

ABA Program Prerequisite Skills Checklist

We want to ensure every child enrolled can benefit fully from our program. However, due to the limitations of our environment and capacity, the following skills are required prior to enrollment. When these foundational skills are in place, our team can effectively support and build upon them—helping each child thrive socially and emotionally within an inclusive group setting.

Attention & Following Directions

- ☐ Can sit and attend to a preferred activity for 3–5 minutes.
- ☐ Can follow 1–2 step directions without continuous prompting.

Communication

- ☐ Communicates basic wants/needs (e.g., “hungry,” “thirsty”).
- ☐ Answers simple WH-questions (what, where, who).
- ☐ Responds when name is called in most settings.
- ☐ Attempts to solve problems with help (e.g., asking for help with gestures or words, with or without prompts).

Social Awareness & Interaction

- ☐ Notices when others move away.
- ☐ Makes eye contact or uses other nonverbal cues to connect.
- ☐ Demonstrates interest in peers (watching, smiling, approaching).
- ☐ Tolerates proximity to peers without aggression or withdrawal.
- ☐ Imitates simple actions or words.
- ☐ Can engage in a shared activity for at least 2–3 minutes.

Play Skills

- ☐ Uses toys in functional ways (not only repetitive or sensory play).

Flexibility & Coping

- ☐ Transitions between activities without severe distress.
- ☐ Accepts small changes to routines with adult support.

- ☐ Recovers from minor disappointments within a few minutes.

Self-Care & Independence

- ☐ Uses the toilet independently and appropriately (enters, manages clothing, wipes, flushes).
- ☐ Communicates need to use the bathroom before it's too late.
- ☐ Washes and dries hands without reminders or with minimal prompting.
- ☐ Eats snacks or meals without constant assistance.
- ☐ Drinks from an open cup or water bottle without excessive spilling.

Safety Awareness

- ☐ Knows not to put unsafe items in mouth.
- ☐ Asks for help when injured or uncomfortable.
- ☐ Do not demonstrate severe aggression towards peers or staff.