

Funding The Future

What No One Tells You About Speeding
Up Funding

Provided To You By

The MAEZ Collective

Mount Etna Child & Family Services · Aubrey Academy · The Embers
for Access Foundation · Zalik Academy

The MAEZ Collective

Four Ontario organisations working together on therapy, education, respite and funding access for neurodivergent children and their families.

Mount Etna Child & Family Services

Play-based behavioural and developmental services.

Aubrey Academy

Specialized high school education and hybrid/virtual learning support.

The Embers for Access Foundation

Removes financial barriers through subsidies for therapy, respite and inclusion.

Zalik Academy

An inclusive microschool offering individualized learning for neurodivergent students.



Disclaimer

The strategies shared in this guide are based on real-world actions taken by families and direct conversations with OAP officials in Ontario.

In some cases, parents who have followed these steps have experienced a reduction in their wait times by **1–2 years**. However, we cannot guarantee that these results will apply to every family. OAP timelines are determined by a range of factors — including available resources, government policies, and individual case circumstances — which may change without notice.

This guide is provided for educational and advocacy purposes only. It does not constitute legal, clinical, or official government advice. For guidance specific to your situation, we recommend contacting OAP support staff, licensed professionals, or legal counsel.

By using this guide, you acknowledge that any actions taken are done at your own discretion and risk.

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The Ontario Autism Program (OAP): What It Pays For and What It Doesn't

Let's clear the fog and break down exactly what OAP is, what it covers, and what it doesn't — so you're not left guessing.

When families first hear about the Ontario Autism Program (OAP), they often feel 2 things at once.

1. HOPE

"Finally, there's support for us!"

2. CONFUSION

"Why is this so complicated?"

What is the OAP?

The Ontario Autism Program is the provincial government's way of funding autism-related services for children under 18. Instead of sending money directly to clinics or providers, the OAP provides **child-specific budgets** that parents can use on eligible services.

These budgets aren't one-size-fits-all — they depend on your child's age, needs, and funding stream.

What the OAP covers, and what it doesn't

The OAP funds services that fall under what they call "Core Clinical Services." Despite the broad umbrella, there are limitations.

WHAT THE OAP DOES COVER

ABA Therapy (Applied Behaviour Analysis)

Speech-Language Pathology (SLP)

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Mental Health Supports (like counselling)

Other developmental supports

You can also spend your OAP budget on assessments (e.g. language, behaviour, skills assessments), parent coaching and training, and travel costs in some cases, like remote areas.

WHAT THE OAP DOESN'T COVER

General childcare

Educational support or private school fees

Medication or medical care

Nutritional supplements

Equipment (unless specifically part of a funded therapy)

Services from unlicensed or non-recognized providers

If a provider isn't OAP-approved (or can't give you proper invoices with provider credentials), your spending may not be reimbursed.

The different types of OAP funding

There isn't just one OAP stream — and understanding which one you're in affects what you get.

Childhood Budget	Phased out, but some families still on it
Interim One-Time Funding	Also being phased out
Core Clinical Services Registration	The new long-term system

The government has been transitioning all families to Core Services — but the pace has been slow, and not all families have received offers yet.

Translation: what this means for you

WAITING FOR FUNDING

You can still prep paperwork, find therapists, and get clarity on your goals.

FUNDING RECEIVED

You need to spend it strategically and track every dollar.

APPLIED, HEARD NOTHING

It might be time to escalate or explore interim options — more on this in Chapter 2.

"When we first got our budget, I assumed it would cover everything. But we quickly realized things like group therapy and social skills programs weren't always billable. We had to really think about what mattered most — and build a plan from there."

— Lisa, parent of a 6-year-old in Toronto

THE TRAP TO AVOID

Some parents feel overwhelmed and leave the funding unused, or blow through it quickly on low-impact services. This guide will help you avoid both extremes. In the next chapter, we'll walk through how to speed up approvals and sidestep the bottlenecks that delay care.

Speeding Up OAP Approval & Avoiding Costly Delays

All the steps OAP may need from you, and some tips for getting the most out of each step.

Most families apply to the Ontario Autism Program with hope and urgency. But after hitting "submit," they're often met with... silence.

Weeks turn into months; months turn into years. You wonder:

Did I miss a step?

Should I call someone?

Is there even a way to speed this up?

Here's the honest truth: you can't hack the system — but you can avoid falling into its slowest traps. Let's break down all the steps OAP may need from you, and some tips for getting the most out of each step.

The timeline of events to getting funding

01 AccessOAP registration & setup

Proof of age, proof of Ontario residency, and a written ASD diagnosis. One incomplete field can reset your spot in the queue.

02 Meet your Care Coordinator

4+ weeks

At least 4 weeks after your documents are submitted. A 15–30 minute introduction call. Ask for their direct contact.

03 Booking the Determination of Needs interview

An open calendar shared with every other parent in the province. This is the stage people mean when they say funding takes years.

04 The DON interview

3–4 hours

A call where you make the case for your child and the urgency of your current situation.

05 Core Clinical Services funding offer

A child-specific budget you can spend on eligible services. Chapter 3 covers how to make it last.

Why it's so slow, and what actually causes delays

The OAP isn't just underfunded — it's also fragmented. Here's where most parents get stuck.

Missing documents

Even one incomplete field in the registration form can reset your spot in the queue. Most common: missing diagnosis report, incomplete mailing address, outdated contact info.

No follow-up

If you moved, changed emails, or missed a letter, your file might just sit there waiting for a response.

Eligibility verification

Government teams need to verify your child's diagnosis was done by a qualified provider and meets their criteria. If anything is unclear, they delay rather than reject.

Transition confusion

Some families are still in limbo between Childhood Budget, Interim One-Time Funding, and Core Services. This makes tracking even harder.

AccessOAP registration & setup

This step is likely the simplest, yet most people miss 1–2 things that add years to their OAP wait-time. While you can find the most accurate and up-to-date needed documents by visiting the official OAP website, here's a list of the required documents you'll need before getting started.

01 Proof of age

e.g. birth certificate, passport, Ontario photo card. **Health cards are not accepted.**

02 Proof of residency in Ontario

e.g. school report card, Ontario driver's license, utility bill.

03 Written ASD diagnosis

Must include child's full name, date of birth, assessment date, and qualified professional's credentials (physician, psychologist, nurse practitioner, or diagnostic hub).

TREAT "OPTIONAL" AS REQUIRED

If you see any segments listed as "optional" while registering, you should fill them out as if they're required. The more information you can provide OAP upfront, the better your chances at getting availability later down the line.

Meet your Care Coordinator

After you've submitted your documents, it'll take at least 4 weeks before OAP reaches out to you to connect you with your own Care Coordinator.

This will be the person who will likely oversee you and your child's needs over time, and be responsible for your file on hand.

They will schedule a 15–30 minute call with you as an introduction and give you the next steps you'll both be working on.

4+

WEEKS BEFORE
THEY CONTACT YOU

15–30

MINUTES ON THE
INTRODUCTION CALL

DO THIS ON THE CALL

Ask for their direct contact — either email or phone extension number — so that you can ask about your file without having to wait around.

Determination of Needs interview

APPLYING FOR AN INTERVIEW

Welcome to the stage of OAP that's notoriously long-winded. When you hear "funding takes years to get," this is the stage they're likely talking about.

Either before or after you meet with your Care Coordinator, you'll have gained access to schedule your Determination of Needs (DON) Interview. Because it's an open calendar, you and every other parent in the province are competing for the limited number of time slots available.

Chances are, you won't get an appointment slot on your first try. And that's okay.

As of 2025, OAP doesn't have a notification system in place to tell you when a slot opens up, which means you'll need to set one up for yourself.

SET YOUR OWN REMINDER

On your phone, set a recurring reminder to check available time slots every 2 weeks.

The reason we suggest biweekly and not weekly is because it's unlikely to change in such a short time span. Biweekly gives you enough time to consistently check, while not obsessing over the calendar constantly.

There's no real way to speed up this part since it's based on agent availability, but later on we'll give you some bonus steps you can take to proactively open a slot in your name.

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

Take your therapist's notes into the interview

The DON Interview is a 3–4 hour call, where you'll be making the case for your child and the urgency of your current situation.

The biggest flaw of this step is that you — as a parent — will have difficulty explaining all the internal mechanisms that your child goes through, in a way a therapist would. In fact, in an ideal world, your therapist — the one your child is already working with — should be the one giving this interview, to make your best case.

Since that isn't the case, the next best thing is to take your therapist's notes into the interview. Most therapy centres offer a "Child Assessment" before starting service. It's often paid, but gives you the full breakdown of your child's needs and the associated plan the centre plans to give your child.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

Ask the therapist conducting the assessment to draw up a report (or at the very least, a summary) of their findings for your child. Both major and minor. The more detail and the wider area this report covers, that accurately represents your child's current situation, will act as ammunition for you during your DON Interview.

Being able to communicate to one expert from the words of another will help you get your point across that much easier, building the case that your child needs funding ASAP.

Steps to proactively move the process forward

Eight things you can do while the calendar sits still. Each one puts your file in front of a human being.

- 1 Submit a "Case Review Escalation" letter to your OAP contact**
- 2 Ask every provider to write a supporting clinical letter**
- 3 Contact your local MPP — but ask the right way**
- 4 Request to be assigned a case coordinator or family support worker**
- 5 Submit a "Family Impact Statement" with a timeline of missed milestones**
- 6 Apply for additional one-time funding**
- 7 Join a parent advocacy group that shares escalation tactics**
- 8 Keep a documented log of all contacts & follow-ups**

Submit a "Case Review Escalation" letter to your OAP contact

If you've received an OAP reference number or correspondence, you're already in the system. Now, you need to ask for a formal file review.

HOW TO DO IT

Write a concise letter stating:

Your child's worsening condition

Emotional and financial toll on your family

Request for interim funding or early activation

Attach documentation

Send to **oap@ontario.ca** and cc your family's OAP contact, if one is assigned.

ATTACHMENTS TO INCLUDE

Doctor's letter or psychological assessment

Speech therapist, OT, or ABA notes

A "day in the life" outline showing how challenging your current situation is

Ask every provider to write a supporting clinical letter

Most parents stop at just submitting an ASD diagnosis. Go further. Ask your paediatrician, SLP, OT, psychologist and ABA/IBI Care Coordinator to each submit a short letter stating your child needs urgent support and that delayed therapy increases long-term risk.

Make sure these letters are sent directly to the OAP via email or fax — not just handed to you.

A letter from each professional who sees your child carries more weight than the diagnosis alone.

Contact your local MPP — but ask the right way

Most people contact their MPP incorrectly. Don't just "ask for help"
— request a formal case inquiry.

EMAIL SUBJECT

**Constituent OAP Waitlist Escalation – Immediate Help Needed for
[Child's First Name]**

INCLUDE

OAP reference number (if available) · diagnosis paperwork · summary of current family hardship · and a simple ask:

"Can your office contact MCCSS on our behalf and inquire if our file qualifies for a faster review or early allocation?"

This gets routed through a case manager at MCCSS and usually triggers internal movement.

Pro tip: most MPPs have a dedicated constituency assistant who handles family services. You can even call their office and ask for this person's direct email.

Request to be assigned a case coordinator or family support worker

Parents don't know this — but you can ask to be matched with a case coordinator before one is automatically assigned to you. Email the OAP team at oap@ontario.ca and request the following:

"We would like to be assigned a case coordinator so we can better understand how to plan supports for our child. Is there a case worker or family support worker who can be assigned to our file to help us navigate this process?"

Someone personally
reviewing your file

Faster responses

A chance to explain your
urgency in more detail

Submit a "Family Impact Statement" with a timeline of missed milestones

OAP staff are human — they respond to emotion and clear storytelling. Create a one-page document that includes:

Your child's name and age

A timeline of key events: diagnosis, regressions, challenges

A list of things your child has missed out on — school placement, friendships, language milestones

A statement of what this funding would allow you to do

This isn't legally required — but it often gets added to your file and helps reviewers prioritize families facing emotional burnout or high needs.

Apply for additional one-time funding

Even if you've already received a Childhood Budget or Interim One-Time Funding, you can request a second round if your situation has worsened. Gather a new support letter from a clinician, include new documentation showing increased severity (e.g. aggression, injury, school refusal), and email oap@ontario.ca with a request to reassess your eligibility for temporary additional funding.

Join a parent advocacy group that shares escalation tactics

There are small parent groups in Ontario — sometimes organized through Facebook, Reddit, or WhatsApp — that share real-time updates on what email templates are getting replies, which OAP team members are responding, and what worked for them to unlock early funding. These are private, but powerful.

"Ontario autism parent group"

"OAP navigation group"

"ABA support funding Ontario"

Keep a documented log of all contacts & follow-ups

RECORD

Every call or email — date, name, purpose

What documents were sent

Promises or commitments made

THIS HELPS IF

You need to escalate your case later

You get a new case worker and need to re-explain everything

You want to send a summary to an MPP or supervisor to show diligence

What if you still haven't heard back?

If 6 months pass and you've done all the above:

Call again and request an "OAP program supervisor review"

Escalate to your local MPP — they are legally obligated to respond to constituent issues

Consider filing a complaint with the Ontario Ombudsman

HOW TO PREPARE WHILE YOU WAIT

While the funding catches up, you can still take action:

Join parent coaching groups through Foundational Services

Book an ABA assessment if you can afford it upfront — this gives you a service plan ready to go

Research clinics that accept private pay with deferred payment options or bridge support

How To Stretch Your Budget (Even If It's Not Much)

Savvy families have found clever, ethical, and high-impact ways to stretch their dollars without sacrificing quality. Here are some things we've found.

**So you've finally received OAP funding.
Maybe it's \$5,000... maybe it's \$20,000.
But now you're looking at therapy quotes
and thinking: "This won't last long."**

You're not wrong. ABA therapy is life-changing, but it's also one of the most expensive early intervention services in Ontario.

FIRST: KNOW WHAT "HIGH-IMPACT" SPENDING LOOKS LIKE

The golden rule: not all therapy hours are equal. Instead of buying therapy hours, you're buying outcomes.

Getting an initial assessment & personalized plan

Before you commit to a package, get a formal ABA assessment from a RBA. It will define your child's starting skill level, prioritize 1–3 areas of change, and include treatment goals based on what's realistic. This plan helps avoid wasteful spending on generalized services that may not move the needle.

Use a tiered therapy model

Instead of hiring only high-cost RBAs, ask clinics to use RBTs or ABA Therapists for direct sessions at a lower hourly cost, and RBAs for supervision and planning — used more sparingly.

RBA

Supervision & planning

Higher hourly cost, used sparingly — around 2 hrs/month

ABA THERAPIST OR RBT

Direct sessions

Lower hourly cost, used for the bulk of care

This strategy alone can double the lifespan of your funding.

STRATEGY 2

Choose short-term intensive programs over long-term general plans

Some clinics offer 8–12 week intensive programs focused on communication, behaviour reduction, or school readiness. These can generate faster wins and measurable outcomes. Then, when your funding renews or increases, you re-invest.

STRATEGY 3

Bundle services

Some providers offer bundled packages — e.g. ABA plus OT or SLP consults — at discounted rates. Bundling saves admin costs, assessment repetition, and travel time if it's all done in one place. Ask your clinic if they collaborate with other licensed professionals under one invoice.

STRATEGY 4

Leverage group therapy & parent coaching

Both are OAP-eligible and far more affordable.

Group ABA

Social skills or school prep, at a lower cost per hour than 1:1

Parent coaching

Equips you to reinforce strategies at home, which reduces the need for 1:1 hours

Group settings also build peer interaction, something many parents want but struggle to facilitate.

STRATEGY 5

Negotiate payment plans or hybrid models

If a clinic is aligned with your goals but pricing seems steep: ask about monthly payment options, see if they offer a hybrid model where you do some work at home with guidance, and ask if they offer scholarship programs — some do, funded by donors or grant offsets.

ONE MORE OPTION: OUR OWN

The RISE Initiative — subsidized respite and inclusion support

The RISE Initiative provides affordable respite and inclusion support for children with autism and developmental needs. Families receive flexible, individualized support at home, in the community or in programs, giving children meaningful opportunities to participate, build independence and connect while caregivers get reliable support.

COST

Sliding-scale fees based on family need, with full subsidies where funding allows. Some clinical supports may be OAP-billable.

ELIGIBILITY

Needs-based, with intake subject to funding and capacity.

WHERE

Oshawa, Bowmanville, Scarborough and Kitchener-Waterloo.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Ask us what a subsidized plan would look like for your child before you commit your OAP budget elsewhere.

Mount Etna Child & Family Services — office@mountetnachildservices.com · 1 866-931-3978

The Embers for Access Foundation — info@embersforaccess.org · 1-877-708-1513

Mistakes that drain budgets fast

Avoid these common pitfalls.

Jumping into therapy before an assessment

Over-scheduling hours out of guilt rather than data

Paying for non-billable services, e.g. general tutoring, unlicensed aides

Using multiple providers without a central plan — leads to overlap, confusion, and burnout

A REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE

"We started with 3x/week sessions but quickly burned through our budget. When we switched to biweekly RBA check-ins, a home-based plan, and group therapy, we doubled how long our funding lasted — and actually saw more consistent behaviour change."

— Karan, parent of a 5-year-old in Hamilton

What If I Can't Afford Therapy?

The realistic, no-fluff strategies parents are using to move forward even without deep pockets — so your child doesn't fall behind while you wait.

Let's be honest. Even with OAP funding, many parents still say the same thing —

"We can't afford enough therapy to actually make a difference."

And for families still waiting for their funding, that feeling is even worse. But here's the truth: while private ABA therapy can be expensive, early intervention doesn't have to be out of reach.

STEP 1 — BREAK THE "ALL OR NOTHING" MENTALITY

Many parents believe if they can't afford 20–30 hours/week of therapy, it's not worth doing at all. That's a myth. Research shows that consistency, structure, and parent involvement often matter more than total hours — especially in the early stages.

Even 2–5 quality hours a week, paired with parent-led reinforcement, can create meaningful progress.

Flip the delivery model

If 1:1 in-clinic care is too expensive, shift the format.

Parent coaching **70–80% cheaper than direct therapy**

OAP covers it. A RBA helps you understand your child's behaviour, implement therapy routines at home, and track data and adjust. The result: you become your child's daily therapist without paying full-time rates.

Group programs

Social groups, readiness classes, and behaviour bootcamps are lower cost per hour, often covered by OAP, and still led by certified professionals. Ask clinics if they run seasonal or part-time group options.

Access subsidized or free services

While you wait for (or supplement) OAP, there are hidden gems worth looking into.

GOVERNMENT-FUNDED SERVICES

ErinoakKids

Surrey Place (Toronto)

Ron Joyce Centre (Hamilton)

Children's Treatment Centres (across Ontario)

Many offer waitlisted or low-cost ABA, OT/SLP support, parent training, and in-home or virtual support.

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

Autism Ontario — local chapters often have grants, free events, and education support

Jennifer Ashleigh Foundation — funds medical/therapy expenses for kids with serious conditions

President's Choice Children's Charity — may help with therapy or equipment

The Embers for Access Foundation — subsidies for therapy, respite and inclusion, including the RISE Initiative on the next spread

STEP 4 — USE TECHNOLOGY TO BRIDGE THE GAP

Not a replacement for formal therapy, but many parents use apps and tools to reinforce learning at home: Proloquo2Go / TouchChat (AAC communication apps), ABCmouse (early learning, subscription-based), Brili Routines (visual schedules and independence), BOOM Cards (therapist-created digital activities), and Autism Navigator (free online parent education modules). Even YouTube channels run by certified therapists, e.g. How to ABA, can be surprisingly helpful with home strategies.

STEP 5 — PROTECT YOUR SANITY (AND RELATIONSHIP)

Let's not ignore the elephant in the room: not affording therapy can feel like you're failing your child. You're not.

The guilt is real, but so is the power of informed action.

"We couldn't afford clinic-based ABA. So I learned everything I could about behaviour support, and we made it work at home. It wasn't perfect — but it was better than standing still."

— Fatima, mom of 2 in Mississauga

Don't go it alone. Join support groups. Talk to other parents. Email the clinic you want to work with — many will meet you halfway.

OUR INITIATIVE

The RISE Initiative

The RISE Initiative provides affordable respite and inclusion support for children with autism and developmental needs.

Families receive flexible, individualized support at home, in the community or in programs, giving children meaningful opportunities to participate, build independence and connect while caregivers get reliable support.

FEES	Subsidized, on a sliding scale based on family need, with full subsidies where funding allows. Some clinical supports may be OAP-billable.
ELIGIBILITY	Needs-based, with intake subject to funding and capacity.
WHERE	Oshawa, Bowmanville, Scarborough and Kitchener-Waterloo.

START AN INTAKE CONVERSATION

info@embersforaccess.org · 1-877-708-1513
office@mountetnachildservices.com · 1 866-931-3978



Choosing The Right ABA Clinic: What To Look For (And What To Avoid)

Not all ABA clinics are created equal. Some are deeply invested in your child's long-term development. Others... are glorified behaviour factories.

GREEN FLAGS

Signs of a quality clinic

They start with listening, not a diagnosis

Before pitching services or packages, a great clinic asks questions about your child's personality, routines, and past therapy experience. It's a conversation, not a hard sell.

You're given a personalized plan within 1–2 sessions

Behaviour goals based on your family's priorities, a sample therapy schedule, and clarity on how progress will be measured.

They have multiple RBAs on staff

If there's only one RBA for the whole clinic (or none), that's a red flag. A proper clinic should have active supervision, frequent team check-ins, and clear clinical leadership.

Data is collected & shared regularly

You shouldn't have to wonder if therapy is working. The best clinics give you clear, visual data every few weeks showing progress (or lack of it).

They invite you into the process

Great clinics offer parent training, transparent communication, and actively involve you in planning. You're part of the team — not just the bank account.

RED FLAGS

Walk away if you see these

High staff turnover

If your child gets a new therapist every few weeks, that disrupts trust and consistency. Ask: "How long has your team been here?"

They promise fast fixes

If a clinic promises to "solve" behaviour issues in a matter of weeks, it's overselling. Real ABA is about gradual, meaningful change — not quick suppression.

They don't offer parent training

If you're never invited to observe sessions or learn techniques, they're gatekeeping. You'll end up dependent on them, instead of empowered as a parent.

They can't explain their methods simply

Ask why they use a given approach for tantrums or communication. If the answer is filled with jargon or vague language, it likely means they're not well-trained, copy-pasting generic protocols, or avoiding transparency.

Poor cultural or emotional sensitivity

If your family dynamics, cultural values, or emotional boundaries are dismissed or minimized, that's a dealbreaker. ABA must adapt to your life — not override it.

Smart questions to ask in a clinic tour

"What do the first 30 days look like?"

Reveals their onboarding process, planning style, and parent involvement.

"How do you track and show progress?"

Filters out clinics that wing it versus those that use real data.

"How do you individualize therapy for each child?"

Look for answers about interest-based play, communication style, and family goals — not just checklists.

"What's your staff turnover like?"

A stable team means better outcomes for your child.

"What happens if my child regresses or struggles?"

Great clinics will have flexible, supportive answers — not blame or withdrawal.

PRO TIP: DON'T RUSH IT

Tour at least two clinics. Ask for parent references. Compare notes.
ABA is about building trust with your child and their therapy team.
When you find the right fit, you'll feel it. And your child will too.

Making Therapy Actually Work (Without Burning Out)

Therapy isn't plug-and-play. It's a relationship —
between your child, their therapists, and you.

So you've chosen a clinic. Your child is attending sessions. And yet... you're still feeling overwhelmed. In this final chapter, we'll show you how to make ABA not just run, but work — with less second-guessing, fewer meltdowns, and a stronger family rhythm.

THE #1 MISTAKE PARENTS MAKE

Outsourcing all of it.

ABA isn't just what happens inside the clinic. It's how those lessons carry over into your home, school, and daily life. When you treat ABA like daycare — "drop them off, pick them up, and hope it helps" — you're missing the transfer of skills that matters most.

What helps? Being part of the process — without having to be the therapist.

SHARE WHAT'S WORKING — AND WHAT'S NOT

Every two weeks, give the clinic updates on changes in sleep, diet and routines; specific challenges or new behaviours; and what you've tried at home and how it went. This gives the therapy team real data to adjust plans and reinforce the right patterns.

ASK FOR "CARRYOVER" STRATEGIES

For every skill your child is working on — communication, dressing, transitions — ask: "What can we do at home to support this?" Your job isn't to replicate sessions. It's to reinforce patterns in your natural environment.

Build ABA into routines you already have

No, you don't need flashcards or token boards. You just need to spot opportunities in everyday life. Here's how to layer ABA into moments you're already doing.

EVERYDAY ROUTINE	ABA SKILL OPPORTUNITY
Brushing teeth	Visual schedule, prompting, reward delivery
Snack time	Requesting (manding), choosing, waiting
Bedtime routine	Transition cues, self-soothing, compliance
Getting dressed	Task chaining, independence building
Car rides	Labelling objects, social games, turn-taking

This builds consistency — without extra time or stress.

Prevent your burnout — because yes, you matter

When you're exhausted, even the best therapy plan will hit a wall. Here's what proactive parents do to stay sane.

1 Set boundaries around "therapy talk"

It's easy to talk about autism and goals 24/7. But your identity is more than that. Set aside time for non-ABA conversation, hobbies, or social time — even just once a week.

2 Find a parent support space

Look for local or virtual groups where you can vent honestly, ask unfiltered questions, and swap real-world wins and losses. Ask your clinic if they know of any active groups.

3 Celebrate micro-wins

Progress is rarely big leaps. It's tiny wins that add up. Keep a "small wins" journal.

"He made eye contact this morning."

"She picked out her own clothes."

"No meltdown at the grocery store today."

These moments matter. They're proof that things are changing — even if it's slow.

FINAL THOUGHT

**ABA isn't the destination. It's a tool.
A bridge. A way to support your
child in their growth, not a blueprint
to make them more "normal."**

The real win isn't just behaviour change. It's confidence.
Connection. And a sense of peace in your home again.

That's possible. And it's worth the effort.

Final words: you don't have to do this alone.

If you've made it to this point, it means something matters to you. Your child's future. Your family's well-being. Getting unstuck — even if things have felt impossible.

ABA therapy can be overwhelming. Confusing. And sometimes, flat-out frustrating. But it can also be life-changing — when it's done right, by the right people, with the right support.

So here's your next step:

Book a free, judgment-free consultation

Whether you're still waiting for OAP funding, unsure what therapy even should look like, or wondering if your current provider is the right fit — we're here to help you figure it out. No pressure, no sales pitch. Just clarity.

YOU'LL GET

A breakdown of your child's options based on age, needs, and funding status

A game plan to start therapy, even if it's not with us

Peace of mind that you're not doing this blind

REACH US

Mount Etna Child & Family Services

office@mountetnachildservices.com
mountetnachildservices.com · 1 866-931-3978

The Embers for Access Foundation

info@embersforaccess.org
embersforaccess.org · 1-877-708-1513

Zalik Academy

zalik.academy@gmail.com

Because at the end of the day, you deserve a team that sees your child the way you do: capable, unique, and full of potential.

