

# Plano and Collin County First 90 Days Checklist



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# Gather the paperwork in week 1

Health plans, clinics, schools and grant programs each ask for some of these papers. Keep them in one folder and make copies of the diagnosis report.

☐ **The full written diagnosis report**

Texas Medicaid looks for the DSM criteria, the severity level and the name of the standardized test used, such as the ADOS. A screening checklist such as the M-CHAT does not count on its own.

☐ **A signed referral for an ABA evaluation**

Texas Medicaid needs a signed, dated referral before any ABA evaluation or therapy. Your child's primary care provider or the diagnosing doctor can write it.

☐ **Your child's insurance or Medicaid card, your photo ID and proof of guardianship**

Cook Children's asks families to bring a driver's license, the child's insurance card and legal proof of guardianship, such as a birth certificate.

☐ **Earlier evaluations and school records**

Children's Health asks for medical records, ECI or therapy reports and any screener results with a referral. For a child 4 or older it also asks for the school's Full Individual Evaluation and the latest ARD paperwork, including the IEP.

☐ **A written evaluation request to your school district, if your child is 3 or older**

Give it to the district's director of special education or to your campus principal, and keep a dated copy. A request made only by phone or in person does not start the 15 school day clock.

☐ **A folder for every letter you get**

STAR Kids mails its health plan packet, and a waiver office contacts you when a spot opens. LifePath Systems asks families on its waiver interest lists to update their information at least once every two years.

# Make the first calls in week 1

| Who to call                                                          | What they do                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | How to reach them                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>LifePath Systems Early Childhood Intervention (ECI). Under 3.</b> | Evaluates your child and gives therapy at home or in child care. The evaluation is at no cost. Families who can afford it pay part of the cost of other services on a sliding fee scale, and no child is turned away for inability to pay. | 972-562-0331 or <a href="mailto:ECI_Referrals@lifepathsystems.org">ECI_Referrals@lifepathsystems.org</a> . Serves Collin, Fannin, Grayson, Kaufman and Rockwall counties. |
| <b>Your school district's Child Find. Ages 3 to 21.</b>              | Evaluates your child for special education. Texas gives the district 15 school days from your written request to send consent forms or a written refusal.                                                                                  | Plano ISD 469-752-8100 or your principal. Frisco ISD 469-633-3838 (birth to pre-K) or 469-633-6900 (K to 21). Allen ISD 972-727-0490. McKinney ISD 469-302-6337.          |
| <b>Texas Parent to Parent. Any age.</b>                              | Its staff are parents of children with disabilities, and weekly Zoom parent groups meet in English and Spanish.                                                                                                                            | 866-896-6001 or 512-458-8600.                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>PACT Project, Partners Resource Network. Birth to 26.</b>         | The federally funded parent center for Region 10, which includes Plano, Frisco, Allen and McKinney ISD. It explains special education rights under IDEA at no cost to parents.                                                             | 1-855-974-1368. Region 10 lines 469-388-8662 and 972-358-7014 (habla español).                                                                                            |

Plano ISD sends families of children under 3 to LifePath ECI. Frisco, Allen and McKinney ISD say the school evaluation is at no cost to parents.

# Set up how therapy gets paid for

Start with the coverage your child has now. If your child has no coverage yet, send the Medicaid application first.

## ☐ Know that Texas Medicaid covers ABA for members 20 and younger

Since February 1, 2022, Texas Medicaid has covered applied behavior analysis (ABA) evaluation and treatment for members 20 and younger with an autism diagnosis who meet the benefit's rules. The ABA provider asks for approval before therapy starts.

## ☐ Learn what EPSDT means for your child

EPSDT stands for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment. In Texas it is called Texas Health Steps, and it covers Medicaid members from birth through age 20. Federal law requires Texas Medicaid to pay for treatment that is medically necessary to correct a child's physical or mental condition, even when the state's Medicaid plan does not list that service.

## ☐ Find out whether your child belongs in STAR Kids

STAR Kids is the Texas Medicaid program for children and youth 20 and younger with disabilities. A child on Medicaid has to join it if the child also gets SSI, has Medicare, or gets services through a waiver such as MDCP, CLASS, HCS or TxHmL. Every member gets a service coordinator through the health plan.

## ☐ Save your STAR Kids plan's member services number

Collin County is in the Dallas service area, where the plans are Aetna at 844-787-5437 and Wellpoint at 844-756-4600. If your home is in Denton County, you are in the Tarrant service area, where the plans are Aetna at 844-787-5437 and Cook Children's Health Plan at 844-843-0004.

# Set up how therapy gets paid for (continued)

☐ **If your child does not have Medicaid yet, apply online or call 2-1-1**

Apply at [YourTexasBenefits.com](https://YourTexasBenefits.com) or call 2-1-1. Once your child is approved for STAR Kids, a packet about choosing a health plan comes in the mail.

☐ **If you have private insurance, ask whether the Texas autism law covers your plan**

Texas Insurance Code section 1355.015 applies to group health plans that Texas regulates. If your child was diagnosed with autism before age 10, those plans have to cover the treatment your child's primary care doctor prescribes, which can include ABA, speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy. From age 10, a plan may cap ABA at \$36,000 a year. Deductibles, copays and coinsurance can still apply.

☐ **Ask your employer or plan whether your coverage is self-funded**

The Texas Department of Insurance says it does not regulate most health plans, including self-funded employer plans, so ask your plan whether section 1355.015 applies to it and whether ABA needs approval first. The TDI help line is 800-252-3439.

# Join the waiver interest lists this month

| Waiver and who it is for                                                                                                                                          | Who takes your call                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>HCS, for people with an intellectual disability who live with family, in their own home or in another community setting.</b>                                   | LifePath Systems, the local IDD authority for Collin County, at 972-727-9133. |
| <b>TxHmL, for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who live in their family home or their own home.</b>                                        | LifePath Systems at 972-727-9133, in the same call as HCS.                    |
| <b>CLASS, for a related condition, which Texas defines as a disability other than an intellectual disability that began before age 22 and affects daily life.</b> | The Texas HHS interest list line, 877-438-5658.                               |
| <b>MDCP, for children and young adults 20 and younger who need a high level of medical care.</b>                                                                  | The Texas HHS interest list line, 877-438-5658, in the same call as CLASS.    |
| <b>DBMD, for people who are deafblind with multiple disabilities.</b>                                                                                             | The Texas HHS interest list line, 877-438-5658, in the same call.             |

The Arc of Texas says you do not have to prove eligibility to join a waiver list, and eligibility is checked once your child reaches the top of the list. It reports waits as long as 16 years on some lists, so call this month. If your home is in Denton County, the local IDD authority is Denton County MHMR Center at 800-762-0157. The full steps, including the YES Waiver, are in Alpaca Health's Texas Medicaid waivers guide at [alpacahealth.io/family-resources/texas-medicaid-waivers-your-guide-to-approval](https://alpacahealth.io/family-resources/texas-medicaid-waivers-your-guide-to-approval).

# Get a full evaluation if you still need one

Before you book, ask each clinic whether it takes your child's plan and how long the current wait is.

- ☐ **Ask your child's doctor to refer you to the Children's Health and UT Southwestern Center for Autism Care**

Your child's doctor faxes the referral to 888-848-2990. The referral lines are 214-456-7700 in Dallas and 469-303-4787 in Plano. Testing may include the ADOS, and Children's Health says the program accepts most commercial insurance plans and Medicaid.

- ☐ **Call Cook Children's Psychology in Prosper, for children 2 to 18**

The office at 4200 W. University Drive sees children and teens with autism and other neurodevelopmental needs. Call intake at 682-885-3917 and ask whether the Prosper office does full autism evaluations.

- ☐ **Send records with the referral**

Children's Health asks for medical records, ECI or therapy reports and screener results such as the M-CHAT. For a child 4 or older, add the school's Full Individual Evaluation and the IEP.

- ☐ **Bring these to the first visit**

Cook Children's asks for your driver's license, your child's insurance card, legal proof of guardianship, a list of your child's medicines and any earlier psychological testing.

- ☐ **Ask whether the report will meet Texas Medicaid's rules for ABA**

Texas Medicaid accepts a diagnosis from a developmental pediatrician, neurologist, psychiatrist, licensed psychologist or diagnostic team. The report needs the DSM criteria, the severity level and a standardized tool such as the ADOS.

# Apply for grants and money

| Program and who can apply                                                                                                                                            | What it pays for and how to apply                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PDSES, Parent-Directed Special Education Services. Texas public school students in pre-K to 12th grade who get special education through an IEP.</b>              | A one-time \$1,500 online account for learning materials and services such as extra speech therapy or tutoring, given first-come, first-served. Apply through the SPEDTex Parent Portal, call SPEDTex at 1-855-773-3839, or join the 2026 to 2027 email list at <a href="https://spedtex.org">spedtex.org</a> . |
| <b>More grants for Texas families.</b>                                                                                                                               | Alpaca Health's Texas autism grants guide lists more Texas and national grants and how to apply, at <a href="https://alpacahealth.io/family-resources/texas-autism-grants">alpacahealth.io/family-resources/texas-autism-grants</a> .                                                                           |
| <b>SSI, Supplemental Security Income. Apply at <a href="https://ssa.gov">ssa.gov</a> or call 1-800-772-1213, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. local time.</b> | A monthly payment for a child under 18 whose condition causes marked and severe functional limits expected to last at least 12 months. Social Security counts part of the parents' income and resources. In most states, a child who gets SSI can get Medicaid.                                                 |
| <b>Texas ABLE account. A Texas resident whose disability began before age 46.</b>                                                                                    | A savings account for a person with a disability. The IRS says money taken out for qualified disability expenses is tax-free. The age limit of 46 took effect on January 1, 2026. Call Texas ABLE at 844-489-2253 or visit <a href="https://texasable.org">texasable.org</a> .                                  |

# Find recreation, outings and respite

These programs are set up for children with disabilities or sensory needs. Call or email before you go, since schedules change.

## ☐ Sign up for Plano Adapted Recreation

The city runs year-round classes, outings and fitness for people with special needs from 12 months to over 60, mostly at Carpenter Park Recreation Center, and says the programs also give caregivers respite. Fill out the intake form before the first class. City line 972-941-7000.

## ☐ Register for Adapted Storytime at the Plano Public Library

It is for children 3 to 5 with needs such as autism or sensory challenges, and registration is required. The library also lends sensory backpacks. Email [LibraryAdapted@plano.gov](mailto:LibraryAdapted@plano.gov).

## ☐ Borrow a sensory bag at the Perot Museum of Nature and Science

The Dallas museum at 2201 N. Field Street lends sensory bags with noise-canceling headphones at the Box Office and has a quiet area on the Lower Level. Call 214-428-5555.

## ☐ Join Special Olympics Team Plano

About 165 athletes train in 5 sports on evenings or weekends. Athletes must be 8 or older and have an intellectual disability or limits in both learning and adaptive skills. Contact the team through [teamplano.org](http://teamplano.org).

## ☐ Visit the Special Friends ministry at Prestonwood Baptist Church

The Plano campus at 6801 W. Park Blvd. has Sunday and midweek classes for children and adults with special needs and a monthly support group for parents and caregivers. Call 972-820-5468.

## ☐ Search Take Time Texas for respite care

It is the Texas HHS list of respite providers, and you can search it by ZIP code and your child's age. Texas HHS says a listing is not an endorsement, so check each provider's license yourself.

# Save these crisis numbers now

Put these numbers in your phone before you need them. If anyone faces a life-threatening emergency or a threat of injury, call 911 right away.

☐ **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

Call or text 988, or chat at [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org), at any hour of any day. Conversations are free and confidential, and text and chat are available in Spanish.

☐ **LifePath Systems Crisis Hotline, 1-877-422-5939**

Trained behavioral health professionals answer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The line serves adults and children living in Collin County, regardless of insurance or income.

☐ **LifePath mobile crisis outreach and IDD crisis support**

LifePath's mobile crisis outreach team comes to you for a mental health assessment at any hour. LifePath also gives crisis support to families of a person with an intellectual or developmental disability. Call the hotline and ask about both.

☐ **Denton County MHMR Center crisis line, 800-762-0157**

If your home is in Denton County, this is the crisis line of your local mental health and IDD authority.

# Your call log

| Date | Who I called | Who I spoke to | What they told me | Next step and date |
|------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
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# Questions to ask on each call

Write down each answer with the date and the name of the person you spoke to.

☐ **When will ECI evaluate my child, and who is our case manager?**

Ask LifePath ECI at 972-562-0331. Texas ECI does not charge for the evaluation or for case management.

☐ **On what date did the school district receive my written request?**

The 15 school days start on that date. Once you sign consent, Texas gives the district 45 school days to finish the evaluation report.

☐ **Does my child's diagnosis report meet Texas Medicaid's rules for ABA?**

Ask the evaluator. Texas Medicaid looks for the DSM criteria, the severity level and a standardized diagnostic tool, with the diagnosis made or reconfirmed within the last 3 years.

☐ **Who will sign the referral for an ABA evaluation?**

Ask your child's primary care provider or the doctor who made the diagnosis. Texas Medicaid needs a signed and dated referral.

☐ **Is my child in STAR Kids, and who is our service coordinator?**

Ask your STAR Kids plan's member services line.

☐ **Is my child on the HCS and TxHmL interest lists, and what is our request date?**

Ask LifePath Systems at 972-727-9133. Texas calls the day your child joined a list the request date.

☐ **Is my child on the CLASS, MDGP and DBMD lists?**

Ask the Texas HHS interest list line at 877-438-5658, and write down the date of your call.

☐ **Does my private plan follow Texas Insurance Code 1355.015?**

Ask your health plan whether it is state-regulated or self-funded, and whether ABA needs approval before it starts.

# Sources

Sources change over time, so check each one before you act on it.

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**LifePath Systems, Early Childhood Intervention**

<https://www.lifepathsystems.org/get-help/child-family-services/early-childhood-intervention/>

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**Texas HHS, Early Childhood Intervention and Family Cost Share (archived copy, July 31, 2026)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/early-childhood-intervention-services>

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**Plano ISD, Child Find**

<https://www.pisd.edu/students-families-a6/child-find>

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**Frisco ISD, Child Find (archived copy, September 20, 2026)**

<https://www.friscoisd.org/o/fisd/page/child-find>

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**Allen ISD, Child Find**

<https://www.allenisd.org/page/child-find>

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**McKinney ISD, Child Find**

<https://www.mckinneyisd.net/page/child-find>

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**Texas Education Agency, Special Education Initial Referral Timeline (PDF, 2024)**

[https://spedsupport.tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/2024-09/special-education-initial-referral-timeline\\_2024.pdf](https://spedsupport.tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/2024-09/special-education-initial-referral-timeline_2024.pdf)

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**Texas Parent to Parent**

<https://www.txp2p.org/>

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**Partners Resource Network, PACT Project**

<https://prntexas.org/texas-ptis/pact-project/>

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**Region 10 Education Service Center, school districts in its service area by county**

<https://www.region10.org/o/r10esc/page/accessible-version-regional-service-area-map>

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**TMHP, autism services benefits effective February 1, 2022**

<https://www.tmhp.com/news/2021-07-30-hhsc-release-autism-services-benefits-effective-february-1-2022>

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**TMPPM, Children's Services Handbook, September 2026, sections 2.1 and 2.3 (PDF)**

[https://www.tmhp.com/sites/default/files/file-library/resources/provider-manuals/tmppm/pdf-chapters/2026/2026-09-september/2\\_04\\_childrens\\_services.pdf](https://www.tmhp.com/sites/default/files/file-library/resources/provider-manuals/tmppm/pdf-chapters/2026/2026-09-september/2_04_childrens_services.pdf)

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# Sources (continued)

**Texas HHS, STAR Kids (archived copy, December 8, 2025)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/health/medicaid-chip/medicaid-chip-members/star-kids>

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**Texas HHS Handbooks, STAR Kids plans and member services numbers (5-2025)**

<https://fhhb.hhs.texas.gov/handbooks/star-kids-program-support-unit-operational-procedures-handbook/appendix-xxvi-star-kids-plan-codes>

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**Texas Insurance Code, sections 1355.002 and 1355.015 (archived copy, December 11, 2025)**

<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/IN/htm/IN.1355.htm>

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**Texas Department of Insurance, health care coverage guide (archived copy, August 7, 2026)**

<https://www.tdi.texas.gov/pubs/consumer/cb005.html>

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**LifePath Systems, intellectual and developmental disability services and waiver interest lists**

<https://www.lifepathsystems.org/get-help/intellectual-developmental-disabilities/>

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**Texas HHS, directory of local IDD authorities (LIDDA)**

<https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/directories/lidda>

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**Texas HHS, LIDDA handbook section 7000, HCS and TxHmL interest lists**

<https://fhhb.hhs.texas.gov/handbooks/local-intellectual-developmental-disability-authority-handbook/7000-hcs-txhtml-interest-lists>

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**Texas HHS, HCS program (archived copy, May 6, 2026)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/home-community-based-services-hcs>

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**Texas HHS, Texas Home Living, TxHmL (archived copy, September 3, 2026)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/texas-home-living>

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**Texas HHS, CLASS program (archived copy, May 6, 2026)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/community-living-assistance-support-services-class>

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**Texas HHS, Medically Dependent Children Program, MDCP (archived copy, September 8, 2026)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/medically-dependent-children-program-mdcp>

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**Texas HHS, DBMD program (archived copy, February 6, 2026)**

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/deaf-blind-multiple-disabilities-dbmd>

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# Sources (continued)

## **The Arc of Texas, Medicaid waivers**

<https://www.thearcoftexas.org/resources/medicaid-waivers/>

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## **Alpaca Health, Texas Medicaid waivers guide**

<https://www.alpacahealth.io/family-resources/texas-medicaid-waivers-your-guide-to-approval>

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## **Children's Health, diagnostic evaluations for autism**

<https://www.childrens.com/specialties-services/specialty-centers-and-programs/autism-and-developmental-disabilities/programs-and-services/diagnostic-evaluations-for-autism>

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## **Children's Health, patient referral forms, Autism and Developmental Disabilities (CADD)**

<https://www.childrens.com/for-healthcare-professionals/refer-a-patient/referral-forms?spec=cadd>

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## **Cook Children's, Psychology (Prosper)**

<https://www.cookchildrens.org/services/behavioral-health/contact-us/psychology-prosper/>

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## **SPEDTex, Parent-Directed Special Education Services (PDSES)**

<https://spedtex.org/resources/pdses>

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## **Alpaca Health, Texas autism grants guide**

<https://www.alpacahealth.io/family-resources/texas-autism-grants>

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## **Social Security Administration, SSI for children, 2026 edition**

<https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-child-ussi.htm>

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## **Social Security Administration, contact by phone**

<https://www.ssa.gov/agency/contact/phone.html>

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## **Texas ABLE, expanded ABLE eligibility in 2026**

<https://www.texasable.org/expanded-able-eligibility/>

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## **IRS, ABLE accounts, tax benefit for people with disabilities**

<https://www.irs.gov/government-entities/federal-state-local-governments/able-accounts-tax-benefit-for-people-with-disabilities>

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## **City of Plano, Adapted Recreation**

<https://www.plano.gov/adapted-recreation>

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# Sources (continued)

**Plano Public Library, Adapted Library and Adapted Storytime**

<https://www.plano.gov/adapted-library>

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**Perot Museum of Nature and Science, accessibility and sensory needs**

<https://www.perotmuseum.org/visit/accessibility/>

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**Special Olympics Team Plano, about the delegation and becoming an athlete**

<https://teampiano.org/be-an-athlete>

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**Prestonwood Baptist Church, Special Friends ministry**

<https://prestonwood.org/connect/special-needs/>

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**Texas HHS, Take Time Texas respite provider search (archived copy, August 29, 2026)**

<https://respite.hhs.state.tx.us/RespiteProvider/respite/respiteSearch.xhtml>

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**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**

<https://988lifeline.org/>

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**LifePath Systems, crisis services**

<https://www.lifepathsystems.org/get-help/crisis-services/>

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**Alpaca Health, insurance**

<https://www.alpacahealth.io/insurance>

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**Alpaca Health, ABA therapy in Plano**

<https://www.alpacahealth.io/cities/plano>

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This kit is general information and is not medical or legal advice. Talk to a qualified professional about your child's situation.

# Start ABA therapy in Plano with Alpaca Health

Alpaca Health accepts Texas Medicaid and private insurance plans. It matches Plano families with an independent Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), and it handles the insurance paperwork, from checking your child's coverage to sending claims after each session.



**When you are ready**

**Start with Alpaca Health →**

<https://secure.alpacahealth.io/signup>



Scan to open

Read the Texas Medicaid waivers guide <https://www.alpacahealth.io/family-resources/texas-medicaid-waivers-your-guide-to-approval>