

Guide for Families:

**What questions should you ask
when picking an ABA provider?**

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Before you read another word:

You've already done the hard part. You noticed something, you pushed for answers, and now you're here, looking for the right team for your child. That takes more strength than most people will ever understand.

This guide is designed to help you ask the right questions, not just of us, but of any ABA provider you're considering. Our highest goal is for you to find the team that feels like a true partner: one that sees your child the way you do.

We organized this guide around the four things we believe matter most when choosing a provider. They're the same things families tell us made the biggest difference:

- 1 A plan built for your child, not a template
- 2 One clinical team that actually talks to each other
- 3 A bridge from therapy to the classroom
- 4 A child who is having fun and feels comfortable



A DAY IN OUR CENTERS



01

A PLAN BUILT FOR YOUR CHILD

Why personalized care is the first topic to discuss



ASK: How do you determine the number of treatment hours my child needs?

ASK: What factors go into the recommendation?

ASK: Does your evaluation gather information about my child in more than one environment?

Not all ABA looks the same. Every recommendation we make is built from a structured clinical assessment, not a guess, and not a default.

The plan you walk out with is the one that fits your specific child, not a template with their name on it. Here's how we get there:

How we get to know your child

Before therapy starts, we learn what makes your child light up: the toys they reach for first, the shows they watch on repeat, the textures and sounds they seek out, what calms them, what overwhelms them, and what they can't get enough of.

We meet your family, watch your child play in whatever way play looks like for them, and listen for the things only you know about them. The plan we build reflects all of it.

How we determine your child's plan

Your child's Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) looks at communication, social skills, daily living, play, and behavior, identifying where your child is thriving and where they're stuck. They review what your child's week looks like, what other supports are part of your child's world, and what your family is hoping for. Then they translate all of that into a recommendation: how many hours, which goals, what pace.

02

ONE TEAM THAT TALKS TO EACH OTHER

Why interdisciplinary care changes everything



ASK: If my child needs speech or OT in addition to ABA, are those therapists available to help my child?

ASK: How do you communicate with my child's pediatrician and school?

ASK: When it's time for a re-evaluation, how do you support families with that?

When your child's ABA, speech, and occupational therapists are all part of the same team, under one roof, and working from the same plan, the wins compound. A goal in ABA becomes a breakthrough in speech the next week.

What this looks like in practice

Every child gets a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) who designs their plan, provides guidance to your family, and pulls in the other specialists when something needs a different lens. Teams compare notes regularly: what we tried, what worked, what to try next. With your permission, we can share progress with your pediatrician and help you coordinate IEP goals with your school.

Who's on your child's team

- Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs): Master's-level clinicians with 2,000+ hours of field experience, who design and oversee the plan
- Registered Behavior Technicians delivering 1:1 sessions with your child
- Speech-Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists: licensed specialists working alongside the ABA team
- Neuropsychologists at select locations, or through our trusted referral network

03 A BRIDGE FROM THERAPY TO SCHOOL

When school readiness is the goal, we make it a real one

ASK: Do you have a school readiness program? What does it include?



ASK: Will my child have opportunities to practice skills with other children in a classroom-like setting?

ASK: How do you help families prepare for the transition to school?

Most parents don't dream in therapy hours. They dream about mornings that go smoothly, family dinners that work, and classrooms where their child feels ready to belong. For many families, school readiness is a very important outcome.

Our school readiness program

Our half-day prep school program looks like school, sounds like school, and runs like school, with one big difference: every child has 1:1 support. Days are full of circle time, sensory play, music and movement, learning centers, and imaginative play.

The program is led by our ABA team, with speech and occupational therapists joining in when a child's plan calls for it.

What progress actually looks like

Progress isn't measured in charts or checkboxes. It's in the moments that matter:

- A morning routine that doesn't end in tears
- A child who used to cling at drop-off now waves goodbye and walks in
- The first day of school that starts with a smile

Why prep school works

Our prep school program gives autistic children the confidence, support, and daily structure they need to take their next big step, at their own pace.

Kids practice taking turns, saying hi to a peer, sitting through a story, following a group instruction. Small things that, stacked together, become a child who walks into a classroom and feels like they belong.

Prep school is fully integrated with the ABA therapy and interdisciplinary team at Gracent Pediatric Therapy.

SAMPLE PREP SCHOOL SCHEDULE

- 9:00 AM** Circle Time
- 9:30 AM** Sensory Activities
- 10:00 AM** Group Play
- 10:30 AM** Music and Movement
- 11:00 AM** Snack Time
- 11:30 AM** Centers
- 12:00 PM** Imaginative Play
- 12:30 PM** Library Time



04

A KID WHO'S HAVING FUN

Why your child's enjoyment is the truest sign that therapy is working



ASK: Is your approach play-based and child-led, or more structured?

ASK: How often does the BCBA directly observe my child's sessions? What percentage of hours are supervised?

ASK: Can I come and observe my child's sessions?

You can read about hours and methods all day, but the real test of good ABA is what you see in the parking lot: a child who runs in, and hates to leave. Here, that's the norm.

Therapy that feels like play

Our therapy is naturalistic and play-based. Your child learns through the things they already love, with their interests leading the way. If they love dinosaurs, we count T-rex teeth. If it's trains, we sort train cars by color and practice waiting for the next one. If it's the same picture book seventeen times, we read it seventeen times and build language around every page. Every session is shaped around the kid who walks in the door.

Assent-based care

We practice assent-based care: if your child says no (verbally or otherwise), we listen. We focus on reinforcement, celebrating effort, and building skills through trust. Your child won't know they're in therapy. They'll think they're having the best day.

Safety, supervision, and a window in

Every session is 1:1. Your child is never alone, never lost in the shuffle. And the BCBA who built your child's plan is the same one watching it run, week after week, adjusting as your child grows. For younger kids and first-timers, we build in fade-in plans so the first few visits are gradual, with you nearby until your child is ready. And you're always welcome to observe: a therapy session, our prep school, anything we're doing.

Potential grows here.

OUR ILLINOIS LOCATIONS

NAPERVILLE • ELMHURST
WOODRIDGE • WHEATON

OUR TEXAS LOCATIONS

SOUTHLAKE • KELLER
DENTON • MISSOURI CITY

WE ARE IN-NETWORK WITH

BCBS PPO • BCBS HMO (IL ONLY) • TRICARE
UNITED • AETNA (TX ONLY) • OPTUM • AMITA

Our billing team is happy to verify your
insurance benefits prior to starting services.

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