

ABA SESSION NOTE TEMPLATE

What to Include, How to Write It, and What to Avoid



Session notes are a legal and clinical record of the services provided. They must be **accurate**, **objective**, **measurable**, and **insurance-ready**.



WHAT TO INCLUDE

- 1 Client Information**
Client name, DOB, diagnosis (if required), caregiver/guardian (if present).
- 2 Session Information**
Date, start/end time, location of session (home, clinic, school, community).
- 3 Individuals Present**
List of all individuals present during the session and their roles.
- 4 Summary of Services Provided**
Type of service, amount of time (e.g., BCBA supervision, direct therapy, parent training).
- 5 Target Summary (Data)**
Skills worked on and data collected. Include % correct, frequency, duration, etc.
- 6 Behavioral Events**
Description of any significant behavior. Include antecedent, behavior, consequence, and function (if known).
- 7 Progress Narrative**
Objective summary of client's performance. Include what was successful and what was difficult.
- 8 Plans for Next Session**
Adjustments to goals, strategies, or materials. What will be worked on next.
- 9 Caregiver Involvement / Education**
What was discussed or coached with caregivers (if applicable).



THE NOTE SHOULD BE...



Objective

Report what you observed and measured. Avoid opinions or assumptions.



Measurable

Include numbers, percentages, duration, frequency, and data.



Accurate

Write facts only. Be honest and specific.



Clear & Concise

Use simple language. Avoid unclear or unnecessary details.



Insurance-Ready

Follow the requirements of the payer (timely, complete, and professional).



GENERAL BEHAVIOR SUMMARY

- Overall behavior was (appropriate / variable / challenging) during the session.
- Triggers identified: _____
- Coping strategies or supports used: _____
- Behavior impact on learning: _____
- Function of behavior (if known): _____



WHAT TO AVOID

- ✗ Subjective opinions (e.g., "lazy", "unmotivated", "bad mood").
- ✗ Vague statements (e.g., "worked on skills", "had a good day").
- ✗ Irrelevant details not related to treatment.
- ✗ Blaming language or negative comments about caregivers.
- ✗ Copying previous notes without updating information.



PROGRESS RATING (OPTIONAL)

Rate overall progress toward goals this session:



GOOD

Client met or exceeded expectations.



FAIR

Client showed some progress, inconsistent.



POOR

Client showed minimal progress or regression.



REMEMBER: Your session notes help demonstrate the value of services and guide effective treatment. Write with integrity and professionalism.

Light 2 Minds

ABA SESSION NOTE EXAMPLES

✓ FAIR PROGRESS

Client with Higher Support Needs



The session was conducted in the client's home. The client displayed challenging behaviors such as screaming, elopement (scape) and difficulty remaining engaged during structured activities. The RBT implemented behavior reduction interventions and skill acquisition procedures according to the treatment plan (such as visual supports, first-then statements, functional communication training, differential reinforcement, and prompting strategies). The client required frequent prompting but demonstrated fair progress with functional communication and following simple instructions. Continued support is needed to increase independence and task participation.

✗ POOR PROGRESS

Client with Higher Functional Skills



The session was conducted at the clinic. The client demonstrated task refusal and difficulty maintaining attention during skill acquisition activities. The client displayed challenging behaviors such as tantrums, physical aggression and self-injured behavior during transitions. The RBT implemented redirection, prompting, and reinforcement procedures as outlined in the treatment plan (such as redirection, first-then statements, choice making, differential reinforcement, and prompting). The client required increased support and demonstrated poor progress toward current goals. Behavioral challenges interfered with participation and acquisition of targeted skills.



REMEMBER: Keep notes objective, concise, and insurance-ready.
Document what you saw, what you did, and how the client responded.

