



TIP SHEET

Selecting an Autism Therapy Service Provider

The choice of autism treatment can greatly impact a child's progress and future quality of life. It's critical to start the intervention early, as soon as there is any suspicion of developmental delay.

There are a number of therapeutic approaches to consider. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is the most well-researched and scientifically-validated method. Look for service providers that use a blend of ABA-based strategies to ensure programs are collaborative, fun, and make measurable progress. These programs are often family-focused and incorporate everyday home routines.

It is also important to find an established agency with experienced and qualified staff members.

Staff members should:

- Make parents and the child feel comfortable
- Take an individualized and collaborative approach to treatment planning
- Provide honest and realistic feedback
- Parents should be encouraged to ask as many questions as they wish, such as:

Assessments

- Can you provide a basic developmental screening for autism?
- Does the assessment include a printed report, outlining the child's unique strengths/challenges?

Therapy

- Do you offer ABA-based therapy?
- What specific activities can be done at home to support the child's progress?
- Can you refer parents to other families you have worked with in the past?
- What happens during a typical treatment session?
- How involved will parents be in the day-to-day delivery of the child's program?
- How many hours of therapy per week will the child need?
- Do you provide weekly/monthly reports on the child's progress?
- Do you provide training or support for families?

Staff Qualifications

- What are the qualifications of your therapists regarding Applied Behavior Analysis?
- Will the child's program be supervised by a Master's level staff member?