

Questions to ask when choosing an ABA provider



ABA providers can vary in their experience, scope of practice, and how they implement ABA principles. Before enrolling your child in ABA, it is wise to gather information about what therapy may look like so that you can make the most informed decision for your family. Below are some questions you can ask when first meeting an ABA provider.

THERAPY SESSIONS

What will a typical day at ABA therapy look like for my child? _____

What kinds of items and activities will my child have access to throughout the day? _____

Do you have a minimum therapy hour requirement? If so what is it and why? What happens if what you recommended does not fit into the family's schedule? Therapists may recommend anywhere from 6-40 hours of therapy a week for your child. When evaluating a therapist's recommendations, consider what is developmentally appropriate for your child, and what will fit best into your family's schedule and lifestyle. _____

What happens when my child is having an unusually difficult day? Will I be notified? _____

TREATMENT GOALS & MONITORING

How is progress monitored & relayed to parents? What happens if my child is not making progress? _____

What type of goals do you typically identify for your clients? Red flags would be goals such as reducing stimming or forcing eye contact just to make a person appear more neurotypical. _____

CAREGIVER COLLABORATION

How often will I meet with my child's BCBA? _____

What is the best way to relay questions or concerns? _____

Are caregivers permitted to watch and/or participate in therapy sessions? _____

Do caregivers receive any training on how to implement therapeutic techniques at home? _____

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SUPERVISION & TRAINING

What is the training procedure for therapists who will work with my child? _____

What supervision is provided to the therapists who will work with my child? _____

How many clients do your BCBAs manage on average? BCBAs who have more than 10-15 clients on their caseloads at any given time may have more difficulty maintaining adequate supervision and caregiver engagement without additional resources. _____

PROCEDURES & PRACTICES

What is your policy on punishment procedures? Do you practice extinction*? If so, what safeguards do you have? _____

Do you use compliance training**? If so, when and why? _____

Are you a trauma-informed*** practice? _____

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

What is your staff turnover rate? _____

How big is your company? What is the structure? _____

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**In ABA, extinction refers to the practice of reducing a certain dangerous or unwanted behavior by discontinuing rewards for that behavior. There are certain risks associated with using extinction, especially in children with severe and dangerous behavior. When an extinction procedure is implemented, it can lead to what is called an extinction burst, a period during which the behavior may increase in frequency and intensity. Extinction may also be hard to replicate outside of the ABA setting, which may also lead to an increase in dangerous and severe behavior. These risks should be carefully considered when using extinction and certain safeguards should be in place to ensure client safety and dignity.*

*** For more information on compliance training, visit <https://masteraba.com/compliance-training-teach-cooperation-while-preserving-individual-rights/>*

**** For more information on what it means to be trauma-informed, visit <https://www.iloveaba.com/2021/08/trauma-informed-aba.html>*