

# Success Beyond Six Supports During COVID-19



## Overview

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During extended remote learning related to COVID-19, the Designated Mental Health Agencies (DA) continue to support students, families, schools, and communities through a variety of collaborative and creative strategies. Families need supports to manage stress and to support their child(ren)'s anxiety or other emotional and behavioral challenges. The pivot to remote learning has put even more stress and strain on vulnerable children/youth making these social, emotional, and behavioral supports more important than ever.

Below are examples of how school-based mental health services are currently provided through remote strategies, followed by stories from the field of how some students and families are using and benefitting from these services.

A parent of a child who receives autism programming expressed how incredibly happy they were with the materials being delivered to them at home. The visuals they were provided helped structure their child's day to allow them to build routines, which helped with behaviors.

## Ongoing Supports

- Behavioral Intervention Services
- School-based Behavioral Consultation
- School-based Clinicians
- CERT Therapeutic Schools
- School-based Autism Services

# Behavioral Intervention Services

Maintaining Connection and Support



## Working with parents, teachers and clients

- Connecting multiple times weekly
- In-home reinforcement planning meetings
- Relaying family's experience with remote learning to schools
- Social emotional learning (SEL) through activities over Zoom
- Assistance accessing other critical supports
- Assisting with school meal preparation, food delivery, and essential worker daycare
- Supporting students in online classrooms
- Recording behavioral data to inform programming
- Lending parents “respite” during BI time with children

## School-Based Behavioral Consultation

- Assisting with transition to distance learning and facilitating communication
- Facilitating weekly meetings to identify students and families that may need additional supports
- Developing materials for families to support positive behaviors for distance learning
- Facilitating virtual reinforcement contingent on meeting home and/or academic expectations
- Consultation with classroom teachers on maximizing student engagement in distance learning
- Creation of customized totes of SEL materials to be dropped off at client’s home
- Zoom and YouTube training for parents on supporting safety in the home, toileting programming, procedures to support desired outcomes, behavioral principals and strategies, addressing misbehavior, teaching/ practicing/ promoting appropriate social skills, and more.

*“I know that I don’t need to worry about the families that [the school-based clinician] is working with, she has been able to reach the families that I am most worried about and is in every effort working to collaborate with the school and families to make sure that people’s needs are met in all aspects” -Special Educator*

## School-Based Clinicians (SBC)

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- Therapy, service coordination, & family intervention, including for those newly referred by school
- Psycho-education for families on how this time may impact mood and behavior; coping skills
- Increased levels of support to students identified as high risk by clinicians
- Running community wellness Facebook page and joining Google Hangouts with teachers
- Supporting teachers and staff to attend to their own self-care/mental health needs
- Organized and distributed SEL work and parent resources for all students in days prior to shut down
- Remote Coordinated Service Plan (264) meetings for families
- Clinicians can offer consultation to schools in their planning for transitions during COVID-19 and for families in how to support individual student needs.



### Concurrent Education, Rehabilitation and Treatment (CERT)

- independent schools with therapeutic mental health supports
- operated by a Designated Agency
- daily contact with students is mandatory

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## CERTs During COVID-19

- Keeping track of attendance has continued along with academic studies and clinical support
- Shifted to online learning platforms with continuity of learning plans
- Coordinating with school districts to distribute laptops and other equipment to students at home
- Daily contact with families by school-based clinicians, behavioral interventionists
- IEP and Evaluation meetings are continuing to be held through Zoom
- Coordinated and delivered donations to families of games, art supplies, puzzles, and some sports equipment. Sewing masks and distributing to families.
- Staff meetings are occurring weekly to continue to evaluate and adjust programming and share information concerning needs of students and families

# School-Based Autism Services

Development and implementation of a range of individualized supports to meet the needs of each client and team, including regular check-ins with parents and schools, adaptation of behavior plans to the home setting, and helping families create new routines.

- Implementing new visual schedules, reinforcement plans, and environmental supports to increase self-regulation, motivation, and task completion in the home environment
- Coordinating with teachers and special educators in creating new materials to support IEP goals
- Creation of new home-school communication logs, data sheets, and documentation
- Assisting with identifying and connecting families with other supports
- Working to arrange face to face sessions with BI and/or Consultant for behavior intervention
- Supporting schools and communities by assisting with meal preparation, food delivery, and essential worker daycare

# Impactful Interventions

## Critical Supports.

A student with significant trauma history who functions at a developmentally younger level and is now in an adoptive home, requires significant intervention as they become physically aggressive when they feel threatened. We have worked with the parent to help them regulate and stabilize the home with other young children, and develop a set of strategies to cope with the physical aggression. SBC is more available during COVID-19 quarantine and has de-escalated and re-regulated the student several times each week which would not have been possible without telehealth.

*"I actually miss school."  
-CERT Student*

BCBA instructed a behavioral interventionist how to shape communication device use in the home for a student with ASD who used it in school but was refusing in home. Student was using device independently in home after 3rd session.

## Connection.



A school-based clinician is texting daily with a student experiencing intense suicidal ideation to keep the student stabilized. The clinician is in regular contact with crisis and the school to support this youth in the community and keep out of the ER.

*"I work with a [student] who has all but dropped off the face of the planet....After a week of isolation, she reached out to me and I called her back. She is depressed and needed to talk. I have struggled to maintain contact with her, but when we do talk she sounds really low. Another example of being the only point of contact and her functioning being extremely impaired." -SB6 Clinician*

## Relational Opportunities.



There has been an incredible increase in opportunities to provide emotional support to parents. Many parents are more engaged and willing to talk via phone or Zoom. **As one SBC said, "we are relational opportunists" and it's working.**