ABC of NC
impact report
As we invite our supporters to celebrate our 20th anniversary with us this year, we reflect on how your generosity helped us maintain our essential mission, even as we navigated the most tumultuous time in recent history. You stayed by our sides as we proudly remained resourceful, inventive, and adaptable. This report illustrates how we continued to achieve numerous milestones in the face of unprecedented challenges.

Even with the pandemic still looming, we show a successful financial picture for the fiscal year 2020–21. We express gratitude to the donors who gave over the past 18 months, exemplifying the continued devotion of our generous community, and we share examples of our success stories—how we helped children learn and families move forward, even as we faced seemingly insurmountable barriers.

We emerged from the pandemic using effective advocacy and creative solutions for a return to pre-pandemic levels of services.

We remained nimble, using new technologies and changing COVID-19 protocols while continuing to provide quality services to our diverse clients.

We pursued public, state, and local funding so that families could continue their vital autism services.

We launched ABCares, a collaborative program designed to reduce health disparities in autism by building an inclusive and equitable network of care through culturally responsive autism practices while providing accessible, evidence-based programs for children with autism and their caregivers, specifically targeting families with additional unmet social needs.

We advocated for the Behavior Analyst Licensure Law, resulting in greater accessibility to services and support for families across North Carolina.

As they say, it was a lot. But as we mark these achievements and our 20th year, we proudly rejoice in the impact our organization has made and the hundreds of families we’ve served since 2002—consistently establishing, improving, and expanding programs for autism and meeting the needs of our ever-increasing community of diverse, adorable, extraordinary clients.

Happy 20th Anniversary to us—we look forward to a celebratory year and continued success.
success with style

Terrie

When Terrie* arrived at ABC of NC, their family shared with us that Terrie had been unable to get haircuts without a significant amount of stress, so this was set as a goal. Using the Great Clips mock hair salon in ABC of NC’s Joy W. Pope Life Skills Center, Terrie’s care team practiced the routine of getting a haircut, following a systematic and graduated process that would keep Terrie successful without experiencing distress. After just a few months, Terrie’s family was able to give Terrie a full haircut at home with no distress. Their family was so pleased with Terrie’s progress that they were moved to tears when they reported this fantastic news to Terrie’s clinical team. The team also worked on self-advocacy with Terrie, teaching them how to request a break when in a stressful situation. With a few more months of practice, Terrie’s family was able to take them to an actual hair salon for a haircut! Terrie’s family was overjoyed, and so were we. Terrie continues to make progress in many domains, and we are so happy to have them here with us!

Sarah

During the pandemic, ABC of NC care teams had a special opportunity to visit some of our clients in their home environments. This unique situation allowed the Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) and Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) to expand the skills taught in the clinic setting to the home setting. Prior to the COVID-19 shutdown in 2020, Sarah* was working on haircutting at the Great Clips mock hair salon in the Joy W. Pope Life Skills Center with her care team. She had successfully learned to participate in a haircut in this setting. Sarah’s caregiver was then able to come to ABC of NC to learn the routine and perform a haircut in the mock hair salon. When the pandemic forced ABC of NC’s clinic to close, Sarah’s team continued to work with her and her caregiver on this goal in their home. Working together with her RBT and her caregiver, Sarah successfully accomplished a haircut at home, too! It was a beautiful moment to see our client successfully meet her goal.

*Clients’ names have been changed in this story to protect their real identity and allow ABC of NC to share treatment details confidentially. Photos are used for illustrative purposes with permission and do not necessarily indicate the identity of those described in this article.
taking the bite out of dental visits

**Going to the dentist can be scary** for adults and even more so for children. There are weird smells, frightening sounds, bright lights, and strange people in your personal space. If all these sensations aren’t enough to set you on edge, there is also the potential of pain hovering over it all. For ABC of NC clients on the autism spectrum, this overwhelming experience can be too much to handle. Some clients even have to be sedated for basic dental cleanings. We understand the importance of regular dental care for health, so when ABC of NC built the SECU Autism Clinic, we created the Joy W. Pope Life Skills Center. The center is comprised of five community labs, including a mock dental office to help kids become more comfortable with the experiences of a dental visit.

ABC of NC’s care providers are tuned into their clients and work hard to identify and proactively remove barriers to success. Brittany, one of our Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA), shared a dental success story of one of our clients. It was recently discovered that Jason* had a sensitivity to having items near his mouth, especially if those items were being utilized by another person. Jason was particularly afraid of the toothbrush. His team worked diligently at slowly exposing the toothbrush in different ways. They began by brushing the teacher’s hand and arm with the toothbrush then transitioned to touching Jason’s arm and hands with it. After two months of consistent work by Jason and his care team, Jason is not only tolerating a toothbrush in his mouth, but he has started to independently pick the toothbrush up and brush his own teeth!

Luis* is another client who had great success using our mock dental office. His BCBA, Kat, explained that Luis struggled with dental appointments. It was particularly challenging for him to lie back in the dentist’s chair and keep his mouth open for the exam. Kat and Luis’s care team developed a graduated exposure program that focused on increasing his success by practicing a simulated dental routine. After working diligently for over a year, Luis recently went on to have two successful dentist appointments back to back! Kat says, “This is one of many memorable events over the last three years that makes my work so rewarding at ABC of NC.”

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Vision ABC of NC’s vision is that all people with autism spectrum disorder reach their full potential in a world where they are valued, accepted, and included.

Mission ABC of NC is committed to providing high-quality, evidence-based diagnostic, therapeutic, and educational services to people with autism spectrum disorder; ensuring service accessibility to individuals from any economic background; offering support and hope to families; and advocating for inclusion and acceptance.
**Supporters: Thank you!**

Remarkable people like you and generous businesses in our community have made it possible for ABC of NC to provide services to children on the spectrum and their families for 20 years! We would not be celebrating this anniversary without each and every one of you. We are grateful for your constant and unwavering support.

Those listed below have supported ABC of NC during the period of June 1, 2020, through December 31, 2021. With your continued help, we look forward to giving many more decades of service to our community.

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