

## Discussion of Ethical Issues

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## General Principles of the APA Ethics Code (2004)

Principle of Beneficence and Nonmaleficence

- Will do no harm
- Will seek to safeguard the welfare and rights of those with whom they interact professionally
- Will resolve conflicts in a responsible fashion
- Will not misuse influence

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## General Principles, cont.

Principle of Fidelity and Responsibility

- Establish relationships of trust with whom they work
- Responsible to society and community in which they work
- Uphold professional standards of conduct
- Accept responsibility for actions
- Manage conflicts of interests to avoid exploitation and harm

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● ● ● | General Principles, cont.

Principle of Integrity

- Promote accuracy, honesty, and truthfulness in science, teaching, and practice
- Do not steal, cheat, engage in fraud, subterfuge, or intentional misrepresentation of fact
- Avoid making commitments you can't keep
- Avoid using deception unless ethically justifiable

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● ● ● | General Principles, cont.

Principle of Justice

- All persons should have to access to and benefit from services/therapy
- That therapy be of equal quality
- Take precautions that potential biases, boundaries of competence, and limitations in expertise do not lead to unjust practices

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● ● ● | General Principles, cont.

Principle of Respect for People's Rights and Dignity

- Recognize the dignity and rights of all individuals with regard to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination
- Must take special precautions for vulnerable populations
- Respect cultural, individual and role differences
- Avoid bias and prejudice

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## Ethical Considerations

### Conflict of interest and multiple relationships

- How may this happen?
- How do you resolve it?
- Once entered into a therapeutic relationship, you have responsibilities to continue/complete treatment
- In small towns, may be difficult to avoid

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## Potential Exploitive Relationships

- Must avoid taking advantage of students, trainees, supervisees, employees, and research participants
- Need to define expectations up front
- Relationships with supervisees (e.g., from going out for a drink to dating)

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## Ethical Considerations

### Boundaries of Competence

- Only provide services in areas that you have identified competence (straightforward in KIPBS training program), but what about other services provided
- Implementing behavioral interventions in which you haven't been directly trained (e.g., functional analysis, discrete trial teaching, restraint)

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● ● ● | **Cultural or Religion Differences**

- How do you deal with a consumer that has widely disparate cultural or religion differences – can you set them aside?
  - May depend on the depth of your faith
  - Often affects behavior subtly
- Before working with a culturally different family, should review possible factors
  - Consider differences in disciplining children, seeking treatment, and inviting strangers into home, paying for services

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● ● ● | **Ethical Considerations**

Reporting ethical violations

- Is there a method for doing this at agency level?
- How do these concerns get resolved?
- Working with an ethics or human subjects committee (you should all volunteer to be members of one)
- Are there consequences for whistleblowers?

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● ● ● | **Reporting Abuse or Neglect**

- You are all mandated reporters for any known or suspected abuse or neglect
  - Has anyone ever reported? Outcome?
  - Did you hesitate in reporting or regret not reporting? Why?
  - Other factors => pass off on other colleagues (e.g., teacher), afraid outcome will affect therapeutic relationship
- Be familiar with KS requirements

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● ● ● | Privacy and Confidentiality

- Maintaining confidentiality
  - Workplace policy
  - HIPAA issues
  - Discussing limits of confidentiality up front
- Minimizing intrusions on privacy
- Using confidential information for didactic or training purposes

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● ● ● | Issues more directly related to KIPBS training

- Based on Behavior Analyst Certification Board – Guidelines for Responsible Conduct (2002)
  - Overlaps greatly with APA Code
  - Differences lie in behavioral intervention and assessment

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● ● ● | Behavior Analysis - Integrity

Definition: The behavior analyst's behavior conforms to the legal and moral codes of the social and professional community of the behavior analyst is a member

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## Treatment Efficacy

- The BA must recommend scientifically supported, most effective treatment procedures.
- Effective tx's have been validated as having both long-term and short-term benefits to clients and society
- Clients have the right to effective treatment
- BA's must appraise all alternative tx's including those provided by other disciplines and no intervention

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## Assessing Behavior

- Data-based, based on research
- Recognizes the limits to the certainty with which judgments or predictions can be made about individuals
- Must be done by qualified persons
- Specific section defining functional assessment

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## Interventions

- Need to describe in writing the objectives of the behavior change program
- Need to explain assessment results
- Must be approved by client or client-surrogate
- Need to describe those environmental conditions that are necessary for the program to be effective

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● ● ● | Interventions

- Section on reinforcement and punishment
  - Notes that reinforcement should be used rather than punishment whenever possible
  - If punishment necessary, reinforcement for alternative behaviors must also be included
  - Avoid the use of reinforcers that may be harmful to the long-term health of client (e.g., cigarettes) or extreme deprivation
- Also recommends the use of least restrictive procedures

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● ● ● | Behavioral Interventions

- Recommending punishment (or any) intervention that you don't feel comfortable with or that you feel won't be implemented with fidelity
- Pressure from family, school staff, administration to implement it
  - Pressure due to the severity of problem behavior that is danger to self or others

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● ● ● | Other Ethical Considerations for KIPBS Facilitators

- Quality Assurance issues
- Data to support interventions
  - Maintaining records and information, especially around timely billing
  - FBAs and behavior plans
  - Using data to improve performance
  - Is it best to develop an ethics policy/code for KIPBS facilitators or adopt another code?

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## Final Comments

- It's always important to know the ethical code supporting your work
- Need a resource to discuss ethical dilemmas or case/peer reviews as needed
- Better to ask questions and act conservatively than have something regrettable happen

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