



Your partners in educational excellence for over 20 years

Introduction to The Bertram Group's therapeutic educational consulting services

Families who discover that a younger member of the family needs special assistance to deal with emotional or behavioral issues, or a substance abuse problem, will often experience a roller coaster of emotions. Furthermore, they will need support from a number of sources who bring a broad range of expertise. One of the most important of these can be that of an educational consultant who is experienced and knowledgeable in dealing with placement options and managing the relationships with therapists, field personnel, directors and educators. The best therapeutic consultants have visited the vast majority of therapeutic programs, acute hospital settings, intervention programs and young adult support settings. They know the individual therapists and can often be instrumental in matching the child with the most appropriate therapist in a particular program. Research has shown that the relationship between the client and treatment provider is a key factor in determining success.

Therapeutic placement is often a multi-step process and can last some time. The process usually begins with an assessment program which serves to provide intervention, awareness and coping strategies to allow a smoother reintegration into traditional environments. During this time the individual will find him/herself in a foreign environment which fosters simplicity and clarity to reduce the current challenges they are facing at home and school. This period of assessment can last 8 to 12 weeks, and the objective is to develop a course of action for the child which will identify and address his or her emotional needs.

This understanding of the evolving challenges of adolescence and young adulthood often leads to a subsequent placement where these adolescents and young adults can gain the ability to act in a more socially acceptable manner. These therapeutic day/boarding schools, residential treatment centers, supportive boarding schools and young adult transition programs provide the tools which will refine the direction of their moral compass. Moreover, these programs have flexible matriculation dates and can provide credit toward a high school diploma, or outright graduation, in a shorter period of time than might be expected.

The educational consultants at The Bertram Group who work with families and "at risk" adolescents and young adults have extensive knowledge of the available programs that

would be most appropriate for an individual. We have visited hundreds of programs through the United States and developed trusting and open relationships with directors and therapists at all of these programs. In fact we will not recommend a school or program if we haven't visited it and established relationships with the staff.

Our services at the beginning of the relationship with a family include the following:

- Assessing the child's needs and accomplishments, as well as academic, emotional, clinical and social history
- Conducting clinical and educational inventory of services and treatment, including evaluating test results
- Recommending optimal school, program and/or support services
- Advocating for the child at those schools or programs
- Providing clinical support to the family throughout the initial placement process through the services of a licensed marriage and family therapist
- Periodic, formal discussions (usually weekly) with the child's therapist
- Monitoring the progress and outcomes throughout all stages of the placement in order to make recommendations for next steps

It is important to understand this is an iterative process that moves towards a better understanding of the circumstances that have created these educational and emotional challenges. As we develop a plan it is important to understand the outcomes sought will often evolve as the process unfolds. This critical evolution will likely produce a better understanding of the necessary steps to meet the family's goals through appropriate therapeutic options and programs. However, it is critical to understand that there are no guarantees about a specific outcome or acceptance into a specific school. What we can guarantee is our complete effort on your family's behalf in developing an appropriate list of schools/programs, and an honest and thorough inventory of the current state of affairs. Our reputation and knowledge of the schools as well as the personal and professional relationships with many of the clinical professionals will ensure you a complete review of the suitability of suggested programs for your child's success.

We are an important part of a team that you will assemble as you move through this journey. You will need emotional support throughout, obviously. But, financial advice and counsel is important as well. Although we cannot provide this service to you directly, we can make introductions to advocates who can represent you in appealing the cost to your local school district. We also have contacts with firms who will work with you, healthcare providers and your insurance carriers to try and maximize reimbursement for the programs.

We are available at any time to discuss your child's needs and options for help, and act as your advocate throughout the entire process.