



**UK Society for
Behaviour Analysis**

How to Manage Practitioners in Your Own Home

What is ABA?

ABA stands for 'Applied Behaviour Analysis'. ABA is a science that helps us understand why people behave in particular ways, including how they acquire skills or develop challenging behaviours. The science of ABA has been used to develop a number of approaches and strategies to help people change behaviour and be more successful across a range of life domains. Although there are many ways in which ABA can be applied, this document focusses exclusively on home programmes.

What is an ABA Home Programme?

An ABA home programme takes place in the private home of a family, typically with autistic and/or children with learning disabilities. Please also read [Information for Parents/Carers New to ABA](#) These types of programmes typically require a team of professionals, all of whom will want to work within your home.

This fact sheet has been compiled based on the experiences of parents using home programmes.

Step
1

Knowing the BCBA consultant

Ensure you find the correct consultant for your child. A good starting point is the UK-SBA register, where you can be sure of finding Behaviour analysts whose credentials and training have been verified. The consultant is responsible for assessing & creating programmes, supervising other behaviour analysts/tutors & analysing data from your child's program. Speak with other parents using ABA home programmes, recommendations are important. Discuss the long-term goals regarding funding. Will you be able to self-fund an ABA programme or is your aim that your child will have ABA in mainstream or a special school? If your goal is to challenge the local authority, ensure your BCBA has tribunal experience to represent your child's needs for you in person and via report writing.

Ask your BCBA if they work within a team or who their supervisor is - who do they go to for advice if they are stumped by a barrier to learning?

1

Ideally your BCBA is personable and able to work with outside agencies/professionals. Ask them what their experience is of collaborating with OTs/SLT and head teachers? Are they used to writing reports that can be understood by local authorities / teaching professionals? Your ABA consultant should also be aware of issues such as the need to gain informed consent for their work from clients, or from those (like parents to small children) who are legally responsible, if the clients themselves are not legally capable of giving consent.

Step
2

Understanding the assessments.

The BCBA will assess current skills and areas for development using ABA tools such as the VB-Mapp (Verbal Behavior Milestones, Assessment and Placement Program). This will help in identifying any barriers to learning, behavioural problems & learning 'gaps'. You and your child, where they are able, should be involved in identifying the goals which take priority – goals which will improve the child's quality of life. Ensure the assessment covers:

- development milestones, language development, gross & fine motor skills, pre academic skills
- academics: maths, reading & writing, social skills, language & communication, adaptive life skills & problematic behaviour
- functional behaviour

Step
3

ABA tutors.

Finding the right fit for your child is key! Tutors must be DBS checked, again the UK-SBA register is a good starting point, hardworking, flexible & creative. When interviewing tutors, insist on a 'pairing session' to ensure right fit with child.

Step
4

Everyone on the same page

Agree dates and times for regular team meetings to ensure everyone is doing the same thing. Regular double up sessions where the tutors do a session together is good for continuity and the exchange of ideas. Make sure the ABC data is kept fully up to date to track behaviours as soon as they appear

Step
5

Designate an area of your home for 'learning'.

This should be somewhere that enables you to see/hear the session. Be mindful of decoration, lighting, colour. Remove distractors. Declutter learning space. Incorporate visuals. Be clear about boundaries - for example, which rooms are not available for the team, which toilet/bathroom is available for the team, whether or not you are happy for access to your kitchen. Ensure the home is a very happy, inviting space where your tutors want to come to work and where your child wants to learn

**Step
6**

Open communication and transparency.

The program needs to be monitored on a regular basis to keep on track — review the data and make meaningful changes with professionals. Further assessments will help you track progress. Ensure the VB Mapp or assessment tools are being continually updated so you can track regular progress. Have your view. Focus on what's working & what isn't. Be familiar with the targets so you can work with your child outside of sessions and generalise skills learnt. Work with the team on visual boards, social stories. Keep targets useful, and remember your child has preferences too. They don't have to like everything.

**Step
7**

Knowing your role

A parent should be at home throughout the duration of the programme. Parents (and whoever is in the household) need to be dedicated and willing to do the training themselves, not just leave it to the tutors. Get involved, you are crucial to your child's development. Don't forget to enjoy your child - they will only be a child once. Don't miss precious moments and have fun.

**Step
8**

Maintaining positive relationships with the team

Being open and honest is crucial when building relationships with people working in your home. If you have concerns, don't let them build up; often tutors/the team won't be aware that something is an issue unless you say. It is also important that you ask questions to fully understand what is happening with your child. If the answers don't help you understand, ask again, raise it at the team meeting, ask for more information. You are a key member of the team.

**Step
9**

Raising a concern/complaint

It is important that you try to resolve your concerns with the team first, working through issues together may help to improve the relationship and will ultimately improve outcomes for your child. If your concerns continue, you can raise them using the [UK-SBA Complaints](#) procedure for professionals on the UK-SBA register.