

## Behavioral Obstacles

Children and adolescents presenting with oppositional behaviors, or other behavioral obstacles, tell an enduring human story. Children test limits, push boundaries, and challenge their caregivers. Behaviors that are experienced as problematic for families and caregivers can feel overwhelming. We understand that no matter how big or small, when behaviors interrupt a family's ability to do life as usual, help is needed.

Despite this age-old behavioral dilemma, there is something that *has* changed: the current approaches to behaviors consider many things that our ancestors did not. Today, supporting behaviors requires a trauma-informed, compassionate approach, given the diverse reasons that behavioral obstacles emerge. Organic or biological causes, trauma, mood disorders, environment or internal experience, developmental ages and stages are among the many contributors to consider with regard to behavioral obstacles. At Collaborative Counseling Center, our therapists strive to work with children, families, caregivers, schools, physicians and other multidisciplinary supports to ensure that we are supporting clients with the most comprehensive and collective information. We see all facets of a child's life as vital to supporting them holistically and effectively.

Our therapists work to support behavioral obstacles in a way that is not only collaborative, but humble, and very human! We know that parents are the experts of their own children, and that caregivers of children, whether it be a family member or foster parent, have insight that goes well beyond that of a professional that sees only a snapshot of a child. We trust that the knowledge of a family can lend insight to the therapist.

Despite various theoretical approaches, our therapists collectively address and support behaviors in the following ways:

- **We work to incorporate strengths and successful approaches** that have already been employed with the child client through caregivers and other community support people
- **We employ theoretical approaches that are proven to work** (research-based methods)
- **We take a holistic approach to care:** we seek to understand the whole person, beyond diagnosis or presenting behaviors
- **We seek to work in our scope of expertise,** while resourcing and collaborating with other professionals to lend professional insights, in lieu of working in isolation
- **We employ a trauma-informed approach to addressing behaviors.** In this, we work proactively to avoid re-traumatizing a child while addressing behaviors, while employing processes that are empirically-based for our clients
- **We seek a higher level of wellness** for the child and their caregivers (viewing behaviors as a disruption to the highest level of peace and wellbeing for the collective family unit)
- **We recognize our limitations!** We understand that families are required to do most of the work in order to impact and change existing behaviors
- **We respect the autonomy of the client and caregivers.** The choice in how one proceeds with regard to therapeutic interventions is always their own—we do not impose any practices. Rather, we offer solutions and supports to explore if you choose to participate. We understand that supporting any client is a delicate process that requires respect and collaboration.
- **We demonstrate a respect for your valuable time!** We do all we can in the weekly session/s in order to offer the tools and support for maximum impact with behaviors. We work for change to

occur as quickly, safely and effectively as possible, while supporting processes that are sustainable and manageable for busy families. Therapy is ideally a process that occurs within a timeframe that is faded when an individual, family or group has either reached their goals or maximized what can be gained with the given therapeutic services at a given time.

**\*Click here to better understand the risks, benefits and limitations of clinical psychotherapy.**

Parent-Child Interactive Therapy (PCIT), Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Eye-Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR), Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, RCET (RSafe® provides education and training programs to providers, the public and clients, including the RSafe® Clinical Endorsement Training (RCET) for Problematic Sexual Behavior (PSB), and Trauma-informed Expressive Arts Therapy are among the theories and modalities employed to support behaviors.

Currently, all therapists at Collaborative Counseling Center have backgrounds in supporting families, caretakers, and children who struggle with meeting the expectations of behavioral norms across settings. Some of our therapist have a background and training in serving adolescents who are struggling with behavioral obstacles.

**\*Please click on the links to our therapists in order to learn more about the specific training, modalities and approaches each therapist employs to address behavioral health and wellness.**

*Understanding that unwanted behaviors may not be intentional, that they may be outside the scope of a child's developmental ability, and that these behaviors may not fully be within a child's understanding or awareness informs the way we support behaviors. We work to meet the child client and families where they are in order to best choose a way to move forward with integrative strategies in the spirit of collaboration.*