



# Building Bridges



A place for fun,  
friendship, and  
development  
through Applied  
Behavior Analysis  
Services

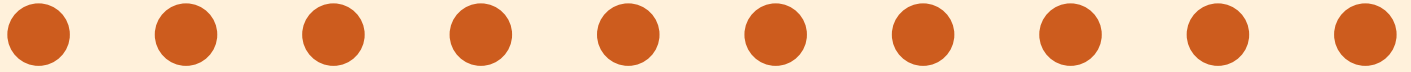


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# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

## Our Mission:

Providing young children with autism the opportunity for individualized 1:1 support through ABA therapy in a group setting to prepare them for kindergarten. We will work to develop learners into the best versions of themselves, and ultimately develop the skills they need to approach kindergarten with confidence and pride.



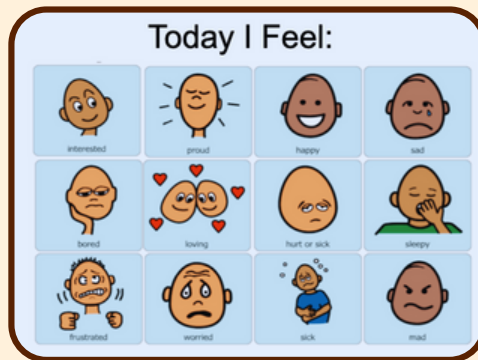
## Quick Facts:

- The Early Learner (EL) program is designed for children age 3-6 years old with approval for ABA services.
- Each learner has an RBT assigned to them throughout the day. Often a learner has at least two different therapists per day.
- The program is designed to replace preschool and teach key kinder-readiness skills.
- Learners attend Monday through Friday for an average 30 hours a week.



# FOCUS ON COMMUNICATION

All EL rooms have a heavy emphasis on increasing communication. Programming targeting communication is embedded throughout every part of each learner's day. Communication can look different for each learner and depends on what works best for them.



BCBA's and the learners' therapists work to establish and evolve communication systems that are the most effective and easiest for the learner. This may look like an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), vocal approximations and words or American Sign Language (ASL).



Check with your child's BCBA to learn how to implement their preferred communication system at home!

# PLAY & SOCIAL SKILLS



Learners in the EL program work on play skills in naturalistic settings, with help from their therapists as needed. Some of the play skills targeted during free play time include turn taking with peers, sharing a toy or set with multiple parts, back and forth communicative play, and organized games. Some learners enjoy games like Candy Land, while others prefer to play tag or duck duck goose. These games help to teach reciprocal play skills, social skills, and tolerance to waiting for preferred items.



# CIRCLE TIME



Circle times in the EL classrooms target a broad range of skills including listener responding, imitation, and social skills. During morning circle times, learners first greet one another through a hello song. They then identify the date, month and year. They sing songs about the days of the week and identify the weather before participating in an interactive dance song together!



During afternoon circle time, learners engage with a book read by a group leader. Both circle times focus on increasing skills needed for kindergarten such as staying seated in a designated area and following group instructions.



# FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES



Each EL classroom participates in a daily craft activity. Some learners practice prerequisite skills for crafting such as snipping using scissors, tracing lines, tearing paper, and using glue. Other learners use imitation skills to copy an example craft each day. The crafts are themed each week, and the themes correlate with their book of the week read during story time.



Our learners love making silly crafts, and engaging with the full sensory experience that their art time includes!



# GENERALIZATION

Things to practice at home with your early learner!

Eating at the table: Eating at the table is an important skill to learn for lunchtime in kindergarten. Many of our learners struggle to sit while eating. Try making a visual schedule with eating times on it to encourage your learner to eat full meals at meal times, and work towards encouraging food to be at the table rather than carried around the home. Try having a special toy or fidget item that is only available during meal times while your child is sitting!



Following one, two, and three step instructions:

Following simple directions leads to great opportunities for our learners in kindergarten. Try asking them to do simple, one-step tasks around the house. Once mastered, try adding in one additional step at a time. Give plenty of praise when your child completes these tasks.



# GENERALIZATION

Things to practice at home with your early learner!



Taking turns with siblings or friends: Turn taking can be difficult for all children. Try modeling appropriate turn taking in front of your child before asking them to do it. When they're ready, practice taking turns with an adult first, who will reliably give them a turn.

Then, try encouraging turn taking with a sibling or peer with a moderately preferred item. Once mastered, try turn taking with a highly preferred item. Give your child encouragement and praise for each successful turn they give to another child.



Wearing shoes outside of the home: This skill is often forgotten when preparing children for kindergarten. When starting school, your child will be expected to keep their shoes on for the entirety of the day. Try starting with short outings with shoes on, and adding time during each outing where shoes are expected to stay on. If your learner is able to communicate their feelings about shoes, help them troubleshoot by discussing their comfortability, different styles of shoes, socks, and why shoes are important for safety outside the home



# PARENT CORNER

## Charlotte...

### Special Needs Swim Classes

- Charlotte Aquatics
- Learn More at [charlotteaquatics.com/special-needs-swim-lessons!](http://charlotteaquatics.com/special-needs-swim-lessons!)

### Unwind Indoor Play Cafe

- Indoor playground with sensory play areas in Pineville, NC
- Learn More at [unwindindoorplaycafe.com](http://unwindindoorplaycafe.com)

### Miracle League Baseball 5-11 yr olds

- Keith Family YMCA 8100 Old Mallard Creek Rd Charlotte, NC 28262
- Learn More at [ymcacharlotte.org/programs/youth-sports/baseball-t-ball/miracle-league](http://ymcacharlotte.org/programs/youth-sports/baseball-t-ball/miracle-league)



## Winston-Salem...

### Adaptive Soccer

- Greensboro or Bermuda Run, NC
- Ages 3-19 & FREE
- Learn More & Register Here: [ncfusion.org/topsoccer31c89e70](http://ncfusion.org/topsoccer31c89e70)

### Touch a Truck:

- Where: Cabarrus Arena & Events Center
  - Free Admission and Parking \$7.00
- When: October 28th, 2023
  - 9 am to 1 pm (Low Sensory 9:00 - 10:30 am no sirens, flashing lights)
- Candy, Games, Giveaways and More.
- Halloween Costumes are encouraged!!

### Visit Kaledium

- Where: 400 W Hanes Mill Rd, Winston-Salem NC
  - \$10 per person admission
- The museum offers sensory-friendly backpacks at the welcome desk!
- Visit their website to learn more: [kaleideum.org/accessibility](http://kaleideum.org/accessibility)

# RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

## ...And Beyond!

### Boo at the Zoo

- NC Zoo offers sensory bags and weighted lap pads at the Guest Services offices located at the North America and Africa entrances and at Kidzone.
- WHEN:
  - Saturday, October 28 -
  - Sunday, October 29
- \$10 per person
- WHERE: 4401 Zoo Parkway, Asheboro, NC 27205
- Zoo Map with Sensory Areas
- Learn More Here: [nczoo.org/events/boo-nc-zoo](http://nczoo.org/events/boo-nc-zoo)

### Sensory Friendly Marbles Museum:

- Located in Raleigh, NC
- Learn More Here: [marbleskidsmuseum.org/sensory-friendly-playtime](http://marbleskidsmuseum.org/sensory-friendly-playtime)

### Sensory Friendly Movies:

- AMC Theatres Near You!
- Learn More Here: [amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films](http://amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films)

### Autism Parent Support Groups

- Learn More Here: [autismsociety-nc.org/find-chaptersupport-group/](http://autismsociety-nc.org/find-chaptersupport-group/)



\*This list is informational only. ABtA is not affiliated with these activities.\*