home visits, planned trips, etc., shall be rescheduled.

Parents acknowledge that it is their responsibility to provide viable contact information, which would include a method of contacting the client in the event of a weather event or to determine conditions that are present prior to the client's session.

### **Behavioral Crisis**

#### *Physical Restraint*

Graham Behavior Services makes every effort to avoid the use of physical restraint. In the home physical restraint is not used by GBS staff. If a crisis occurs, parents and caregivers are expected to step in to maintain safety. In the clinic, in the event that an individual needs to be restrained in order to maintain safety, all staff are trained in crisis management procedures. The parent will be notified via phone call and email in the event that physical restraint is used. If restraint occurs 3 times or more in a two week period, it will be evaluated if clinic based services are still appropriate for the client.

#### *Management of behavior Crisis*

If a behavior crisis occurs in which the client is acting in a way that is unsafe toward him or herself or other individuals in the surrounding area, Graham Behavior Services employees will follow the client's behavior intervention plan and utilize coping strategies to de-escalate the behavior. Coping strategies may include breathing exercises, providing a break in a safe location, changing the environment, and providing one-step directions to gain compliance, among others.

The employee may also contact the client's BCBA, Clinical Supervisor for assistance in handling the behavior crisis. If needed, you may be contacted to assist the team. The client may respond differently to coping strategies if presented by a caregiver or another individual in the environment.

If the client's behavior does not de-escalate, there is still imminent risk of injury, and the team does not feel comfortable continuing to provide de-escalation strategies, it is recommended that the team call 911.

### **Abuse Prevention and Reporting**

#### **Mandated Reporter Disclosure Form**

All employees for the program operated by Graham Behavior Services are mandated reporters as deemed so by New Jersey state rules, regulations, and laws. This is true of all social workers, teachers, etc., and should not restrict the work to be completed. This is a state law

designed to protect children from injury and should not be viewed as means to harm parents and caretakers.

This form shall serve as a reminder to the family of this fact and shall also provide insight into what this disclosure means. This disclosure shall serve as part of the client education regarding the program, and the client information packet.

Being deemed a mandated reporter, the Behavior Therapist for the Graham Behavior Services is required by law to report any and all allegations, reports, and suspicions of child abuse, neglect, and maltreatment to the appropriate identified governing body.

Child Protective Services is the governing body identified in the state of New Jersey regarding cases of child abuse, neglect, and maltreatment, and the Behavior Therapist is required and shall, therefore, report the incidents mentioned above to the National Hotline for Child Protective Services.

Any report to Child Protective Services, where deemed necessary by them, shall constitute a separate case from the one managed by Graham Behavior Services's intensive in-home program. For this reason, it should be noted that the Graham Behavior Services employees shall only participate in CPS cases as required and requested by Child Protective Services. The intensive in-home program operated by Graham Behavior Services shall play no part in decisions made by Child Protective Services and should be viewed as a separate organization from Child Protective Services.

## **Ethical Code**

### **Parents' Interaction with Employees & Dual Relationships**

The nature of our business can often be personal because we are all working so intensely with each other on a frequent basis. For this reason, we require that parents maintain a friendly relationship with employees, but not a personal relationship. Parents acknowledge that any relationship outside the therapeutic one is completely inappropriate.

Dual relationships include, but are not limited to babysitting, acting as a nanny, bartering of services or goods, friendships, sexual relationships, etc. This pertains to past and present employees. Graham Behavior Services strives to hire the best employees; however, at times people may leave our company for various reasons. In this case, we do not encourage families to hire or have dual relationships with our past or present employees. Due to the confidentiality we hold with our employees and parents, we cannot go into detail about why an employee left the company. This is for the protection of Graham Behavior Services and for our clients.

## **Transportation Policies**

Parents acknowledge that Graham Behavior Services does not allow employees to transport clients or client family members in personal vehicles. This is due to a lack of auto insurance policy and to ensure the safety of all staff and clients.

Clients whose treatment plans include community based instruction and vocational skills will be taught to use common rideshare apps as a mode of transportation to work. If this is selected as an appropriate goal for your child, your BCBA will contact you to discuss a plan. The client will be responsible for the cost of transportation services.

## **Gifts**

The Behavior Analyst Certification Board Professional and Ethical Compliance Code does not allow BCBAs or behavior therapists to accept any gifts of any kind in excess of \$10.00. A gift is acceptable if it functions as an infrequent expression of gratitude.

If an employee or workforce member receives a gift prohibited by this policy, the gift giver will be reminded of this policy and the employee will graciously decline or return the gift. If the gift is anonymous, the recipient must deliver the gift to the supervisor, who will convey the gift to a charitable organization.

## **Transitioning, Fading, and Discharge**

Transitioning occurs when a client moves from one set of criteria goals to another. These transitions can be the result of either the client's mastery of the established goal criteria, resulting in a transition to the next higher-level goal, or due to the client's deficiency or inability to reach current goal objectives, moving the client to a lower-level goal.

When situations occur where clients are moved to lower-level goals the prerequisite goals are re-evaluated and a new goal criteria set is established. Once the client is able to master the new goal criteria set, the original goals will be revisited and the client will be eligible to move to the next higher-level set of goal criteria.

Fading refers to decreasing the level of assistance needed to complete a task or activity. When teaching a skill, the overall goal is for the student to eventually engage in the skill independently.

Discharge and transition planning from one or all treatment programs will involve a gradual step down in services. Discharge from a comprehensive ABA treatment program occurs over several months. Treatment plans will be reviewed and evaluated, and discharge planning will begin when the child has achieved specific treatment goals, as measured by appropriate standardized protocols.