



ABC of NC

May 21, 2020

Greetings ABC of NC families,

I hope this message finds you healthy and safe as our communities have begun gradually reopening. As many of you probably heard, Governor Cooper announced yesterday that NC will enter a modest approach to Phase 2 beginning on Friday, May 22, at 5:00 pm. While we prepare to reopen our campus, we will continue providing in-home and telehealth-based services during the week of May 25 (reminder that we are closed on Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day). We **will begin ABA therapy services in the clinic on Monday, June 1**. Leigh Ellen Spencer will reach out to families to notify them of their therapy schedules.

Preparations

During the week of May 25, staff will work with clients to prepare them for re-entry into the clinic setting by: 1) introducing social narratives about the transition, 2) practicing the client seeing others wear masks, and 3) clients practicing wearing a mask. Our cleaning vendor will conduct a deep clean and sanitation process across the campus over Memorial Day weekend. We have identified a team of staff members who will sanitize toys and teaching supplies and set up the campus for increased social distancing success.

Other Services

- Distance learning will continue for school and preschool programs (while some schools may reopen during this phase, ABC of NC is taking a more conservative approach since our clients may have difficulty meeting the social distancing guidelines).
- Counseling services will be delivered via telehealth only.
- Family/caregiver training will continue to be delivered via telehealth only.
- Parent/caregiver classes and ABC of NC tours/information sessions will be delivered virtually through Zoom.

Additional reminders regarding ABA therapy during Phase 2:

- ABA therapy services will be delivered in the clinic with limited staffing/teaming per client. The goal is to minimize the number of staff working with each client. If we limit contact, if a positive COVID-19 case is identified, this will make it more manageable to trace and will limit the number of people that will need to quarantine. Client therapy hours may be reduced in order to ensure limited staffing/teaming per client.
- Some clients may continue to receive ABA therapy services via telehealth and/or in-home: a) clients who have written documentation from a doctor that the child is medically fragile/high risk, or b) clients whose program supervisors have made a *clinical* recommendation for in-home or telehealth services at this time.
- PLEASE NOTE we will do our best to provide all requested/authorized therapy hours to clients during this phase, but we cannot guarantee hours as staff availability may impact the schedule.
- We will conduct the pre-entry health checklist and temperature checks for clients before beginning therapy.
- All clinical/educational space across campus will be used to ensure social distancing between clients (as we did before). To limit contact, clients will eat in their assigned therapeutic space.
- Shared spaces, including the playground, will be open but with maximum capacities, strict rotating schedules, and enhanced sanitization practices according to CDC recommendations.
- ALL staff will be required to wear masks at all times (unless working in a private office alone). Masks will be changed between clients, lunch breaks, etc. and will be washed before another use.

- Clients will be encouraged to wear masks if/when they are able.
- Staff must check their temperatures daily upon arrival to work and must not be on campus if they have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Staff must follow social distancing guidelines, and staff shared spaces will have maximum capacities.
- No visitors, including family members, will be allowed in the building.
- Staff members who can perform their work duties from home (administrative staff, those delivering distance learning, and telehealth) will be strongly encouraged to work from home to keep the number of people in the building at a minimum.

A reminder that ABC of NC is using the following sources as guidance for our phased approach:

- <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/#phase-two> [whitehouse.gov]
- <https://governor.nc.gov/news/governor-extends-stay-home-order-through-may-8-plans-three-phase-lifting-restrictions-based>

We will let you know when we have updates from Imprints Cares and the Speech Center regarding collaborative services. As we receive further guidance, we will also keep you posted regarding our move into Phase 3. In the meantime, please feel free to contact Leigh Ellen Spencer or me directly if we can provide any additional information.

The team at ABC of NC is excited to see our clients back in the clinical setting. We are committed to doing everything we can to ensure that ABC of NC is following guidelines to keep our clients, their families, and our staff safe and healthy.

Thank you for your understanding and flexibility as we continue to navigate this changing situation. Hoping that you and your families continue to be well!

Sincerely,

Selene Johnson, M.Ed., BCBA
Executive Director