



SECTION 3: **ASSESSMENT, FORMULATION OF TREATMENT GOALS, AND MEASUREMENT OF CLIENT PROGRESS**

1 The Assessment Process

A developmentally appropriate ABA assessment process must identify strengths and weaknesses across domains and potential barriers to progress. The information from this process is the basis for developing the individualized ABA treatment plan. An ABA assessment typically utilizes information obtained from multiple methods and multiple informants, including the following:

File Review

Information about medical status, prior assessment results, response to prior treatment and other relevant information may be obtained via file review and incorporated into the development of treatment goals and intervention. Examples of assessments that should be reviewed include intellectual and achievement tests, developmental assessments, assessments of comorbid mental health conditions, and evaluations of family functioning and needs. In some cases, if assessment information is incomplete, the Behavior Analyst should refer the client to other professionals for needed assessments.

Interviews and Rating Scales

Clients, caregivers, and other stakeholders, as appropriate, are included when selecting treatment goals, developing protocols, and evaluating progress. Behavior Analysts use interviews, rating scales, and social validity measures to assess perceptions of the client's skill deficits and behavioral excesses, and the extent to which these deficits and excesses impede the life of the individual and the family. Examples of rating scales include adaptive-behavior assessments, functional assessments, among others.

Direct Assessment and Observation

Direct observation and data collection and analysis are defining characteristics of ABA. The analysis of such data serves as the primary basis for identifying pretreatment levels of functioning, developing and adapting treatment protocols on an ongoing basis, and evaluating response to treatment and progress toward goals. Behavior should be directly observed in a variety of relevant naturally occurring settings and structured interactions. Examples of structured direct assessments include curricular assessment, structured observations of social interactions, among others.

Assessment from Other Professionals

Periodic assessments from other professionals may be helpful in guiding treatment or assessing progress. Examples might include assessment of general intellectual functioning, medical status, academic performance, among others.

