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# CAREGIVER'S CORNER

Behavioral Family Solutions



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**WE'RE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE WE'VE ACHIEVED OUR  
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2-Year Accreditation

# WHAT IS A BHCOE ACCREDITATION?

- The Behavioral Health Center of Excellence (BHCOE) has recognized Behavioral Family Solutions with a 2-Year Accreditation—acknowledging the organization as one of the top ABA service providers in the country!
- The BHCOE Accreditation indicates the organization is committed to excellence, in providing high-quality ABA services in their community.
- Provider's are not given the accreditation— it's earned! The BHCOE Accreditation recognizes exceptional behavioral health providers that excel in the areas of clinical quality, staff satisfaction and qualifications, and consumer satisfaction.



# Virtual Learning— How to Help Your Child Stay Focused

- Staying focused can be difficult for all children. Their siblings' conversations or the view outside their window always seem more exciting!
- Whether your kids are doing 100% at-home learning this year, or a hybrid of remote and in-school instruction, here some tips to help your kids stay focused:
  - **Reduce Distractions:**
    - Video games, computer games, social media, TV, toys, pets—our homes have lots of distractions. Make a list of the things that distract your child. Then, find ways to limit them during learning time.
    - Keep devices out of your children's workspace! This can also mean shutting down phones, keeping phones in a designated place for the day, and putting away remotes if temptation takes over.
    - For some children, any noise is a distraction, and noise cancelling headphones might help. Others crave background noise and might do better while listening to music.
  - **Encourage Movement:**
    - Make sure to allow for 'brain breaks' and let them walk around, do jumping jacks, or other exercises that get them up and moving!
  - **Provide Positive Feedback:**
    - Each time your child completes an assignment, provide immediate and positive feedback!
    - Something as simple as putting a check mark, star, or sticker on their assignment can go a long way in helping to motivate your child!
    - Other examples of rewards can include: praise, stickers, choose a movie, a treat such as ice cream, tablet time, choose a family activity, play with a special toy, free choice time; or an extra 15 minutes to play before bedtime!





# Importance of Staying Social— During Social Distancing

- Social distancing has become the new normal for us all as we adjust and respond to COVID-19. As a result, our day-to-day social interactions have become more limited.
- For children, reducing opportunities to face different social scenarios translates into reduced learning opportunities, and impacts social-emotional development. The effect on children on the spectrum is even more significant because they often need extra help cultivating the skills they need to create and maintain positive interactions with others in social situations!
- Through everyday social interactions, children learn skills such as:
  - Initiating and maintaining interactions with others
  - Identifying and responding to social cues
  - Sharing
  - Playing appropriately with peers
  - Understanding different perspectives
  - Responding to others' feelings
- The development of social skills is essential for individuals to establish and maintain healthy social relationships. Friendships not only improve an individual's sense of belonging but can also enhance mental health, improve self-confidence and help reduce stress and anxiety!
- Caregivers may need to check-in with their child and help identify who their friends are to develop a plan about how to connect.
- Consider sharing contact information with a teacher to pass to a classmate! With many options available via text messaging, FaceTime, Google Hangout/Meet, and other apps, your child may need to figure out which forms of socialization will work best for them!



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"Meet Your Child  
Where They Are

—

Not Where The  
World Expects  
Them To be"

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THEODORE ROOSEVELT



# Tips: Selecting Toys for Children with ASD

- Play has an important role in the growth and development of children of all abilities, but it is particularly valuable for children with ASD!
- Through play children with special needs develop cognitive, motor, social, and communication skills in a fun and engaging way. These skills contribute to a child's overall emotional regulation and well-being.
- The following steps can help find the right toy:
  - Identify the child's play capability and consider their individual needs and likes.
  - Consider the skills that a toy can help expand or develop.
  - Consider toys that encourage interaction with others.
  - Carefully review toys for safety.
- Depending on your unique child's needs, here are some toys that encourage development of communication + fine/motor skills!
  - Puzzles (promote fine motor skills, communication, and problem solving)
  - Blocks (all sizes and shapes for problem solving, manipulation, and squatting to floor to pick up)
  - Social Stories (books that require you to act out movements while learning social expectations and communication techniques)
  - Legos or other types of toys that require building and manipulation of objects to create things (encourage development of gross and fine motor skills and communication techniques)
  - Art activities, such as clay and coloring
  - Containers filled with toys to encourage bending, squatting, stacking, and ball play

