

Frequently asked questions about ABA services for parents:

Q: What is ABA?

A: How the Behavior Analyst Certification Board summarizes the field of Applied Behavior Analysis:

Behavior Analysis is the scientific study of principles of learning and behavior. Two primary areas of study include:

- **Experimental Analysis of Behavior:** The basic science of the discipline and has, over many decades, accumulated a substantial and well-respected body of research literature on how behavior is learned and changes over time. The experimental analysis of behavior is the scientific foundation of Applied Behavior Analysis.
- **Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA):** A systematic approach for influencing socially important behavior through the identification of reliably related environmental variables and the production of behavior change techniques that make use of those findings. Practitioners of behavior analysis provide services consistent with the dimensions of ABA.

Common services may include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting behavioral assessments
- Analyzing data
- Writing and revising behavior-analytic treatment plans
- Training others to implement components of treatment plans
- Overseeing the implementation of treatment plans

Behavior analysts provide services to clients with a variety of needs including, but not limited to:

- Organizational Functioning (e.g., staff performance, management and pay structure interventions)
- Skill Deficits (e.g., communication, adaptive behavior)
- Problem Behavior (e.g., aggression, self-injurious behavior)

Q: What is a BCBA?

A: The Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) is a graduate-level certification in behavior analysis. Professionals who are certified at the BCBA level are independent practitioners who provide [behavior-analytic](#) services. In addition, BCBAs supervise the work of Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, and others who implement behavior-analytic interventions.

Ethics and Discipline: BCBAs must abide by the [Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts](#).

Q: How should ABA programs be supervised and supported?

A: ABA programs should be written and supervised by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)™. In addition to having a BCBA supervising your child's therapy, we provide Registered Behavior Technicians (RBT's) to conduct all your child's therapy.

Q: How many hours of therapy per week does my child need?

A: The number of hours your child requires will depend on your family's needs and priorities, symptom presentation (are there unwanted behaviors occurring?) and level of skill development that your child has achieved (how does your child do when compared to other children his or her age?). Our BCBA will work with the ABA team to complete a thorough assessment and make a recommendation of the number of hours of therapy

your child should receive. The intensity of services is adjusted as the child gains new skills and is re-evaluated throughout your child's treatment.

Q: Do I have to be present during my child's treatment hours?

A: No. However, a caregiver does need to be designated for the time that services are provided. This caregiver is often a family or extended family member but can also be a neighbor, friend of the family, babysitter, personal care assistant (PCA) or direct service provider (DSP).

Q: How long are therapy sessions?

A: Our therapy sessions are typically scheduled for 3 hours, with the number of sessions for each week varying per child. However, therapy sessions can range from 2-4 hours in length. Therapy sessions are typically not scheduled for less than 2-hour periods after the initial assessment is completed.

Q: Where is therapy conducted?

A: Our therapy is conducted in the child's home and community. Your child's therapy goals direct where therapy takes place. Whether at the dentist, neighborhood park, grocery store, or dinner table.

Q: How many people will be on my child's ABA team?

A: This varies based on the number of hours your child is receiving. Some children see only a BCBA and 1 Technician. Others have up to 4 Technicians in addition to their BCBA.

Q: Can I use insurance to pay for ABA therapy?

It is our goal to accept every insurance, both public and private, that provides an ABA benefit. Currently, we are accepting most insurance plans with an ABA benefit! Please, call us to conduct a benefit check and set up an appointment at Pediatric Partners Neurobehavioral health, 701-356-4384. You always have the option of paying out of pocket for services as a discounted rate. Our billing department is happy to find the best option for your family!

Q: How much does ABA cost?

A: The cost of services depends on the intensity of services your child requires and if you are using insurance coverage for services. An outline of the cost of therapy for your child can be estimated during a phone call with our billing department.

Q: What ages can enroll ABA therapy?

A: ABA at Pediatric Partners Neurobehavioral Health typically accepts children from ages 15 months through 12 years.

Q: How do we enroll in ABA?

A: For information about our program, to enroll, or to be directed to our billing department for an insurance authorization check please contact the front desk at Pediatric Partners Neurobehavioral health at 701-356-4384.

Q: Can I hire my own therapists?

A: Typically, our program will provide therapists as it leads to greater consistency across therapists and better supervision of the program. However, we are open to all referrals!

Q: Is ABA the same as Lovaas or VB?

A: ABA stands for Applied Behavior Analysis and is the term for the scientific field that supports ABA therapy. The term "Lovaas" is used to describe an approach to providing ABA therapy that was created by Ole Ivar Lovaas, who is a pioneer within the field of applied behavior analysis through his development of Discrete trial training, and was the first to provide evidence that the behavior of children with autism can be modified through teaching. "VB" stands for Verbal Behavior and it is a specific approach to teaching language skills utilizing the principles of ABA and is based on the book called Verbal Behavior written by B.F. Skinner, another pioneer in the field of behavior analysis, in 1957.

Our ABA program utilizes both the Lovaas and VB approaches of teaching. Research supports the use of many techniques used by both Ivar Lovaas and B.F. Skinner, as well and the theories of ABA in general.

Q: What is Discrete Trial?

A: Discrete trial instruction, also known as discrete trial teaching (DTT) or intensive teaching, is a teaching methodology typically used in ABA therapy. It was created by Ole Ivar Lovaas and in 1999, the U.S. Office of the Surgeon General described Lovaas's techniques as having been shown to be efficacious at "reducing inappropriate behavior and in increasing communication, learning, and appropriate social behavior" which is based on "thirty years of research." It is a highly structured method of teaching skills by breaking them down into smaller, teachable components. The 'trial' in discrete trial teaching comes from the systematic presentation of the task or directions, use of prompts when needed, and delivery of reinforcement. These trials are presented many times over the course of a teaching session. This results in the learner having many opportunities to practice the new skill, which typically results in more rapid acquisition. At which point these skills are generalized to the natural environment.

Q: Does my child have to have an autism spectrum diagnosis to get, or benefit from, ABA therapy?

A: No. However, most insurance companies who provide a benefit for ABA therapy require the child receiving therapy to have a formal diagnosis of some sort. Some require a specific diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder and others include various diagnoses. For more information on what your insurance requires contact us at 701-356-4384 and ask for a benefit check through our billing department. You always have the option to pay out of pocket for ABA services if your child does not have an insurance qualifying diagnosis.

Still have questions? Contact us at 701-356-4384.