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triumph
Behavior Support

Balancing Therapies Without Burnout

Dear Triumph ABA Parents,

Therapy plays an important role in supporting your child's growth and development—but when appointments, schedules, homework, and daily responsibilities pile up, it's easy for families to feel stretched thin. Many parents find themselves juggling multiple therapies while also trying to preserve family time, routines, and emotional balance. If this sounds familiar, you're not alone.

Burnout doesn't mean you're doing something wrong—it often means you care deeply and are giving a lot. Children on the autism spectrum benefit most when therapies are consistent and when families feel supported, rested, and emotionally available. Striking that balance can feel challenging, especially when progress feels slow or expectations feel high.

In this edition, we're focusing on practical ways to balance therapies without burnout—helping families create sustainable routines that support progress while protecting well-being. Remember: meaningful growth happens over time, and caring for yourself is a critical part of caring for your child.

TiPs

Tips for Parents: Finding Balance Without Losing Momentum

Focus on Quality Over Quantity

More therapy hours don't always mean better outcomes. Progress often comes from consistent, well-supported sessions paired with real-life practice.

Try this:

Ask your child's BCBA which goals can naturally be practiced during daily routines like meals, playtime, or bedtime.

Build in Breaks—For Everyone

Children and caregivers both need downtime to recharge. Breaks can actually improve engagement and learning.

Try this:

Schedule therapy-free evenings or lighter days where connection and relaxation are the priority.

Keep Communication Open With Your Team

Your child's therapy team is there to support the whole family, not just skill acquisition.

Try this:

If schedules feel overwhelming, reach out to your child's BCBA to problem-solve pacing, priorities, or adjustments.

Use Routines to Reduce Mental Load

Predictable routines help children feel secure—and help parents reduce decision fatigue.

Try this:

Create a simple weekly schedule that clearly outlines therapy days, rest days, and family time.

Celebrate Progress—Big and Small

Progress doesn't always look dramatic. Small wins matter.

Try this:

Keep a short list of weekly successes to remind yourself how far your child—and your family—are coming.

BOOKS TO CHECK OUT

The Whole-Brain Child by Daniel J. Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson

The Autism Parent's Guide to Self-Care by Debra Moore

Parenting with Patience by Cheri J. Meiners

Self-Care for Parents of Children with Autism by Dr. Patricia Oelwein

These resources emphasize balance, emotional regulation, and sustainable parenting strategies.

Triumph's Triumphs:

REAL SUCCESS STORIES FROM OUR BCBAS

When Maya began ABA at six, she averaged over a dozen aggressive episodes a day, headbanging, hitting, dropping during transitions. Data from the BCBA's FBA suggested escape-maintained behavior with limited functional communication.

The team implemented Functional Communication Training. Her BT prompted use of a speech-generating device to request "break," immediately reinforcing each attempt.

Then one day during the session, before escalation, Maya independently pressed:
"I need break."
The BT honored her request and it was the first time behavior didn't escalate.
Within weeks, aggression decreased by more than half. Within months, it was rare. She began independently using:
"Too loud."
"All done."
"Help please."
The shift wasn't accidental. Once communication was reinforced, behavior no longer needed to serve that function.

At six, Sofia had minimal verbal behavior and relied on prompting. Her BCBA shifted programming toward motivation-based NET and systematic echoic shaping.

Around seven and a half, during a routine moment, her dad asked if she wanted to go outside. Sofia responded:
"Let's go on an adventure!"
Spontaneous. Contextually appropriate.
The team quickly implemented script fading and expanded intraverbal targets. Language began generalizing across settings.
By nine, she was conversational.
Years of steady shaping, reinforcement, and high expectations led to a breakthrough that once felt unlikely.

Aria experienced multiple daily meltdowns at school. ABC data revealed triggers: sensory overload and unexpected transitions.

Her BCBA revised the BIP to prioritize self-advocacy. Her BT explicitly taught device-based phrases and reinforced their use before escalation.

One morning, when the schedule changed, Aria independently pressed:

“Change is hard.”

No meltdown followed.

Over the semester, episodes decreased by more than half. Instead of escaping through behavior, she accessed support through communication.

The difference was simple but powerful: replacement behaviors were taught, reinforced, and honored.

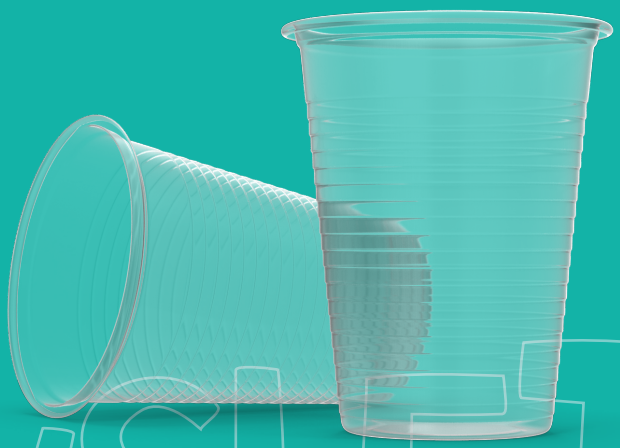
REAL SUCCESS STORIES FROM OUR BCBAS

Triumph's Triumphs:

Quote of the month:

You can't pour from an empty cup. Take care of yourself first.

— Audrey Lorde



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