



Respite: A Handbook for Families and Respite Providers

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A Welcome Respite

AT BACI we believe that respite is a physical and emotional retreat, where relaxation and renewal can create strength and resilience. Every family's idea of respite is unique; one family may enjoy an afternoon run up the Grouse Grind, while another may fly off for a tropical vacation and some just want to recharge their batteries in their own home. Other times the need for respite cannot be planned; an unexpected illness, accident, or circumstance requires immediate respite response. Whether a family's idea of respite is an annual vacation, a weekly short break, a good night's sleep, or a helping hand in an emergency, BACI is dedicated to meeting those needs.

BACI also believes that real respite can only occur when every member of the family is comfortable and confident with the service. Families have told us that this occurs when the services are reliable, responsive, and are provided by capable respite providers, in safe and nurturing environments. It is with these important factors in mind that BACI has developed our respite services.

This guide is for families and respite providers who may already be familiar with BACI and for those just considering respite services. We hope the information is helpful and we encourage all families and respite providers to visit our website for additional information at www.gobaci.com.



About BACI

In 1956, parents of children with disabilities formed a non-profit organization in Burnaby to help advocate for the rights of their sons and daughters. This was the birth of the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion and the beginning of an unwavering commitment to respond to the needs expressed by people served and their families.

From its start as a grassroots organization, our Association has maintained a steadfast commitment to listening to the needs of those it serves and their families. Services must honour this group above all and be capable of accommodating its diverse needs, interests, and expectations. This obligation results from a number of considerations, not the least of which is the fact that our services bear directly and profoundly upon the quality of life of those receiving them. We are therefore committed to being a dynamic and vibrant organization with a strong membership, always driven by, and answerable to, the people we serve and their families. A central conviction that shapes all our practices is the belief that citizenship (and the rights, privileges, and responsibilities that accompany it) must extend to all Canadians, regardless of whether or not one has a disability. So our goal is not simply to integrate principles of citizenship into the services we provide – such as the right to self-determination, contribution, and the freedom from discrimination – but to advocate making sure these principles are also present for people with disabilities in the wider social and political systems.

Each person has the right to make decisions about what sort of life they will lead, and to be given responsibility for those choices. This includes the right to make decisions regarding their working life, home life, community, and the direction taken in their personal journey.



Consequently, we are committed to ensuring that:

- Self-advocates are given roles or leadership, involvement and influence in matters that are of concern to them (including our services) and that all people we serve contribute to decisions affecting them to the extent that they are able;
- All people enjoy opportunities to make meaningful contributions to their communities;
- BACI collaborates with our local communities, municipalities, province and nation to create inclusion and genuine belonging for persons living in the margins of our society, most especially those with disabilities.

However, because our communities clearly are not yet places of full inclusion where citizenship and dignity is readily given to all members, we recognize advocacy and partnership as important and appropriate ways of bringing about change.

The Board of Directors has created and endorsed a Vision, Mission and set of Guiding Principles for our Association:

Vision: A society that includes all people.

Mission: BACI creates places where people of all ages

- Connect with family and friends
- Achieve hopes and dreams
- Learn and grow
- Have choices respected
- Access quality supports and services
- Believe in and advocate for the rights and responsibilities of everyone.

Guiding Principles

- 1. We recognize the inherent value of every person.** We recognize the value of every person. All people with disabilities share the same basic human rights as well as the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens. We will treat all people in a fair and equal way.
- 2. We believe that each person should be treated as an individual.** We recognize that all people are unique. They all have both gifts and limitations. All people must be seen as people and must be treated with respect.
- 3. We believe that friends and family are of utmost importance in the lives of the people whom we support.** We are committed to making sure that all of the people that we support have family and friends in their lives. Friends and family are an extremely important part of our lives. People with friends usually are more valued by people in the larger community. Friends add joy to people's lives, make their lives more satisfying, and make them less vulnerable.

4. **We believe that all people have a right to take part in and belong in their community.** We are committed to working toward a community in which people are neither labeled nor excluded. We believe that all people have the right to belong in their community and that they should be valued for the gifts that they bring to their community.
5. **We believe that people with disabilities should be supported and encouraged to make decisions that affect their lives.** We will encourage people to say or show what they want, make sure that they have choices, and respect those choices. Our goals are to involve people with disabilities in making decisions and to make sure that they have enough information to make choices themselves. Making choices and decisions may lead to taking risks, to being responsible for those decisions and to learning from those experiences. We will ensure that people who are vulnerable have family and friends involved in making decisions that affect their lives.
6. **BACI is a Disability Confident organization; every aspect of the organization is accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities. This commitment is proactively supported in policy and practice.** These principles serve as both the foundation for, and the inspiration behind our services. We are committed to their fulfillment in every aspect of our undertakings, and we are determined that they shall be neither compromised nor weakened as a result of the demands, pressures, and/or stresses that are involved in the provision of services. We welcome and encourage all stakeholders (the people we support, their families, members, social workers, external professionals/contractors, financial donors, and so on) to challenge us when they feel we may be losing this focus, or when they feel we have not implemented these principles to the fullest extent possible.



About Respite Services

BACI's goal is to offer respite services that contribute to the entire family's well being. We recognize the balance that must be achieved between meeting the support needs of the people we serve, the family's support needs, and BACI's capacity to respond. Our services are designed to achieve that balance and are framed around the belief that families will experience real respite when service includes the following features:

- Flexibility
- Choice
- Transparent communication
- Accessibility

Getting Started

To receive a referral to BACI's respite services families should contact either Community Living British Columbia (CLBC) for adults, or the Ministry for Children & Family Development (MCFD) for children. With the referral will come the approved amount of funding available for respite services. The amount of funding available will influence the type and amount of respite services possible. If you are having trouble connecting to either of these referral bodies please contact one of the Respite Managers at BACI.

Exploring the Options

Respite service options include support offered in the respite provider's home, the family home (if overnight stays are included), or out at community activities (if day respite is the preferred option). Each service option is designed to provide the opportunity for families to retreat, relax and renew.

Determining the option that best meets the families need within the available respite funding allotted is the first important step. Often families know exactly what type of support they need and it becomes BACI's job to listen closely. Other times families may not be sure of the support they need and in these cases BACI will introduce them to the various options, and to other families who can help guide and support them. Once BACI and the family share an understanding of the type, frequency and when they require respite, BACI will confirm this information in a service plan.



Selecting the Respite Provider

Because BACI has been providing services to people with disabilities and their families for some time, we have developed a pool of talented and dedicated people who we often draw upon to become respite providers. In the event that an appropriate caregiver cannot be found within our existing network, BACI will begin the recruitment process. Sometimes families will have suggestions about who might be a good caregiver such as past support workers, school assistants, neighbors, and friends. BACI welcomes these suggestions.

Respite providers are selected through a process which includes an interview, reference checks and a criminal record search. with BACI and the family. The intent of the interview is to determine the respite provider's capacity to provide respite support and his/her compatibility with the family. Please note: Even family friends must go through our selection process.

If the respite service option includes overnight stays in the respite care providers home, BACI and the family will conduct a home study, the intent of which is to determine the safety and suitability of the home.

Depending on the nature of the respite service, the selected respite provider may either become a BACI employee or enter into a 'Respite Agreement.' This agreement is a legal contract that establishes BACI as the 'employer,' the caregiver as the 'contractor,' and describes all the terms, conditions and key deliverables of the respite service to be provided.

Supporting Respite

Families and respite providers will be supported by one of our respite managers, who will provide a connection to human and web-based resources that will help everyone enjoy the respite experience.

We have found that the support drawn from common experience is very powerful. Families are encouraged to take part in BACI's Family Support Services. This group is led by families and provides a safe, supportive and effective forum to discuss family issues and seek solutions.

The dates, times, locations and themes for the meetings are posted at <http://family.gobaci.com/>

If you have a suggestion for a meeting theme, please let us know!

Respite providers are part of a large network of the people we serve who are dedicated to strengthening the resilience of families. BACI encourages all respite providers to take part in the many professional development and support opportunities made available on a regular basis and posted on the web site.

Web-Based Resources

- 1. Resources to Strengthen the Respite Experience.** This resource section contains links to interesting community information, activities, general health information, family support services etc. This resource section will grow and change as BACI finds and posts new materials.
- 2. Resources Required within the Respite Caregiver Agreement.** This section of resources connects directly to the Respite Caregiver Agreement and contains procedures and forms that **must** be followed and used in the fulfillment of the agreement. This section includes, for example, BACI Policy that relates to contractors, Critical Incident Reporting procedures and forms, reporting procedures and forms, etc.

Tools and resources are available to families and the respite caregiver by accessing the BACI web site at www.gobaci.com. If you have questions about any of the materials on the web site, or are having difficulty accessing them, please contact your BACI Team member.

Monitoring

BACI's Respite Team plays an important role in monitoring the respite experience and the fulfillment of the Respite Provider Agreement. While formal monitoring will occur quarterly, BACI relies upon and supports the informal and very powerful roles that families, friends and neighbors can play in helping people with disabilities lead safe and dynamic lives.

Finances

Respite services at BACI are provided through two different kinds of contracts.

1. "Funding In"...The first is the contract that BACI has with either CLBC or MCFD. This contract provides BACI with funds to be used to provide respite services for families. BACI will communicate openly with families around the amount of funding received and the terms and conditions for its use.
2. "Funding Out"...The second contract is between BACI and the caregiver that describes the terms and conditions (including financial) related to providing respite services for a specific family. Families will be involved in creating the deliverables of this contract that relate directly to the care needs of their family member.

The Respite Relationship

The respite experience is a shared experience impacting all parties – the person with disabilities/their family, the respite provider and BACI. Each of the members has a role to play in the relationship and each comes to the relationship with a set of hopes, dreams and expectations. While every experience is unique, our goal is to provide services that lead to real respite; retreat, relax, and renewal.

Next Steps

Whether you are a family seeking respite or someone interested in becoming a respite provider, BACI hopes this handbook provides a good introduction to our respite service.

Please feel free to contact a BACI Respite Team member to arrange a time to meet. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have, and get started on building a great respite experience.