

Using the *Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care* (BAS) to Promote Quality Improvements

BY LINDA BUTKOVICH

Soon after my daughter was born over 30 years ago, the early care and education center I was teaching at closed. Becoming a family child care provider seemed like the perfect way to spend time with my newborn child and my son, who attended the center. I approached the parents of several of his friends at the center to see if they would like to have me care for their children. They did, and I was in business!

Fast forward to July 2007. After two years as a family child care provider and several more in other roles, the twists and turns of life and my career in early childhood education led me to the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership. The state of Illinois officially launched a quality rating system, which included the *Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care* (BAS) as one of two measures of program quality in family child care. I was part of the initial research team involved in the reliability and validity study of the BAS. Using the BAS definitely opened my eyes to the complexities of operating a family child care business and taught me so many things that would have made my business run more smoothly.

Since this introduction to the BAS, I have had the good fortune of being able to share this information by providing trainings on the BAS throughout the state of Illinois and across the country. Over the course of these years, it has been gratifying to see how receptive family child care providers have been to learning about the BAS and using this information to improve their business and professional practices. It has also been exciting to learn of the innovative ways certified BAS assessors have used the BAS to improve quality in family child care programs. I would like to highlight several examples.

Keystone STARS

Suzanne Glenn, Michelle Long, and Barbara Bredell-Searle work with Keystone STARS, Pennsylvania's Quality and Improvement System (QRIS). They attended BAS Reliability Training in 2017 and became certified BAS assessors. As certified assessors, they received materials to conduct "More Than a Nurturing Heart," an introductory training that provides an overview of the BAS. They offered in-person trainings to family child care providers/owners throughout Pennsylvania; however, they were disappointed with the turnout for these trainings.

The pandemic provided an unexpected opportunity to reach a wider audience. Beginning in the fall of 2020, they offered virtual trainings and were overwhelmed with the response from family child care providers. Taking advantage of this enthusiasm, they polled participants in each session to see if they might be interested in participating in a Community of Practice (CoP) pilot using the BAS. This was also met with a positive response, and the CoP pilot sessions will begin in early September. The pilot will consist of 10 virtual sessions, each 1.5 hours in length. Each session will offer a deeper look into the items of the BAS, provide additional resources and networking opportunities, and professional development training hours will be awarded for each session.

FCCH Leadership Academy

Jana Cornelius is a Quality Assurance Coordinator at the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development at the University of Oklahoma. She became a certified BAS assessor in 2019 and is currently using what she learned in training to offer family child care home providers (FCCH) a Leadership Academy tailored to family child care business owners. The FCCH Leadership Academy offers 24 hours of CEU-approved, formal in-person training on business essentials. Session topics include:

- Introduction to the *Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care (BAS)*
- The ABC's of a Child Care Business
- Program Management
- Legal Knowledge
- Program Planning
- Policy and Procedures
- Staff Development
- Building a Stronger Child Care Business Using the BAS

Participants are given an initial BAS assessment by a certified assessor. Participants are then required to attend four, six-hour in-person training sessions held on one Saturday for four consecutive months. During the last session, participants develop an action plan for program improvement based on their initial BAS summary report. Upon graduation from FCCH Leadership Academy, participants will be eligible for a \$450.00 stipend that they can use to help implement their action plans.

During and after the FCCH Leadership Academy, participants are provided one-on-one coaching sessions, as needed for 12 months, with a certified business coach/expert in early childhood. A post-BAS assessment is conducted at the end of the 12 months to document the changes/improvements made.

Additional action plans are developed, and coaching sessions are then scheduled as needed based on the post-BAS assessment. Oklahoma is in the process of developing a Peer Mentorship Program that family child care home providers can participate in for additional coaching and training needs.

Taking the Lead: A Leadership Academy for Family Child Care Providers

Thirty years after opening my family child care business, I now have the distinct pleasure of being one of the certified BAS assessors and instructors for the McCormick Center's leadership academy for family child care providers, Taking the Lead (TTL). TTL is a nine-month academy that includes in-person sessions and online assignments, as well as a coaching component and a peer networking component that includes emails and group texts. Since it began in 2015, TTL has enrolled over 100 FCC providers across seven cohorts. The BAS plays a central role in TTL by empowering providers in their work as entrepreneurs. All of the instructors are trained to reliability on the BAS and provide comprehensive skill-building sessions as well as individual coaching on the tool. Participants participate in a pre-BAS assessment conducted by a reliable and certified assessor. They use the data from those assessments, along with content from their monthly sessions and assignments, to improve their practices and inform a \$300 quality improvement grant plan. Many of TTL's sessions focus on BAS content areas such as budgeting, taxes, contracts and handbooks, and marketing. At the conclusion of TTL, participants complete a post-BAS assessment which allows us to track data and evaluate the effectiveness of TTL—and guess what? According to a [research project](#) examining the first five cohorts, TTL really does lead to lasting improvements.

Have you thought about how focusing on business and professional practices in family child care can improve your program or programs you work with? Check out [Business Practices in Family Child Care: How Confident Are You?](#) to reflect on your confidence in specific business-related areas to support future improvements.

References

Talan, T. N., & Bloom, P. J. (2009). *Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.

Do you provide technical assistance (TA) to family child care providers? If so, you may be interested in the McCormick Center's [BAS Transformative TA Institute](#), [BAS Reliability Training](#), or having us bring learning to you. [Contact Us](#) about traveling training options.

Linda Butkovich, M.S.Ed., is Report and Certification Manager for the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership. In this role, Linda oversees the Program Administration Scale (PAS) and Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care (BAS) certification system. Linda is also a national reliability anchor for the PAS and BAS. She holds a master's degree in early childhood special education. Prior to joining the McCormick Center, Linda worked as a developmental therapist with children birth to three years of age and their families. She has also been director of an NAEYC-accredited program, teacher, and family child care provider. Linda also provides training, consultation, and mentoring for early childhood program administrators.