

**MOVING OUTSIDE THE ABA BUBBLE**

Transitioning from a comprehensive ABA program

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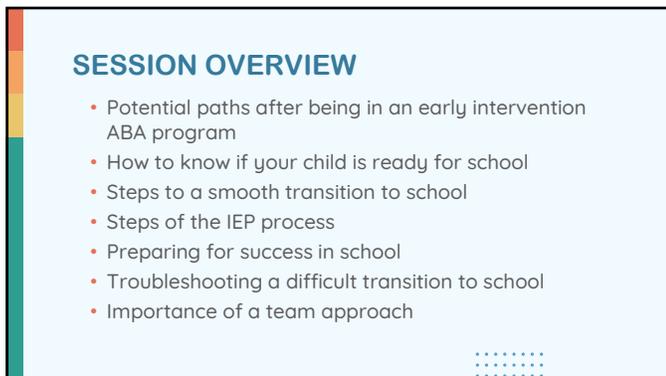
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**SESSION OVERVIEW**

- Potential paths after being in an early intervention ABA program
- How to know if your child is ready for school
- Steps to a smooth transition to school
- Steps of the IEP process
- Preparing for success in school
- Troubleshooting a difficult transition to school
- Importance of a team approach

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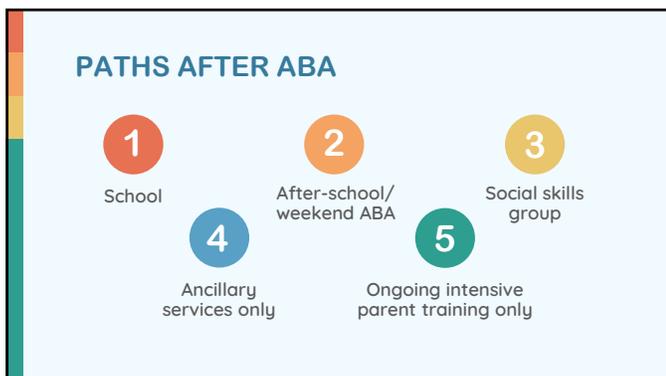
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**PATHS AFTER ABA**

- 1 School
- 2 After-school/weekend ABA
- 3 Social skills group
- 4 Ancillary services only
- 5 Ongoing intensive parent training only

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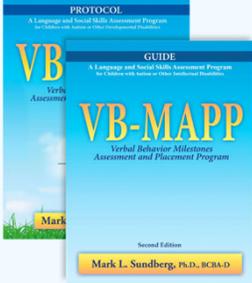
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**Criterion-referenced assessments**

Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment & Placement Program (VB-MAPP)



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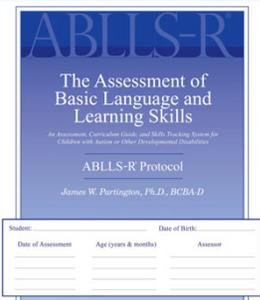
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**Criterion-referenced assessments**

Assessment of Basic Language & Learning Skills - Revised (ABLLS-R)



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**2 Group readiness skills**

- How long can your child sit in small-group activities? (more opportunities to respond)
- How long can your child sit in large group activities (fewer opportunities to respond)
- Does your child respond in a group when not called on directly?
- Does your child attend to the behavior of peers?

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### 3 Are barriers to learning low?

- Challenging behavior
- Functional communication skills
- Social skills
- Reinforcer dependent
- Prompt dependent
- Activities of daily living (toileting)



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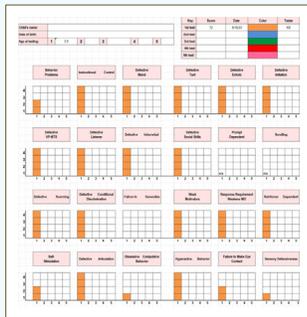
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#### Example 1: Barriers assessment HIGH score



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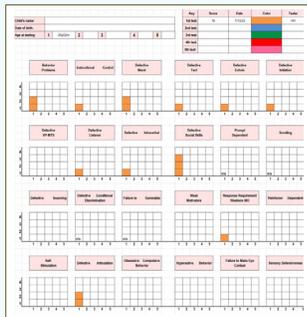
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#### Example 1: Barriers assessment LOW score



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**4 Is the current environment a barrier to progress?**

- Is the environment too restrictive?
- Are there ample opportunities to target skills in the areas with the greatest gaps in learning
- Consider if learning from peers can take place?
- Does the environment lack structure?



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**Not quite ready for school?  
What to do in the meantime**

Talk to your ABA provider to identify ways to increase “school readiness” and possibly switch the focus of your current ABA treatment plan:

- Fade out token boards
- Try self-monitoring or another system that is easily implemented in a group setting
- Fade the use of edibles as reinforcers

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- Identify similar language level peers to develop small group activities
- Implement reinforcement systems surrounding group time (rewarding responding in a group, remaining seated, raising their hand)
- Slowly increase the amount of time expected in group instruction based on success

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- Teach the child to independently follow and manipulate a visual schedule to increase independence across or within activities
- Increasing independent work duration (can they complete consecutive closed-ended activities on their own?)
- Focus on toilet training if needed

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**SUMMARY**  
**Not quite ready for school**

- ✓ Schedule meeting with your BCBA
- ✓ Bring a list of concerns and request modification to current treatment plan to address those concerns
- ✓ Utilize checklists at the meeting to support your concerns

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**A VARIETY OF  
DIFFERENT  
LEARNERS CAN  
BE SUCCESSFUL  
IN SCHOOL!**



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### Transitioning to school (identify setting)

- Identifying the school that’s the best fit for your child (private, local school district, school of choice)
- Make educated decisions and ask questions (visit schools, contact the special education department)
- Be aware of deadlines (school of choice, IEP, before/after care)

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### Once you’ve determined the setting...

- Enroll your child (check IEP box)
- Once enrollment complete follow up in writing
- Share contact information of current team members (SLPs, OTs, ABA team)

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### Steps of the IEP process

- Familiarize yourself with the IEP process and your rights as a parent
- Attempt to coordinate school team observations of your child in their current environment (ABA)
- Most important part for parents is to be ready to discuss your child’s strengths and difficulties and your priorities and concerns as a parents
- This is something that your current ABA team should be able to help you generate

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### Parent Priorities and Concerns

- Your concerns about academic, social, behavioral needs
- Concerns about their progress, program/placement (classroom) or services (speech, OT, PT, social work) during the previous year.
- IEPs are “needs driven” documents so they can sometimes appear to focus on what a child cannot or does not do yet and forget to highlight what a child is good at and loves to do.

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- Stating strengths is important as these can be capitalized upon when teaching a child many different skills. They also help others to make sure learning is tied to individual interests and motivations whenever possible.
- Suggest being very specific and prepare this statement in advance of your IEP

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### Tips for preparing

- Generate a statement (one to two paragraphs) that can be typed right into the document by the recorder/facilitator.
- You can also ask for it to be attached to the IEP.
- Practice sharing priorities and concerns the night before making certain to be specific!



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### Example of IEP preparation

Parent concern	Parent-preferred method to address concern	School team response (IEP goal or additional support/services)
Safety: Risk of elopement, playground not fenced	Additional support listed during recess	
Social: Child does not initiate interactions with peers and will need support developing and maintaining meaningful relationships with peers	Social goals in IEP	
Communication: Child starting to use AAC device to communicate, but needs many learning opportunities throughout the day	Communication goals from SLP	

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- ### School preparation
- Visuals to prepare your child (social stories, calendars to count down)
  - Visit the school with your child (show them playground, classroom/teacher visit, etc.)
    - ✓ Familiarize yourself with your school’s calendar
    - ✓ Meet and greet
    - ✓ Kindergarten round up
    - ✓ Curriculum night
  - Possibly fade in the amount of time/days your child attends school for initial weeks

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### School has started... and it’s not going well

- Give it time! This is a big adjustment!
- Communication: Clarify a reasonable expectation for how often you will hear from the teacher
- Review your child’s IEP and determine if any supports and services may be helpful to add
  - ✓ Who makes the most sense to contact to get faster results
  - ✓ Request meeting if needed (in writing)

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### Coordinating care

- Options for BCBA consultation with school team if it’s not going well in school.
- Could happen monthly informally (phone calls, Zoom)
- BCBA observe in school setting and provide support with previously implemented strategies that were effective.

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### Resources

- Session handout
- Guide to IEP (Autism Speaks)
- Development & milestones for pre-k children (mich.gov)
- Kindergarten readiness tips from teachers (mich.gov)
- Kindergarten readiness checklist (itsalwaysautumn.com)



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