



Iowa Autism Support Program Information for Parents and Families Revised February 2019

What is the Autism Support Program?

The Autism Support Program (ASP) was created by the Iowa Legislature in 2013 and began operation on April 1, 2014. ASP provides funding for applied behavior analysis (ABA) services to children under the age of fourteen who are not eligible to receive ABA services through Medicaid or private health insurers and who meet certain diagnostic and financial eligibility criteria. The Iowa Department of Human Services Division of Mental Health and Disability Services administers the program.

What benefits are provided by the program?

ASP provides funding for children with autism to receive Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services from Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and professional staff working under the supervision of BCBAs. Only ABA services are covered through this program. Other types of services and therapies for children with autism may be funded by Medicaid or private insurers.

What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

“Applied Behavior Analysis” is a highly researched and scientifically validated approach to understanding behavior and how it is affected by the environment, and then using this knowledge to bring about meaningful and positive change in behavior that helps improve how the child functions within the home and community. ABA focuses on principles that explain how learning takes place and on measuring and evaluating a child’s behavior. ABA has been shown to be effective in:

- improving social and communication skills;
- reducing behaviors that are harmful or affect learning negatively;
- teaching new functional skills; and
- generalizing behavior and skills across settings and individuals.

Who is eligible to participate in the Autism Support Program?

A child is eligible to receive assistance through ASP if:

- the child is under the age of fourteen (14) at the time of application;
- the child has a diagnosis on the Autism spectrum made by a child psychiatrist, developmental pediatrician, or a clinical psychologist;
- the diagnosis is dated within twenty-four (24) months of the date of application;
- the child does not qualify for Medicaid or any other public funding for ABA services;
- the child does not have coverage available for ABA services through any private insurance carrier; and
- the child’s family meets the income guidelines for the program.

What are the income guidelines for ASP?

- Families with household incomes at or below 500% of the federal poverty level (FPL) may qualify for assistance under this program (as an example, effective January 31, 2018, 500% of FPL for a family of four is \$125,500).
- Income is determined by applying a modified adjusted gross income calculation to the income reported on the most recently filed federal tax return for the household (the return must have been filed within 15 months of the application date).

Are there other sources of funding for ABA services?

- Before applying for the Autism Support Program you should determine whether your child qualifies for Iowa Medicaid, either on the basis of your family income, or as a child with special needs. You can obtain more information by contacting Iowa Medicaid Member Services at 1-800-338-8366 or your local county DHS office.
- You may also want to place your child's name on a waiting list for a Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver. To learn more about HCBS Waivers, go to: <http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members/medicaid-a-to-z/hcbs>
- As discussed under the ASP eligibility section, you will also need to determine what, if any, benefits are available to you through your private insurance carrier. As the result of a state law change that became effective in 2018, the number of private insurance carriers that are now required to provide an ABA benefit has increased.

How do I apply for the program?

Contact the ASP administrator, Connie Fanselow, by email at: cfansel@dhs.state.ia.us
Or by phone at: 515-725-0131 to request an application.

What information and documentation is needed to apply?

You will need to provide:

- a fully completed and signed DHS application form;
- a copy of the child's certified birth certificate as proof of age;
- information from your most recently filed federal tax return (Form 1040 or Form 1040A) to determine your household size and modified adjusted gross income;
- your insurance card (or your child's card) or other evidence with child's name as proof of insurance coverage;
- proof of non-coverage or denial of coverage for ABA services by all insurance carriers, which may be any of the following:
 1. an insurance policy document (such as a member benefits guide) that clearly specifies non-coverage for ABA services, or
 2. an explanation of benefits showing ABA is excluded from coverage, or
 3. a letter of from the insurer stating that ABA is not covered or has been denied, or some other written documentation stating that insurance funding is not available to your child (note: if your child is covered only by the *hawk-i* children's health insurance program, no additional documentation of non-coverage is required)
- a copy of the medical record verifying your child's diagnosis of autism and made within 24 months of the date of application by a child psychiatrist, a developmental pediatrician, or a clinical psychologist.

Will I have to pay for ABA services under this program?

- Families of children who are enrolled in this program may have a cost share (co-pay) based on income.
- Families with household incomes up to 200% of FPL have no cost share.
- Families with household incomes over 200% of FPL will have a cost share depending on family income.
- The family cost share ranges from 0.5% to 15% of the service cost.
- If you are unable to pay your cost share, you may apply to the ASP administrator for an exemption from the cost share due to financial hardship.
- It is the responsibility of the ABA provider to collect the cost share payment directly from you and it is your obligation to pay your cost share directly to your service provider.

Who is qualified to provide ASP program supervision and services?

- Only Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs), licensed psychiatrists, or licensed psychologists can provide program oversight and supervision.
- Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBAs) and other trained and qualified staff working under the supervision of a BCBA may provide program services.
- The remainder of the service cost will be billed to the Autism Support Program by the provider,

How do I find a provider?

- The program administrator will maintain a list of Department-approved autism service providers who are qualified to provide ABA services under the ASP and have joined out provider network.
- If you currently have a service provider, the ASP will work with that provider to authorize services; other qualified ABA providers may be enrolled in the provider network if they are enrolled as Iowa Medicaid providers.
- Once enrolled, you will also be referred to the Iowa Regional Autism Assistance Program (RAP) of the Child Health Specialty Clinics who can assist you with care coordination for your child or other autism-related needs your child may have.
- Services must be pre-authorized before they can be paid for with ASP funding.

What is the Regional Autism Assistance Program?

- The Regional Autism Assistance Program (RAP) is operated by The University of Iowa's Child Health Specialty Clinics.
- RAP supports Iowa's children and youth from birth to age 21, and their families, with concerns related to Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).
- RAP helps families navigate local supports and services.
- RAP teams are located in regional centers across the state and are available to provide services to families in all 99 counties.
- Family Navigators are staff members who are also the parent or primary caregiver of a child or youth with special health care needs.

- Family Navigators work with families to provide emotional support, systems navigation, and connections to community resources.
- There are no fees for RAP care coordination and family-to-family support services.
- For more information, please call toll-free 1-866-219-9119, Ext. 2 or email iowa-RAP@uiowa.edu.

Are there limits in the amount or length of services?

- ASP benefits are available to an eligible child for a period of up to 24 months.
- The maximum benefit amount is \$36,000 per year (a year is a 12-month period beginning with the first date of service).
- Initial eligibility for ASP will last for one year from the approved service start date.
- An Annual Financial Eligibility Review form with updated income information must be submitted prior to the end of the first year to determine continued financial eligibility to receive services and determine any change in the family cost share.
- Your provider will need to submit a revised service plan and receive re-authorization to continue services under that plan at least every six months during the eligibility period.

What happens if my child reaches the maximum age limitation while participating in the program?

- Your child must be under age 14 at the time of application to the program.
- Once the child has been approved for services, he or she is eligible to continue receiving services for up to 24 months (or the maximum annual benefit amount) even if the child becomes older than the allowed application age.

What happens after I find out my child is eligible for the program?

- You will receive information about ABA providers or be referred to a provider in your area if you do not already have one.
- You will be contacted by or referred to care coordination services through the Iowa Regional Autism Assistance Program (RAP) of the Child Health Specialty Clinics.
- Your provider will need to make a service (treatment) plan for your child and submit the plan to DHS for approval.
- Once the service plan is approved, the provider will receive authorization to begin ABA services to be funded through the ASP.

Where can I find more information about ASP?

Contact: Connie Fanselow, ASP Administrator
 Mental Health and Disability Services
 Iowa Department of Human Services
 Hoover State Office Bldg. 5 SE, 1305 E. Walnut Street
 Des Moines, IA 50319
 Email: cfansel@dhs.state.ia.us
 Phone: 515-725-0131

Iowa Autism Resources

Autism Advocacy groups:

- Autism Society of Iowa - Kris Steinmetz, director
<http://autismia.com/>
- Autism Speaks
http://communities.autismspeaks.org/site/c.ihLPK1PDLof/b.4182725/k.A3A4/low_a_Resources.htm
- Iowa Autism Council
<https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/special-education/state-requirements-reports/iowa-autism-council>

Family Navigation, Care Coordination Services:

- University of Iowa Regional Autism Assistance Program-can provide family navigator to assist with finding services, connecting with other families.
<http://www.chsciowa.org/regional-autism-assistance-program.asp>

Medicaid Program Information:

- HCBS Waiver information with descriptions of each waiver and a comparison chart.
<https://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members/medicaid-a-to-z/hcbs/waivers>
- Medicaid application online portal
<https://dhsservices.iowa.gov/apsspssp/ssp.portal>
- Medicaid application-printable
<http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/470-5170.pdf>
- Medicaid for Kids with Special Needs program
<http://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/Comm337.pdf>
- For Iowa Medicaid application and eligibility questions (including how to apply for Medicaid, services offered, general health care questions) call DHS Contact Center 1-855-889-7985 (Toll Free) Mon-Fri 7:00 am to 6:00 pm
- For Iowa Medicaid member questions call IME member services call 1-800-338-8366 (Toll Free) or 515-256-4606 (in the Des Moines Area) Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
<http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/members>
- IA Health Link managed care organizations
<http://dhs.iowa.gov/iahealthlink>

Iowa Autism Support Program Providers

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ABA of Iowa

305 North 4th Street
Bellevue, IA 52031
563-542-1052

Behavior Care Specialists

745 10th Street, Suite C
Rock Valley, IA 51247
712-454-3484

Hills and Dales Child Development Center

1011 Davis Street
Dubuque, IA 52001
563-556-7878

Balance Autism (formerly The Homestead)

1625 Adventureland Drive, Suite B
Altoona, IA 50009
515-967-4369

Balance Autism
2209 Northern Drive
Burlington, IA 52601
515-967-4369

Balance Autism
118 E. 18th Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
515-967-4369

Balance Autism
1860 NW 118th Street, Suite 100
Clive, IA 50325
515-967-4369

Balance Autism
4959 Utica Ridge Road
Davenport, IA 52807
515-967-4369

Balance Autism
161 Boyson Square Drive, Suite 100
Hiawatha, IA 52233
515-967-4369

Kathryn Kunkel, BCBA

Bettendorf, IA 52722
773-677-4925

Munroe-Meyer Institute

Center of Autism Spectrum Disorders
& Pediatric Feeding Disorders
985450 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198
402-559-3716 or 402-559-8863

One Vision Children's Autism Center

1200 N. 9th Street W.
P.O. Box 622
Clear Lake, IA 50428
6441-357-6471

The Pier Center for Autism

709 Iowa Street
Sioux City, IA 51105
712-522-2961

Kristin Purington, BCBA

Plattsmouth, NE 68048
402-312-9272

Seasons Center for Behavioral Health

147 South Main
Sioux Center, IA 51250
800-242-5101 Ext. 1308

Tanager Place

2309 C Street SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
319-365-9165

Unified Therapy Services, Inc.

4121 Pennsylvania Avenue
Dubuque, IA 52002
563-583-4003

University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Autism Center

100 Hawkins Drive
Iowa City, IA 52242
319-353-6900