

Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC

Preschool Special Education & Multidisciplinary Evaluation Program

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SEIT HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to guide SEIT providers with regards to the policies and procedures to be followed by Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC. We base our practices on New York State Education Laws and Regulations and encourage our therapists to refer to the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education which are available at: <https://www.op.nysed.gov/title8/regulations-commissioner-education>.

Providers of SEIT services can register online to receive notifications of new publications and updates pertaining to educational programs for preschool students with disabilities using the following link: <https://www.nysed.gov/subscribe>.

SEIT services are provided on a fee-for-service basis. SEIT providers are responsible to keep their license valid and to complete professional development as required by NYSED.

All forms mentioned in the Handbook may be found on Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC website at www.smartchoicetherapyinc.com.

SEIT Case Assignment/Receipt Procedure

- The SEIT will receive the student's IEP, SEIT Assignment form (for school/daycare-based cases), projected start date and other pertaining information for the case by an email.
- The SEIT will review the student's Evaluation Summary, IEP Present Levels of Performance, Goals and Related Service Mandate and note child's DOB, frequency and duration of sessions, direct/indirect service, medical alerts and location of service. **SEIT service must be scheduled in accordance with the student's IEP.**
- The SEIT can start services on any day of the week but not prior to the authorized start date, as specified in the IEP.
- The SEIT will contact the parent/guardian within 24 hours of case assignment to discuss the tentative schedule and start date.
- The SEIT will submit **First Attend Date Form, Provider Schedule, Waiver and Release of Information, FERPA Letter, Emergency Home Contact Form, and Parent Introduction Letter** to the SEIT Supervisor/Program Director with their first billing, with all applicable parent's signatures. **The First Attend Form must include the exact location of service provision (i.e., name and address of Day Care Center).**
- Once the SEIT signs First Attend Date Form, he/she is agreeing to service the child for the entire school year.
- The SEIT must submit to the agency by fax or email copies of Waiver and Release of Information, FERPA Letter to Parent and Emergency Contact Information forms, signed by the parent/guardian, within 3 business days from the start of services and send the originals with the first monthly billing thereafter (keeping a copy of Emergency Contact Information form for his/her records). Updated Emergency Contact Information form should be obtained as needed.
- **The schedule must be followed on a daily basis and should not change frequently.** All schedule changes should be previously discussed and agreed upon with the parent/caregiver. In case of a change in schedule, the SEIT will immediately notify the agency and submit a copy of the new schedule to SEIT Supervisor/Program Director.
- Provider Schedule form is required to be submitted at the beginning of the case and any time thereafter in case there is a change in the child's location of services as well as menu,

frequency and/or duration of services, as per the IEP, and if a new related service provider joins or leaves the team.

- The SEIT shall maintain accurate records to document direct and/or indirect service hours. **If indirect service is mandated on the IEP, the SEIT will document these sessions on a separate session note and will be paid accordingly.**
- The SEIT is the case coordinator and is required to communicate with related service providers on an ongoing basis. Smart Choice Therapy will collect data on SEIT's communication with related service providers as part of quarterly reports.
- On the last day of services for each semester, the SEIT fills out the Last Day Attend form and submits the original with the last billing.

Location of Services

- Location of services should be mirrored from the child's IEP. If a need arises to change the location of services (i.e., the parent removed child from daycare, and IEP specifies location of service as daycare), **the SEIT must notify the agency.** The agency will then correspond with the CPSE administrator to make the necessary amendment to the IEP.
- If the daycare/school is closed for any reason on a working school day (i.e., private school holidays, etc.), the SEIT should make prior arrangements with the agency to contact the CPSE administrator to obtain an approval to see the child at any other location for the corresponding period of time.
- If the student's IEP specifies location as **school only**, services can be provided in a community location (library, park, etc.) if the school is closed for any reason and SEIT services can be provided based on the agency's Attendance Calendar. **No home-based services are allowed for school-only IEPs.**

Attendance and Absences

SEIT services must be provided between 8:00 am and 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, **except for the holidays specified on the Attendance Calendar**, available on the website. Full mandates should be justified on a weekly bases by recording attended and missed sessions, except for the first and last weeks of the semester. **Each new semester must start with an attendance session.**

Student attendance should be recorded daily on the **Attendance Calendar** using the following codes:

- If the session is conducted, indicate the number of **full hour** sessions held (i.e., 2, 2.5, etc.).
- If more than 1 session are conducted for any given day, indicate the total number of hours provided.
- The SEIT should fill out all full hour sessions held for the month and calculate the total number of hours; then make a **copy** of the Attendance Calendar, **sign it** and submit with the monthly paperwork. The original Attendance Calendar should be held by the SEIT till the end of the school year and submitted with the June paperwork.
- **If the student is legally absent or late for services, indicate “A” on the Attendance Calendar.** Legal absences as per Regulations of the Commissioner of Education Section 175.6 include: illness, death in the family, impassable roads or weather, required court appearances, religious observance, vacation, attendance at health clinics. For any of the above, **the legal excuse should be indicated on the daily session note and written documentation should be obtained from the parent and submitted with monthly billing.**
- If a student is absent due to illness, SEIT must indicate the reason on the session note and include form of contact with parent (i.e., No session provided - child sick, spoke to parent by telephone at 8:00 am).
- **If the teacher is absent from the session, indicate “P” on the Attendance Calendar and include an explanation on a session note.**
- If an attendance session and a missed session are provided on the same day, only the attendance hours are recorded on the Attendance Calendar.
- If a student **misses five (5) consecutive sessions**, the SEIT should complete the **Absence Notification Form** indicating the dates and reason(s) for the absence (if known) and immediately submit it to the SEIT Supervisor/Program Director. If reason is not known, SEIT should indicate outreach attempts to parent.
- If a child is habitually missing sessions, the SEIT should immediately notify the agency. The district may choose to reconvene the CPSE to consider amending the child’s services. The SEIT Supervisor/Program Director will reach out to family and CPSE in accordance with RDNA Guidelines.

- In case the SEIT is not able to provide services (i.e., vacation or illness), the agency must be notified in advance or as soon as possible to arrange a substitute teacher.

Make-Up Sessions

- Any semester can only start with an attendance session; missed sessions can only start accruing after the first attendance session (for new and continuing cases).
- Make-up sessions have to be provided within any given semester and cannot be rolled over to the next semester.
- Make-up sessions cannot be performed prior to the missed sessions.
- **Make-up sessions can be provided during any given week once a full mandate has been fulfilled.**
- All teacher and student absences must be made up as close in proximity to the missed session as possible (preferably not to exceed 30 days or by the end of school year) if extenuating circumstances exist and no substitute was available to conduct the session.
- Make-up sessions must be performed during the student's two-month or ten-month period of authorization and enrollment.
- Each make-up session should be documented as such in the session notes signed by the parent or caregiver.
- The make-up session may be done on a day the child will be receiving regular SEIT service. However, make-up sessions should be scheduled within the timeframe of a typical school day. The total hours of services per one day should not exceed 6 hours.
- All make-up sessions must be provided to students at the same location as required on the IEP unless agreed upon, in writing, by the parent and CPSE.

Calendar

Each SEIT provider will receive a copy of Calendar.

Services may not be scheduled or made up on weekends or legal holidays.

No services/make-ups may be provided on the following legal holidays:

New Year's Day; Martin Luther King Birthday; Presidents' Day; Good Friday; Memorial Day; Juneteenth; Indigenous Peoples' Day; Veterans' Day; Thanksgiving Day; Christmas Day; New Year's Day.

Additional holidays will be observed in accordance with the agency's policy (as indicated in the agency's Calendar).

If the school district closes due to inclement weather conditions or other emergency, the SEIT should verify the agency's policy on whether to provide services that day or to schedule a make-up session.

Session Notes

- Sessions must be provided in 30-minute increments.
- The SEIT should **submit electronic session notes and related paper-based billing paperwork on the 3rd of the following month or as requested in the Important Dates mass email distributed on a monthly basis.**
- Following each session, the SEIT should complete a corresponding electronic session note.
- Session notes must be typed in Provider Soft.
- There should be no lapse in dates on the session notes.
- Sessions cannot be combined to fewer days unless approval is granted by CPSE.
- The **Start time** and **End time** must be indicated specifically as the time of arrival and end of service session. AM or PM must be indicated on the daily session note.
- The session note should include at least 2 IEP goals taken exactly from the child's IEP. The SEIT should include all tangible activities used within the session to work on these goals and provide the student's response, level of facilitations, and progress.
- **Session notes must NOT be completed during the session.** The entire session period should be allocated to servicing the child.
- If the session ends early due to parent's requests or a significant child concern, not less than 23 minutes or more of the 30-minute session are considered billable.
- The SEIT's electronic signature must be included and his/her credentials indicated (MSED).
- **SEIT Service Form must be completed and signed weekly for each child.** SEIT Services Forms should include authentic physical signatures of the SEIT and child's caregiver(s), depending on the location of services, as specified in the IEP. If services are provided in a school/daycare, a signee authorized by the venue should add the name, signature and date in the assigned section, using a black or blue pen.

If services are provided at home, a child's parent or other caregiver (over 18 years of age) should sign and date in the assigned section, using a black or blue pen. Parent cannot sign for services provided at the daycare/school. All signatures should be actual, physical signatures; **no photocopies accepted!** **At least 4 of SEIT Service Forms must be submitted with billing every month.**

- Any material misrepresentation of date, time or extent of services may result in criminal actions.

Reports

Quarterly Progress Reports

The SEIT is responsible for writing quarterly progress reports for each of his/her students.

Quarterly reports are completed every 3 months and submitted to the SEIT Supervisor/Program Director using the Quarterly Progress Report forms with SEIT's November, February, May, and August billing (for 12-month cases), on the 3rd of the following month.

The SEIT must review the Quarterly report with the parents and provide them with a copy of this report.

The report should reflect the following:

- Current functioning level of the child
- Progress the child has made toward achieving the IEP goals
- Target for meeting the goals by the end of the IEP
- Information related to continued eligibility of the child including informal testing
- An indication if a new CPSE review needs to be scheduled to change the IEP
- Collaboration with the related services provider(s), including date(s)
- Collaboration with the child's parent(s)/caregiver(s), including date(s)

All quarterly progress reports require **parent's signature**. Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC accepts authentic signatures, physical and electronic (with a time stamp for the latter), provided by the parent for these reports.

Annual Progress Reports

A student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) is reviewed at least once each year. Summer is part of the following school year.

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The SEIT is responsible for writing the Annual report using the Annual Progress Report form. **The Annual report is due and must be submitted to the SEIT Supervisor/Program Director at least one month before the end of the child's IEP period.** Corresponding reminders are emailed by the Program Director/SEIT Supervisor to the SEIT and related service providers 2 months prior to the due date, in order to ensure timely submission.

Each Annual report will contain progress and deficit comments related to the individual student's IEP goals covering each of the five domain areas:

1. Cognitive
2. Social-Emotional
3. Physical (including Gross and Fine Motor subdomains)
4. Language and Communication (including Receptive Language and Expressive Language subdomains)
5. Adaptive/Self-Help

The following will also be included in the report:

1. Summary indicating the suggested level of support for the student for the upcoming IEP period
2. Suggested modifications to the frequency and duration of services, if any

IEP Pages including a new PLOP (Present Level of Progress) and IEP goals must be submitted with Annual Progress Report.

SEIT must coordinate the timely submission of Annual Reports and IEP pages from Related Service providers.

Age Out (Turning 5) Report

Age Out reports for aging out students are due and must be submitted to the SEIT Supervisor/Program Director **by January 3rd (with December billing)**. No updated IEP goals are to be submitted with the Age Out report.

Each Age Out Report will contain progress and deficit comments related to the individual student's IEP goals covering each of the five domain areas:

1. Cognitive
2. Social-Emotional
3. Physical
4. Language and Communication
5. Adaptive/Self-Help

The following will also be included in the report:

1. Summary
2. Recommendations for the kindergarten placement and if the parent(s)/caregiver(s) agree with the SEIT recommendation

Billing

The following documents **MUST** be submitted by the 3rd of the following month of services. If the 3rd falls on a weekend, paperwork **MUST** be submitted by Monday right after the 3rd or as requested in the Important Dates mass email distributed on a monthly basis.

- Session Notes are to be submitted electronically, through Provider Soft.
- Original SEIT Invoice, completed in its entirety and signed.
- Original Provider Schedule (if changed from last month).
- A copy of Attendance Calendar (final completed original calendar will be due with the end of the school year/summer semester billing).
- Original SEIT Service Forms, one for every week of the month if the child was in attendance, with authentic physical signatures and dates.

LATENESS POLICY: Overdue billing will result in late processing of payment.

- If the SEIT's billing is submitted within a month after the deadline, he/she will be compensated a month later. If billing is submitted 2 months after the deadline, the SEIT will be compensated 2 months later, and so forth.
- If the SEIT is habitually submitting late billing, the case might be reassigned.

Supervision

Individual SEIT observations are conducted at least once a year. SEIT Supervisor will observe SEIT's session and check paperwork. Observations might be done in announced and/or unexpected manner, according to the schedule submitted to the agency. SEIT Supervisor will assist the SEIT in following learning standards, creating individual curriculum, completing paperwork and other areas if needed. The SEIT can request extra observations, if necessary.

If necessary, in-person observations can be replaced by obtaining periodic feedback from caregivers at home and/or programs (by phone, emails, etc.). Verbal interviews can be conducted by designated staff at least once a year; feedback forms to be filled out and placed in students' files.

Service Delivery

All services are to be provided in person.

SEIT Services - Given in the Mainstream Classroom

The goal of SEIT services is to enable the child to function and learn within a typical preschool classroom, therefore SEIT services are usually provided in the regular classroom setting. SEIT providers should work in the classroom to facilitate the child's participation in ongoing activities and to encourage the child's engagement with the provided materials and props. Occasionally, circumstances require for the SEIT to work with a child on a "pull-out" basis, outside of the routine of the class. Such circumstances could include: scheduling difficulties, IEP goals that cannot be addressed during the class routine, or a lack of appropriate materials. In such cases, teachers should spend part of their assigned time working with a child in a quiet corner of the room or somewhere nearby (hallway, cubby area, etc.), using their own materials. The SEIT provider must be flexible and adapt the plan for the day to what is going on in the typical classroom (trips, special events, birthday parties, etc.).

SEIT Services – Given in the Home

SEIT services can be provided in the child's home for eligible children with "any location" IEPs. The SEIT needs to provide suitable materials, toys, and activities to the child to work on the IEP goals and objectives. The SEIT should consider working with toys or materials from the child's

home in order to teach students how to use their own toys appropriately. The SEIT should closely work with the student's parents/guardians to provide necessary feedback and carryover. SEIT providers are responsible for reporting any situations of concern in the student's home to the SEIT Supervisor/Program Director immediately. In some cases reporting a situation to ACS may be necessary. SEIT providers should be aware of unsafe conditions in the home, e.g., uncovered outlets, peeling paint, windows without screens, lack of supervision, etc.

SEIT Services - Indirect

Indirect Services include consultation to the child's regular classroom teacher to adjust the environment and/or modify methodology, materials, etc. in order to meet the needs of the student. **Indirect Services are not billable, unless they are mandated by the IEP.** Should the student's IEP mandate Indirect Services, the SEIT will be filling out **Indirect SEIT Session Note** for every session provided.

CPSE/CSE Meetings

Preparation for IEP meetings/Annual Reviews

SEIT providers must keep track of annual review dates for each student. Annual Review is scheduled one (1) year from the date of the "original/initial" IEP. The SEIT is responsible for informing Related Service providers of the due dates of Annual Progress reports and updated IEP pages, **eight (8) weeks prior to IEP date.** Annual reports and IEP pages should be gathered and submitted at least 4 weeks before the due date.

SEITs are mandated to attend all CPSE and CSE meetings. These meetings and preparation time for them are not billable.

Other reasons for IEP meeting

Additional meetings may be conducted upon submission of a Request to Amend IEP, at the parent's/caregiver's request or as deemed necessary. SEIT can request to amend frequency of services, request termination of services, additional evaluations or extending to 12-month program. Request to amend IEP should not be submitted until after providing at least 2 months of services to the student. The SEIT should consult SEIT Supervisor/Program Director before submitting the form.

In case SEIT is requesting 12-month mandate for the student, he/she will also provide Regression Tracking Form, a progress report and updated PLOP with IEP goals.

Behavioral Management Policies and Procedures

It is a given part of the SEIT's role to assist his/her student to develop initiative to control himself/herself and take responsibility for his/her own behavior.

Behavior management is a strategy for managing inappropriate behavior. The SEIT as he/she does her/his session would most likely experience occasional problematic behavior from assigned case/s. It can be one or a combination of the following: non-compliance, destructiveness or physical or verbal aggression to SEIT, the child himself/herself, or to others (children or adults if the service is in a group setting). The troublesome behavior can be short-lived or occurring at brief or prolonged intervals. The behavior problem manifested can be either minor or serious. In whatever way, the troublesome behavior needs to be addressed and if it is not possible to totally eliminate it, at least to be prevented or minimized. Ignoring problematic behavior can escalate it or would send the wrong message that misbehaving can be tolerated and/or allowed. Consequently, teaching would be negatively affected. Even if misbehavior is beyond the child's control, there are ways to contain the problem.

No matter how challenging the behavior problem is, the corrective action employed by SEITs should be limited to application of positive behavior management techniques.

Punishment of any kind is definitely not allowed. Managing a preschooler's misbehavior involves teaching him/her to act in more socially acceptable ways to communicate his/her need/s or express himself/herself to handle particular situation/s without resorting to crying, biting, screaming or making tantrums. At all times, SEIT has to look at the message behind the inappropriate behavior in deciding for a possible solution. If her/his student is verbal, it is important for the SEIT to prompt the child to use words, phrase or sentence to express his/her need, feelings of anger, sadness or disappointment with appropriate words and tone of voice.

The following list of behavior modification techniques can be used:

- Modifying materials
- Modifying instructions/breakdown tasks
- Modifying given task's length/expectations
- Providing reinforcement
- Following least preferred activity with most preferred activity

- Providing visual support

If challenging behavior is motivated by need of attention, SEIT can exercise the following behavior modification techniques:

- Providing praise, token or material reward
- Offering desirable/favorite toys
- Offering a desired reward for completing a given activity
- Providing a choice of activities (2-3)
- Providing offers of assistance
- Using timer to make known provision of reinforcement

If challenging behavior is caused by transitioning difficulty:

- Providing verbal warning ("5 more minutes. . .", etc.)
- Providing countdown (count from 20 to 1, etc.)
- Stating the ending activity and the activity to follow ("5 more minutes, then clean-up")
- Using visuals/pictures/photos to show the next activity

When considering tangible rewards, SEITs should pick something of value to their children (stickers, bubbles, special toys, etc.) accompanied with verbal praise. SEITs should always show excitement and enthusiasm when the child exercises the desirable behavior. Gradually, SEIT should phase out tangible rewards and switch to verbal praise only. To be effective, verbal praise and enthusiasm must be given sincerely.

Other possible causes of a child's misbehavior that SEIT can consider are the following:

- Ecological causes (triggered by food) - gluten, casein, chocolate and other sweets
- Physiological causes – hunger, pain, allergic reaction, illness
- Activity not being developmentally- appropriate (too challenging/too boring)
- Environmental causes – surroundings being noisy, messy, too stimulating
- SEIT's lack of preparedness for the session

When encountering more serious behavior problems, SEIT must gather data from different sources about what triggers them considering SEIT's observations, the child's records, interviewing the student's family and/or school teachers, etc. Once SEIT gathers appropriate data, he/she can analyze it for possible solutions. Some of the options to discuss with caregivers could include, but not be limited to:

- Switching the child to gluten-casein free diet
- Promoting sensory integration (weighted vests, balls)

- Encouraging auditory integration
- Considering medication (upon consulting the child's pediatrician or other specialist)

SEIT is always welcome to contact the Program Director/SEIT Supervisor for advice so appropriate steps can be undertaken prior to setting up a behavior management plan.

Behavioral assessments and behavior intervention plans should be developed by trained behavioral specialists as deemed necessary if all other means of intervention fail to succeed.

If a behavior intervention plan is developed for a child receiving SEIT services, the SEIT will likely be required to implement it as part of the provision of services. This implementation must include regular progress monitoring of the behavioral interventions at scheduled intervals as specified in the child's behavior plan and in the IEP. The results of the monitoring must be documented and reported to the child's parents and the CPSE and shall be considered in any determination to revise a student's behavior intervention plan or IEP.

Sexual Harassment at Workplace Reporting

SEITs are mandated to complete Stop Sexual Harassment free online training every year and submit the certificate of completion to Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC. Please use the link below to obtain your certificate:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/law/sexual-harassment-training.page>

If you have witnessed or experienced sexual harassment, please inform a manager at your workplace as soon as possible.

Report sexual harassment to the NYC Commission on Human Rights. Call 718-722-3131 or visit <https://www.nyc.gov/site/cchr/index.page> to learn how to file a complaint or report discrimination. You can file a complaint anonymously.

Incident/Accident Reporting

The intent of the incident report process is to enhance the quality of care provided to the students in order to protect them from harm, mental and physical abuse or neglect. The primary function of incident reporting is to enable Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC administrators and supervisors to become aware of problems, to take corrective measures, and to minimize the potential for recurrence of the same or similar events or situations.

SEITs are mandated to complete Child Abuse and Neglect training every three years. Additionally, all teachers will be trained in incident reporting procedures prior to their first day of employment.

A. Reportable Incidents

There are three types of incidents. All of them must be reported, reviewed and investigated according to the procedures contained in this document.

1. Allegations of Abuse and Neglect

Incidents in which the maltreatment or mishandling of a student would endanger the physical or emotional well-being of the student through the action or inaction on the part of anyone, including an employee, volunteer, visitor or others, whether or not the student appears to be injured or harmed. The failure to exercise one's duty on behalf of a student also constitutes abuse.

When child abuse or neglect is suspected, a report must be made to the Child Abuse Hotline immediately - 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453). Note that the Child Abuse Hotline will only accept allegations against family members, not employees.

All deaths suspected to be the result of abuse or neglect, suicides, homicides, accidental deaths due to suspicious, unusual or unnatural circumstances must be also reported immediately by telephone to the police. The police will notify the medical examiner.

2. Serious Reportable Incidents

Serious reportable reports include:

- a) Injury to a student when the injury was caused by an act of that person or another which includes the overnight admission to a hospital or emergency room for a treatment or observation;
- b) Injury to a student which was caused by an accident and which includes the overnight admission to a hospital or emergency room for treatment or observation;
- c) Injury of unknown origin which includes the overnight admission to a hospital or emergency room for treatment or observation;
- d) Missing person;
- e) Death;
- f) Restraint: the act of limiting or controlling a student's behavior through the use of any device which prevents the free movement of both arms or both legs;
- g) Hospitalization.

3. Incidents Reportable to Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC

Significant events or situations that may endanger a student's wellbeing are required by the agency to be reported. Examples of the incidents include but are not limited to:

- a) evacuation - a situation which necessitates the immediate evacuation due to fire, smoke, flood or other condition;
- b) behavior which is dangerous to self or others, such as physical aggression by a student or self-injurious or potentially dangerous behavior. Behavior management plan will be developed in such cases;

B. Family/Guardian Rights.

A student's family member(s) or guardian is to be notified immediately of all allegations of abuse and neglect and all serious reportable incidents. In these situations, the notifications should be made by the agency supervisor or administrator. If the allegation is abuse or neglect against the family/guardian, the agency administration will determine whether or not communication with them is appropriate. The student's family shall be given information during the investigation process and advised of the findings and conclusions. Whenever possible, the communication with families should be done in person or by phone. In providing such notifications, or any additional information regarding a serious reportable incident/allegation of abuse and neglect, the staff shall adhere to confidentiality requirements regarding students and respect the privacy rights of involved parties.

Health and Safety Procedures

During the provision of SEIT services at home, the student should always be supervised by his/her parent(s) or caregiver(s).

When SEITs provide services at day care/preschool, they should request an orientation at the beginning of the first visit. Specifically, teachers need to know evacuation route, emergency procedures and safety plan of the preschool/day care. SEITs should follow the facility health/safety/emergency procedures in addition to this policy.

General Guidelines:

- 1) Wash hands at the beginning and end of each session.

- 2) Wash toys and equipment before using them with another student. Toys and equipment must be disinfected on a daily basis.
- 3) Diapering and toileting needs that occur during a home visit should be taken care of by the parent/caregiver.
- 4) While providing services at daycare/preschool, SEIT should make sure gloves are worn while changing or toileting a student and hands must be washed immediately afterwards.
- 5) Gloves must be worn at all times when teacher works with food or touches the student's mouth.
- 6) SEIT providers must discuss dietary restrictions with the parents/caregivers and adhere to them.
- 7) Food reinforcers should not be used without parents' knowledge and permission.
- 8) SEIT should not enter a building if it does not appear to be safe. SEIT should leave the building if he/she does not feel safe.
- 9) Immediately notify SEIT Supervisor/Program Director in case of any safety concerns.

Caregiver should contact the student's doctor or emergency medical services (911) for help when needed. SEIT should get help **immediately** for a student with any of the following conditions (this is not a complete list; when in doubt, call 911):

1. A temperature of 105 degrees F. or higher
2. A sudden seizure
3. Unequal pupils
4. A blood-red or purple rash made up of pinhead-sized spots or bruises
5. A rash of hives or welts that appears and spreads quickly
6. Breathing so fast or so hard that the child cannot play, talk, cry, or drink
7. A severe stomachache that causes the child to double up and scream
8. Stools that are black or have blood mixed through them
9. Continuous clear drainage from the nose after a hard blow to the head
10. Student looking or acting very ill or getting worse quickly
11. Student experiencing neck pain when his/her head is moved or touched
12. Student acting unusually confused

DOs and DON'Ts:

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1. Introduce yourself to the parents and caregivers as soon as you start working with a student.
2. Be on time for all scheduled sessions. Inform parents or/and caregivers when you are not able to provide services because of sickness or emergency.
3. Do not accept, solicit or offer anything of value from anyone doing business with Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC if the gift or gratuity results from your employment activity at the agency.
4. Never provide any confidential information about your students/their families to anybody not involved in providing services to the child.
5. Do not produce copies of IEP to anybody (including the student's school or regular classroom teacher) without the parent/guardian permission.
6. Never make false or misleading statement to anyone as a Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC employee.
7. Do not stay alone with your student. A family representative must be present at all times when services are provided at home. Caregivers should be able to observe you when you work at preschool.
8. Do not close the door or move to another area of the house without family permission.
9. Do not bring your children, other family members, friends or other non-professionals on a home visit.
10. Do not take pictures of the child or their family without written permission from the parent/guardian.
11. Call police immediately, when you come to provide services at home and find a child unattended.
12. Do not drive your students in your personal vehicle.
13. Do not bring food or beverages into the classroom or home for your personal consumption.
14. Turn off/silence your cell phone during sessions and meetings.
15. Do not communicate about the child with teachers and/or parents in front of the child or in public areas.
16. Communicate with parents, classroom teachers, therapists and other professionals in appropriate language and within professional boundaries.

Footwear and Professional Appearance

Employees are expected to maintain a professional appearance that reflects the standards of Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC and is appropriate for working with children, schools, daycares, homes, and community settings.

Clothing should be clean, neat, professional, and suitable for providing educational and therapeutic services. Employees must dress in a manner that allows them to safely and effectively perform their job duties, including sitting on the floor and low chairs, engaging in play-based activities, assisting children, and moving throughout various service environments. For safety reasons, employees must wear footwear that provides adequate support, stability, and traction. Footwear that creates a safety hazard or interferes with the employee's ability to safely perform job duties is not permitted. Employees should avoid excessively high heels, platform shoes, or other footwear that may increase the risk of slips, trips, falls, or injury while working with young children.

Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC reserves the right to determine whether an employee's attire or footwear is appropriate for the work environment and may require modifications when necessary to maintain safety, professionalism, or compliance with workplace standards. Employees who require an exception or modification to this policy for a medical or religious reason should contact SEIT Supervisor or Program Director to discuss a reasonable accommodation in accordance with applicable laws.

Confidentiality Policy

Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC is dedicated to protecting privacy and confidentiality of all information relating to our students. As a Special Education Itinerant Services Program, we are required to abide by Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) policies limiting disclosure of information. Teachers must safeguard at all times confidential information that is not intended to be disclosed; this information may only be released to authorized individuals. Smart Choice Therapy Inc personnel are responsible for guaranteeing confidentiality. Confidentiality applies throughout the stages of collection, disclosure, storage and destruction of hard copy or electronic records. Teachers shall not verbally convey information about a child or family without the written parental consent.

Parents or legal guardians have the right to access their child's educational records under FERPA and IDEA. Parents will receive an explanation and interpretation of the student's records if needed; also, parents can have a representative review the requested records on their behalf. When parents or legal guardians want to share the information with other schools, professionals or individuals, they are required to submit written consent. Parents have rights to obtain a copy of the requested record within 10 working days of receipt of the written request (5 working days if the request is made as part of mediation or impartial hearing). Parents/legal guardians will be informed about their rights to access their child's records at the beginning of their services and every year since then.

Child records and other personally identifiable materials may not be released or made available to persons other than those authorized. Records are maintained in a locked file or cabinet at the Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC administrative office. A list of personnel authorized to have access to a student's file will be placed in the front of each file. All individual records have a separate page which documents the date of access, the person who accessed the record and the purpose of the access. Requests for access to a student's record will be kept in the student's file. Correspondence or record of one child shall not reveal the name of another student or family. Records shall be disposed of by shredding.

Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC should apply safeguards when communicating by email, fax or other method to keep personally identifiable information confidential. The least amount of identifiable information should be used (e.g., first and/or last initials). Email exchanges with parents and schools should also be copied to SEIT Supervisor/Program Director. Child specific information should be transmitted only if all parties included in sending and receiving are able to maintain confidentiality. It is recommended to use disclaimer when corresponding by email or fax.

Preventing Fraud on Signature Forms

As per the SEIT Employment Agreement signed at the beginning of SEIT's employment with Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC, our agency has zero tolerance policy towards employee's falsification of patient records, invoices, including, without limitation, time and place of delivery, extent of service, combining sessions, fraudulent signatures parents and/or caregivers, misrepresentations of client's level of functionality, overlapping in schedule, etc.

Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC would like to reiterate the importance of obtaining and submitting paperwork as per the NYC DOE guidelines stipulating that all signatures on your forms should be authentic and physical.

On a weekly basis, SEITs have to collect signatures and dates of the caregivers at the children's assigned locations, as per the IEP (school/daycare or home), on SEIT Service Forms. Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC only accepts physical signatures and dates on SEIT Service billing forms (no photocopies accepted).

In case the student attends a school or daycare, SEIT collects a physical signature and date from the person authorized by the school to sign the form as well as his/her full name and title. In case there is a paraprofessional on the case, he/she cannot sign for the school.

In case the student receives services at home, as per the IEP, the child's caregiver (parent or other, over 18 years of age) signs in the appropriate box and adds a date.

In the state of New York, any individual who willfully and knowingly creates a forged document that suggests liability or value in an attempt to defraud another party is guilty of the crime of forgery. Forgery in New York is considered a very serious crime. Penalties that are given will depend largely on the degree of the forgery for which a person has been convicted, as well as other surrounding factors.

Based on the above, a SEIT who submits paperwork with forged signatures of the child's caregivers, is committing a fraud that Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC must report to the corresponding New York City DOE school district and New York State DOE while putting the SEIT's employment on hold. In case the investigation conducted by Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC as well as NYC DOE and NYS DOE shows fraudulent activity, the SEIT will be immediately fired. Other consequences can include revoking teaching license, pressing charges, paying fines, etc.

We hope that SEITs always exercise professionalism and high standards of delivering special education itinerary services to all our students.

Important Phone Numbers and Contact Information

Elena Kofner, Program Director/SEIT Supervisor

Yana Bruck, CFO

Roslyn Stozki, SEIT Supervisor

Mariya Reznik, Evaluation Program Director

Lana Khodorkovskiy, Billing Specialist

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Receipt of SEIT Handbook

This is to acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC SEIT Handbook. I understand all the policies, guidelines and practices of Smart Choice Therapy Group LLC as a Department of Education contracted agency. I agree to comply with policies as outlined in the Handbook. If I have questions regarding the content or interpretation, I will contact Program Director or SEIT Supervisor.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

FOR OFFICE ONLY

Signature: _____ / ____ / _____

Interviewer/Manager