



*Autism Services Center (ASC) is dedicated to providing the highest quality treatment, training and applied research in order to provide the highest quality of life possible for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. We are committed to utilizing new resources in the fight to understand and treat one of the most daunting conditions affecting children today.*

Children diagnosed with autism typically experience language, social, and/or behavioral delays at home and at school. Regardless of their challenges, many individuals can make significant gains in each of these areas when participating in intensive Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services.

Typically developing children learn without our intervention--the world around them provides the right conditions to learn language, play, and social skills. Some children with autism may learn much less easily from the environment. They have the potential to learn, but it takes a very structured environment with optimal conditions to acquire the same skills that typical children learn "naturally." ABA is all about how to set up the environment to enable our clients to learn.

### **What is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)?**

Applied Behavior Analysis is a scientific approach to understanding behavior, how it is affected by the environment and how learning takes place. It is a mixture of psychological and educational techniques tailored to meet the needs of each individual. ABA methods are used to measure behavior, teach functional skills, and evaluate progress.

Various techniques have been developed over the years for increasing constructive behaviors and reducing those that may be harmful or that interfere with learning. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is the use of those techniques and principles to discourage socially problematic behaviors and replace them with more acceptable ones.

Scientific studies have proven ABA techniques to be one of the most effective methods of treating the behaviors of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). ABA uses a variety of approaches to find a way of motivating the child and ensuring that the sessions are both enjoyable and productive.

## **Who can benefit from ABA programs?**

ABA programs can prove extremely beneficial in teaching or improving an individual's language, eye contact, social skills, peer interactions and behavioral issues. ABA has also been shown to improve the skills necessary to stay on task and encourages the desire to learn. Even if an individual does not achieve the "best result," it generally improves normal functioning levels in most areas. Most individuals with autism can benefit from intensive ABA programs.

## **Who is qualified to oversee ABA programs?**

### **Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)**

Behavior analysts are dedicated to the advancement of positive practices in the field of challenging behavior and the provision of non-aversive, person-centered services to support people with challenging behaviors.

Candidates for certification as BCBA professionals who hold a minimum of a master's degree in psychology, education, or speech and hearing sciences or related fields from accredited universities and:

- Must complete 225 classroom hours of graduate level instruction
- Must complete coursework that includes topics such as ethical considerations, principles, processes, behavioral assessment, selecting interventional outcomes, measuring and interpreting behavioral data, etc.
- Must also accrue supervised experience in three categories: fieldwork, practicum, and intensive practicum.
- Must complete 1500 hours of Supervised Independent Fieldwork in behavior analysis, along with extensive experience involving direct treatment of children with mild to severe disabilities.

## **What are some of the goals and responsibilities of a BCBA?**

- Design, implement, and monitor programs that provide an abundance of positive reinforcement for useful skills and positive social interactions with an emphasis on socially appropriate behaviors
- Provide opportunities for each individual to acquire and practice skills every day in structured and unstructured situations
- Objectively observe and analyze the behaviors, reviews the accumulated data to determine the effectiveness of the programs and makes adjustments to improve or adapt the programs as the child grows and changes
- Train parents and individuals who interact with children with autism and other severe handicaps so they can teach and support skills during typical family activities
- Provide a detailed assessment of each child's skills as well as family preferences to determine initial treatment goals
- Provide an ongoing objective measurement of each child's progress so that the goals and procedures can be "fine tuned" as needed
- Place an emphasis on skills that will enable the child to be independent and successful in both the short and long term

**ASC presently has one BCBA on staff:**

- **Jimmie Beirne** has over 20 years of experience in the field of developmental disabilities. Jimmie is now ASC's Chief Operations Officer.

**ABA Services offered at Autism Services Center:**

ASC also offers a variety of services that are available to families, students, agencies and schools. They include workshops, seminars and presentations on topics including:

- Principles of Applied Behavior Analysis
- Developing Behavior Intervention Plans/Managing Disruptive Behaviors
- Conducting functional behavior assessments and analyses
- How to teach children with autism
- Parenting skills
- Follow-up monitoring and plan evaluations
- Staff training
- Discrete Trial Training (DTT)
- Picture Exchange Communication System (*PECS*)
- Self-Management Training

*For additional information, please call the number listed above.*