

Errands Service Helps Individuals with Severe Developmental Disabilities Develop Critical Skills

Presenter: Frank Marone

Intended Audience: Families, Direct Service Providers

Session Description

“Errands Service”: Individuals with Extreme Behaviors Contribute to the Well Being of Others in Their Communities

Adults with severe developmental disabilities participate in a unique activity as a regular part of a community based day activity program provided by a positive behavior support agency (B*E*T*A). Participants are adults who have been refused service by other local day support providers because of current and past extreme behaviors, including causing injury to others, causing injury to the participant, causing environmental damage, and safety related behavior such as ingesting toxic materials or walking into vehicular traffic. Participants also have histories of very little skill development, including bathing, dressing, eating, and toileting, and are typically nonverbal when they are first served by B*E*T*A.

Community members contact B*E*T*A for assistance with various community errands. An individual assisted by B*E*T*A and a specially trained personal assistant travel to the community member’s home, review with them their shopping or errand list, receive money from them as appropriate, travel to the relevant destination, select and purchase the items from the list or complete other aspects of the errand, return to the customer’s home, etc.

Participants practice refraining from untoward behavior throughout this activity, in numerous community and social situations. Skill development is infused, including traveling about the community, completing specific errands, social skills such as conversation, asking for assistance, greetings and leave taking, and more.

Data are presented related to skill development and behavior improvement.