

Severe Behavior Program

Undergraduate & Graduate Practicum Requirements

Marcus Autism Center
Severe Behavior Program
1920 Briarcliff Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30033
marcus.org/behavior

The Severe Behavior Program uses the most current and empirically supported assessment and treatment strategies, based upon Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). The Severe Behavior Program at Marcus Autism Center is one of only a few programs in the country with the specialized facility, highly trained staff, and sufficient expertise to assess and treat severe problem behavior in an intensive context. We provide a continuum of services ranging in severity to meet each child's individualized needs. We serve children between the ages of 3-21 who have previously been diagnosed with a developmental disability, and engage in severe problem behavior. Our team consists of highly trained Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA, BCBA-D) and Licensed Psychologists.

Day Treatment Program

The Day Treatment Program is our most intensive service for the assessment and treatment of severe problem behavior. Patients attend services daily (Monday-Friday) for six hours per day for approximately 12 week admissions. Patients who are appropriate for this service engage in significant problem behavior (e.g., aggression, self-injurious behavior, disruptive behavior, elopement, noncompliance, etc.) that is causing harm to themselves or others or destruction to property. Students work directly with patients and learn to collect data, conduct assessment and treatment sessions as the therapist, manage problem behavior, physically transition patients, assist with caregiver training and may also assist with administrative tasks related to the program.

Thoughts from Previous Practicum Students

"The opportunity of being an intern and helping impact the family's life is an opportunity that you would not get anywhere else!" – *Hannah*

"I gained valuable experiences and knowledge in the implementation of ABA treatment protocols. My internship opened doors to a career in psychology as well as provided me with the foundations from which to grow as a researcher and clinician." – *Adriana*

"The people are wonderful and really make you feel like part of the team, it is truly a great learning experience that you will never forget!" – *Madison*

"There are so few opportunities for undergrads to get the type of hands on experience one can get interning with the Severe Behavior Program. I can't recommend the program enough!" – *Jennifer*

"My internship was incredible. I learned how to become a better communicator, both with my colleagues and patients. The immersion of interns into the department helped the cohesiveness of the unit and the patients' teams." – *Megan*

Student Expectations

- Number of hours required per week: Students are required to commit to a minimum of 12 hours per week; however, preference is given to students who can commit to more than 12 hours per week. These hours can be distributed Monday through Friday and must be during client hours (i.e. 9:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.).
- Number of months required: A 3 month (12 week) commitment is required.
- Prerequisite skills and experience: Basic knowledge of ABA and experience working with children with developmental disabilities is preferred, but not required.
- Physical requirements: Due to the nature of the problem behaviors of our patients in the Severe Behavior Program, all students must be able to tolerate the physical demands that the placement requires as listed below:
 - Hearing/Speaking: Effective communication with patients, staff and visitors.
 - Standing: 20-60% of the workday.
 - Sitting: 20-60% of the workday.
 - Walking: 20-60% of the workday.
 - Climbing: <10% of the workday.
 - Pushing/Pulling: 20-60% of the workday.
 - Bending/Stooping: 20-60% of the workday.
 - Lifting: 20-60% of the workday. Up to 50lbs independently and up to 300lbs with assistance.

Training Requirements

If an offer is made and accepted for the Severe Behavior Program, students will be required to attend two mandatory training dates prior to their first day of internship. During this two day training, students will receive training in basic ABA principles, conducting assessments, implementing strategies and practices specific to the Severe Behavior Program, and implementation of the Marcus Crisis Prevention Program. Students will be required to complete a test and/or demonstrate mastery in these procedures prior to being allowed to work with patients.

BCaBA/BCBA Supervision

Placements are available for students seeking BCaBA or BCBA supervision. For this type of experience, please note that a minimum of 20 hours per week is required over the course of two consecutive semesters (i.e. six months).

