



Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Services: Questions to Ask Providers

Below are some of the questions that parents/caregivers might ask potential home or clinic-based ABA service providers. You are your child's best advocate. Advocate for services that are person-centered and evidence-based. Today's ABA emphasizes the development of meaningful skills that lead to individually determined forms of self-advocacy and empowerment. Compassion, connection and happiness are indicators to look for within the behavior analytic teaching and learning context.

What matters most?

If you had to pick three overall outcomes that matter most for a child like mine, what would those be?

Getting started with services:

Do you have a waitlist for services, and approximately how long is your wait?

Does your agency have an age limit or age cap for services?

Do you accept (insert yours here) insurance funder?

For services to be authorized, do you need an autism evaluation completed by a MD or PhD level licensed psychologist?

When we are ready to get started with services, what is the basic process and timeline?

We are also receiving NC Innovations Waiver services. How will this work with ABA?

Staffing and supervision:

Do you have Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) working in your agency?

In addition to behavior analysis, what other relevant areas of expertise, licensure, or training do your staff possess?

Are all your behavior technicians certified as Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs)?

Please describe the process for training and supervising the behavior technicians / front-line staff who are working with my child.

How many cases does each BCBA oversee? In other words, what is a BCBA's typical caseload size?

If I have a concern/issue regarding the RBT or BCBA working with my child, who is my next point of contact?

(If applicable) Do you provide language translation and interpretation services?

Could you tell me about the typical RBT/BCBA retention at your company? Can I expect my child to have consistent staff throughout treatment?

What is your policy when a RBT cancels a session? Also, what if I need to cancel a session?

Initial assessment process:

What is involved in the assessment process? What does this look like, and how long does it take?

What information sources and factors do you consider when developing a treatment plan?

What assessment tool(s) and curricula might you use for a child like mine?

Once the initial assessment and treatment plan document is complete, how long will it take for sessions to get started?

Intervention:

What is the typical frequency and length of a session?

My toddler was recently diagnosed. What are a few examples of goals that you might address with a child like mine?

My child is characterized as “high functioning.” What are a few examples of goals that you might address with a child like mine?

My adolescent or adult child is severely impacted by his/her autism and needs a lot of support in many areas. What are a few examples of goals that you might address?

My adolescent child is characterized as “high functioning” and will graduate from high school in a few years. What are a few examples of goals that you might address with a child like mine?

Please describe what a typical intervention session with my child might look like. Paint that picture for me.

(If applicable to your situation) What is your experience in dealing with severe problem behavior?

How often will the BCBA directly observe treatment sessions?

What documentation and data do you collect during services?

How long are individuals typically enrolled in your program?

What does the typical transition and discharge process look like for your agency (e.g., gradual step down in hours, increase in caregiver collaboration efforts, connection to other resources)?

Place of service:

Is this a home or clinic-based service?

If at home, is there a designated space in the home where the service should happen?

If in a clinic, am I able to observe sessions?

Can services also happen out in the community (e.g., at parks, volunteer sites, library)?

Can you provide this service in my child's classroom?

Collaboration with caregivers and other providers:

Should we (as parents/caregivers) participate in every home session? What are we supposed to do when services are happening?

How often will the BCBA directly meet with and coach me so I learn strategies to support my child?

Where does this collaboration and coaching happen?

How often will I be updated on progress, and how is this information typically shared with me?

Describe the ways you collaborate with other professionals who support my child (therapists, school system staff, medical providers, etc.).

If my child will be served in a preschool/daycare or school setting, can you describe a general plan for fading your supports over time?

Financial impact:

Do you help with the insurance process (i.e., do you file the insurance claims for the family and do you help to clarify their out-of-pocket costs such as deductibles, co-insurance, co-pays, etc.)?

Will you provide information about my insurance benefit, including any age or dollar caps?

Do you monitor the drain down of my insurance benefit so I will be alerted when my funds are about to be exhausted?

If I am paying privately for these services, how much does each service type cost per hour? What might I expect to pay per month? How often am I billed for services?