



FAQs for Parents Seeking ABA Clinic Services

General Information

- **What is ABA therapy? How does it help children with autism?**
 - ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) is a therapy based on the science of learning and behavior. It focuses on understanding how behavior works, how it's affected by the environment, and how learning takes place. For children with autism, ABA therapy helps improve communication, social skills, and adaptive behaviors while reducing challenging behaviors.
- **Is ABA therapy evidence-based? What research supports its effectiveness?**
 - Yes, ABA therapy is one of the most well-researched and evidence-based approaches for individuals with autism. Decades of studies have demonstrated its effectiveness in improving functional behaviors, communication, and social skills. The therapy is endorsed by organizations like the American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S. Surgeon General.
- **What does a typical ABA session look like? How is it structured?**
 - A typical ABA session follows a carefully designed schedule to provide consistency, predictability, and opportunities for skill-building. It often mirrors the structure of a school day to help your child prepare for a smooth transition into a classroom environment. Here's how:
 - Clear Routine and Structure:
 - Sessions begin with a clear plan and schedule, just like a school day. For example, there may be designated times for activities such as structured learning, group interaction, and breaks.
 - Visual schedules or timers may be used to help children anticipate transitions and develop independence.
 - Skill-Building in Key Areas:
 - Academic Readiness: Activities might include learning colors, shapes, letters, numbers, or pre-writing skills, tailored to your child's developmental level.

- **Communication Skills:** RBTs work on skills like following instructions, making requests, and responding to questions, which are critical for classroom participation.
 - **Social Interaction:** Group activities or parallel play sessions encourage skills like sharing, turn-taking, and cooperative play.
- **Practice with Transitions:**
 - Sessions include multiple transitions (e.g., moving from table work to floor play) to simulate a school environment. This helps your child become comfortable with changes in activities and locations.
- **Focus on Independence:**
 - Children are encouraged to complete tasks independently, such as putting away toys, using tools (like scissors or crayons), and managing personal care tasks (e.g., washing hands), which are essential for school readiness.
- **Group and Individual Settings:**
 - Group activities may mimic a classroom setting to practice following group instructions, waiting their turn, and engaging in circle-time routines.
 - Individualized one-on-one teaching ensures mastery of foundational skills.
- **Behavior Support:**
 - RBTs address any behaviors that might interfere with school success, such as difficulty staying seated, following directions, or managing frustration. Positive reinforcement is used to encourage appropriate behaviors.
- **What services do you offer?**
 - We provide 1:1 ABA therapy services in the home, center, and community. School services can be provided with school district approval.
 - Telehealth may also be provided to supplement in-person services.

Staff and Credentials

- **Who will work with my child?**
 - **Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)**
 - The Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) completes assessments, develops the treatment plan, and oversees the implementation of the treatment plan. The BCBA also implements family guidance. A BCBA has earned a master's degree in a related field, such as psychology or ABA, and has passed a national exam to become a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).
 - **Registered Behavior Technician (RBT)**

- The Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) is responsible for the implementation of treatment programs written by the BCBA and is based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). A RBT will work directly with your child to deliver programming and is registered with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). An RBT has completed the UCP Heartland RBT training modules which meets national certification standards and passed the RBT exam. A RBT works under the direction of the BCBA. The RBT role is a key position within UCPH building strong relationships with clients, families and has direct impact on each client's outcomes.
- All employees of UCP Heartland must be registered with the Missouri Family Care Safety Registry. UCP Heartland checks this registry quarterly to ensure staff continue to be safe and appropriate. All employees are also trained and/or certified in at least the following areas: Abuse and Neglect, HIPAA, Positive Behavioral Supports, CPR, First Aid, Blood borne Pathogens, Consumer Rights, and Medication Administration Level 1 (when necessary).

Assessment and Individualized Plans

- **What assessments will you conduct? How do these assessments inform the treatment plan?**
 - Our assessment process is individualized to each learner. During the initial assessment, our team will conduct a thorough review of your child's background history including medical and educational to help us determine the right assessment for their needs.
 - ALL learners will receive a caregiver interview, record review, functional behavior assessment, and Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales questionnaire as these give us the initial background information, we need to assess skills and behaviors of concern.
 - The assessment process helps us determine where your child may need additional skill to reduce behavior or continue learning. This is then used to determine goals that will be the primary focus for services.
- **How often is the treatment plan updated? Will I be involved in reviewing progress?**
 - Parents are always a part of the process for reviewing progress. It is important that the parent's voice is included in determining the ongoing needs of the child. We also want to make sure that the child is able to use their skills in all environments that they access.
 - All learners will receive a formal treatment plan update that is reported to their insurance company at the 6-month mark. Further treatment plan updates will be made as needed during the therapy process.

Parent Involvement

- **How can I be involved in my child's therapy?**
 - Parent and caregiver training is a built-in part of our service! This is the parent's opportunity to have 1:1 time with the child's team to discuss their needs, during this time we also teach the parent about ABA and how we implement it to help your child succeed. Parent training can take place in the home, center, or community.
- **Will I receive regular updates on my child's progress?**
 - All parents receive a daily communication log that details how their child's day went while at our center. Parents will also have the opportunity weekly to speak 1:1 with their child's BCBA during parent training.
- **Can I observe sessions?**
 - Yes. If you would like to observe your child's session, please notify your BCBA at least two weeks prior to the time you would like to observe. Observations are 1-hour in length and a non-disclosure agreement must be signed prior to the observation. You will be accompanied by the BCBA during the observation to answer any questions you may have during the hour.
- We encourage you to communicate with your child's team about things that are happening at home which may affect your child (e.g., parent out of town, loss of a favorite pet, changes in sleeping patterns), and about any questions or concerns you may have regarding their therapy. ABA therapy services maintain an "open door" policy-you may observe your child's services at any time. Parents are viewed as active participants and key implementors of therapeutic strategies.

Logistics and Costs

- **Do you accept insurance?**
 - Yes, we accept insurance. We currently accept Cigna, MO Medicaid, Aetna, UHC/UMR/Optum, and Anthem/Blue Cross Blue Shield.
- **What is the process for verifying coverage?**
 - TO verify your insurance coverage, you will need to submit your insurance cards to us. Our team will then contact your insurance provider, and they will detail your insurance coverage and eligibility for the service. You will then receive a phone call from our team to explain those benefits to you. The process can be completed in 24-48 hours!