

RDI® Program Standards and Code of Ethics August 2008

This document was developed by RDIconnect under the advisement of the RDI® Program Committee of Standards and Ethics. RDIconnect will revise this document as needed.

RDI® Program Standards

- I. **Introduction – Preamble:** The RDI® Program Committee of Standards and Ethics (herein called the “Committee”) provides consultation to RDIconnect regarding standards for the general and specialty practice as an RDI® Program Certified Consultant. The Consultants certified by RDIconnect may identify with different professional associations and are often licensed by jurisdictions which promulgate codes of ethics. RDI® Program Certified Consultants (hereby called “Consultant”) must adhere to and uphold the highest standards and ethics of both their individual professions and as specified here as a Consultant in the RDI® Program and in compliance with the RDI® Program Code of Ethical Principles and Standards as specified by RDIconnect through the advisement of the RDI® Program Committee of Standards and Ethics.

- II. **General Principles:** Consultants know and provide for understanding in their role as consultant to families, the following general principles for the RDI® Program (hereby called RDI®):
 - RDI® is a parent education and training program. It is not therapy for the child.
 - The RDI® curriculum comprises a carefully developed, systematic set of developmental objectives that is a critical part of the RDI® process.
 - RDI®, as an intervention program, is in continual development. Methods and principles will likely evolve over the period in which families are involved with RDI®. Specific objectives will be revised and improved upon.
 - There is no specific setting, equipment or activity that defines RDI®.
 - RDI® is not a “play-based” approach.
 - RDI® is not a social development or social skills program.
 - RDI® requires an extensive commitment of time and energy by parents.
 - Parents are expected to engage in journaling and reflection on a regular basis, as guided by the Consultant.
 - Parents are expected to construct Mission Previews, under the Consultant’s guidance. Parents are expected to regularly review and update these previews.

- The Consultant understands that the RDIos™ is the essential operating system of RDI®. It is not adjunctive. It is the way we communicate. It is an essential learning tool. It is the way we maintain a quality of practice. It is the way we continue to develop RDI®.

III. Professional Consultant Competency

- The primary role of the RDI® Certified Consultant is to facilitate the development of parents as effective guides. Therefore, a bulk of the Consultant's time is to be spent in this area.
- Consultants provide clear guidance and act in a conservative, careful manner, when determining mastery of any objective. Consultants have a duty to contact RDIconnect for clarification, if unsure of mastery.
- Consultants conduct regular dynamic assessments following the most current RDA™ protocol at a frequency and in the manner determined by RDIconnect. The current RDA™ information can be obtained by Consultants on the RDIos™.
- Consultants conduct a thorough bio-psycho-social screening of all clients. Consultants ensure that all ASD clients have received a competent evaluation from a pediatric neurologist or equivalent.
- Consultants recommend evaluations with other specialists, when screening indicates a potential co-occurring problem or when any client communication or consultant observation raises questions that the consultant is not qualified to address.
- Consultants carefully evaluate the effectiveness of their communication style with each family. Consultants customize their style, mode and frequency of communication to optimize effective transfer of concepts, skills and responsibilities based on each client's needs. Consultants construct careful scaffolding plans based on the specific needs of each client (parent) focused on providing competent challenges. Consultants develop technical competence in providing any and all forms of feedback to clients, including use of webcams, if that would be in the best interest of the client. Consultants effectively use video cameras and web cameras to provide online reminders for clients of critical parts of consultation sessions.
- Consultants write clear, systematic assignments to break up each objective into manageable parts, customized to the needs of the child and parents. Assignments are clearly documented in the RDIos™ and are the precursor to their initiation of communication feedback with clients. Consultants effectively help clients translate assignments into portable phrases that they can use throughout their day to search for developmental opportunities.

- Consultants make sure that parents have appropriate understanding of what and how they are expected to work with their child between consultant visits. This information is clearly documented and available to clients on the RDios™ in a way that the client can easily reference.
- Consultants clearly indicate and document all client decisions that serve as significant obstacles to the family's ability to benefit from RDI®. Parents must clearly indicate their awareness that they recognize the impact of such decisions.
- Consultants communicate to parents the minimum responsibilities and commitments they must make to be accepted into and continue with RDI® in order to affect the rate of progress for their child as well as for the integrity of the program.
- Consultants take responsibility to maintain limits. Consultants clearly communicate that parents are required to analyze and critique their own work in a specific manner, prior to submitting feedback such as video segments to the consultant.
- Consultants provide guidance for parents so that they can successfully conduct these ongoing self-analyses. Consultants use webcams and similar methods to ensure that clients have a clear reference point available to them at any time to recall specific recommendations and assignments they have been given as appropriate for their individual clients.
- Consultants teach parents how to provide constructive feedback, including analysis of short videotape segments. Under the consultant's guidance, parents learn how to use the operating system to maintain a dynamic communication process, to review progress and plan future objectives.

IV. Consultation Relationships:

- Consultants provide services only within the limits of their professional expertise. They clearly inform clients of these limits and do not accept clients whose needs are outside of these limits. They contact RDIconnect for clarification if they have questions about these limits.
- Consultants set and maintain clear ethical boundaries with clients. This includes identification of dual relationships and how those will be managed.
- Consultants maintain the confidentiality of all client information. They do not release client information to third parties without a written release of information from the client.
- Consultants charge fairly for their time, at a rate that is consistent with their expertise and specialization in RDI®.
- Consultants live up to time and action commitments that they make with clients. They provide clients with sufficient notice if commitments cannot be kept.

- Consultants assist clients who cannot afford video cameras, computers and Internet access by providing them with information on resources in their community. Consultants contact RDIconnect and obtain “temporary exemptions” for any client wishing to be involved with RDI® who, for whatever reason, is unable to access the operating system.
- Consultants prominently display a certificate provided by RDIconnect, including contact information for communicating concerns and/or complaints.
- Consultants maintain a professional demeanor and style of dress during assessment and consultation sessions with clients and during their professional community appearances.

V. Professional Commitment to the RDI® Community: An essential part of RDI® is based on benefiting from participation in the larger community of parents and consultants. Consultants take active responsibility to educate important members of their community about RDI®. Consultants actively contribute to the development of the RDios™ assignments library. Consultants actively contribute to the development of the RDios™ resources library. Consultants actively contribute to the development of the RDI® objective system.

VI. Quality Assurance: Consultants notify clients that RDIconnect may contact them for permission to undertake quality assurance audits. This entails clients providing access to their RDios™ records. Consultants understand that clients have full right to refuse and their care will not be impacted in any manner if they choose to do so. Consultants are responsible to strictly control the release of any RDIconnect and/or RDI® proprietary information to unauthorized parties. Consultants are responsible for making sure that RDIconnect has their most up-to-date contact information. Consultants are responsible for reading and replying to all necessary notifications sent to Consultants. Consultants keep up-to-date with all information concerning RDI® revisions and modifications. Consultants recognize and exercise their duty to report to RDIconnect any Consultant or trainee whose actions fall beneath the standards expected of an RDI® Consultant. Consultants recognize and exercise their duty to report any and all clinicians falsely advertising or communicating that they are practicing RDI®.

VII. Recertification: Consultants meet their yearly continuing education commitments as specified by RDIconnect. This currently consists of reviewing parent accounts on the RDios™ with parent permission, a minimum of five families with regular RDios™ subscriptions, twenty CE credits (per certification/recertification year), and no violations to the RDI® Program Standards and Code of Ethics.

Code of Ethical Principles & Standards

- I. **Introduction – Preamble:** The RDI® Program Code of Ethical Principles and Standards (herein called the “Code”) provides a minimal ethical standard for the professional behavior of all Consultants. This code provides an expectation of and assurance for the ethical practice for all who use the professional services of an RDI® Program Certified Consultant. In addition, it serves the purpose of having an enforceable standard for all RDI® Program professionals and assures those served of some resource in case of a perceived ethical violation. This code is applicable to all RDI® Program Certified Consultants and those Consultants-in-Training who are seeking certification from RDIconnect. The Code applies to all those certified by RDIconnect regardless of any other professional affiliation. Persons who receive professional services from Consultants may elect to use other ethical codes which apply to their Consultant. Although RDIconnect cooperates with professional associations and credentialing organizations, it can bring actions to discipline or sanction RDI® Program professionals only if the provisions of the Code are found to have been violated. The following are General Ethical Principles:
- II. Consultants engage in continuous efforts to improve professional practices, services, and research. Consultants are guided in their work by evidence of the best professional practices.
- III. Consultants have a responsibility to the clients they serve and to the institutions within which the services are performed. Consultants also strive to assist the respective agency, organization, or institution in providing competent and ethical professional services. The acceptance of employment in an institution implies that the Consultant is in agreement with the general policies and principles of the institution. Therefore, the professional activities of the Consultant are in accord with the objectives of the institution. If the Consultant and the employer do not agree and cannot reach agreement on policies that are consistent with appropriate consultant ethical practice that is conducive to client growth and development, the employment should be terminated. If the situation warrants further action, the Consultant should work through professional organizations to have the unethical practice changed.
- IV. Ethical behavior among professional associates (i.e., both certified and non-Consultants) must be expected at all times. When a Consultant has doubts as to the ethical behavior of professional colleagues, the certified consultant must take action to attempt to rectify this condition. Such action uses the respective institution’s channels first and then uses procedures established by RDIconnect or the perceived violator’s profession.

- V.** Consultants must refuse remuneration for consultation or consulting with persons who are entitled to these services through the Consultant's employing institution or agency. Consultants must not divert to their private practices, without the mutual consent of the institution and the client, legitimate clients in their primary agencies or the institutions with which they are affiliated.
- VI.** Prior to a transfer of clients, all parties must be knowledgeable that a transfer has been requested. Transfer of RDIOs™ account will happen through RDIconnect.
- VII.** In establishing fees for professional Consulting services, Consultants must consider the financial status of clients. In the event that the established fee status is inappropriate for a client, assistance must be provided in finding comparable services at acceptable cost. Fees may be assessed only for services provided. Contracts between Consultants and clients will specify obligations related to fees.
- VIII.** Consultants offer only professional services for which they are trained or have supervised experience. No diagnosis, assessment, or treatment should be performed without prior training or supervision. Consultants are responsible for correcting any misrepresentations of their qualifications by others.
- IX.** Consultants recognize their limitations and provide services or use techniques for which they are qualified by training and/or supervision. Consultants recognize the need for and seek continuing education to ensure competent services.
- X.** Consultants are aware of the intimacy in the Consulting relationship and maintain respect for the client. Consultants must not engage in activities that seek to meet their personal or professional needs at the expense of the client.
- XI.** Consultants must ensure that they do not engage in personal, social, organizational, financial, or political activities, which might lead to a misuse of their influence.
- XII.** Sexual intimacy with clients is unethical. Consultants will not be sexually, physically, or romantically intimate with clients, and they will not engage in sexual, physical, or romantic intimacy with clients within a minimum of two years after terminating the Consulting relationship.
- XIII.** Consultants do not condone or engage in sexual harassment, which is defined as unwelcome comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature.

- XIV.** Through an awareness of the impact of stereotyping and unwarranted discrimination (e.g., biases based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation), Consultants guard the individual rights and personal dignity of the client in the Consulting relationship.

- XV.** Consultants are accountable at all times for their behavior. They must be aware that all actions and behaviors of the Consultant reflect on professional integrity and, when inappropriate, can damage the public trust in the RDI® Program and the Consulting profession. To protect public confidence in the RDI® Program and the Consulting profession, Consultants avoid behavior that is clearly in violation of accepted moral and legal standards.

- XVI.** Products or services provided by Consultants by means of classroom instruction, public lectures, demonstrations, written articles, radio or television programs or other types of media must meet the criteria cited in this Code.

- XVII.** Consultants have an obligation to withdraw from their practice as an RDI® Program Certified Consultant if they violate the Code, or if the mental or physical condition of the Consultant renders it unlikely that a professional relationship will be maintained.