



**Rogue Behavior Services
Vision and Mission**



Our “Why”

Every decision we make, including the decision to open Rogue Behavior Services, is predicated on our core belief that every child, regardless of circumstance, deserves the opportunity to and support to make and achieve their own goals.

Each of our actions is centered on our belief that each child is unique and deserves security to be themselves unapologetically. We continually strive to use feasible, respectful, and dignified approaches to support children, adolescents, and young adults with autism. Rogue Behavior Services is carefully designed to directly and uniquely address common barriers families experience while seeking Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) support such as long waiting lists, provider turnover, and equitable services regardless of funder.

We believe in challenging the status quo. When challenges and barriers arise, we encourage creativity and outside-the-box thinking. Recurring difficulties simply means we have an opportunity to improve upon our short-term solutions by converting them to long-term solutions. Rogue Behavior Services is commonly referred to as *our organization* because our successful, unprecedented solutions to common challenges is so often shaped by invaluable feedback from our families and staff.

We believe in continual, unrelenting growth. We perpetuate this ideal with the children and families we serve, our employees, and our organization as a whole. Children and families are empowered to dictate the direction of services. Employees are supported as they pursue their personal and professional goals. Growth, as it relates to our organization, means choosing to reject the concept of “maximum potential” for any child, family, and/or employee because we view potential as an infinite construct.

In short, Rogue Behavior Services is predicated on hope. Join us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jesse Yarger", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Jesse Yarger
Founder, Rogue Behavior Services

Solutions to Common Problems

Lengthy Waiting Lists

So often, children receive a diagnosis of autism, and their families are informed of the importance of early intervention only to be placed on a waiting list for 12-24 months. While we cannot guarantee we will never have a waiting list, we expect to begin services with children and families shortly after an initial conversation. We believe this problem is unacceptable and have found it is unfairly unique to those seeking Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services.

To date, we have not developed a waiting list. Our organization emphasizes employee retention (see *Employee Turnover* for more information). We mentor future behavior analysts, so they are prepared to provide effective supervisory services immediately upon earning their credentials. Additionally, our approach to service delivery is developed, in conjunction with the children and families we serve, with graduation from services in mind.

Employee Turnover

The turnover rate for Registered Behavior Technicians® can be as high as 75% (Molko, 2018). High turnover rates result in pauses in ABA service delivery for children and families, perpetuate long waiting lists, and often require other employees to take on additional responsibilities.

We understand the responsibility we have as administrators and have established systems to motivate, not require, our employees to remain employed with our organization. The list below outlines some of the hiring and retention practices we utilize to directly address high turnover rates. We expect this list to grow as we strive for continual development and improvement.

- We hire people who are interested in working in helping professions.
- Employees are carefully matched with children and families based on employee strengths and the child needs.
- We recognize and celebrate employee accomplishments and exceptional performance.
- We offer room for advancement for employees who demonstrate leadership qualities.
- Corrective feedback is delivered through the lens of teaching, not punishment.
- We solicit feedback, both directly and anonymously, from our employees.
- We have developed an incentive system for employees with strong attendance.
- Child-specific and organizational improvements are made based on feedback from employees.
- Employees are compensated above state averages.
- We track and address the reasons our employees provide when they leave our organization.



Common Criticisms of Applied Behavior Analysis

Unfortunately, some children and families have encountered negative experiences related to ABA services. These inauspicious experiences have led to backlash about the ABA profession. Instead of avoiding or discounting those with beliefs in opposition to ABA, we believe this feedback from the autistic community is valuable and affords us an opportunity to shape the way in which children and families experience ABA services with us.

We believe our families and employees deserve to hear about our plan to ensure common concerns do not arise within our organization. Below is a summary of common criticisms about ABA services and the way in which we address these concerns.

Concern: ABA focuses on changing an autistic person.

Rogue's Approach: We believe in growth. We teach children skills aligned with their values and goals to love the person they are and support them in becoming the person they aspire to be. For example, most people feel guilt or shame after doing something they aren't proud of (e.g., yelling at someone, throwing things, making a mess, etc.). When that person learns healthier ways to respond to difficult situations, they may feel accomplished when they respond to stressors in a healthy way instead of feeling further away from their goals.

Concern: ABA decreases the likelihood of intrinsic motivation.

Rogue's Approach: We attempt to use natural rewards first and whenever possible. To us, natural rewards are the positive things that follow behavior in the real world. Here are some examples:

- Asking for a cup of water usually results in access to water.
- Raising a hand in class usually results in an opportunity to speak to the teacher.
- Playing nicely with a sibling usually results in more playtime with that sibling.
- Answering a question correctly usually results in praise and affirmation.

In some cases, natural rewards do not exist for the skills we teach at the time they are taught. In these instances, we may use unnatural rewards (i.e., unrelated rewards) to teach our learners the value of their accomplishments. While unique to each learner, some common unnatural rewards are extra praise for mundane tasks, rewarding activities after completing unrelated tasks, and individualized incentives that can be exchanged for different prizes. When we use unnatural rewards, we also include natural rewards (e.g., affirmation for answering a question correctly and incentive systems). This pairing allows the natural reward to become motivating as the unnatural reward is faded over time.

Concern: Extreme hours limit free time.

Rogue's Approach: The number of hours we recommend are created through interviews with children and families, a review of available records (e.g., diagnosis, medical reports, etc.), skill-based assessments, and related evidence-based research. We recommend the minimum number of hours required to achieve the child's and family's goals.



In most cases, we use a teaching method called Naturalistic Teaching. Essentially, Naturalistic Teaching occurs when a skill is taught in the moment it is most useful. Naturalistic Teaching strategies occur when behavior technicians teach skills within the framework of learners' everyday activities. Instead of limiting free time, Naturalistic Teaching strategies provide an opportunity for enhanced free time by incorporating ABA services into everyday activities.

Concern: The premise of ABA is to make autistic people "fit in", implying they are not normal.

Rogue's Approach: We appreciate and celebrate diversity. Diversity has shaped our values and approach to ABA service delivery. We believe a subtle, but critical, distinction exists between *fitting in* and *adapting*. To us, *fitting in* happens when we encourage conformity. It can result in susceptibility to peer pressure, decreased self-esteem, and lower confidence. We do not advocate for *fitting in*. *Adapting* happens when someone learns to make meaningful, self-driven adjustments to increase their enjoyment and fulfillment in common settings (e.g., school, grocery stores, parks, etc.). Some skills related to adaptation are learning to plan ahead and be assertive. We advocate for *adapting* and teach requisite skills accordingly.

Concern: ABA is abusive.

Rogue's Approach: The ways in which we teach skills and increase motivation are rooted in positive support strategies. Our employees are well-trained to use positive support strategies, and we do not tolerate abuse of any kind. If a child or family member observes any uncomfortable or potentially abusive situations, they are encouraged to contact their case supervisor immediately. Additionally, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® has developed a reporting system for inappropriate actions from Registered Behavior Technicians and Board Certified Behavior Analysts®. Reporting information can be found here:

<https://www.bacb.com/ethics-information/reporting-to-ethics-department/>.



Rogue Children and Families

Our organization is predicated on hope. Our staff have a multitude of different backgrounds and experiences, but all have one thing in common: insatiable enthusiasm for the children and families whom we serve. We understand selecting a behavior-analytic service provider is a decision of paramount importance. We empathize with the magnitude of these critical decisions and are grateful for the trust our families have in us. We commit to the fundamental understanding that our work is more than a job. We exist to instill hope.

We're usually hired to support a child, however we strive to support the whole family. Before services begin, each family meets with a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)[®]. During this meeting, your behavior analyst *listens* to your goals. In other words, the children and families we serve define success and guide the trajectory of services. Our behavior analysts' objective to develop a feasible, individualized plan to support and promote success.

After a success plan is created, behavior technicians begin to work with children under the direction of the behavior analyst. Our personable, knowledgeable behavior technicians integrate into children's day-to-day lives. Teaching occurs subtly, and often takes place in the moment it's most needed. This method of teaching is most salient because your child will immediately experience the result of their efforts in the most relevant context.

Success plans are generally updated every six months, and families receive progress reports at least monthly. This allows families and their behavior teams to monitor rates of child progress at moderate and long timeframes. It also provides opportunities for our behavior analysts to make appropriate and timely updates to each child's skill-building curriculum. Updates are based on progress and goals and feedback from the families we serve.

We frequently solicit feedback related to the feasibility and efficacy of our services. Families have direct contract information for their support team. Additionally, anonymous surveys are sent to our families to influence change on an organizational level. Ultimately, we are motivated to serve our families, and their guidance helps us be the best possible service providers.

Our families are the lifeblood of our organization.



Rogue Employees

It's simple. After our children and families, the most important people at Rogue are the employees who work directly with children and families. Our behavior technicians make up the majority of our organization and leave the biggest imprint on the lives of those we serve. As such, we lean heavily on our behavior technicians to provide insight regarding child progress, ideas related to new skills, and feedback on how we can improve upon our existing staff appreciation efforts.

When hiring, we do not require superfluous experience as a behavior technician. Instead, we hire people who exemplify each of these three qualities that we believe to be the most accurate indicators of exceptional performance: (1) Passion for helping, (2) an enjoyable personality, and (3) an insatiable appetite for learning. Our supervisors have been trained to teach effectively and know our new employees are dedicated enough to learn quickly.

We highly value transparency. We do not hold unscheduled meetings to address performance or conduct concerns. Instead, behavior technicians will always be apprised of meeting agendas prior to meeting with a supervisor. The primary purpose of every meeting is to foster growth, and transparency allows behavior technicians to prepare to contribute meaningfully to our primary purpose: supporting children to make and achieve their own goals.

Feedback is always educational in nature rather than corrective. Instead of focusing on errors, our supervisors explain and demonstrate more efficient processes. In addition to in-the-moment feedback, formal reviews are completed frequently. These meetings are designed to create formal opportunities for supervisors to highlight behavior technician success and progress. Formal reviews also provide an opportunity to support behavior technicians with their professional development and for supervisors to listen to feedback from behavior technicians.

We pride ourselves on high employee retention rates and satisfaction. We know retention has little correlation with wage, so we use additional rewards-based methods to motivate behavior technicians to continue their partnerships with us. We collect satisfaction survey data, point out ways in which employees excel, follow through with promises, provide opportunities for growth, and use incentive systems.

It's lofty, but our goal is for all behavior technicians to choose to spend their careers with us and continue to love the meaningful work they do.