



**BHCOE  
Accreditation**

# ABA PROVIDERS TALK BENEFITS OF BHCOE ACCREDITATION: ABS KIDS



ABS Kids holds BHCOE's Two-Year Accreditation and has grown from its founding in 2011 to encompass more than 1,200 clinical staff and serve more than 1,100 children across three states. ABS pursues thoughtful and responsible expansion of ABA services to meet and advance treatment for people with autism and related developmental disabilities and improve support for families. In a waitlist-defined world, where patient count outweighs clinical capacity, ABS uses data-driven continuous improvement to strengthen its efforts both operationally and clinically, a dual focus that has mutually reinforced the organization's ability to improve the services it provides to patients.

At the heart of ABS's efforts are transparency and quality assurance. Skibitsky says ABS's use of data, whether related to quality, operational, or key performance indicators, is unique to the ABA field and was inspired and enabled by BHCOE feedback.

ABS uses BHCOE feedback to understand gaps in its clinical performance, to see if there are any deficits so it can remediate, better enhance its training, and make sure it is giving its patients the best experience.



Anyone can grow.  
Growing responsibly is  
hard and that's what we  
need to get right.

— **Jeff Skibitsky**  
Founder and President  
ABS Kids

ABS furthered its goal for transparency by implementing a virtual platform to bring its remote workforce home. By using this platform, ABS facilitates continuous communication and dialogue among its providers. The virtual platform allows everyone to express their pain points and to have a voice in the company's decision-making. The platform also links to ABS's learning management system.

"We are not afraid as a company to talk about the issues in our chats," Skibitsky says. "It's part of our systems and management approach to capture and use data, whether it's related to quality or operational KPI."

As a result, ABS has very high BCBA satisfaction, and it improved its registered behavioral therapist (RBT) retention by almost 40 percent. Skibitsky points out that provider satisfaction and retention lead to improved patient outcomes and satisfaction. "If BCBA's are happy, patients are happy," he says.

ABS also runs its own Master's in Applied Behavior Analysis program. It funds the tuition, runs the course work, and its executives serve as assistant professors through an accredited university.



We've put a lot of time and energy into understanding our clinical care and operations. Having initial transparency in 2015 when we went through our first BHCOE Accreditation and started getting our survey results caused us to dig deeper into our data for root causes. It empowered us to invest in data analysts, systems, and infrastructure to give us more information. Transparency drives improvement.

— **Jeff Skibitsky**  
Founder and President  
ABS Kids

ABS's collaborative goals extend beyond its organization. The company practices and advocates collaboration among the community who surround a patient's development. As a pioneer in multidisciplinary treatment, Skibitsky channeled his experience to create ABS's partnership approach with physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, behavior analysts, occupational therapists, and physical therapists. ABS has partnered with a large hospital in North Carolina to open an ABA therapy center within the Developmental Pediatric Department. This is just one example of how ABS strives to make collaboration with pediatricians simple.

ABS's clinical capacity and patient count continue to expand, and responsibly managing this growth remains a number one priority. Skibitsky is aware that growth can diminish quality, so ABS is committed to continuous improvement through external validation and encourages other ABA organizations to do the same.

"You can only understand your gaps and capabilities by bringing in outside resources," he says.

Skibitsky says BHCOE's initial survey inspired ABS to live up to and supersede the standards.

BHCOE is not there to tell you that you are failing or succeeding, he says, it's there to point you in the right direction, to make sure you have chances to rectify and strengthen your program.

In looking ahead, Skibitsky comments that ABA treatment will continue to serve the needs of autism patients in a leading way. He encourages other providers to focus on understanding and improving their operating metrics, quality metrics, and transparency to establish benchmarks and push the field forward. Having standard quality measures is something that payors, managed care organizations, government agencies, and consumers will be looking at, he says, emphasizing that ABA is a growing field where a child's progress, opportunity to engage, and independence is conditioned on the level of care, practice effect, and consistency of treatment provided.

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