

Behavior Support Assistant (BSA) Policy

Participating Humboldt – Del Norte Local Education Agencies (LEAs) Big Lagoon Union School District, Blue Lake Union School District, Bridgeville School District, Cuddeback Union School District, Cutten School District, Del Norte Unified School Districts, Eureka City Schools, Ferndale Unified School District, Fieldbrook School District, Fortuna Elementary School District, Fortuna Union High School District, Freshwater School District, Garfield School District, Green Point School District, Hydesville School District, Jacoby Creek School District, Klamath-Trinity Joint Unified School District, Kneeland School District, Loleta Union School District, Maple Creek School District, Mattole Unified School District, McKinleyville Union School District, Northern Humboldt Union High School District, Orick School District, Pacific Union School District, Peninsula Union School District, Rio Dell School District, Scotia Union School District, South Bay Union School District, Southern Humboldt Unified School District, Trinidad Union School District

SELPA Behavior Support Assistant Policy Information

SELPA Policy on Requests for Behavior Support Assistance (BSA):

To be eligible for a BSA, a student must meet the following criteria:

- The student must be qualified for Special Education Services with a current IEP
- The student must have a 1:1 instructional aide written as part of the Offer of FAPE and approved by the student's IEP team for the BSA to serve in place of the SCIA for specifically identified reasons.

To request the support of a BSA, the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Principal or Superintendent completes the *Behavior Support Assistant: Request for Assistance* form located in the SEIS Document Library and sends the form to Carrie Moses (SELPA Behavior Analyst/BSA Program Manager). Reasons for BSA assignment include, but are not limited to:

- Student with serious challenging behavior moves into the LEA and needs assistance while a SCIA is hired and eventually trained by BSA.
- Student receiving Educationally Related Intensive Counseling services exhibits serious challenging behavior and the LEA SCIA is unable to provide the level of therapeutic support the student needs without more training and assistance.
- LEA SCIA quits or goes on leave and student needs a BSA until a new SCIA can be hired and/or trained.

The Administrator will be contacted within 48 hours of the initial request. The BSA Program Manager will identify if a BSA is available and a timeline for services. If the BSAs are already on assignment, the BSA Program Manager or other SELPA staff members can assist in identifying other resources, such as Therapeutic Aide Services that may be obtained through contracting with a local NPA. In addition, SELPA may recommend the IEP team reconvene to explore need for additional services for this student (ERICS or Behavior Intervention Services if the student is not already receiving services).

There are currently a limited number of SELPA Behavior Support Assistants. Priority for requests will be given to students with the highest level of behavioral need. The SELPA Director will have final approval of BSA assignments. When BSAs are not assigned to students on a district site, they will assist the Behaviorists and/or SELPA Behavioral Health Clinicians with students who have social-emotional and behavioral challenges.

The SELPA Director will be notified of all Requests for Assistance. After the BSA Program Manager and LEA Administrator agree to a timeline for BSA Service, the SELPA Director and SELPA Secretary will be notified to arrange the fiscal contract.

If a BSA is assigned to work with a student and he/she is absent, the day still counts towards the number of days on the contract. The BSA will contact BSA Program Manager or another SELPA Behavior Intervention Team member, and in collaboration with the site administrator, the BSA will possibly stay on site and support another student who receives Behavior Intervention services (when applicable).

Email Behavior Support Assistant Requests to:

Carrie Moses, M.A., BCBA

cmoses@hcoe.org

Dr. Peter Stoll

SELPA Program Manager, Educationally Related Intensive Counseling Services

pstoll@hcoe.org

Initial Training

Upon hire, each Behavior Support Assistant will spend a minimum of 3 hours with the BSA Program Manager, ERICS Manager, and/or SELPA Director to review BSA Policies and Procedures and develop an individualized training plan. Depending on the BSAs employment history, he/she may receive up to 40 hours of initial training prior to beginning direct work with students. The training plan will be tailored to the individual BSA, and may include a combination of didactic training, web-based training, and direct observation/coaching at school sites and/or the Therapeutic Learning Classrooms. In addition, the BSA may be asked to shadow a clinician or another BSA.

Web Based Courses may include the following topics:

- Principles of Behavior Part 1: Reinforcement
- Principles of Behavior Part 2: Behavior Reduction
- Antecedent Interventions
- Consequence Interventions

The BSA will pass a competency-based evaluation based on the following criteria before he/she will begin independent work in the field:

- Correctly define the basic principles of ABA (e.g., positive and negative reinforcement, positive and negative punishment, extinction, differential reinforcement).
- Demonstrate an understanding of how the Behavior Specialists conduct Functional Behavior Assessments and the components of a Behavior Intervention Plan
- Demonstrate fidelity with implementation of a Behavior Intervention Plan
- Demonstrate the ability to collect accurate frequency, duration, interval, and A-B-C data
- Demonstrate an understanding of PBIS and the Three-Tiered Model of Support
- Correctly identify basic knowledge of the IEP process and special education law related to behavioral interventions
- Correctly identify basic special education terminology and laws as they relate to the BSA position.

If the BSA does not have current CPI training or its equivalent (e.g., PRO-ACT), he/she must complete this training prior to using any physical responses to students with challenging physical behaviors (i.e., inappropriate physical contact/physical aggression).

Communication with District Personnel

As a SELPA representative, the BSA is expected to conduct himself/herself with professionalism when communicating with district personnel. The BSA will be provided with directions on his/her role (e.g., data collection, observation, coaching) prior to any work with a student. During site visits, the BSA is expected to only focus on the student(s) he/she was assigned to visit. The BSA will refer LEA personnel to the BSA Program Manager for questions outside the scope of the assignment. This expectation includes complex questions about the student that the BSA has not been trained on or is not described in the student's BIP. BSAs will report any LEA requests that are outside of the BSA's scope to the BSA Program Manager and the Behaviorist assigned to the case. This expectation is to ensure that the LEAs are provided with accurate information from the appropriate team member.

Under most circumstances, the BSA will provide his/her email for day-to-day contact while contracted to work in the LEA however the BSA Program Manager is the primary SELPA contact for any questions or concerns regarding the BSAs roles and responsibilities.

Communication with Students

The BSA is expected to use a 4:1 ratio of positive feedback to corrective feedback statements with all students. This strategy means that for every one corrective feedback statement there are a minimum of 4 positive statements or interactions. The positive ratio may be even higher with some students, particularly when the BSA is in the relationship development phase.

Whenever possible, the BSA will be scheduled with pairing/rapport building opportunities prior to beginning any direct work with a student. In the event that this opportunity is not possible, the BSA will create rapport building opportunities and a low demand/instruction providing ratio until the BSA has developed instructional control/a positive working relationship with the student.

Scheduling

The BSA will use Outlook to schedule his/her appointments. The schedule will be developed based on the BSAs current assignment(s). The BSA Program Manager will oversee the schedules. The BSA is expected to maintain and follow this schedule, and any changes must be approved in advance.

If the BSA is not assigned to a student and is doing “floater” work, the BSA will contact the Behavior Specialists to identify availability in his/her schedule.

Assignments & Duties

The BSA assignments may include the following:

- Direct work with a qualifying student for up to 30 school days per student. This number may be increased on a case-by-case basis with consultation from the SELPA Director, BSA Program Manager and LEA Superintendent.
- “Floater” days, which include, but are not limited to the following duties:
 - Gathering initial information using the SELPA Initial Visit form after a new request for assistance is made
 - Direct observation and Data collection
 - Data forms provided to the assigned Behavior Specialist
 - A brief, written follow-up summary after each observation emailed to the assigned Behavior Specialist within 48 hours
 - Training and coaching of LEA SCIA's by BSA
 - Data Graphing
 - Preparation of behavior support materials (e.g., visual supports)

TECHNIQUES FOR RESPONDING TO BEHAVIORAL ESCALATION

De-Escalation Strategies Using the Anxiety Curve Model

Redirection or Prompting at Level 2 or 3

Be aware that students show signs of escalation in different ways. If you don't know the student, early indicators of escalation include, but are not limited to:

- Pacing
- Vocalizations
- Trying to leave the appropriate area
- Resistance to directives (passive or active noncompliance)
- Being silly or giggling
- Engaging in property misuse (e.g., breaking a pencil)

Refer to the student's behavior plan for specific recommendations about replacement behaviors the student is working on. If the student does not have a BIP, you may not know the best way to prompt or redirect the student. Below are potential strategies for supporting the student to get his/her needs met and avoid escalating to a 5 on the curve model, the highest level for that student (which is also different for each individual).

For students who have a more advanced verbal repertoire, you can try simple language strategies to prompt or redirect:

- ✓ **Check in with the student:**
In a calm, reassuring tone ask the student, "Are you ok?" Be sure to give the student time to respond for repeating the question (between 5 and 7 seconds).
- ✓ **Check your body:** be aware of your body positioning and body language
- ✓ **Do a brief check of the student's emotional state:**
 - For example, in a calm, empathetic tone you might validate how the student may be feeling by saying something like, "You look frustrated."
 - If the student is able or willing to tell you how he/she feels or what support he/she needs, try the following questions with wait time:
 - "Are you hungry?"
 - "Are you thirsty?"
 - "Does your body hurt?"
 - "What do you need?"
 - If the student doesn't tell you, you can model what the student may need by saying something like, "It's noisy in here. Let's go outside and take a break."
- ✓ Give a "forced choice" by presenting two choices two at a time. Use limited words.
 - "Do you want a break or walk?"
 - "Do you want space or to talk?"
 - "Do you want a snack or _____?"(Depending on the student's developmental level and qualifying condition, this technique can be done verbally, visually, with the student's reinforcement form (check-in/checkout form), token or points system, or the actual reinforcer).
- ✓ **Change activity/ change topic/distraction**
 - "Look _____" (point to something interesting or novel)
 - "Check this out _____" (begin a new or interesting activity)

✓ **Behavior Momentum**

Try using behavior momentum by finding a small task the student is likely to do. Often “helper” jobs can effectively redirect the student to a new location and get the student “back on track”. For example, give the student a direction, “Let’s take this folder to the office”

If you have been able to de-escalate the student back to a level 1 without going to a 4 or 5, then once the student has returned to calm “1” level, try to redirect to previous activity (whatever was going on when escalation began) even if it’s just for a very brief instruction (put name on it) or out the task in a “do later” folder. You can also try to prompt the student to request a different activity if they do not want to go back to the previous activity. Some student with developmental disabilities benefit from a “protest board” while other students respond best to verbally modeled protest language to assist them with protesting appropriately and requesting the support he/she needs.

Escalation to Levels 4 and 5

When students are exhibiting crisis levels behaviors, we typically redirect other students away from the focal student (through evacuating the classroom or redirecting the focal student), and then offer space and wait time until the student has safely deescalated. If the student has a BIP, the reactive plan will describe the reactive procedures, including modeling coping skills.

When students are engaging in dangerous behaviors that can hurt themselves or others, one adult may state in a firm voice, “Stop” paired with an inhibiting response such as “Hands down” or “Sit down”. If the student continues to be a danger to himself/herself or others and doesn’t respond after multiple attempts to stop the behavior, staff will implement the crisis plan.

Crisis Level Support

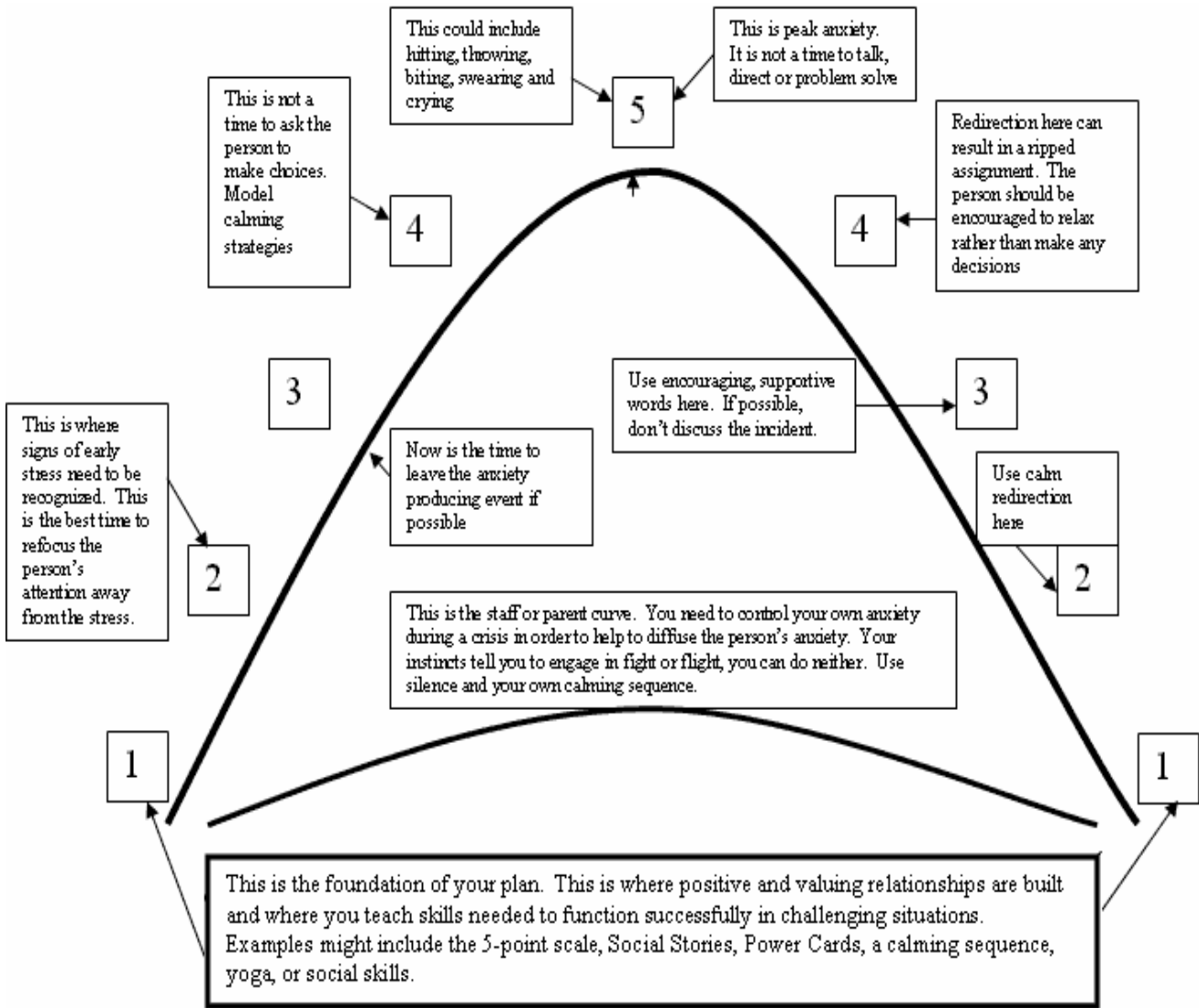
Some students may have a written Crisis Plan as part of their BIP. The general plan is that the CPI team will use the least intrusive measures to assist the student with de-escalation. Restraint is considered a **last resort**, and must be documented using the *SELPA Behavioral Emergency* form found in the SEIS Document Library. Please send the form the SELPA office and a copy to the SELPA Behaviorist (if one is assigned). Only CPI trained individuals are authorized to use these techniques.

De-Briefing Phase

If the student is unable to safely deescalate the LEA Administrator may determine the student is to be sent home.

If the student safely deescalates, the BSA will reestablish rapport with the student and determine with Teacher or LEA Administrator if the student is to resume the regular routine or engage in a different activity with the student (e.g., complete a restorative practice, fill out a think sheet, go for a walk with student).

The Anxiety Curve Model (Buron & Curtis)



Ongoing Supervision

Approximately 5% of the BSAs direct work time will include ongoing supervision, which will be provided by the ERICS and Behavior Intervention Team. Supervision includes a whole-group monthly BI team meeting, small group meetings, student specific 1:1 meetings with the Behavior Specialists, and direct observation in the field. The BSA will keep a Monthly Training Log, which will be reviewed by the BSA Program Manager.