



PARENT/CAREGIVER HANDBOOK



Contact

1-800-579-7351 OR info@heartlandbehavior.com

Program Guidelines and Mission

Thank you for choosing us to provide behavioral consultation and Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services for your child. The following will outline program guidelines and administrative policies and procedures. Please read it thoroughly and keep it handy for future reference. Please sign the last page and return to Heartland ABA, keeping a copy for your records.

Mission

Heartland ABA is an agency composed of Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs), Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs), and a strong administrative team who work together to provide ABA services for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) throughout Nebraska. We specialize in providing intensive, individualized, treatment rooted in the principles of ABA in order to meet our patients' needs. Our treatment plans focus on increasing skills that will lead to increased opportunities, involvement, and independence while simultaneously decreasing problem behavior and other barriers to learning.

Our mission is to decrease the challenges faced and enhance the lives of individuals with ASD and their families by providing one-to-one instruction, education, training, guidance, and resources.

Core Values

- Every patient has the right to effective treatment that is rooted in the evidence-based literature of the science of ABA. Treatment must consist of an in-depth assessment to select goals and objectives which target socially significant behavior.
- Every patient has the potential to learn new skills and the right to acquire meaningful repertoires measured by a consistent data collection system and systematic review.
- Every patient has the right to programming and treatment which increases access to reinforcers, opportunities for rewarding personal relationships, well-being, productivity, independence, and community involvement while decreasing barriers to learning.
- Every patient has the right to treatment that is provided within the context of what is legal, ethical, and best practice.



- Parents/caregivers have the right to be involved throughout every facet of the assessment, treatment, transition, and discharge process through effective communication and active participation.
- Every patient has the right to a treatment team of qualified, highly trained professionals.

Our Philosophy

We are a private treatment agency providing data-driven, evidence-based, individualized, one-to-one therapy utilizing the principles of ABA. All training and therapy interventions are provided or supervised by a BCBA. Our providers specialize in ABA, Discrete Trial Teaching, Natural Environment Teaching, Verbal Behavior, and small and large group direct instruction. We work on all areas of development based on the VB- MAPP, ABS- S:2, AFLS and SKILLS Assessment, including academic, language, motor, behavior, adaptive skills, cognition, executive function, play skills and social skills. Staff is highly qualified with backgrounds ranging from early childhood to special education and all have a passion for helping children with ASD as well as understanding and applying behavioral principles.

Statement Regarding Biomedical Interventions for Autism

Science has not yet pinpointed the cause of ASD. Over the last decade, the suspected cause of ASD has moved away from genetics to an increasing focus on environmental, toxic, autoimmune, and viral agents. Many children with ASD also exhibit gastrointestinal, immune, allergic, sensory, motor, and physical conditions which should be treated to improve the overall health of the child. Until such time that the cause is scientifically determined, we do not believe suspected causes or treatments should be ruled out. We support families' choices to explore biomedical interventions and will work with others to support healing of the child.

Ethical standards

Heartland ABA adheres to the Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts issued by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board.

Patient Services

Heartland ABA provides ABA treatment to individuals diagnosed with ASD who have been referred for ABA services by a physician. ABA is a science which involves the application of the principles of behavior (i.e., reinforcement, motivation, extinction, punishment, stimulus control, conditioned reinforcement, and schedules of reinforcement) to build socially significant behavior and reduce problematic behavior. The field of ABA is well-established with a large supporting body of scientific research and standards for evidence-based practice. ABA treatment for individuals with ASD has been endorsed by the US Surgeon General (1999). In addition, many professional associations have published statements reporting the



effectiveness of and endorsing ABA treatment, such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (2001). In addition, the National Autism Standards Report (2009, 2015) has found that treatment rooted in the principles of ABA have the strongest research support as established, effective treatment for individuals with ASD.

Heartland ABA abides by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's Professional Ethical Compliance Code and Guidelines for Responsible Conduct (BACB, 2014) as well as all local, state, and federal laws with regards to the provision of services.

Our Process

Our services begin with an intake with a member of our administrative team. At this time, the patient's family is able to discuss their primary areas of concern and determine if Heartland ABA can meet their needs. During this process our team will determine eligibility for services and navigate the insurance process for you. You will be asked to fill out an application, provide proof of medical diagnosis of ASD, provide a prescription for ABA services, and provide proof of insurance.

The next step is to assess your child's skill level which is necessary to guide the development of an individualized treatment plan. The assessment will be conducted by a licensed BCBA and includes the use of various assessment tools. Assessments are typically conducted in the child's home setting; however, arrangements can be made to conduct the assessment in an area that best suits your family's needs.

Some assessment tools we use include:

- **Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills- Revised (ABLLS-R)**
The ABLLS-R is an assessment, curriculum guide, and skills tracking system for children with language delays. It provides criterion referenced information about a child's skills which can be used as the basis for selecting objectives and monitoring progress (Partington, 2010).
- **Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS)**
The AFLS is an assessment, skills tracking system, and curriculum guide for skills that are essential for independence. It assesses the basic abilities as well as more advanced skills of the child which are broken down into six assessment modules: Basic Living Skills, Home Skills, Community Participation Skills, School Skills, Independent Living Skills, and Vocational Skills (Partington & Mueller, 2012).
- **Essential for Living (EFL)**
EFL is a communication, behavior, and functional skills assessment, curriculum, and skill-tracking instrument for both children and adults with moderate-to- severe disabilities, particularly those with limited communication repertoires, minimal daily living skills, and/or severe problem behavior. It is based on the concepts, principles, and empirically-validated procedures from ABA and Skinner's (1957) analysis of verbal behavior. The focus of this assessment is to identify, assess, and target skills and behaviors which are essential for effective daily living and result in an improved quality of life by categorizing skills into must-have skills, should-have skills, good-to-have skills, and nice-to-have skills (McGreevy, Fry, & Cornwall, 2012).

- **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)**
The FBA is an assessment used to determine the function (i.e., purpose) of problem behavior in order to select protocols for reduction (e.g., access to tangibles, attention, escape/avoidance, sensory, etc.). It includes various forms of data collection and procedures.
- **Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP):** The VB-MAPP is a criterion referenced assessment based on B.F. Skinner's analysis of Verbal Behavior (1957), which, in addition to his work in behavioral psychology and learning, led to the field of ABA. The VB-MAPP contains five components (Milestones Assessment, Barriers Assessment, Transition Assessment, Task Analysis, and Curriculum Placement Guide) that are designed to assess a child's existing skills, determine appropriate treatment plans and placement, and to assist in developing treatment goals and objectives. The Milestones Assessment is designed to provide a sample of the child's existing verbal and related skills, containing 170 measurable learning and language milestones that are sequenced according to typical development and balanced across 3 developmental levels. The Barriers Assessment provides an assessment of 24 common learning and language acquisition barriers children with autism are faced with. The Transition Assessment contains 18 assessment areas to help identify whether a child has made meaningful progress and has acquired the skills necessary for reducing and/or withdrawing treatment. This assessment tool can provide a measurable way for the child's team to make decisions and set priorities regarding reduction of treatment and/or discharge (Sundberg, 2007).

Once the assessment has been conducted, the BCBA will evaluate the data collected to inform the development of a treatment plan and behavior intervention plan [BIP] (if necessary). The BCBA will comprise an extensive report of the assessment findings as well as a specific treatment plan, including recommendations for the number of service hours. Heartland ABA is dedicated to providing the highest quality of service possible and for this reason our treatment packages typically include the following services, dependent on your insurance company's approval and medical necessity: direct service hours with a qualified behavior therapist, weekly supervision hours by a licensed BCBA, weekly parent training hours by a licensed BCBA, and weekly treatment planning hours by a licensed BCBA. Coordination of care (i.e., team meetings) and social skills groups are also available to some patients.

Components of our treatment plans might include prompting/prompt fading, errorless teaching, shaping, correction procedures, positive/negative reinforcement, differential reinforcement, pairing procedures, task analysis, chaining procedures, stimulus discrimination training, extinction, Verbal Behavior, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), sign language, speech generating devices, discrete trial instruction, and natural environment teaching.

Heartland ABA recognizes that the quality of services we provide is directly dependent on the quality of our providers. Heartland ABA uses an exclusive patient-staff matching process



across 30 essential domains to ensure the perfect fit for your family. In addition, Heartland ABA is proud to offer our providers training and continuing education/professional development opportunities which allow for enhanced services to be provided to your child.

When needed, Heartland ABA will provide you with contact information for other professionals who may be better able to assist with the needs of the patient if Heartland ABA is unable to meet specific treatment needs.

Assessment results are available to the patient and/or family, and a preliminary treatment plan meeting will be scheduled with the patient and ABA professionals to review the proposed service type(s), treatment plan goals and objectives, recommended duration and length of treatment, and a discharge plan for the patient. Upon discharge, recommendations will be provided as a way to support continued progress or address persisting concerns.

The contents of both the assessment and treatment plan will be explained to the patient and/or family, and Heartland ABA staff will willingly answer any related questions about the assessment or proposed service. Heartland ABA understands that this information is confidential, and will abide by established confidentiality regulations, policies and procedures.

Parent/Caregiver Involvement

Parent/caregiver participation is an expectation of service. Participation may include team meetings, data collection, and implementation of recommended strategies/programs. If there is lack of involvement, HEARTLAND ABA reserves the right to reconsider the appropriateness of service.

A parent and/or authorized caregiver **MUST** be on the premises during HEARTLAND ABA sessions at all times. HEARTLAND ABA providers are not permitted to be left alone in the home/service location with a patient. If the parent/authorized caregiver must leave the premises, the provider will be forced to terminate the session. Programs which include self-help skills (e.g. showering, toileting) are only permitted with the presence of a parent/guardian. HEARTLAND ABA reserves the right to reconsider the provision of services if there is a failure to comply with this policy.

Parent Training

HEARTLAND ABA requires parent/caregiver participation in parent training at a minimum of two hours a month. Parent training is critical to promote generalization of newly-learned skills across all settings and environments. In addition, all insurance carriers require parent training in conjunction with direct care. If parent training is not occurring, insurance carriers will either decrease services or refuse to reauthorize ongoing service. We encourage all parents to take advantage of parent training for hands-on learning in areas of particular difficulty or concern. We believe consistency with interactions and expectations across all caregivers is an important factor to a child's



success in his or her individual program. To schedule a parent training session, please speak with your BCBA.

Cancellation and Late Policy

CBS requires a minimum of 24 hours notice to cancel a session. The 24 hours policy does not include excused absences. Excused absences shall be determined case by case at the discretion of CBS and may include, but are not limited to sickness, emergencies, or extenuating circumstances. In these circumstances, please call your Case Manager. CBS may ask for verification of excused absences.

In order to provide the best services, CBS adheres to the following fee schedules for our cancellation and late policy:

Situation	Fee
No Call - No Show: <i>Any session that does not start within 10 minutes of the scheduled start time and the family has not contacted CBS.</i>	\$100
Cancellation: <i>Any session that is canceled with less than 24 hours notice.</i>	\$50
<i>Families covered by Medicaid will be exempt from these fees, but are expected to adhere to this policy.</i>	

Our Illness Policy below outlines instances when your child’s session should be canceled due to illness. In situations where a family has canceled their child’s appointment 3 or more times in a month, the Case Manager will call a meeting to discuss the situation. CBS may need to consider terminating services.

CBS has a strict cancellation policy for our providers as well. If a CBS provider cancels a session, they will make every effort to make-up the canceled session.

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

As a patient, you have the right to:

- Give informed written consent for assessment, initiation of services, and treatment plan implementation.
- Review records and request copies of any or all parts of that record. In order to make a request, please contact your HEARTLAND ABA Case Manager who will make the record available for review.
- Privacy regarding your family information. HEARTLAND ABA adheres to the confidentiality guidelines set forth by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Participate fully in the assessment process and service provision.
- Contact HEARTLAND ABA to report any concerns with HEARTLAND ABA’s services and/or employees.
- Be informed about and appeal any possible changes to the assessment and/or services before those changes are made.
- Participate in all meetings where decisions will be made about changes in assessment and/or services.
- Be treated with respect and in a professional manner at all times.



- Receive services that are provided in accordance with HEARTLAND ABA 's Mission Statement and Core Values.
- Due process (appeal) procedures in cases where there is a disagreement with HEARTLAND ABA.

As a patient, you have the responsibility to:

- Provide informed written consent for HEARTLAND ABA to assess and provide services.
- Establish and adhere to a schedule with the service providers. HEARTLAND ABA 's providers are flexible and will work with your family to meet scheduling needs, within reason.
- Participate fully in the assessment process, as well as the ongoing provision of services.
- Be present in the location of service at all times during HEARTLAND ABA sessions.
- Treat all HEARTLAND ABA employees in a respectful and professional manner.
- Provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for our employees to provide treatment.
- Respect the roles, responsibilities, and guidelines set forth by HEARTLAND ABA for the provision of services by each employee.
- Respect the scope of practice of ABA services provided through insurance.
- Notify the provider prior to a scheduled session if the child or parent/caregiver is ill so the session can be rescheduled.
- Notify CBS immediately if there is an infectious illness in the home. If anyone has a contagious/communicable condition, medical clearance from a doctor will be required before services can resume. If the child is ill or has a fever or vomits, 24



hours must pass without the fever before treatment may resume. Clearance must specifically state that the patient may return to regular sessions.

Reasonable Access to Care and Personalized Care

Clients are given reasonable access to care without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, newborn status, handicap or source of payment provided that the medical care needed is within the scope of services provided at HEARTLAND ABA. Reasonable modifications and accommodations to policies, procedures and practices will be provided when requested by a client with a disability or handicap to afford such a client with the same services, privileges, goods, accommodations or advantages as non-disabled clients, unless the provision of the modification or accommodation would: 1) fundamentally alter HEARTLAND ABA' program, services, goods, privileges, advantages, or accommodations, 2) involve issues of medical treatment, or 3) compromise client care.

An employee who receives a client request for a program modification or accommodation should make every effort to grant and implement the request, unless the request, if granted, would violate the above- listed provisions. An employee with questions regarding a client's request for accommodations should direct them first to the Clinical Director, and then to the Regional Director, who will make the final decision regarding the request.

Clients requiring care that is beyond the HEARTLAND ABA scope will be referred to outside providers. HEARTLAND ABA and its affiliated organizations will be responsible for providing communication mechanisms with hearing impaired and non-English speaking clients.

Clients have a right to receive considerate and respectful care based on their individual psychosocial, spiritual, cultural needs and values. Cultural and spiritual beliefs may be exercised to the extent that they do not interfere with others well- being.

Informed Consent

The client or their designated representative has the right and responsibility to be involved in decision- making about their care. This includes acceptance or refusal of care. Conflicts in the needs and wishes of client's family members or designated representatives can be addressed with the assigned staff. The Clinical Director and/or Regional Director may be called upon to assist in the event of a disagreement.

Staff will detail the benefits, significant risks and recognized alternatives of treatments and procedures prior to their performance. All clients and caregivers will be provided with the Parent/Caregiver Handbook at the onset of treatment, which details Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and provides comprehensive information about the treatment program and expectations. Clients/caregivers have the right to accept or refuse treatment at any time.

ILLNESS POLICY

Young children frequently become mildly ill. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers experience a yearly average of six respiratory infections (colds) and can expect one to two gastrointestinal infections (vomiting and/or diarrhea) each year. Deciding whether to cancel your child’s home therapy can be difficult. It is important for parents and caregivers to discuss what observations have been made and agree on a plan of action. Please contact HEARTLAND ABA or your BCBA when your child is ill and describe the illness.

The following is a guideline and recommendation for exclusion from home services:

Disease or Symptom	Need to cancel home therapy?
Body Rash with fever	Yes—seek medical attention. Any rash that spreads quickly, has open, weeping wounds and/or is not healing should be evaluated
Chicken Pox	Yes—until blisters have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Yes—until 24 hours after treatment
Coughing (severe, uncontrolled coughing or wheezing, rapid or difficulty in breathing)	Yes—medical attention is necessary.
Coxsackie’s Virus (hand, foot and mouth disease)	No—child is no longer contagious once the symptomatic rash appears, unless the child has mouth sores or is drooling
Fever	Yes—fever over 101 degrees and when fever is accompanied by behavior changes or symptoms of illness, such as rash, sore throat, vomiting, etc.
Mild cold symptoms	A good rule of thumb is cancel a child home services at the beginning of a cold—the most infectious time and when he or she feels the worst. Return to services when he does not have a persistent cough and he or she feels well

Vomiting (2 or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours)

Yes, child not have home services until 24 hours following the resolution of the vomiting. Observe for other signs of illness and for dehydration

Appointments

HEARTLAND ABA is committed to providing consistent, reliable services as scheduled and agreed upon by the patient. HEARTLAND ABA will propose a preliminary set of hours for ABA services within the initial treatment plan, taking into consideration medical necessity and the results of the assessment. Once your family has been matched with a treatment team (i.e., BCBA and RBT), it is recommended that you work out a monthly/weekly schedule with the providers. This schedule will help to ensure that your child receives consistent services that can be provided within the context of your family's and the providers' schedules. HEARTLAND ABA expects our providers to keep their appointments with your family and we ask that you do the same. Adherence to this schedule is essential to the productivity of our providers as well as the ability to meet goals, standards, and deadlines for your child's treatment.

When the need for a cancellation of an appointment is foreseeable, as for planned medical treatments, holidays, vacations, etc., HEARTLAND ABA asks that you notify the providers and your Case Manager in advance as soon as you are aware of the change in schedule.

HEARTLAND ABA understands that circumstances, such as illness and family emergencies, may arise which necessitate a cancellation. Whenever possible, we request that you provide at least 24-hours advanced notice of the cancellation to your providers and the Case Manager. If your child or someone in the household becomes ill or it becomes necessary to cancel a session with less than 24-hours' notice, we ask that you notify the providers and Case Manager as soon as possible. Three (3) consecutive cancellations or a total of five (5) within one authorization period (i.e., 6-months) by the patient may result in termination or reduction of services, as consistency in the implementation of the treatment plan is critical to your child's success.

HEARTLAND ABA requires that you contact your providers and Case Manager directly for all cancellations of sessions/changes in schedule.

Health, Safety, and Security

HEARTLAND ABA takes every precaution to ensure that we protect the health, safety, and security of our patients and employees. Employees are trained in how to deal with situations that may arise during sessions. The following are guidelines to help ensure the health, safety, and security of our patients and employees:

- Patients must be supervised at all times. A parent/authorized caregiver must be

present in the home/service location for the session.

- Providers will call 911 for all emergencies.
- Providers will not be expected to provide services to patients who are ill. Parents/caregivers are strongly encouraged to cancel sessions in advance if you believe your child is ill.
- Providers will not provide services if the patient or someone living in the household has a contagious/communicable/infectious disease. Medical clearance from a physician is required before services can resume following an illness of this nature.
- Providers will not provide services in the presence of a pest infestation.
- Corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, and maltreatment are not permitted by HEARTLAND ABA employees and will be reported as required by state law.
- HEARTLAND ABA does not permit the use of physical holds/restraints. In a crisis situation, the parent/caregiver may be asked to intervene to ensure safety.
- Providers should not be expected to tend to toileting accidents/diaper changes unless the patient has a specified toileting program in his/her treatment plan. These should be handled by the parent/caregiver.
- HEARTLAND ABA does not permit its employees to administer any medication whatsoever to patients, under any circumstances, whether such medication is available over-the-counter or is prescribed by a medical practitioner. If a patient requires medication during a session, parents/caregivers must administer the medication.
- Providers are mandated reporters and may disclose your health information to appropriate authorities if it is believed that your child is a possible victim of abuse, neglect, domestic violence, or the victim of other crimes.

In the event of an emergency, the provider will follow HEARTLAND ABA's notification and reporting policy as outlined in their employee handbooks.

Payment for Services

We at HEARTLAND ABA are dedicated to providing the best possible ABA services to the families we serve. We make every attempt to work with your insurance carrier to have the best possible reimbursement outcome within the guidelines of every policy. We are required per Federal and State insurance laws to inform you of the copayment, deductible, and coinsurance amounts and send invoices to you on a regular basis. Please contact your insurance carrier directly if you have questions about your coverage or contact our Administrative Team for assistance with this process. We wish to assist our families in dealing with the insurance process in every way possible.

Details of Service Home-

Based Programs

Each patient's program is individualized and based on his or her goals and unique learning style. Every patient receives an assessment, and, in cooperation with parents, goals and objectives are designed to meet individual needs.

Our service model is based upon a research-proven approach, providing supervision to staff, high levels of training and a dynamic approach, which allows for constant evaluation, change and progress monitoring. The following outlines the process for starting a typical in-home program. The specifics of service may vary depending on your child and their specific program.

Program Content:

- Oversight and supervision from a BCBA
- Home consultation and training
- Individual therapy
- Consultation for home and community life skills

Acclimation to Therapy

During a therapy session, your child will be required to work and comply with instructions with which he or she may at times not want to participate. In these instances, the child may tantrum, scream and/or become aggressive. This response is typical of a child who has never been required to comply with such requests.

Some children take several weeks before they adjust to his therapy format and cooperate. During the adaptation phase, the child will still be required to participate in the therapy sessions.

Treatment Plans

HEARTLAND ABA is designed for individuals with ASD and related disorders. Treatment plans are based on the development of language, social, motor, safety and self-help skills and guided by developmental, functional, and norm-based curriculums. Each patient's strengths and weaknesses are evaluated, and an individual program plan is developed based on each patient's unique learning needs.

Discipline

HEARTLAND ABA believes in the use of positive behavioral supports to allow individuals to be successful and to prepare them for independent living. Each person is taught in accordance with their individualized treatment plan using the principles of ABA which may include: redirection, token systems, social praise for appropriate behavior, or temporary removal of reinforcement. When necessary, a behavior plan is developed and overseen by a BCBA. All professional ethical standards are observed. We do not tolerate any form of corporal punishment, humiliation, and /or traumatic treatment.

In order to help the child differentiate appropriate and inappropriate response and behaviors, rewards will be used. Which rewards will be used will depend on the child's individual preference. Some examples of common rewards include food

(crackers, candy, juice), toys (bubbles, tops, wind-up toys), music and breaks. If the child correctly responds to an instruction that s/he has not previously performed, the child will receive a significant reward; either an immediate break, a treat, or a toy to play with at the table. Initially the child will be rewarded for all correct responses. Over time, the child will earn greater rewards for demonstrating new and more complex skills than for mastered/known skills. Parent/Guardian may be asked to withhold specific toys or treats upon the request of the provider.

Requests for withholding food or drink items will not be made on the child's meal items, but rather on items that would be considered a treat. If this type of program is implemented, the parent/guardian will be asked to sign a list of items that parent/guardian agrees can be used as reinforcers and that will be used only during treatment. Parent/Guardian is expected to update and sign this list once a month. Reinforcement is a key component to the child's program. Parent/Guardian may be asked to prevent access to these items that s/he has approved.

Collaboration with other Professionals and Supplementary Interventions

Your BCBA will make every effort to collaborate with all professionals involved in working with the child. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the BCBA of all professionals currently working with the child, as well as to keep the BCBA informed of any new professionals who provide the child with therapeutic services in the future. Additionally, a signed release of information will be required in order to correspond with all professionals outside of the child's HEARTLAND ABA therapy team.

Social Skills Group

Our social skills program focuses on treating young children with critical social skills that they struggle to acquire from their natural environment. We are able to give our patients the opportunity to learn social skills in a structured yet natural environment. The goal is that these learned skills will then be adapted into their everyday lives, across all settings. Some of the key components of our curriculum include:

- Conflict resolution
- Emotional regulation
- Following rules
- Initiating peer interactions
- Maintaining age-appropriate conversation
- Perspective-taking
- Recognition and utilization of non-verbal cues
- Social awareness
- Turn-taking/sharing

Definition of Roles

Parent/Guardian

- Receives training from BCBA on running generalization procedures for all programs.
- Conducts generalization procedures for specified programs.
- At least one parent/guardian will attend all parent training meetings.
- Follow through with appropriate behavior plans as specified in home environment.
- Maintain open communication with BCBA and RBT regarding challenges with behavior interventions.
- Maintain professional relationships with all staff members.
- Provide reinforcers and supplies for program.

RBT

- Delivers approved hours per week of 1:1 ABA.
- Attends all supervision meetings with BCBA.
- Meet clinical competencies through assessment and observation by BCBA.
- Maintain professional relationship with parents/guardians and all other staff members.

BCBA

- Provides 1 hour of clinical supervision for every 10 hours of direct care.
- Supervise and assist in behavioral and educational program development.
- Reviews and adjusts treatment goals reflecting data recorded.
- Perform an assessment of the child to determine necessity of new programming and ongoing programs.
- Supervise monitoring of acquisition rates and program progress.
- Maintain professional relationship with parents/guardians and all other staff members.
- Provide parent training at least twice per month.

Scope of Practice

HEARTLAND ABA agrees to provide services that are within our scope of practice and area of expertise. For that reason, HEARTLAND ABA will only provide services based on the principles of ABA. Goals/objectives will be determined solely based on the results from our assessment, parent/caregiver input, medical necessity, and other factors that may influence the development of an appropriate ABA treatment plan. Academic goals will **not** be considered due to the nature of the services we provide with regards to insurance payment.

HEARTLAND ABA employees will **only** be expected to perform the duties and responsibilities as outlined by their job description. Please feel free to contact the administrative team with questions/concerns about the duties and responsibilities of our providers.

Documentation

HEARTLAND ABA is required to maintain proper clinical documentation for all ABA sessions. To facilitate this, the last 15 minutes of each session may be allocated for any necessary paperwork, such as completing the session note and entering data into Catalyst.

Community Outings and Transportation

Community outings are often included as a part of an individual's treatment plan (with patient approval) if specific goals and objectives need to be targeted in the community. These outings can occur without parent/caregiver presence, if the proper consent forms have been signed. Please contact your Case Manager with any questions/concerns regarding this policy and the necessary consent forms. HEARTLAND ABA policy permits employees to accompany a patient in a vehicle driven by a parent/authorized caregiver, in a taxi/car service arranged for by the patient, on public transportation (e.g., bus, train, subway, etc.), or on foot if the proper consent forms have been signed. In addition, providers may be eligible to transport a patient in his/her personal vehicle, if the provider has met the company regulations and the proper consent forms have been signed. Check with your Case Manager with any questions/concerns regarding this policy and the necessary consent forms.

Transportation of Children

Staff members who transport patients in their own vehicles during working hours as part of the patient's program must be on the approved driver list. Approved drivers are those who submit proof of a good driving record from Department of Motor Vehicles, proof of insurance, vehicle registration and a valid driver's license.

Parents must sign a transportation waiver. Patients must be transported according to state and local laws, including use of car seats and seatbelts.

Communication and Social Media

HEARTLAND ABA is committed to responding in a timely manner to any questions, comments, concerns, or complaints regarding ABA services. Our team is committed to providing the best quality service to patients, which includes timely, professional communication. The patients will be provided with the telephone numbers and email addresses of those individuals involved in direct treatment service and planning. Our administrative team is available during business hours at 1-800-579-7351. HEARTLAND ABA does not offer on-call coverage for ABA services and programs on a 24-hour basis. Patients are advised to call 911 in case of emergency or crisis situations.

At HEARTLAND ABA, we will communicate primarily via phone or email. Providers may also utilize text messaging, if the client/caregiver agrees to this method of contact. Clients and caregivers are expected to utilize their own devices when necessary. In the event that a client/caregiver does not have an electronic device with which to communicate, staff will discuss with the case manager to determine whether alternative arrangements may be made to accommodate treatment needs that require devices.

Electronic communications present with an inherent security risk, including that information could be intercepted by a third party. HEARTLAND ABA hereby notifies you of this risk, with the understanding that each individual has the right to receive information in the way that best suits their needs. As a covered entity, HEARTLAND ABA is not responsible for unauthorized access of protected health information while in transmission to a client based upon that client's request.

Clients may initiate communications with providers using e-mail. If this situation occurs, the provider will assume (unless the client has explicitly stated otherwise) that e-mail communications are acceptable to the individual. If the provider feels the client may not be aware of the possible risks of using unencrypted email, or has concerns about potential liability, the provider will alert the client of those risks, and let the client decide whether to continue email communications.

HEARTLAND ABA will take precautions when using e-mail to avoid unintentional disclosures, such as checking the email address for accuracy before sending. Further, the amount or type of information disclosed through unencrypted email will be limited. Any transmission of electronic protected health information will be made in compliance with the HIPAA Security Rule requirements.

Providers may be busy with other cases but will check messages regularly and respond to inquiries within 24 hours.

Clients/caregivers are encouraged to "like" and follow us on social media platforms for news and information but are not required to do so. For privacy reasons, HEARTLAND ABA staff and contractors will not accept invitations on their private accounts.

In-Home Treatment Policies and Guidelines

- A parent or authorized caretaker (as indicated on the child's form) **must** be present in the home during the therapy session at all times, except for approved community outings (described above).
- It is the responsibility of the parent or caretaker to provide a therapeutic environment in the home that is free from distractions or interruptions. In most cases, this includes pets or siblings that could interfere with the progress of the session. In some circumstances, the provider may request the presence of parents or siblings for training purposes; however, in other situations the provider may request that parents, siblings, pets, etc. be removed from the treatment environment in order not to disrupt the session.
- In some situations, problem behavior may occur. These behaviors might include, but are not limited to verbal or physical aggression, property destruction, self-injurious behaviors, etc. Our providers are trained on how to de-escalate, manage, and reduce problem behavior. Therefore, parent/caretaker intervention is discouraged in these situations unless explicitly requested by the provider in order not to disrupt treatment.
- The family may be asked to provide materials for the patient that will facilitate therapeutic progress. Such materials often include edibles or other preferred items that are typically used in verbal behavior programs. The provider may also request specific items that will be necessary for specific behavioral targets.
- HEARTLAND ABA provides **some** program materials for our patients. These materials remain the property of HEARTLAND ABA. Occasionally, providers will request to store these materials in



your home between sessions to ensure that they have a robust selection of materials to use with your child. If you do not feel comfortable with this, please speak with the provider about making alternate arrangements. If a provider does store program materials in the home between sessions, the patient is responsible for ensuring that the materials remain in a secure location where they will not be used by the patient/siblings in between sessions. This is essential to ensure that our providers have all of the materials they need readily available during sessions so as not to disrupt treatment. It is also important for health, safety, and sanitary reasons.

- HEARTLAND ABA will send an iPad to your home for use by the BCBA and the RBTs during session. When not in use, the iPad should be kept in a secure location (i.e. night table, upper cabinet). If the iPad is damaged during session, that is the responsibility of HEARTLAND ABA. However, if the iPad is damaged when it should have been kept in a secure location, the family will be held responsible.
- HEARTLAND ABA is **not** responsible for other children in the household that are not patients of the company. Additionally, the company is not responsible for pets.

Right to Notice

As the patient, you have the right to adequate notice of the uses and disclosures of your protected health information. Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accessibility Act (HIPAA), your protected health information can be used for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations.

As a patient, you have the right to:

- Confidential communications regarding your protected information.
- Inspect and copy your protected health information.
- Amend your protected information.
- Receive an account of disclosures of your protected health information.
- A paper copy of this privacy notice.

HEARTLAND ABA adheres to HIPAA standards and does not sell or disclose any confidential information. HEARTLAND ABA will follow the guidelines of any legal documentation provided regarding the disclosure of any protected information.

We will not disclose your medical information unless we receive written permission from you to do so or the law authorizes us or compels us to do so. If you require a copy of your child's record, please contact the HEARTLAND ABA office.

Quality Control

A parent/guardian has the right to inform (in writing or by phone) HEARTLAND ABA of any concerns that s/he has regarding staff performance. HEARTLAND ABA will make every attempt to ensure that all staff members working with the child have adequate training.

Conflicts of Interest

In order to protect the confidentiality of patients and their families as well as employees, HEARTLAND ABA follows HIPAA guidelines. Employees are discouraged from personal interaction with current or former patients. Such interaction includes personal relationships and email, as well as social media.



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Discharge/Termination of Services

When your child has met the goals set for therapy and is progressing developmentally within expected functional parameters, your therapist will begin to discuss discharge from services with you; and the next stages of your child's development. If your child reaches a plateau, your therapist may suggest a break from treatment. If your child shows any sign of significant regression after discharge, please contact us immediately for a consultation. If you do not feel your child is ready for discharge you may contact the Clinical Director and request a clinical review.

HEARTLAND ABA reserves the right to terminate services at any time. Reasons for termination of services include: inappropriate behaviors as outlined above, continued cancellations or no-shows, failure to pay outstanding balances, if we are unable to provide the services that your child requires to meet their specific needs, or if a conflict of interest develops.

Exploitation, Abuse, Neglect or Violation of Patient Rights

It is mandatory for HEARTLAND ABA staff to report if there are any suspected physical, emotional, sexual or neglectful behaviors towards a child. Staff will inform the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). It is the responsibility of DHHS to contact the family directly. If we feel the child and/or parent/caregiver is a danger to themselves or others, emergency services will be called to manage the situation in conjunction with a DHHS report.

Grievance Policy

Your rights are important to HEARTLAND ABA. Persons with grievances/complaints or concerns should contact the Administrative Assistant at HEARTLAND ABA. If you feel that any of your rights may have been violated, you may initiate a formal grievance. You may notify the Administrative Assistant in writing at 1299 Farnam Street Suite 300 Omaha, NE 68102. You may also call and speak with them at 402-252-8181.

A complaint/grievance is any expression of dissatisfaction by a client or caregiver about any action or inaction by HEARTLAND ABA and/or their contracted providers. Possible subjects for complaints/grievances include, but are not limited to: quality of care or services provided; HEARTLAND ABA procedures (e.g., claims processing); billing; aspects of interpersonal relationships, such as rudeness of a contractor or employee of HEARTLAND ABA; or failure to respect the client's rights.

The Administrative Assistant will contact you upon receipt of the grievance and will investigate the complaint. Every effort will be made to respond to grievances within 7 days. If the complaint will not be resolved, or if the investigation is not or will not be completed within 7 days, an update will be given to the client or the caregiver informing them that we are continuing to resolve and investigate the complaint. This letter will also have the names of the contact person for any further correspondence.



For both urgent and non-urgent complaints/grievances, a resolution letter informing the client or caregiver will be completed once resolved.

All HEARTLAND ABA employees have the responsibility of handling complaints, compliments and contacts in a responsive and competent manner during the course of daily duties.

The submission of a grievance by a client or caregiver will not compromise any client's present or future access to care, nor will it have a negative impact on the quality of care or service provided.

The grievance will be discussed only with appropriate members of the HEARTLAND ABA team. Confidentiality of information and sources will be maintained.

All persons receiving service at HEARTLAND ABA will be informed of their right to present a grievance and how to do so. A copy of the grievance form is attached below.

Any incident of illegal or inappropriate activity in the work place should be reported on this form. All reports will be treated as confidential, and no retaliation for a good faith report will be allowed. Please sign your completed report and give it to the Administrative Assistant or Human Resources.

Grievant Information

Name : _____ Date: _____

Stat us: (Please Mark One) Employee/Contractor Client

Other (Specify) _____

Phone No: _____ Email Address: _____

Address: _____

When and where did the incident occur? Date, time and location of event

What happened? Detailed account of occurrence (include names of persons involved, if any)

Acknowledgement

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received, read and agree to adhere to the Parent/Caregiver Handbook. I agree to abide by the Heartland ABA policies as set forth in this handbook. I have agreed to the appropriate patient responsibilities/conduct guidelines, provide permission for HEARTLAND ABA to conduct treatment on private property, and will not hold HEARTLAND ABA responsible for property damages. These policies have been fully explained to me and I fully and freely give my consent for service to be implemented as proposed.

Patient's Name

Date of Birth

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Print Parent/Guardian Name