

## **Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Program**

### **What is ABA?**

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an evidence-based approach to creating meaningful or socially significant behavior change. New skills and behaviors are taught while any problem behaviors are minimized. ABA focuses on behaviors that are observable and measurable, with respect to their antecedents and consequences, which are events that occur directly before and after the behavior of interest. This approach utilizes principles of reinforcement, which typically involves providing rewards to increase skills that are functional and socially significant throughout the child's daily life (as noted below). ABA not only teaches these skills, but also promotes maintenance and generalization of the skills. Maintenance is used to determine whether or not the child can still perform the skill after a given amount of time has passed. Generalization requires that the child not only learns a particular skill in a structured 1:1 teaching environment, but ensures that the skill transfers to different people, materials, instructions, and environments. ABA also serves to decrease behaviors that may interfere with learning, such as tantrums, aggression, or stereotypy (hand flapping, spinning, etc.). Individualized curricula are developed to facilitate learning and develop appropriate programming for each child. Areas that we work on include (but are not limited to):

*Language and Functional Communication:* Communicating needs/wants to others

*Independent Play:* Playing alone without assistance

*Social Skills:* Interacting with others

*Imitation:* Imitating behaviors or vocalizations of others

*Gross/Fine Motor Skills:* Control over balance and body movement

*Listener Responding:* Attending and responding to spoken words

*Visual/Perceptual Skills:* Interpreting things he/she sees visually

*Self-help Skills:* Skills such as dressing, grooming, feeding, toilet training

### **StarBright ABA Policies and Procedures**

1. For initial assessments, STARBRIGHT ABA reserves the right to discontinue services or return a client to the wait list if the guardian does not inform the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) of the cancellation within 24 hours of the scheduled assessment.
2. If a child is sick, the session should be cancelled. Staff will not work with a child who has any contagious illness (vomiting and/or diarrhea within the past 24 hours, infection, rash, fever,

etc.). Your child must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication. If a staff member notes any of these symptoms, the session will be cancelled for that day.

3. Please alert STARBRIGHT ABA staff prior to the start time if the child will be late for the assigned session or will be missing the session out of courtesy. If your child will be missing a significant portion of the session the session may be cancelled at the discretion of the BCBA. Sessions that start late will end at their scheduled time and will not be extended to complete the full scheduled duration.

4. Parents need to arrive at least 10 minutes before the end of the scheduled session to talk with the Implementer about the session and any other programming information. Late pick-ups may delay the start of another session and STARBRIGHT ABA staff must be notified if a parent will be arriving late. If the child is late being picked up by the parent the additional time will still be billed.

5. If there are 3 consecutive cancellations/late arrivals, or 3 cancellations/late arrivals within 1 month, then treatment continuation will be reviewed by the BCBA. It will then be determined if transition and discharge from STARBRIGHT ABA will occur. Consistent attendance for sessions is important for progress toward treatment goals. Lapse in treatment attendance inhibits the progress of therapy.

6. Sessions cancelled 24 hours or more in advance may be able to be rescheduled. However, this needs to be done in accordance with the clinic and staff schedule. The BCBA will determine if/when the hours can be made up.

7. STARBRIGHT ABA encourages staff to continue with professional development. STARBRIGHT ABA may hold in-service days and/or staff meetings for professional development. During such, implementers do not provide treatment.

8. Program modifications shall be made through the BCBA in consultation with a Licensed Behavior Analyst. If guardians or implementers have changes that need to be made, this should be discussed with the BCBA. If it is urgent, the clinical director should be called immediately.

9. STARBRIGHT ABA policy is to avoid dual relationships between clients (including their families) and staff. Please do not ask our staff to engage in tasks/activities outside of their STARBRIGHT ABA role/responsibilities (i.e., babysitting, attending birthday parties or other events, giving/receiving gifts, privately paying for ABA services outside of STARBRIGHT ABA, etc.).

10. Confidentiality is important. Please do not discuss any known information about other children or families receiving services through STARBRIGHT ABA to others outside of the facility.

11. STARBRIGHT ABA will attempt to keep consistent staff with each client; however, this will vary across services with the child. Some reasons include scheduling changes, promotions,

illness, etc. This may benefit the child in that it allows him/her to work on generalizing learned skills to other staff.

12. In the event of inclement weather, we will make every effort to provide services. However, there may be hazardous conditions that result in the cancellation of a session. A decision will be made by the BCBA to reschedule the session.

13. For a center-based program to be most effective, it is essential that the guardian/caregiver implement the strategies outside of the session. To facilitate the child's progress, the BCBA will make recommendations, parent goals, and staff will provide parent education.

14. Due to the nature of STARBRIGHT ABA services, parent education is essential. The BCBA reserves the right to discontinue services if recommendations are not being carried over in the home setting (e.g., behavior intervention plan, data collection, etc.) by the child's parent/guardian.

15. STARBRIGHT ABA encourages collaboration with other service providers. Third party observations are permitted one time on a quarterly basis for a maximum of 30 minutes, unless otherwise specified by the BCBA. Proper release forms must be on file before an observation is scheduled.

16. All STARBRIGHT ABA staff members are mandated reporters. If any staff believes there is any cause to suspect abuse and/or neglect, the local Child Welfare Department reporting procedure must be followed. STARBRIGHT ABA staff members are not responsible for the outcome of the investigation.