Family Guide:
What questions should you ask when picking an ABA provider?
ASK: How is my child evaluated for ABA?

An ABA evaluation should be comprehensive in gathering information about your child in different environments. The intake process at North Shore Pediatric Therapy includes interviewing the family, testing and observing your child in the therapy center setting, and observing your child at home.

The home observation is crucial to understanding your child’s skillset, making sure we are translating their strengths to our therapeutic environment, and creating the best teaching plan for the skills they will need to be successful in the world.

TIP: When evaluating other options, make sure to ask whether the evaluation occurs in more than just the therapy center environment.

ASK: What does ABA therapy entail, and what will sessions look like?

ABA therapy uses the concept of reinforcement to teach skills needed to be independent and build and maintain social relationships. Reinforcement can include social praise or access to rewards!

We also teach skills using this same reinforcement technique to replace behaviors that may impede the child’s ability to learn, make friends, or communicate effectively.

Our ABA therapy is highly customized to your child’s skillset, goals, and clinical recommendations.
ASK: Who will oversee my child’s care?

Your child’s care will be overseen by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) who supervises our Behavior Therapists’ ongoing care and execution of your child’s treatment plan.

While your child works directly with a Behavior Therapist, North Shore Pediatric Therapy targets up to 20% of your child’s care to be directly monitored by a BCBA (which is the current maximum supervision time authorized by insurance).

TIP: Supervision percentages matter! When evaluating other options, make sure to ask how much BCBA supervision is provided on an ongoing basis.

ASK: What are the credentials of my child’s clinical team, and how much training do they have?

At the highest level, if your child is not yet diagnosed, we have an in-house team of licensed Neuropsychologists (PhD or PsyD) who can evaluate and diagnose Autism Spectrum Disorder. Being integrated with a team of Neuropsychologists means that we can work collaboratively on your child’s progress and skill developments with them.

Your child’s therapy plan is created by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, who has a Master’s degree in ABA, over 2,000 hours of field experience, and has passed the rigorous Board exam in order to practice as a Behavior Analyst in the field of ABA. Finally, direct treatment is provided by Behavior Therapists who are either already credentialed or in the process of becoming Registered Behavior Therapists.

TIP: When looking at other options, inquire about their ability to perform testing, and whether they work in tandem with Licensed Neuropsychologists or Doctors credentialed to diagnose and assess Autism Spectrum disorder.
ASK: How do you determine the number of treatment hours that my child needs?

Treatment hours might differ for each child, and are determined on an individualized basis. After the intake and assessments are performed, we weigh the priorities of the family, the availability of the child given other therapeutic services they may be receiving, and the level of support needed to facilitate the best outcomes.

TIP: When looking at other options, ask whether they schedule therapy in predefined blocks that may differ from your child’s unique needs or clinical recommendations.

ASK: Do you provide in-home services in addition to sessions in the therapy center?

Some ABA providers offer one or the other, but we’re happy to provide in-home services in addition to in-clinic sessions if this is recommended by your Board Certified Behavior Analyst and your home is within 15-minutes driving distance from one of our clinics.

Most of our clients who qualify for in-home services usually receive a blend of treatment hours in both the home and therapy center environments to ensure the highest level of success.

The ideal therapeutic environment is determined after the initial assessment and is evaluated on an ongoing basis as progress is made.
ASK: Do you have a school readiness program? How does ABA prepare my child for school and other activities?

School readiness is at the root of many of our goals for pre-school and school-aged kids! We have mock classroom environments set up to practice the skills needed to be successful in group learning environments.

These goals are set as part of our Blossom Prep School Program, which is a small-classroom environment incorporating learning opportunities during circle time, structured peer play, and other key learning-to-learn skills.

Some sample goals in this ABA-based school readiness program include learning to take turns, responding and greeting peers, following group instructions, imitating peers during circle time, attending to books, and many more. As always, your child will be receiving one-on-one support during this program.

TIP: When looking at other options, make sure to ask whether your child will have opportunities to interact with other children and practice the skills needed to be successful in a classroom setting.

ASK: What if my child needs therapy from other disciplines in addition to ABA?

Many kids in ABA programs require additional specialized therapies such as Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Mental Health Services.

At North Shore Pediatric Therapy, we have in-house licensed therapists across multiple disciplines, in the same building, and on the same team!

Your child will receive a customized treatment plan of ABA hours with your BCBA and Behavior Therapists, and hours within one of our specialized disciplines with a therapist credentialed in that area.

All treatment teams meet regularly and are aware of your child’s goals and progress, which is key to successful interdisciplinary collaboration and care.

Your BCBA receives regular input from your other specialized professionals to better tailor your child’s treatment plan.

TIP: When looking at other options, ask whether their interdisciplinary care is provided by licensed, specialized providers of that therapy, as those are the only individuals who should be offering clinical recommendations in those areas.
ASK: How do you communicate with my child’s pediatrician and teachers?

ABA is more than just what happens during a session with us, and we feel strongly that success increases when everyone in the child’s immediate care circle is up-to-date on progress and goals.

With your consent, we’ll send regular progress summaries and reports to your Primary Care Physician and diagnosing Physician on file.

We will also facilitate opportunities to observe your child in the classroom and collaborate on classroom and IEP goals to ensure progress is being made in all learning and living environments.

ASK: How often are parents involved in treatment and how is my child’s progress documented?

As the family, you are an active participant in your child’s goal-setting and reviewing of progress. Each treatment plan also includes specific goals for parents in order to help the therapeutic team transfer the skills being learned in session to everyday life and capitalize on all learning opportunities when outside of therapy.

All of our treatment plans have terminal goals that are reported every 6 months and discussed every 3 months directly with the family, to ensure we are always moving towards fading the level of support needed and increasing daily independence.

TIP: When researching other options, ask how often parents are provided meetings and training opportunities with your child’s BCBA.
If you’d like to get to know North Shore Pediatric Therapy, feel free to give us a call or pop-in anytime! We love showing off our amazing facilities and introducing our talented team of interdisciplinary therapists.

With 9 Chicagoland locations (and growing!) you are guaranteed to find a therapy center nearby with immediate ABA services availability.

OUR LOCATIONS
LAKE BLUFF • LINCOLNWOOD • CHICAGO (BUCKTOWN) • DES PLAINES • NAPERVILLE
DEERFIELD • EVANSTON • GLENVIEW • ARLINGTON HEIGHTS

WE ARE IN-NETWORK WITH
AMITA HEALTH/RESURRECTION • BCBS CHOICE PPO • BCBS • MULTIPLAN BRIGHT HEALTH/AMITA • NORTHSHERE PHYSICIAN ASSOCIATES
TRICARE EAST REGION • UBH/UHC • MAGELLAN

Questions? Give us a call! We’re here to walk you through every step of the process.

Want to get in touch? Click here for our Contact Us form.
OUR CORE PURPOSE

*To Experience the Joy of Bringing Happiness into the Lives of Children and their Families*