



WELCOME to the One Vision Children's Autism Center (OVCAC)!

We seek to provide support, education, direct service, and *HOPE* for children and their families with autism through the implementation of *Evidence Based-Practices*; the provision of *Family Support and Advocacy*; and *Collaboration* with other professionals, agencies, and stakeholders.

The OVCAC is dedicated to improving the lives of the children and families we serve. We strive to provide a "seamless" continuation of services from the first time you enter the OVCAC, throughout your child's treatment and on to generalization of skills to the child's environment. Depending upon the child's individual needs, this might include working with other professionals, such as a speech pathologist, school districts, AEA, mental health, etc. in conjunction with parents.

Services through the OVCAC are individualized and tailored to meet the personal needs of each child. Just as no two children with autism are alike, no two treatment plans are alike. Progress monitoring is conducted for each child through data collection and graphing to determine the effectiveness of treatment and whether a child's goals are being met. Staff receive weekly supervision to assess progress and update goals as necessary. Parents are also informed of their child's progress through quarterly progress reports. Parents will also have the opportunity to receive training on skills they can use with their children at home to increase the likelihood that treatment goals will be met even sooner.

GETTING STARTED:

We are looking forward to meeting you and your family and are glad you are here at the OVCAC.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS:

Step 1: Does your child have a formal diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder*?

1. YES! Move to step 2.
2. NO. You will first need to schedule formal diagnostic testing. There are currently several places in Iowa that complete diagnostic testing. University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City and Child Serve in Ames, Johnston, or Ankeny are two agencies you could call to complete an evaluation for your child. The Children's Autism Center in Clear Lake also completes these evaluations on a limited basis.

**All children must have a formal autism diagnosis before being able to receive services at the OVCAC*

Step 2: Intake Packet

You will receive an initial intake packet in the mail to be filled out and returned with a copy of your child's diagnostic evaluation and current insurance information. Once we have received the completed paperwork from you, your application will be processed and you will be contacted by our Clinic Manager to set up a formal intake appointment.

Please note, we need a copy of the original diagnostic evaluation completed with your child indicating a diagnosis of autism. A note from a nurse practitioner or doctor will not suffice.

Step 3: Intake meeting

When we have received all necessary paperwork, our Clinic Manager will contact you to arrange an in-person intake meeting with a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) or Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA). **You do not need to bring your child to this initial meeting unless it is specifically requested.**

During this meeting, you will talk with a BCBA who will gather relevant background information about your child. You will receive a copy of our privacy practices, you will be asked to read and agree to OVCAC policies and procedures, and you will sign consents regarding treatment and releases of information for any person or agency with whom you'd like us to be able to exchange information. At this time, available services will be reviewed with you in order to determine if our services would be beneficial for your child*.

*In certain cases, an additional meeting with you *and* your child may be scheduled prior to beginning services in order to better determine the type of service most appropriate for your child.

Step 4: Waitlist

After your intake meeting, if it is determined that your child is appropriate for the services we offer at the CAC, your child will be placed on our waitlist. We do have a waitlist for the majority of services available at the CAC. We work extremely hard to keep our waiting list as short as possible. The length of time you will wait varies and depends on many factors, including staff availability, type of service desired, preferred therapy time slots, and funding source.

Step 5: Securing funding

While your child is on our waitlist, we will work on verifying insurance coverage of ABA therapy. If you do not have insurance coverage, we do offer self-pay options for therapy.

Step 6: Start Date

Once all the necessary paperwork is completed, funding is secured, and we have an open time slot, you will be called and given a start date, Clinical Specialist case manager, and weekly schedule for your child.

Questions?

At any time if you have questions please feel free to contact Ashton Tucker, our Clinic Manager, at **#641-355-1201**

We look forward to working with you and your family!

ABA Therapy: What to Expect

Once insurance benefits are verified and we have identified an available therapy slot for your child, you will first be contacted to set up a day/time for you to bring your child in for an initial assessment. This assessment will take place in order to determine what goals will be targeted during 1:1 therapy. Your child's case supervisor, a BCBA or BCaBA, will complete this assessment. The assessment may take 1-2 appointments to complete.

Following the assessment process, your child's case supervisor must write a plan of treatment for ABA therapy and submit to insurance for approval prior to the initiation of regular therapy appointments. There may be a 1-2 week break in services following the initial assessment before therapy begins. You will be contacted by our Clinic Manager when we have received insurance approval for ABA therapy to begin.

Once ABA begins, your child will begin attending appointments 2-3x per week. Your child will be assigned a Clinical Specialist to manage his/her case, as well as a Behavior Technician who will both work with your child throughout the week.

Initial appointments begin with an extensive "pairing" process, at which time your child gets to know his/her new therapists. During this time we are helping build a positive relationship between your child and their therapists; formal goals and "work sessions" are not yet targeted.

Once work towards goals commences, you will be provided with quarterly reports on your child's progress. Observations of sessions can occur at any time – just ask!

Most insurance companies require a formal re-authorization for ABA therapy every 6 months, which includes additional assessment and details of progress made towards goals. You will be provided with copies of all treatment requests made to insurance. If at any time you would like to set up a formal meeting with your child's case manager or supervisor, please let them know!

ABA Therapy: is it Appropriate for my Child?

At the Children's Autism Center in Clear Lake, we currently provide 1:1 ABA therapy to children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Children who are most likely to benefit from the type of ABA therapy that is provided at the CAC have the following concerns:

- Functional Communication Deficits, such as:
 - Does not communicate vocally
 - Communicates using echoic or scripted phrases only
- Social Skills Deficits, such as:
 - Lack of eye contact when name is called
 - Lack of interest in same-age peers
- Play Skills Deficits, such as:
 - Lack of imitation skills
 - Lack of pretend play
 - Presence of repetitive or routine-based play
- Adaptive Skill Deficits, such as:
 - Not yet toilet trained
 - Not able to dress or feed him/herself
- Problematic/Interfering Behaviors, such as:
 - Aggression, self-injury, disruptive behaviors that are not age appropriate or are intensive in duration or frequency
- Repetitive/Stereotyped Behaviors, such as:
 - Hand-flapping, spinning, etc.

The majority of children we serve during the day are between the ages of 2-6 years old. Children who are school aged are typically seen during our after-school time slots.

ABA therapy slots are set up as follows throughout the week:

- 9-11am
- 12:30-2:30pm
- 3:30-5pm (school-aged children only)

Each therapy slot includes the following activities:

- Large group social time (15 min)
- Individual work time (two 30 minute sessions)
- Music Time (15 min)
- Small group social time (15 min)
- Snack (15 min)

**Please note: At this time, CAC staff are not trained to provide traditional therapy techniques (e.g., talk therapy; CBT) and highly verbal children who suffer from comorbid anxiety, disruptive behavior disorders, or obsessive compulsive tendencies will be referred to a more appropriate service.*

Social Skills Groups: Are they Appropriate for my Child?

The Children's Autism Center currently offers 4 social skills groups throughout the year for varying age ranges. Groups are 10 weeks in duration and are held in the fall and spring annually from 5:30-6:30pm once per week.

Children who are most likely to benefit from a social skills group are as follows:

- Ages 5 and up
- Presence of functional vocalizations (e.g., answers questions when asked)
- Toilet trained
- Presence of Social Skills deficits such as:
 - Difficulty making friends with same-age peers
 - Difficulty understanding perspectives of others
 - Difficulty regulating emotions when upset
 - Lack of conversation skills
 - Difficulty with turn-taking or playing group games

Behavior Consultation Services: Are they Appropriate for my Child?

Behavior consultation services are offered to families who are struggling with their child's behaviors in home or community settings (e.g. stores, park, etc.). These are time-limited services (6-8 sessions) that involve meeting with a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) to discuss the difficulties you are experiencing at home with your child.

The BCBA will have you collect data on your child's behaviors to determine why the behavior may be occurring, and to help create a behavior plan for you to implement in the home setting to help decrease the display of maladaptive behaviors by your child.

Caregivers are the primary client in this type of service. The BCBA does not work directly with your child, but rather the goal is to work with the caregiver to learn techniques that can be implemented at home to help improve positive behavior and decrease problematic behaviors.

**Please note:* If your child is displaying problematic behaviors primarily in the school setting, the school will have to contact the CAC in order to request a consultation or assistance with behavior management. We are happy to help with school-related difficulties, but the CAC typically contracts separately with schools for this type of service.