

Public Policy Article Guide

Article: Love of this Field: Advocating and Collaborating with a United Purpose by Bobbi Rogers, Dana Reinecke, and Tricia Moss-Lourenco

Brief Summary

This article highlights the New York State Association for Behavior Analysis (NYSABA)'s longstanding inclusion of a consumer representative on its Board of Directors—a role typically filled by a parent of an individual receiving Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services. The authors discuss how this inclusion has facilitated meaningful dialogue between professionals and consumers, significantly influencing public policy related to the practice of ABA-based services in New York State. Collaborative efforts between NYSABA and consumer representatives have been instrumental in advancing initiatives such as insurance coverage for ABA services and licensure for behavior analysts. The article provides insights and actionable steps for organizations aiming to incorporate consumer voices into their leadership structures.

Key Takeaways

- 1. Consumer Representation Enhances Advocacy:** Including consumer representatives in leadership roles fosters collaboration and strengthens advocacy efforts, leading to more effective policy changes.
- 2. Bridging Gaps Between Professionals and Consumers:** Active participation of consumers in organizational leadership promotes compassion and mutual understanding, and it aligns professional practices with the needs of service recipients.
- 3. Impact on Public Policy:** Collaborative relationships between behavior analysts and consumers have led to significant advancements in public policy, including improved insurance coverage and professional licensure standards.

4. Actionable Strategies for Inclusion: The article outlines specific steps organizations can take to meaningfully involve consumers in leadership, ensuring their perspectives inform decision-making processes.

- Listen with respect
- Create systems that increase ability to share and engage with leadership
- Create systems to offset financial burdens for participating
- Create systems and practices that make participating in events easier
- Amplify voices and facilitate connections
- Prioritize consumer-related items
- Facilitate inclusion and engagement in meetings
- Respect consumer's unique perspective and knowledge
- Provide support
- Acknowledge their role as mentor
- Create a buddy or liaison

5. Ethical Alignment: Engaging consumers in leadership aligns with ethical standards promoting respect, dignity, and the incorporation of diverse perspectives in professional practice.

Discussion Questions

- What are the benefits and challenges of including consumer representatives in organizational leadership within the profession of behavior analysis?
- How can behavior analysts ensure that consumer voices are not only heard but also have a tangible impact on decision-making processes?
- In what ways can consumer involvement influence public policy and the broader perception of behavior analysis and practicing behavior analysts?
- What strategies can organizations implement to recruit and support consumer representatives effectively?
- How does the inclusion of consumer perspectives align with the ethical responsibilities outlined by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®)?
- Reflecting on your own practice, how can you incorporate consumer feedback to enhance service delivery and advocacy efforts?

Reference

Rogers, B., Reinecke, D., & Moss-Lourenco, T. (2024). For the Love of this Field: Advocating and Collaborating with a United Purpose. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, 1-9.