



Bloom ABA

THERAPY MATERIAL

ABA Parent Handbook

A plain-language guide to what Applied Behavior Analysis is, what it isn't, and what to expect.

What ABA actually is

Applied Behavior Analysis is a therapy approach built on the science of learning and behavior. In practice, it means breaking skills down into small, teachable steps, then using consistent, positive reinforcement to help a child build them at their own pace. It is currently the most evidence-supported approach for autism-related skill building, which is why it is covered under core clinical services in the Ontario Autism Program.

What good ABA is not

Outdated or badly-run ABA gave the approach a reputation problem. A well-run, BCBA-supervised program should always be:

- ☐ Built around positive reinforcement — never aversives or punishment
- ☐ Focused on skills that genuinely help your child, not compliance for its own sake
- ☐ Respectful of your child's identity — difference is not treated as something to erase
- ☐ Collaborative with you as the parent, not something done "at" your family

What a real session looks like

- Warm-up — a few minutes of play or conversation to build rapport before any "work" begins
- Structured skill-building — short, focused activities targeting the current goal
- Real-time data collection — the therapist notes what worked, so the program adjusts continuously
- Positive reinforcement — praise or a preferred activity, tied directly to effort and progress
- Wind-down — ending on something calm and positive

How to read progress data

Your therapist should share data regularly, not just at review time. When you see a progress chart, here is what to look for:

- Trend, not single data points — one bad session does not mean the plan isn't working
- Percentage of independent responses over time — the real measure of skill acquisition
- Prompt level — is your child needing less support over time, or the same amount?
- Generalization notes — is the skill showing up outside the therapy session too?

Frequently asked questions

Is it covered by OAP funding? Yes — ABA is one of the core clinical services eligible under the Ontario Autism Program.

How often, and for how long? This varies by child and by funding — there is no universal "right amount." A good provider builds a plan around your child's needs and your family's capacity.

The best way to know if a provider is the right fit is usually a short conversation before you commit to anything. Book a free 20-minute call at bloomaba.ca/contact.