

Greetings Ways and Means Committee,

I'm Dayana Bergman a community member currently residing in Carroll County, a parent of 2 young adults and one teenager. In my professional career I served as a respite care provider for children with intellectual disabilities, ranging from ages 3 to 24. After a couple years I went back as Registered Behavioral Health Technician. I worked in multiple states as a Registered Behavioral Health Technician, in the clinical setting, school setting, in the community setting and in the home setting. The responsibilities included the implementation of Functional Behavioral Intervention Plan and Parental Training with supervision from a Board Certified Behavioral Analysts. These services with training are available with most insurance coverages, including those who have coverage under state Medicaid. However, this is only one part of the intervention plan.

The evidence based intervention plan tends to suffer in productivity if only parts of the intervention plan is understood and/or implemented. The child might also have additional unique supports in their Individualized Educational Plan aka the IEP. All 3 of my children had their own unique individualized IEP and it took time to receive training on how the treatment plan and IEP was implemented in their own unique ways to meet their individual needs.

Every time I learned something new it benefited my child and the progress made by the child. Such as a reduction in negative unwanted behaviors of aggression, self-injury behaviors and destruction of items. These are common behaviors seen when children lack or are unable to independently communicate. One of my children was nonverbal until the age of 6 1/2. Even children with visual impairments will also exhibit signs of frustration and aggression.

The best way to support children who find themselves in situations similar to these types of behaviors is to educate the adults for have stepped forward to care for them. I know it's not always easy, and not enough time, I've worked in the past with some foster families. One of the challenges was providing the tools the parents and guardians needed to help them become successful providers. Please I ask for a favorable vote for HB0396 - Residential Child Care Programs - Education of Children and Training of Child and Youth Care Practitioners.

Kind regards,
Dayana Bergman
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