

ABA Clinic Parent Handbook

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**Our Mission - The ABA clinic at Beyond the Spectrum (BTS) is an organization dedicated to providing the highest quality individualized therapeutic and behavioral services in a positive and family friendly environment to children with disabilities such as Autism Spectrum Disorder. Our goal is to support children and their families by providing a strong behavioral and therapeutic program that focuses on assisting the child in adapting to a multitude of environments, such as home, school, and social settings.  We are focused on all aspects of the individual's life and aiding them to go beyond expectations to reach their full potential.**

**Hours of Services:**

Monday – Friday 8:30am – 4:30 pm. Service times are individualized per client and the therapeutic services recommended and authorized. Please request current calendar of services for days off and early release dates.

The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum runs year-round with particular holidays and scheduled breaks. The breaks are optional, and you will be given the opportunity to sign up for services during those times. During Christmas break, Thanksgiving break and Spring break, services are optional, and therapy will run for those who wish to participate. Parents will be asked to sign up in advance to continue therapy during those specific times. Therapy will be offered on a first come first service basis during these breaks, based on staff availability.

**Philosophy -** The programs at The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum are child-centered and developed around the needs of each child. The principles of behavior analysis are the guiding philosophies of each individualized program. Self-help, functional skills, daily living, communication, and social skills are the basis of each child’s program. A board-certified behavior analyst (BCBA) creates and oversees each child’s program. Each client has a one-on-one registered behavior technician (RBT) working with them through their own program under the direction of a BCBA.

**Admissions Procedures -** The prime concern of The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum is the child and the appropriate placement of each child.Admission is based on information gathered from personal interviews with parents and children, and from available academic, psychological, and physical records when needed. The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum has no religious affiliation and accepts children without regard to race, color, creed, or national origin.

**Caregiver Guidance Participation Requirements -** Each family will be required to attend a caregiver guidance series which consists of parents/caregivers meeting with the BCBA as per individual client’s recommended hours in their individualized behavior plan. All caregiver guidance will focus on goals outlined in the client’s BIP and the caregiver fidelity with those goals. It is imperative that caregivers participate in ongoing caregiver guidance for continuation of services through insurance requirements.

**Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures**  - Arrival time is specific per client and agreed upon at the onset of therapy. It is important to have your child with his or her therapist by their agreed upon scheduled time.

A staff member will greet your child in the designated entry area each morning and meet parents every afternoon. Please accompany your child into the building at drop-off and pick-up. **Never drop off your child and leave without speaking to an adult**. A child should **never** be dropped off at the building entrance and left to enter the building alone. **Your child should not be left unattended by a parent until the client’s RBT has taken the child for services.**

You will be asked to sign a document each month outlining the services rendered and submitted to your insurance. Your signature acknowledges that these services were provided as outlined.

**Release of Children -** A child will be released only to a parent or persons listed on the authorized pick-up list. In the event that child is to be picked up by someone not on the list, a note should be sent in or a phone call made to the office to this effect, and that person’s driver’s license will be checked against the name given to the center for verification.

**Communication -** Communication among parents, child and center is critical as we work together toward meaningful and functional experiences for your child. Please look in your child’s backpack every evening as a folder or binder will be placed inside with communication from the RBT or behavior analyst. This folder should stay in the backpack as it will be used for daily communication to and from the center. We like to keep these on record so please keep them in the binder. If you would like a copy, please let the analyst know. Feel free to add information relevant to your child inside the folder for the analyst and RBT.

Conferences and informal conversations in the doorway as sessions begin are difficult for the analyst or RBT as other clients are engaged in therapy. Should you have a concern and need to speak with the BCBA or RBT, you may send a note or leave a message in the office and the corresponding person will contact you as soon as possible. You may also reach your child’s Analyst or RBT through their email address or their communication binder.

Any drastic personal changes in the child’s life or home environment should be discussed with the staff as soon as possible. These situations often affect the child’s behavior or performance at the center. This includes medication, dietary, or behavioral changes.

Should you have a concern about center procedures or policies, please contact the BCBA and she will be happy to meet with you.

**Client Supplies -** Clothing and shoes: Each child should bring a full change of clothes with them daily. Please place all clothing items in a large zip top bag labeled with your child’s name. A full change of clothes should include socks, underpants, shoes, shirt, and pants/ shorts.

Backpack and lunchbox: Each child should bring a backpack and packed lunch daily. Backpacks and lunch boxes should be clearly labeled with your child’s name.

Other items: if your child required pull-ups or wipes, feel free to send in large quantities labeled with your child’s name.

**Lunch -** Please send lunch and a snack with your child’s name on it every day. You are welcome to send a weekly supply of an item to leave in the kitchen. Please be sure to clearly label any items with your child’s name.

**Community Outings -** Outings are designed to enhance and generalize your child’s learning experiences outside of the clinic or home. The program director or analyst will organize trips throughout the year a schedule of trips for the center year will be posted in the office at the beginning or the week, and parents will be reminded several days in advance before each scheduled trip. Generally speaking, a community outing is scheduled each month.

Every parent must sign a general waiver – transportation form at the time of enrollment. No child will be allowed to leave on a field trip unless this completed form is on file at the center. Each child will have a minimum of a one-to-one adult with them at all times during outings.

All children under the age of eight must have a child safety or booster seat unless the child is taller than 4 feet 9 inches tall. All other children are required to wear seat belts at all times while in the vehicle. No child under the age of twelve years may ride in the front seat of a vehicle. No child may ride in the front seat of any vehicle with a passenger side air bag unless the child is accompanied by his/her parent.

**Cancellations -** If there is a cancelation due to an appointment, vacation, or personal reason, **please give the BCBA a 24 hour written notice**. The written notice should state the day(s) that they student will not be at The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum. If these is an illness or an unexpected situation, please call the Analyst prior to the student’s session time to cancel. As much advance notice is greatly appreciated.

**Changes in Schedule -** If there is a change in schedule such as an appointment, but the student will still be attending the clinic for part of the scheduled session, please provide a written notice. The written notice needs to be sent to the clinic manager or BCBA at least 24 hours prior to the start of the day. Without this alert there is a chance that your child may not be able to receive the one-on-one therapy due to staff availability. This includes early dismissals that were not scheduled prior.

**Late Arrivals and No Shows -** If there is an unexpected situation and you are going to be late dropping off your child or your child is unable to attend therapy, please call/text the clinic manager or BCBA directly. Repeated tardiness, absenteeism will be tracked. If this becomes a concern, you may be asked to change your child’s therapy time to a later session time or change your child’s schedule for services.Repeated tardiness is defined as being late for your session (more than 15 minutes) 2x/month. If you are late for your child’s session, your child’s session time will still end at the scheduled end time. Additional minutes will **not** be added to the end of the session.

**Illness** -Please call the office in advance if your child is ill and will not be attending therapy. If and when you have verification of the fact that your child has a communicable disease, the center should be notified immediately so that we may inform other parents .If a child becomes ill while in care at The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum, the center will contact the parent to pick up the child. Illness is characterized by one or more of the following symptoms:

* Temperature of 100 degrees or higher
* Lethargy
* Abnormal breathing
* Uncontrolled diarrhea
* Vomiting
* Rash with fever
* Yellow/Green discharge

Please do not return your child to the center until 24 hours after symptoms subside.

**Accident/ Medical Emergencies**

**If a child is injured while at The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum, the parent will be notified immediately.** If a critical illness or injury occurs, we will contact emergency medical services, give the child first-aid or CPR If necessary, and contact the child’s parents. In the case of an injury that required medical attention, or should there be a situation where a child was at risk, you will receive a copy of an incident report

**Medication -** All medicines are to be handled by adults only. Children should **not** carry medicine, nor should it be placed in lunch boxes or backpacks. At NO TIME may medicine be brought into the child’s classroom or be given directly to the program director, analyst, or RBT to dispense. Medication in its original container with the child’s full name and date should be brought to the center by the parent and delivered to the office manager who will store it in a locked location. In accordance with state licensing requirements, at that time, a medication authorization form must be filled out and signed by the parent. If the medication is to be taken for several days, it may be helpful to have your pharmacist divide the dosage into separate bottles for center and home the prescribed medicine will be administered at the time and time recorded in a medication log. Authorization to administer may also be given in an electronic format capable of being saved. Authorization to administer single dose may be given by phone.

**Lice -** Head lice are a common childhood problem. These small grayish-tan insects without wings attach their eggs, or nits, firmly to hair shafts. The most common symptom if infestation is intense itching on the back of the head or neck. Because list are easily transmitted from child to child, it is the policy of The ABA Clinic at Beyond the Spectrum to call the parents of the child with a suspected active lice infestation and have the child picked up. The child may return to the center after treatment of their hair, clothing and home environment.

**Allergies -** The center should be advised of any foods or other substances to which your child suffers an allergic reaction. These allergies should be noted on the application form. This information will be given to the program director, analyst, or RBTs, and kept in the office with the first aid kid.

If your child has a severe food allergy, you are required to fill out both the food allergy action plan and the anaphylaxis emergency action plan, located towards the end of this handbook.

**Inclement Weather -** During hurricane season, please listen to the radio and news stations for school closings. If the public school where you reside is closed, then the center will also be closed. When in doubt, please call our office.

**Visiting the Center -** Parents are always welcome to visit their child’s sessions during center hours. However, please be aware that this may be upsetting to your child and the other children in the center. If you are interested in setting up a time to observe, please contact your center program director to schedule your visit.

**Severe Weather Policy**

Experiencing a hurricane or extremely severe weather is always a real possibility in Florida. Our BTS closing policy in case of such weather conditions is as follows:

1. All closures and re-openings will follow Sarasota, Manatee, or Charlotte County School Board decisions

2. The clinic manager will call the number on file by 7:30am to alert families of closures.

**Non-Discrimination Policy -** BTS does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, or disability in administration of its admissions or educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, other School-administered programs, or in employment. The School complies with the amended Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.