



## ABC of NC Child Development Center

Mark Trogon, Director  
Fiscal Research Division  
Suite 619, Legislative Office Building  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603

November 19, 2012

Dear Mr. Trogon,

The enclosed report is being submitted to you based on instructions from our Contract Manager, Jalaine Moore. According to Ms. Moore, Session Law 2012-142, Section 10.19, states that we are required to submit our report directly to the NC General Assembly. The enclosed report details the activities of ABC of NC (Contract # 2030, Amendment 1) during the 2011/12 fiscal year.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Selene Johnson, M.Ed., BCBA  
Executive Director

Encl.

CC: Jalaine Moore, Contract Manager  
Sandy Ellsworth, Contract Administrator  
The Honorable Louis Pate  
The Honorable Marilyn Avila  
The Honorable Justin Burr  
The Honorable Nelson Dollar  
The Honorable Harris Blake  
The Honorable Stan Bingham  
The Honorable Ralph Hise



ABC of NC Child Development Center

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**ABC of NC Child Development Center  
(ABC of NC)  
Program Summary FYE 06.30.12**

*Mission*

ABC of NC is committed to providing quality individualized educational services based on evidence-based practices in the field of autism treatment to children with autism spectrum disorders and their families. We are committed to seeking funding from a variety of sources so that we can provide services to families from any economic background. We support each student in developing the skills and motivation necessary to be able to learn and thrive in the least restrictive setting possible.

*Vision*

The vision of ABC of NC is that all children with autism spectrum disorder reach their full potential through effective teaching.

*Governance Structure*

ABC of NC is governed by an unpaid board of directors which meets four times per year. The board of directors approves the annual budget; offers guidance on programmatic and development projects; and provides strategic planning oversight. The finance committee, a committee comprised of board members, guides the annual budgeting process and accounting policies and procedures. The executive director provides both administrative and programming oversight and reports directly to the chair of the board of directors. See the attached organizational chart.

*Purpose*

The purpose of the early intervention program is to provide early and intensive treatment/education to young children with or at risk for developing autism spectrum disorders and to transition them to less intensive and less restrictive programs, where they are more independent learners who require fewer supports.

*Programs and Services*

Each student enrolled in the early intervention program has an individualized education plan (IEP) in place by their second week of enrollment. Each IEP is based on pre-program assessments, the Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP), the Pictorial Infant Communication Scale (PICS), the Structured Play Assessment, developmental norms, and parent goals/concerns. IEPs include measureable goals from a variety of skill domains, including: communication, social, and self-help/adaptive living.

During the 2011/12 fiscal year, the following programs and services were provided as part of the state-funded early intervention autism program:

1. *Intensive 1:1 instruction* (4 hours per day)  
These services are provided to students who are very early learners, either very young or having had little to no prior intervention. These students generally have significant delays in communication, play, and social skills, and may engage in aggressive, destructive, or self-injurious behaviors. Services are provided throughout the school year and the summer.
2. *Preschool inclusion class* (3 hours per day) plus intensive 1:1 instruction (1 hour per day)  
These services are provided to students who have early communication and play skills and need specialized instruction for social and group skill development, continued emphasis on language/communication goals, and ongoing focus on developing adaptive/coping skills. Children with neuro-typical development (i.e. students without developmental delays) are included in the class to provide appropriate peer models for language and play skills and to ensure opportunities for facilitation of social interaction/development of friendships.
3. *Self-contained group instruction* (6 hours per day)  
These services are provided to students who have transitioned into a self-contained classroom to continue focus on communication, group skills, and adaptive behaviors. These students are often more severely affected by autism and will likely transition into self-contained special education classrooms when they enter the public schools.
4. *Inclusive readiness class* (6 hours per day)  
These services are provided to students who have more advanced language/communication, play, and social goals, and whose behaviors are generally well managed. Children with neuro-typical development (i.e. students without developmental delays) are included in the class to provide appropriate peer models for language and play skills and to ensure opportunities for facilitation of social interaction/development of friendships. These students will likely transition into a typical preschool, readiness, or Kindergarten classroom upon exiting from the ABC of NC program.
5. *Inclusive summer program* (6 hours per day)  
All early intervention students, with the exception of those receiving 1:1 intensive instruction, attend the full summer program, which is an 8-week intensive program, which is also inclusive of neuro-typical peers.
6. *Step-down program* (weekly or monthly services)  
These low-intensity/low-frequency services are provided to students who are ready to transition from ABC of NC's more intensive services to their regular community-based schools. Students may receive services in a weekly after-school "Buddy Club," which focuses on more advanced social and communication skill development. They may also receive consultative services in a) the new school, for aiding in the transition, or b) in the home, with a focus on ongoing communication, social, or behavioral challenges.

As part of the early intervention program and in an effort to achieve best outcomes, parents/caregivers are heavily encouraged to participate in a variety of activities designed to promote their child's progress:

1. *Weekly parent education classes*

On average, once per week, ABC of NC lead teachers and/or program supervisors led classes on a variety of topics such as "Reducing Problem Behaviors," "Toilet Training," "Increasing Vocalizations in Non-Vocal Children," etc. Classes were taught in small group format at a variety of times throughout the day in order to make it convenient for families to attend. Several classes were taught during the time that the students were in school so that the parent(s) had child care. Parents were encouraged to attend at least one class per month, but could attend as many classes as they wanted for no additional charges.

2. *Monthly parent observations*

Parents were strongly encouraged to observe their child in school once per month. Parents could observe their child at school any time it was convenient and as often as they desired.

3. *Team meetings/home visits*

Each student had a quarterly team meeting or home visit. During team meetings, the student's program supervisor and teaching team provided progress updates, presented analyzed data, updated IEP goals, and developed strategies for increasing the student's learning rate. Parent(s) were encouraged, but not required to attend. During home visits, the program supervisor and some members of the teaching team, worked with primary caregivers in the home to address communication, social, and behavioral issues. Parent(s) also had access to program supervisors and teachers via phone, e-mail, and face-to-face meetings.

4. *Parent-Teacher Collaborative (PTC)*

Parents were encouraged to attend meetings of the PTC in order to have opportunities to network with each other and to meet and greet staff during after-school hours. Additionally, the president of the PTC hosted a Yahoo!-based list-serve for parents to post questions, comments, celebrations, and challenges to other parents and staff who were members of the PTC.

5. *Parent newsletter*

At least six times throughout the year, parents received a parent newsletter updating them on happenings at ABC of NC. Included in the newsletter were reminders about parent education classes and dates, student celebrations, reports on ongoing staff training/conference attendance and explanations of ABC of NC teaching methods and strategies.

6. *Parent "Homework"*

Parents were encouraged to work with their child on IEP goals at home and in the community in order to generalize the skills to other environments.

ABC of NC incorporates a variety of effective teaching strategies that are based on evidence-based practices as identified by the National Autism Center's National Standards Report and the National Professional Development Center on Autism as well

as “best practices” as identified by the 2001 National Research Council report on educating children with autism. Teaching strategies included, but were not limited to:

1. Focusing on functional communication early in the program.  
Functional communication included use of vocal communication (i.e. manding), augmentative communication (e.g. PECS) and sign language. Non-vocal communication included teaching students to initiate through gazing, reaching, or pointing; and teaching them to respond to more complex non-vocal communication such as non-vocal approval or following another’s eye gaze.
2. Immersing the student in a language-rich environment.  
Teachers modeled functional and developmentally appropriate language to the students in natural environments by focusing on the students’ motivation. Additionally, if language targets were challenging for the student, the teacher would present them in more structured table-based settings utilizing specialized teaching techniques such as discrimination training.
3. Using errorless teaching techniques (i.e. prompting for correct responses and fading prompts systematically).
4. Using positive consequences for correct responses and desired behaviors.  
Reinforcers for each student were identified and utilized to ensure student learning.
5. Including children with ASDs with neuro-typical peers, when appropriate.  
All children in the program had access to an on-site inclusive preschool class for up to four hours per day.
  - a. Some students received small group instruction in an on-site inclusive preschool classroom for three hours daily in addition to one hour of 1:1 instruction each day.
  - b. Other students received four hours per day of 1:1 instruction and were able to utilize the preschool inclusion class as much as needed based on recommendations made by their educational consultants.
6. Incidentally teaching in the child’s natural environments.  
Classrooms were set up like typical preschool classrooms where children had access to a variety of developmentally appropriate toys and materials. Children were also exposed to a variety of group activities, including music, art, and drama classes each week as well as snack and lunch each day.
7. Using video modeling to show students appropriate behaviors from a variety of skill domains including, but not limited to, social, communication, play, self-help, and adaptive skills.
8. Using visual schedules, including pictures, symbols, or written words, to aid students in completing multi-step sequences such as self-help tasks or to communicate the daily schedule to students in order to target difficulties with transitions from one activity to the next.
9. Using story-based interventions individualized for each student or class, such as a social story describing the consequences for engaging in a particular desired or undesired behavior.

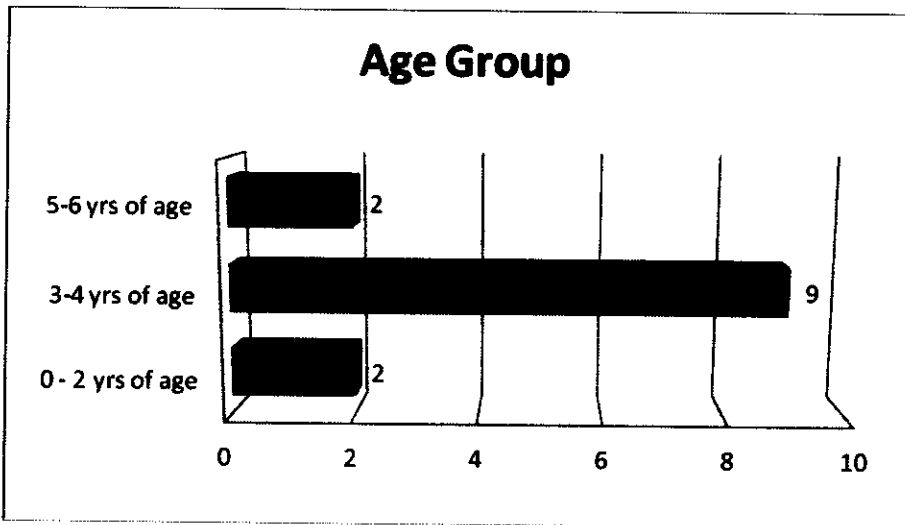
### *Student Demographics*

1. ABC of NC served 13 students in the state-funded intensive early intervention program.

2. Age

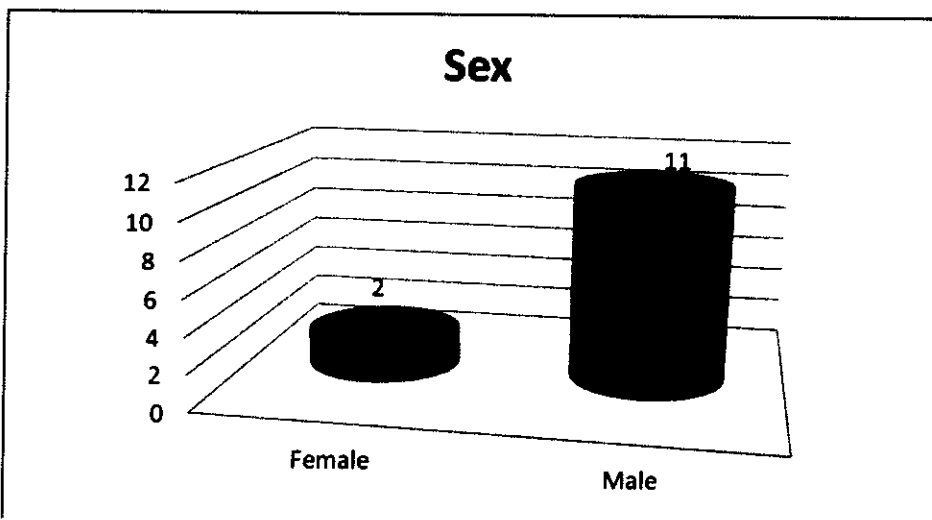
Because the program is designed to be an early intervention program, admission and “age-out criteria” have been developed to ensure that the program serves young children.

- a. New students could be no younger than 12 months and no older than 60 months (i.e. 5 years) at the time of admission into the program.
- b. Returning students (for the new fiscal year) could be no older than 66 months (i.e. 5.5 years) at the start of the fiscal year.



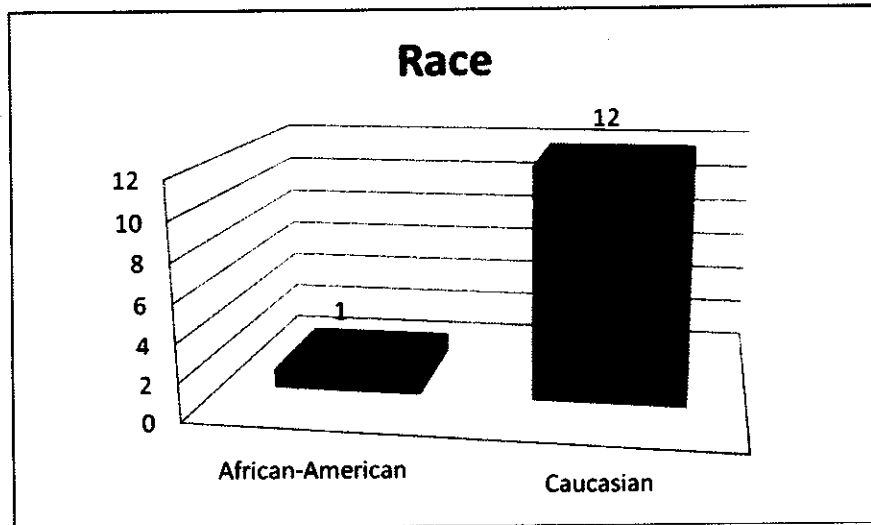
3. Sex

Autism Spectrum Disorders are almost five times more common among boys (1 in 54) than among girls (Centers for Disease Control, 2012), reflected in the ABC of NC student population.



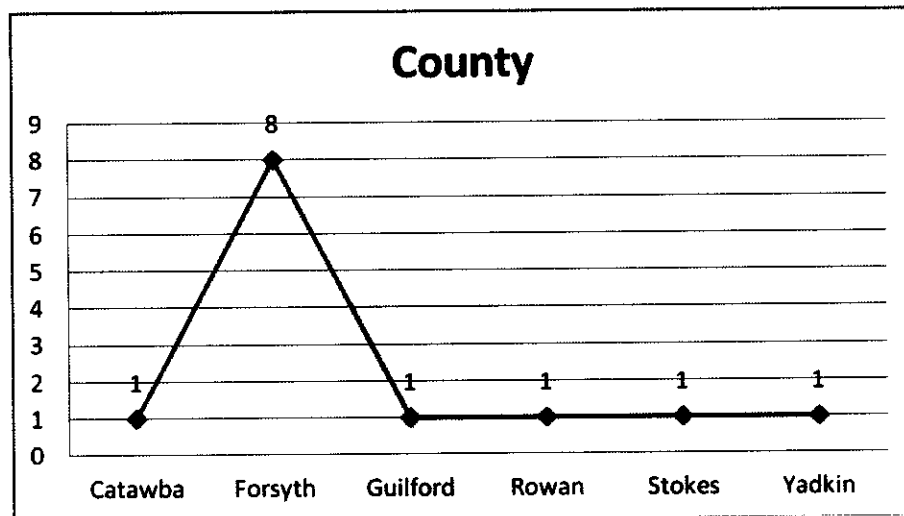
#### 4. Race

Studies have shown that children of African American, Hispanic and Asian descent are less likely to receive an early diagnosis of autism than Caucasian children (Kennedy Krieger, 2012), and the ABC of NC early intervention student population reflects this. Only one non-Caucasian student applied for the early intervention program during this fiscal year. ABC of NC is in the process of opening a diagnostic clinic that will provide outreach to minority populations for assessment and evaluation.



#### 5. Geographical Area

The early intervention program served students from six North Carolina counties.



### *Outcome Measures*

ABC of NC conducts pre- and post-assessments annually on all students enrolled in center-based services. Outcome measures are based on results from these assessments, progress on IEP goals, and a final parent survey.

1. Pictorial Infant Communication Scale (PICS)
  - a. Expectation: 80% of students will demonstrate improvement on at least 2 measures of the Pictorial Infant Communication Scales (PICS) or another modified joint attention assessment tool developed by a group of providers from across the state of North Carolina and based on the Early Social Communication Scales (ESCS).
  - b. Results: 85% of students demonstrated improvement on at least 2 measures of the PICS. **MET**
2. Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP)
  - a. Expectation: 80% of students will demonstrate improvement on at least 5 measures of the VB-MAPP.
  - b. Results: 100% of students demonstrated improvement on at least 5 measures of the VB-MAPP. **MET**
3. Structured Play Assessment
  - a. Expectation: 80% of students will increase at least 2 levels on the Structured Play Assessment.
  - b. Results: 92% of students increased at least 2 levels on the Structured Play Assessment by demonstrating emergent skills of skills that were previously absent or mastery of skills that were previously only emerging. **MET**
4. Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
  - a. Expectation: 80% of students will master at least 60% of all initial IEP goals.
  - b. Results: 85% of students mastered 60% or more of their initial IEP goals. **MET**
5. Service Quality Measure
  - a. Expectation: 90% of parents will report satisfaction with the program (based on surveys and/or other information-gathering methods).
  - b. Results: 100% of respondents reported that they were "extremely satisfied" with the early intervention program when given choices of "extremely satisfied," "satisfied," "dissatisfied," or "extremely dissatisfied." **MET**



*Budget Information*

1. Detailed program budget/expenditures

Description	Budget	Expenditures
	308,035.00	308,035.00
Office Supplies and Materials	2,950.00	2,950.00
Service Related supplies	1,500.00	1,500.00
	4,450.00	4,450.00
Communications and Postage	4,875.00	4,793.56
Utilities	4,915.00	4,915.00
Repair and Maintenance	7,625.00	7,731.39
Advertising	500.00	474.75
	17,915.00	17,915.00
Rent	32,390.00	32,400.00
Insurance and Bond	3,913.00	3,917.15
	36,303.00	36,317.15
	366,703.00	366,703.00

## 2. Detailed Personnel Chart

On average, nine teachers per month worked in the state-funded early intervention program. The personnel chart reflects those staff who worked in the program during the summer program (July-August) as well as the regular school year (August-June). Some staff who worked minimal hours in the program served as temporary summer staff or substitute teachers during staffing absences and changes.

Program supervisors were responsible for writing each student's individualized education plan (IEP), teaching parent classes, conducting home-based trainings, and supervising teaching staff.

Employee Name	Position Title	
Cindy Andree Bowen	Program Supervisor	
Elizabeth Donovan	Program Supervisor	
Stephanie Holladay	Program Supervisor	
Selene Johnson	Executive Director	
Angela Pesenti	Director of Finance	
Barbara Stockfish	Director of Operations	
Amy Vestal	Program Supervisor	
Andree-Bowen, Scott	Teacher	
Barclay, Alice	Teacher	
Bell, Lindsay	Teacher	
Carter-Jackson, Kristin	Lead Teacher	
Charles, Courtney	Teacher	
Charles, Daniel	Teacher	
Michael Errickson	Teacher	
Frank, Katie	Teacher	
Anne Gayle	Teacher	
Courtney Hall	Teacher	
Randilee Lucas	Assistant Teacher	

McClearen, Villa	Teacher
Shundra McLaurin	Teacher
Jesse Nobles	Assistant Teacher
Otwell, Meredith	Teacher
Payton, Becky	Lead teacher
Russell, Alex	Assistant Teacher
Caira Smith	Teacher
Smith-Murray, Ethan	Teacher
Leigh Ellen Spencer	Lead Teacher
Jennifer Whaley	Teacher
Sara Beth White	Teacher
Karen White	Teacher
<b>TOTAL</b>	

### 3. Matching Funds

Each family enrolled in the intensive early intervention program was required to pay a monthly tuition of \$615.00. The total amount received in student tuition fees was \$76,961.00.

*Organizational Chart*

