



ERNIE ELS
ELS FOR AUTISM



Teaching Educational Autism Methods (TEAM)

Candidate Handbook

*Els for Autism Foundation™ at The Els Center of Excellence™
18370 Limestone Creek Road
Jupiter, FL 33458*

Table of Contents

Clinical Staff.....	3
Vision.....	3
Mission.....	3
Teaching Educational Autism Methods (TEAM) Program.....	4
What is the TEAM program?.....	4
Available experiences	4
Behavior Analysis	4
Speech and Language Pathology	4
Social Work	5
Sports and Recreation.....	5
General Autism Internship Experience (non-specific to a discipline)	5
Marketing and Development.....	6
Professional Observership Program (Fee-based Program).....	6
Application Process.....	8
Application	8
Interview	8
Background check	9
Performance Evaluation Process	9
Satisfaction Survey Process.....	9
Hour Logs	9
Supervision Contracts	9
Closing Remarks.....	9

Clinical Staff

Chief Operating Officer: Dr. Marlene Sotelo, Ed.D., BCBA-D, MT-BC

Chief Financial Officer: Yvonne D'Amelio

Director of Clinical Services: Erin Lozott, M.S., CCC-SLP

Global Outreach Coordinator: Dr. Kimberly Watterson-Rivieccio, Ed.

Behavior Services Manager: Ashley Curcio, M.Ed., BCBA

Research Manager: Dr. Christine Honsberger, Ed.D., BCBA

Adult Services Manager: Dr. Kerri Morse, Ed.D.

Adult Services Case Manager: Angela Guarneri, LMSW

Speech Language Pathologist: Hannah Brammer, M.S., CCC-SLP

Recreation Services Coordinator: Kelley Coutts, B.S.

Marketing and Development Manager: Mariann Coleman

Vision

Els for Autism™ is a game-changing resource, delivering and facilitating programs that are leading examples of what can be available to people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Mission

Els for Autism is committed to better understanding the aspirations of people with ASD and helping them to fulfill their potential to lead positive, productive and rewarding lives through:

- Understanding the nature of ASD and facilitating the development and delivery of treatment therapies, educational programs, training programs and recreational programs as well as residential and independent living programs.
- Ensuring the development of global outreach that will facilitate the sharing of best practices and programs.
- Raising awareness and promoting the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with ASD.

Teaching Educational Autism Methods (TEAM) Program

What is the TEAM program?

TEAM provides learning opportunities for college students seeking placement for internships, externships, practicum experience and student teaching. TEAM also provides opportunities for professionals, working in the field of autism spectrum disorder, to observe the implementation of evidenced based practices across disciplines and age ranges. The TEAM professional observership program is a fee-based service. Internships and practicum experiences have no associated costs. All TEAM program experiences allow students to integrate their academic and clinical knowledge in a dynamic, hands-on learning environment. Professionals will be provided opportunities to learn from dynamic observation, training modules and professional team meeting based experiences.

The Els for Autism Foundation prides itself on the adoption of a transdisciplinary model of treatment delivery that allows professionals from various disciplines to share information, knowledge and skills while working cooperatively to develop intervention programs. Working as part of a diverse team of professionals allows students and professionals to learn from a variety of professional models and integrate different treatment approaches into their interventions. The TEAM program strives to build capacity in students interested in working with individuals with ASD and professionals already immersed in the field of ASD, by providing a well-rounded experience that exposes its participants to a variety of disciplines, settings and ages.

Available experiences

Behavior Analysis

The Els for Autism Foundation can serve as a practicum site for students interested in obtaining their BCBA or BCaBA. In order to participate in the practicum program, you must enroll in a course through your university. Each university has slightly different requirements for the host practicum site, which can be discussed during the interview process. Below is a general outline of the experience offered via the TEAM Behavior Analysis practicum program.

- Completion of a supervision contract
- Weekly meetings with the supervising BCBA (minimum 5% of your time worked)
 - Must work a minimum of 10 hours per week and a maximum of 30
- Attendance and participation at both staff meetings and client team meetings
- Required readings related to ABA and autism spectrum disorder
- You will be provided with experiences in using ABA principles in a variety of programs including 1:1 ABA therapy sessions, vocational training programs, occupational therapy, speech and language therapies, and recreational activities

Speech and Language Pathology

The Els for Autism Foundation can serve as a practicum site for students needing advanced practicum experience for their graduate school speech and language pathology program. In order to participate in the practicum program, you must enroll in a course through your university if Els for Autism Foundation has a signed agreement with your university department. Each university has slightly different requirements for the host practicum site, which can be discussed during the interview process. Below is a general outline of the experience offered via the TEAM Speech and Language practicum program.

- Observations of speech and language therapy sessions with clients across ages and across programs/settings
- Direct service treatment and assessment hours with pediatric or adult client populations in 1:1 therapy sessions, vocational training programs and recreational activities
- Clinical writing experiences
- Hearing screening opportunities as needed and as available
- Participation in research projects related to speech and language pathology as available per semester
- Weekly meetings with the supervising Speech Language Pathologist
- Attendance and participation at both staff meetings and client team meetings
- Required readings related to speech language pathology and autism spectrum disorder

Social Work

The Els for Autism Foundation can serve as a practicum site for students interested in obtaining their Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) or Master of Social Work (MSW). To participate in the practicum program, you must enroll in a course through your university. Each university has slightly different requirements for the host practicum site, which can be discussed during the interview process. Below is a general outline of the experience offered via the TEAM Social Work practicum program.

- Completion of a supervision contract
- Weekly meetings with the supervising MSW Field Instructor (minimum 5% of your time worked)
 - Must work 27-hours per week.
- Attendance and participation at Staff meetings, Work Experience (WE) intakes, Family meetings, Roundtable Discussion Groups, Social Group.
- Required readings related to Social Work (SW), ABA and autism spectrum disorder

You will be provided with experiences in using SW principles in a variety of programs including: adult services programs, vocational training programs, recreational activities, and community resources.

Sports and Recreation

The Els for Autism Foundation delivers and disseminates fitness and therapeutic arts programs developed for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The Foundation can serve as an internship site for college students looking for experiences working with individuals with ASD, during sports and recreation-based activities (e.g., golf, tennis, soccer, yoga, dance, theater, music). Internship opportunities are available during year-round afterschool programs, spring break camps, and summer camps.

General Autism Internship Experience (non-specific to a discipline)

The Els for Autism Foundation delivers and disseminates various educational, therapeutic, recreational, and life-enhancing programs for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The Foundation can serve as an internship site for individuals or students looking for experiences working with individuals with ASD. These internships may be available during year-round afterschool programs, spring break camps, and summer camps. The internship experience will provide access to training models and observations of best practices when providing intervention to individuals with ASD. The experience does not necessarily provide direct clinical supervision; however, all interns will be assigned a supervisor.

Marketing and Development

The Els for Autism Foundation can serve as an internship for students in high school or college interested in nonprofit marketing and development. Areas of focus may include:

Events: Assist in supporting the Foundation's fundraising events including the Golf Challenge. Tasks will vary but may include:

- Solicit local, regional and national businesses for auctions and raffle donations
- Assist in packing/shipping and/or receiving return shipments from events
- Maintaining/organizing the event storage room (located in lower school)
- Preparing and printing event signage, labels and other marketing materials used at events
- Support developing content for event presentations
- Donor Perfect support

Website: Basic understanding of WordPress is required and can be learned during the internship. Tasks will vary but may include:

- Assist with setting-up SEO on the elsforautism.org website and assist with website redirects
- Support website content updates

Testimonials: For use in future brochures, grant reports and on the elsforautism.org website, develop a set (number to be determined). Tasks will vary but may include:

- Interviewing testimonial candidates
- Writing the story, approximately 6-8 paragraphs, and get final approvals from the Marketing Manager

Press Clip Organization: Maintain the press clip file on the shared drive by scanning and organizing the existing clips and updating the binder of existing physical clips.

Social Media: Understand the Foundation's social media goals and provide new and creative ideas to achieve and enhance the goals.

Campaign Support: A campaign example is "Giving Tuesday", the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. Tasks will vary but may include:

- Brainstorm campaign ideas
- Develop social media breakthrough ideas that are a financial success based on achievable, established goals

Photography: Take photos of campus activities for specific events and download and organize the photos to the Foundation's shared drive.

Professional Observership Program (Fee-based Program)

The TEAM Professional Observership Program offers professionals from around the world opportunities to observe and learn from a highly qualified transdisciplinary team of professionals (e.g. Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Speech-Language Pathologists, an Occupational Therapist and Music Therapists).

Observations of speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, ABA therapy (i.e., behavior therapy) and adult service programs, both on and off campus will be included in each session.

Observations of diagnostic assessments, research programs, recreation services (e.g., golf, tennis, soccer, yoga), Reach and Teach services (e.g., music, art, drama and dance) may be included based on availability. In order to participate in the program, professionals must be proficient in English and have worked in the field of autism spectrum disorder for at least one year. All professionals participating in the TEAM Observership program will have access to our employer training modules focused on supporting adults with autism spectrum disorder across employment setting. They will also have access to the Els for Autism E-Team online library, and the Els for Autism five staff training modules. A certificate of completion will be provided at the end of these five, 1-hour training modules. Please note, all acceptances are contingent on the results a level 2 or international background check. One background check is included within the fee charged per each professional. Below is a general outline of the experience offered via the TEAM Professional Observership program.

- The fee for each professional accepted into the Professional Observership program is **\$2500.00** dollars per week (5 business days)
 - 1 background check is included in this fee
- Professional Observership sessions are 4 hours a day, across 5 days: The 20 hours across the week (at approximately 4 hours a day) includes a balance of direct program observation and meeting times with the Els for Autism staff. There will be an introduction meeting and tour the first day for 1 hour and a wrap meeting on the final day for 1 hour with the lead staff member/host. Professionals will have set meeting times with lead program staff, in 30-minute increments, up to 3 times across the week. Times and staff will vary based on the focus areas of the professional.
 - 50% advance, non-refundable, payment will be due upon scheduling of the level 2 background check
 - The remaining balance will be paid upon the first day of the program
- Applications must be submitted 6 -12 months in advance of the desired time frame
 - Along with an application, all applicants must submit the following documents prior to an interview being scheduled
 - Curriculum Vitae
 - 3 professional references
 - 3 letters of personal references from families
 - Passport and Visa (as necessary for travel)
 - English Proficiency certification
- Applicants and accepted professionals must be proficient in English
- Applicants and accepted professionals must have at least 1-year experience working in the field of autism spectrum disorder
- Acceptances are contingent on a cleared level 2 or international background check
- NO Stipends/Scholarships are available for travel, accommodations and/or any of the observership activities
- Accepted professionals must sign an “Observership Letter of Agreement” with Els for Autism Foundation
- Upon acceptance a lead TEAM staff member will be assigned as your Professional Observership host

- A schedule of observations and activities will be sent 2-weeks in advance of the Observership session
- Access to Els for Autism corporate hotel rates may be available upon request
- Professionals may request a letter describing/outlining their experience at the completion of the program, but no certificates of training (other than the certificate of completion for the 5 core training modules) or competency will be provided.
 - All requests for letters will be reviewed by the TEAM Professional Observership committee
 - Letter approvals are not guaranteed
 - An approval to write a letter for an applicant is up to the discretion of the committee and will be based on the result of each professional's performance evaluation

Application Process

Application

The step in applying for the TEAM program is to complete the application included in this handbook.

Online Application: <http://www.elsforautism.org/practicumobservationsupervision-interest/>

Once you have submitted your application and have been contacted to take next steps in applying for a practicum placement at Els for Autism Foundation, you will be required to submit your resume/curriculum vitae, a personal statement indicating why you feel you have interest in and feel you would be the best candidate for a practicum at Els for Autism Foundation, three letters of recommendation (two from university professors and one from a work experience) and documentation of your practicum needs from your university. All items must be submitted at the same time, via email to kimberly.rivieccio@elsforautism.org

** If applying for the TEAM Professional Observership program, please complete the online application above and see specific application and document requirements in the Professional Observership section of this handbook.*

Minimum Requirements for interns and practicum students:

- Completion of at least 1 graduate course in autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Minimum of 3.0 GPA
- Work experience with individuals diagnosed with ASD

Interview

An initial interview with the Els for Autism staff member, who will serve as your direct supervisor, will be scheduled in person or via Zoom (our video conferencing system) depending on your availability to be in town. During this interview you will be asked about your current and future interests, previous experience with individuals with ASD and goals for your internship, practicum or professional experience.

For clinical practicum experiences, following the initial interview you may be asked to come in for an in-person, clinical interview if your initial interview was conducted via Zoom or if a clinical interview was not simultaneously scheduled. As part of the clinical interview you will be asked to interact with a child

and/or work with an adult in one of our programs. At this time, you will also meet with the Director of Clinical Programs and/or the Chief Operating Officer. For professional observership applicants, you may be asked to create and present a brief PowerPoint presentation on autism spectrum disorder and how you feel a professional observership experience will positively impact your professional practices.

Background check

If you are offered an internship, practicum placement or professional observership you will be required to pass a level 2 background check. International applicants will need to pass an international background check. You will not be able to begin working until we have received the results of the background check. Depending on the length of your internship, practicum or observership you may also be asked to complete a background check with the Palm Beach County School district.

Performance Evaluation Process

Prior to the end of an internship, practicum or observership, a performance evaluation will be conducted. The results of the performance evaluation will be accessible to and shared with each student and professional. This joint evaluation is of paramount importance to an individual's professional and personal development and to the EIs for Autism TEAM program. Positive performance evaluation results are one of many determining factors in students or professionals receiving letters of support.

Satisfaction Survey Process

Following the completion of a TEAM program experience, interns, practicum students or professionals will be sent a satisfaction survey to complete and return. Participation in the satisfaction survey process is voluntary, although highly encouraged. Satisfaction surveys will be sent via email with a link to an online survey platform. Once received, it is requested that you complete and submit your survey within 2 weeks of the date it was received.

Hour Logs

The number of hours that you are required to complete will depend on the programs available during the time of your internship. In order to participate in the internship program, you must work a minimum of 10 hours per week but may not work more than 40 hours. Your supervisor will need to sign hour logs each week.

Supervision Contracts

A supervision contract is required to be signed by both the supervisee and the supervisor. The contract will outline the roles of both the supervisor and supervisee and describe the purpose of the supervision. For individuals enrolled in a university-based practicum program, additional supervision contracts and/or specifications may be required by the program. Depending on the specific professional discipline and the requirements as such, individual programs will vary.

Closing Remarks

The EIs for Autism Foundation prides itself in providing quality services to individuals and families living with ASD. In order to provide these services, we involve highly qualified professionals. We feel strongly

that our TEAM program will assist you in the development of your educational and professional experiences.

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