Welcome
Thank you for selecting Leaps Forward, LLC. as your treatment provider for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services. At Leaps Forward, LLC., we cherish every child and look forward to working together with you to design a highly effective, individualized behavioral treatment program that will help your child build meaningful skills for learning and thriving.

Before we get started, we ask that you review this information carefully, to ensure that you understand what you can expect from your professional team at Leaps Forward, LLC. and what will be expected of you. ABA treatment programs can require a significant commitment of time, financial resources, staffing, and lifestyle adjustments in order to achieve optimal treatment results. Building a strong partnership between your family and our professional staff is essential to the success of your program.

Important Information Contained in this Packet
This packet has been prepared to help you understand the services you are about to receive, our policies and procedures, and the level of commitment and participation that is expected of you. Attached you will find the following materials:

- Our Parent Handbook may answer many of the questions you have about ABA treatment programs and what to expect as a result of this treatment.

- Please familiarize yourself with Parent & Therapist Responsibilities to ensure that you fully understand our ABA treatment policies and procedures and the commitment required of you.
What to Expect from your ABA Program

Our Commitment to You
Leaps Forward, LLC. is an organization committed to the treatment of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other related disorders. We use evidence-based methods and proven strategies to assist each child in reaching their potential and improving their overall quality of life. We are committed to providing you with the highest quality ABA services possible, through building a partnership between our professional staff and your family.

Our belief is that families play a fundamental role in the success of each child. Every family receiving ABA services is offered customized support and training using the principles and techniques of applied behavior analysis (ABA), and our staff follow the ethical guidelines set forth by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB), the Association of Behavior Analysis International (ABAI), and the Association of Professional Behavior Analysts (APBA).

What Is ABA?
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a research based, scientific method that began many years ago with the work of B.F. Skinner. The philosophy of ABA is rooted in the belief that there is a reason for all behavior. Specific behaviors can be measured, analyzed, predicted and modified by examining the variables influencing those behaviors. Observable behaviors are measured and an analysis is conducted of events occurring immediately prior to a behavior (antecedent) and immediately following a behavior (consequence). Positive reinforcement is used with the goal of increasing desired behaviors.

Teaching methods used in ABA include breaking down skills into simple steps and teaching each step in succession. Skills are taught with the use of prompting to assist learning. A correct response is followed by positive reinforcement which increases the likelihood that a behavior or response will occur more often in the future.

ABA focuses on the functional relationship between one’s behaviors and their environment.
Data are collected on the stimuli that elicits, increases, decreases, or maintains the child’s behavior. These data are carefully analyzed, a treatment plan is developed, and an individualized ABA program is organized and implemented by our team. As a child’s treatment progresses toward set goals, data are collected and analyzed again to determine treatment effectiveness. The goal of a behavior analyst is to utilize behavioral contingencies to help the child learn more functional skills that can replace undesirable behaviors and improve quality of life. Leaps Forward, LLC. seeks to produce significant results, enabling the child to adapt to their environment thus preparing them for a brighter future.

ABA is an evidence-based treatment of choice for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) but can also be highly effective with children diagnosed with other developmental disabilities. ABA programs utilize a set of principles and guidelines upon which educational programs are based, and target specific developmental areas such as:
You may encounter other terms used in the field of ABA, such as Verbal Behavior (VB), Discrete Trial Teaching or Training (DTT), Natural Environment Teaching (NET), Pivotal Response Teaching or Training (PRT), Early Start Denver Model (ESDM), and Fluency-based Instruction. Each use a specific method of instruction and all are based on the principles of ABA.

Who Provides ABA Intervention Services?
ABA services are provided by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCABA) and/or a highly trained Certified Behavior Technician (CBT) under the close supervision of a BCBA.

What Kind of Progress Can Be Expected with ABA?
ABA intervention can be a highly effective treatment approach in assisting individuals with autism to make meaningful changes in many areas. However, it is important to understand that changes do not typically occur quickly. Rather, most children require intensive and ongoing instruction that builds on their step-by-step progress. Moreover, the rate of progress – like the goals of intervention – varies considerably from person to person depending on age, level of functioning, family goals, and other factors.
Some learners do acquire skills quickly. But typically, this rapid progress happens in just one or two skill areas such as reading, while much more instruction and practice is needed to master more complex skill areas, such as interacting with peers.

How is an ABA program structured?
Your child’s ABA program will begin with a thorough developmental assessment conducted by your program manager (a BCBA) followed by treatment recommendations and a plan for working on age-appropriate learning objectives. Once you and your program manager have agreed on a treatment plan, your child will receive one-on-one therapy from a Leaps Forward, LLC. CBT in your home, and/or in community settings. As progress is made, your child may be assisted to generalize skills to other settings, including school. Continuous parent support
and training is offered throughout the entire period your child works with Leaps Forward, LLC., and consultation may be provided to other family members, teachers, and school administration as your child transitions through school and into adulthood.

A large portion of your child’s individual behavior therapy hours will be delivered by CBTs working under the supervision of a BCBA. Our technicians are trained in the evidence-based teaching methods that we offer and will receive training specific to your child’s individualized therapy program. Leaps Forward, LLC. values ongoing professional training for all of our ABA staff to increase treatment effectiveness and maintain high quality service standards for our clients.

**How Many Hours of ABA Therapy will my Child Need?**
Leaps Forward, LLC. staff cannot predetermine the number of hours that your child may require from an ABA program. After the initial assessment, the BCBA working with your family will make a recommendation as to how many hours are appropriate to meet the specific needs of your child.

**What Methods of ABA Treatment will be Used?**
At Leaps Forward, LLC., we use a wide variety of behavior analytic teaching methods such as:

- Discrete Trial Training/Teaching
- Incidental Teaching
- Early Denver Model teaching
- Precision Teaching
- Verbal Behavior
- Social Stories
- Chaining
- Prompt Hierarchies
- Shaping
- Token Economies
- Antecedent Control
- Reinforcement
- Peer Social Skills Groups (contingent on interest)
- Errorless Learning Techniques
- Fading
- Task Analyses
- Behavior Contracts

In addition to 1:1 therapy sessions, your ABA team at Leaps Forward, LLC. may provide IEP goal development, consultation and integration of goals from other professionals (OT, PT, SLP), family training, and social skill groups as part of a wrap-around scope of service for complete client care.
**Parent Training and Participation**

Parents play an integral role in implementing any therapeutic program. Leaps Forward, LLC. strives to include parents in all aspects of therapy, from goal and objective development to treatment strategies and behavior management skills. Consistency of programming across settings is imperative for effective treatment. The Leaps Forward, LLC. supervisors and technicians are available to train parents in the areas of behavior management and the principals of reinforcement so that parents can be full participants in the therapy process.

**The Assessment Process**

Assessment is an ongoing process and Leaps Forward, LLC. staff use a variety of assessment tools. The age and functioning level of your child will determine which assessments are used. Please feel free to ask your BCBA about the assessments they have chosen specifically for your child.

Assessments commonly used by Leaps Forward, LLC. include:
- Vineland III
- ABLLS – Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills
- VB-Mapp – Verbal Behavior Milestones, Assessment, and Placement Program
- AFLS – Assessment for Functional Living Skills

**How Long Does it Take to Conduct the Assessment?**

The assessment process can vary in length depending on the assessment being conducted. Parents will be interviewed as part of the initial intake assessment and they are encouraged to share their concerns and to identify their priorities regarding the objectives for intervention. The entire assessment process includes administration of the test with the client (including observation), intake evaluation (parent interview), detailed behavioral history, interpretation of test results, discussion of findings, recommendations, and preparation of the report.

**How Long will it Take for my Child to Reach Treatment Goals?**

No professional can or should give you absolute guarantees about any aspect of your child’s development or behavior. We use the science of ABA to collect data, which guides our decisions in selecting techniques and strategies to assist your child in acquiring effective behaviors and skills for independence. We regularly share information, discuss any questions or concerns, and plan intervention strategies. You can expect your child to show progress in the areas of his/her goals over time as we monitor progress with regular data collection. Our aim is to help your child to realize his or her full potential, be a full participant in family and social interactions, and thrive in society.

It is always appropriate to ask your ABA team about your child’s treatment, progress, or any other therapy related concerns you may have. We look forward to partnering with you to improve your child’s quality of life.
Parent & Therapist Responsibilities

Partnering with Your Treatment Team: General Guidelines

Our Commitment to You
Please understand that each ABA treatment program we provide involves an extensive commitment on the part of our administrative and professional team. We aim to provide you the highest quality ABA services available, which is made possible through maintaining an honest, open, and mutually respectful relationship with you. In order to achieve optimal treatment results, we rely on maintaining a strong collaborative partnership with your family, and on your willingness to participate in the treatment and share your extensive knowledge of your child with us.

Getting Started with Your Treatment Program
Once you have agreed to proceed with ABA services, a service agreement has been signed, and all pre-authorizations are in place, we proceed with the following:

1. Your BCBA completes an intake evaluation (parent interview)
2. Your BCBA completes as assessment
3. A treatment plan is developed based on assessment results and mutually agreed upon goals
4. Information is submitted to insurance (when applicable) to attain ongoing approval for ABA therapy
5. An appropriate therapy schedule is determined by the family and team

Beginning Stage of Treatment: Building a Relationship with your Child
Please note that it takes time for our team to get to know your family and your child to the extent that allows us to personalize your ABA treatment program to fit your family’s lifestyle and priorities. The process of building rapport with your child, earning his/her trust, and making adjustments to increase the effectiveness of your child’s treatment program can take several sessions.

Please be aware that at the beginning of treatment, your treatment providers may focus mainly—or even entirely—on building rapport with your child. The amount of time needed to build a relationship with your child and earn your child’s trust is a highly individual process. Some parents new to ABA may be concerned that ABA team members seem to be only playing and/or “hanging out” with their child. Since a trusting relationship is foundational for learning and growth, this is an essential stage of treatment which requires careful attention. Sometimes the process of building a relationship can take some time in order to produce more rapid gains in the long term.
Communicating With Your Team
Your primary contact for questions or concerns about your child’s treatment is your ABA Program Supervisor. You may also contact Keri d'Hondt with questions pertaining to your services.

In addition, you will be given the names and contact information of all therapists working with your child. We recommend that you and each of your therapists discuss acceptable methods and times to communicate with each other, including the quickest ways to reach each other immediately on your scheduled session days in case of an emergency or a last-minute scheduling change.

For billing and insurance claims questions, please contact Keri d'Hondt directly at: (206) 214-7516. We make every attempt to return calls within 1-2 business days.

For non-urgent matters, if you have left a message for your service provider, please understand that our direct care staff do work with multiple families which means they may be unable to return calls immediately. Expect a response within 48 hours, and please notify your program supervisor if you have not received a response by then.

After Hours Emergency or Crisis
Leaps Forward, LLC does not offer on-call coverage for ABA services. In the event of a serious situation or an emergency that requires an immediate response, please call the King County 24-hour Crisis Line at (866-427-4747), call 911, or proceed to the nearest hospital emergency room for assistance.

Treatment Sessions
Preparing for your Child’s Sessions
Your cooperation with the following is greatly appreciated to assist us in conducting an effective session. For more examples and suggestions, please see the attached parent-training handout on helping your child to be “therapy ready.”

Prior to each session, please prepare your child by ensuring that:

1. Your child is dressed and fed (unless these specific skills are being addressed within the program).
2. Your child is wearing therapy-ready clothing that is appropriate for work and play, including messy play.
3. Behavioral reinforcers are ready to use and included with your child’s supplies.
4. Materials are readily available to use.
General Guidelines for Treatment Sessions

1. Therapists may require a few minutes prior to beginning a work session with your child to prepare for the session and to set up the environment. Please help your child to cope with any wait time.

2. At the end of each session, your therapist will share highlights of the session.

3. Therapists keep a tight schedule and appreciate advance notice of any changes to the scheduled time frame. If you would like to end a session early or make changes to your start or end time for any reason, please inform the therapist as soon as possible so that adjustments can be made to ensure that your child receives maximum benefit from each session.

4. If you need a few minutes to talk with your child’s therapist before or after a session, please let the therapist know in advance so that adjustments can be made to your child’s lesson plan and your child can be prepared for the wait time. Longer discussions with your child’s therapist or BCBA supervisor must be scheduled in advance since therapists typically do not have more than a few minutes to talk during or between sessions.

5. Therapists are expected to set limits with your child but do not administer discipline; if you feel that your child requires discipline during a treatment session, please discuss this with your therapist.

6. Your child’s ABA program will require that personalized materials be prepared in advance of each session (see Preparing Materials section below). This will require you to make a plan together with your team for ensuring that these materials are ready.

7. Parents are responsible for ensuring accuracy of hours.

8. The area designated for therapy must be a comfortable temperature, well lit, and relatively free of distractions.

9. Access to competing reinforcers (toys that are not used during the therapy session) needs to be limited and/or out of sight.

10. You will be required to provide therapy supplies. Please see attached list.

11. Someone who is of age and ability to care for your child must be present during each therapy session.

Tips to Prepare for a Successful Session

- On your child’s first day of therapy, please provide an assortment of your child’s favorite items.
- Keep in mind that one of the main goals of treatment is to help your child access reinforcers, such as special toys, activities, or other rewards, to make your child’s experience as rewarding as possible and keep him/her motivated to learn.
- Leaps Forward, LLC does not assume responsibility for breakage, damage or loss to items used during sessions so please select these items carefully.
Reinforcers are most effective when reserved exclusively for use during therapy. Outside of therapy sessions, we recommend that you keep these items out of your child’s sight, if possible.

Create a list of the most rewarding items for their child, so that we can do our best to make these regular rewards available.

Thank you for your support in helping us motivate your child to learn. Without motivation to learn, learning will not take place!

Videotaping
Periodic videotaping of sessions can be valuable in assessing the progress of your child. Please inform your supervisor if you do not give permission for Leaps Forward staff to videotape your child’s therapy session for the sole purpose of sharing information with a supervisor, self-evaluating efficacy of approach, or documenting progress. These videos will not be shared with any outside source for any reason and will be properly disposed of. Parent permission may be revoked at any time. Additionally, parents may request a copy of the taped session on a medium provided by them.

Appointments

Your Appointment Schedule
Leaps Forward’s therapists are committed to providing consistent, reliable service as scheduled and agreed upon by you.

Please do not miss appointments. We consider therapy sessions very important to the success of ABA treatment and take this very seriously as it is our job to help our clients reach their full potential. For this reason, we have a strict cancellation policy. If you must cancel, we request that you notify your therapist as soon as possible. We kindly request 48 hours notice for any cancellation of a scheduled service. We require 24 hours notice to allow our staff to fill the scheduled time. A one time fee of $100 may be assessed each month if there are more than two cancellations within that month that fall within the 24 hour period. This charge will be included in the monthly patient responsibility invoice. This will not apply if 24 hours notice is received and/or if the hours are rescheduled.

- This does not apply for scheduled vacations when the Provider is notified 2 weeks in advance.
- The attempt to schedule a make-up service must be made at the time of cancellation.
- No make-up service will be scheduled if the Provider is not notified of a cancellation.

We ask that you consider potential time frames to make up the missed session and be prepared to discuss this with the therapist.
Rescheduling a Session
Once a session is scheduled, it cannot be changed except by mutual agreement between parents and therapists. We understand that occasionally it will become necessary for you to reschedule a session and we will try to accommodate you. Therapists may also need to cancel or reschedule a session and we require that they coordinate with parents prior to any cancellations. Accommodations for rescheduled sessions must be made through each therapist impacted by the change.

Arriving Late for a Session
If you will not be on time for an in-home session, please inform your therapist. Our therapists are instructed to wait 15 minutes, after which time s/he will leave and the session will be deemed cancelled.

If your child’s therapist expects to arrive 10 or more minutes late for your scheduled session, s/he is expected to call or text you. Please be aware that delays when traveling between job sites is not uncommon. Although our therapists will do their best to arrive on time, we want our therapists to arrive safely. Your therapist may make up the missed time at the end of the session whenever possible.

Cancellation Policy
Your session time is reserved for you. We are rarely able to fill cancelled sessions. In the event that 20% or more of your scheduled sessions are missed within a 6-month period, we reserve the right to dis-enroll your child from the program and offer the time slot to someone else.

Vacations
Vacations may be important to your family and we want to support you in spending quality time together. If your family is planning a vacation, please inform your therapist(s) at your earliest opportunity.

Holidays
Therapists may or may not provide services on observed holidays. Please discuss this with your therapist in advance.

Illness
When cancellation becomes necessary due to illness, please notify your child’s therapist as much in advance as possible, at least the night before the scheduled session. Illness includes, but is not limited to:
  - Temperature above 100
  - Communicable Disease
  - Foot/Mouth Disease
  - Vomiting
  - Mumps/ Measles
  - Chicken Pox
Leaps Forward, LLC  
“Providing behavioral and educational intervention services to children with ASD and other special needs”

Keri d’Hondt, M.Ed., BCBA  
Director & Consultant

- Diarrhea
- Pin Worm
- Strep Throat
- Lice
- Any Rash
- Pink Eye

Following an illness, therapy will resume as soon as:
- your child’s doctor clears him/her of being contagious
- your child is symptom free for 24 hours
- the prescribed remedy (medication) is complete

Inclement Weather
In the event that travel to your home is unsafe due to weather conditions, we advise our therapists to cancel. Please pay attention to public announcements of school closures for the district in which you or your therapist reside. If the district schools are closed, this is an indication that driving in that area presents danger and your therapist should not report to work that day; however, we suggest that you communicate directly with your child’s therapist to discuss plans and options for making up the missed session(s).

Accidents and Injuries
In case of an accident, injury, or unusual incident, your child’s therapist is responsible for completing an incident form and notifying you and their supervisor within 1 working day. You may at any time request a copy of this form.

Confidentiality
All client information is considered Protected Healthcare Information and is protected under both state and federal laws. All Leaps Forward, LLC. therapists must maintain each client’s right to confidentiality regarding treatment. If you believe that your confidentiality has been breached, please contact: Keri d’Hondt, Director, Leaps Forward, LLC at (206) 214-7516.

Professional Boundaries
In following the BACB’s guidelines and standards, and in your best interest, we strive to maintain a therapeutic and support-based relationship at all times. Our work is highly personal and we may become involved in many aspects of your life. Maintaining a professional boundary may be difficult. However, it is important to keep in mind that developing a personal friendship may compromise our ability to continue to view your family’s situation through a professional’s lens. That said, we do develop a special, unique relationship with the families we serve due to the nature of our business.

To help us maintain a professional collaborative relationship with you, we instruct our therapists and BCBA’s to:
- Refrain from adding parents or clients to their social networking profiles.
• Decline invitations to social functions, unless they are directly related to programs.
• Deny acceptance of favors and gifts.
• Avoid creating a dual relationship by refraining from socializing or spending time with your child or family members outside of or after therapy sessions.
  You can help by:
• Not sending friend requests to therapists on social networking sites.
• Not inviting therapists to social functions, unless related to programming and a supervisor has approved it.
• Not giving gifts or offering favors.
• Maintaining the professional boundary between you and the therapist by keeping personal family life personal.

Ending Treatment
Discharge from treatment is an event planned by mutual consent. Typically, this process takes time in order to ensure that gains are maintained after therapy is complete. That said, you have the right to terminate treatment at any time. We request 2 weeks’ notice in order to help us plan for those children that are on the waiting list and to prepare your child for a successful transition.

You will be responsible to pay the cost of up to 2 weeks’ sessions if you do not provide advance notice of termination.

Financial Agreement

Insurance Billable Services

Getting started
If you plan to use your insurance benefits to pay for portions of your child’s ABA Treatment program, we will need to work with you to gather important information before we get started. Ultimately, you are responsible for paying all costs associated with your child’s ABA treatment program, and for knowing the limits of your particular plan benefits. We would like to provide you with suggestions and assist you in using all financial supports you may be eligible to receive, and ask that you begin by checking with your insurance plan to see if any of the following are required:

• A qualifying diagnosis from an approved specialist.
• A prescription or recommendation for ABA services, made by a qualified treatment provider.

Even if you are told that this documentation is not required by your plan, we advise you to obtain all of the above proactively and provide us with copies of this documentation.
We will contact your insurance carrier to obtain any pre-authorizations, determine what your plan is likely to cover, and provide you with an estimate of your out-of-pocket costs. Prior to beginning treatment, we ask that you:

- Supply us with copies of all pertinent reports, assessments, and evaluations to help us to better understand your child’s needs.

- Review your out-of-pocket cost estimate to determine if our services will work for you financially. If you have concerns about meeting these obligations, please let us know, as there may be grants that your family is eligible to receive.

**Payment Policies**

As a courtesy to you, Leaps Forward, LLC. will bill your insurance company directly for ABA services. You are responsible for any deductibles, copays, and/or coinsurance per the terms of your insurance plan. In the event that your insurance plan does not cover these services, you will be held responsible for the total amount due. Leaps Forward, LLC. does not bill secondary insurance; however, we will provide you with a statement to submit to any other insurance plans or funding sources.

You will be billed monthly for your patient responsibility amount and any other amounts not covered under your plan. Payments may be paid by personal check and/or via health savings accounts (please request that they mail a check) and are due to be postmarked by the 30th day following receipt of the invoice.

**Change of Insurance**

Please notify us immediately of any insurance changes or cancellations because you will be held responsible for 100% of uncollectable amounts.

Please note that Leaps Forward, LLC. reserves the right to:

- Bill separately for services not covered by your plan
- Make changes to the billing structure if payments are not received promptly
- Discontinue ABA service delivery if account is overdue
- Increase fees upon one month’s prior written notice
- Refer delinquent accounts to collections

We welcome your questions and input, so please do not hesitate to discuss with us any questions or concerns you may have regarding these policies.
Preparing Your Child to be "Therapy Ready" For Sessions

You as a parent want your child to have the most fun and exciting therapist around to help your child succeed! But if right before your therapist arrives at your house your child is jumping on the couch, watching cartoons, and eating a Snickers bar, your child will likely get pretty upset when they hear that doorbell ring and see their therapist walk into the house. Depending on the child, at least 30-45 minutes before the session you need to begin making transition statements to help them prepare for the session.

Examples:

- "It’s almost time to turn the TV off, because Ms. Jane will be here soon.”
- "You have 5 more minutes, then time to pick up your toys because Ms. Jane will be here”.

Give the child ample warning that it is almost time for work. Another way you can help is by using a visual schedule and showing the child on the schedule that after TV time it is time for Ms. Jane.

Please make sure your child is fed, clean, and has been to the toilet before each ABA session. Your therapist should not have to take a hungry, thirsty, or wet child to the table to run a session.

Keeping consistency in the home will help your child manage his/her day. Make a routine for your home and stick to it. Bedtime, Dinnertime, and Outside time should ideally be consistent each day. Big, sweeping, dramatic changes from day to day or moment to moment are a good way to cause your child to dissolve into behaviors or meltdowns. If there is going to be change, let your therapist know, as this could change the intensity of a session. If your child is having a difficult day, the therapist will know that today may not be a good day to introduce something new. Creating a routine based on daily happenings helps your child feel more in control and lets them know what to expect.

When preparing your child to be "therapy ready" for a session, it is recommended that you eliminate “free reign” and “grazing.” An example of free reign might be allowing a child who just “loves” Dora DVDs to sit and watch Dora for hours each day. An example of grazing might be allowing a child who just “loves” pretzels to climb up onto the kitchen counter, open the cabinet, and grab a handful. If your child has free, no-limit access to the things s/he enjoys the most, what will be left for your child’s therapist to use as reinforcers?