



Easy does it

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) support program

Understanding ASD

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others.¹ It's considered a spectrum disorder because people experience it in different ways — from mild habits to severe behaviors that could cause injury.

Autism can be diagnosed at any age, but signs generally appear in the first two years of life. While there are differences, people on the spectrum share similar symptoms — such as difficulties with social interaction. Getting the right support and services can help improve a person's symptoms and ability to function.

New challenges

No one is prepared for a diagnosis of ASD. It changes not only the life of the child with autism, but life for family members as well. Every family is unique and deals with stress and emotions differently. Getting your child started in treatment is an important first step. Aetna® also offers helpful resources for caregivers and family support.

The **earlier** treatment starts, the more **effective** it can be.

¹National Institute of Mental Health. **Autism spectrum disorder**. March 2018. Accessed January 4, 2021.

Policies and plans are insured and/or administered by Aetna Life Insurance Company or its affiliates (Aetna).



ABA treatment may help

Your health plan covers treatment with applied behavior analysis (ABA). ABA is considered one of the most effective treatments for autism spectrum disorder. It trains parents and caregivers to recognize triggers that lead to harmful behaviors and to apply interactions proactively. It can help:

- Change behaviors in a positive way
- Increase quality of life by working on useful and productive behaviors
- Reduce harmful behaviors

There are basic requirements to get ABA services. They include:

- A diagnosis
- A target behavior
- Parental involvement
- A time-limited and individualized treatment plan
- Involvement of community resources
- A qualified provider

Your Aetna® autism advocate (see next section) can help you connect with network providers certified in ABA. Or you can use our provider search tool by logging in at [Aetna.com](https://www.aetna.com).

Steps to authorize coverage

After you make an appointment with a network provider, it's just four steps to authorization:

1. **Request:** We ask the provider to do a functional assessment and create a targeted treatment plan.
2. **Review:** We check the provider's proposed plan to ensure it's clinically appropriate.
3. **Approve:** We review requests based on medical necessity criteria and approve services, as appropriate. It's possible that we may approve only part of the proposed treatment plan.
4. **Follow up:** We review treatment progress every six months.

To learn more about services that are considered medically necessary to treat ABA, you may wish to review the [ABA Medical Necessity Guide](#). It's a nationally recognized guide that helps clinicians decide appropriate levels and types of care.

Member testimonial

"I have had a painful time finding an ABA program that suits my son's needs. I've been very lost, confused, stressed and sad. Emily helped me find the **light at the end of the tunnel** — as if she were part of my family."



Help from your autism advocate

An autism advocate can help you find your way. They have special training in autism spectrum disorder and can:

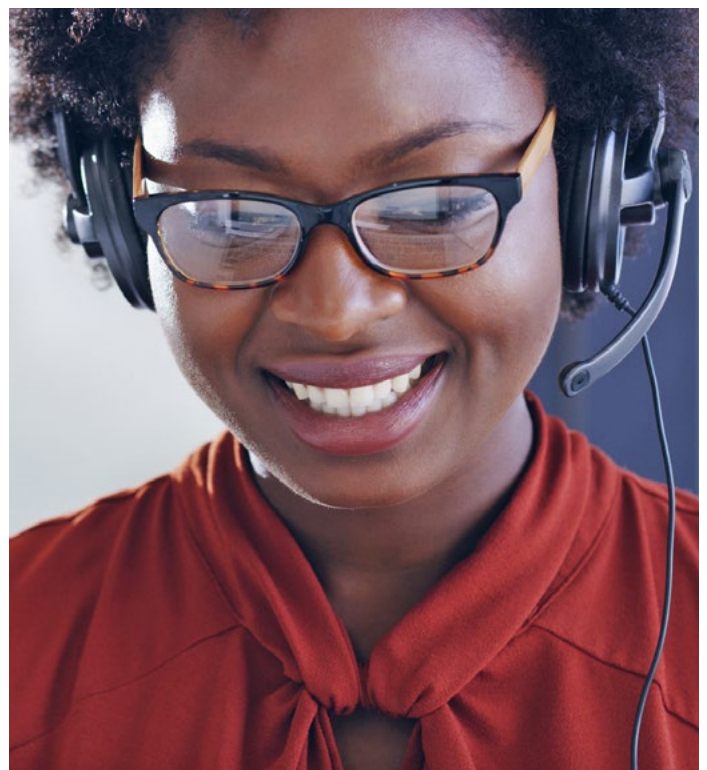
- Answer questions about your benefits, including treatment with ABA
- Promote early treatment
- Pair you or your child with the right providers
- Ensure the quality and appropriateness of the treatment plan
- Connect you with resources for caregivers and family support
- Coordinate a variety of behavioral health services

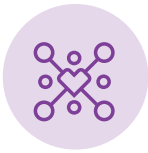
Aetna recognizes that treatment plans are specific to each person. In addition to autism advocates, we have an in-house team of doctorate-level specialists who assess treatment plans. They work with providers to ensure that each plan meets the person's specific needs.

Call your Aetna Concierge at **1-800-884-9565 (TTY: 711)** and ask to speak with an autism advocate.

Provider testimonial

"I'm always pleased when we have a new client with Aetna insurance because I know I have a **knowledgeable case manager** to speak with."





Behavioral health resources

Your needs are unique, and your care must feel right. Here are some additional resources you may want to explore to help support you and your family.

AbleTo

AbleTo is an eight-week program that lets you talk with a therapist and behavior coach by phone or video. Get help with issues such as grief and loss, depression and anxiety, and caregiver stress.

To get started, call AbleTo at **1-844-422-5386**. The program is covered at 100% once you meet your annual deductible.

Behavioral health televideo

Meet with a counselor from anywhere at your convenience. Just use your webcam on any computer or smart device. A behavioral health televideo session will cost the same as a face-to-face office visit.

- **MDLIVE**® provides services to members in all 50 states and accepts patients age 10 and up. To register and schedule a session, call **1-855-824-2170** or go to **MDLIVE.com/BHCOMM**.
- **Inpathy**® provides services to members age 14 and up who live in California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia. Call **1-800-442-8938** or go to **InsightPortal.MahlerHealth.com**.
- **Arcadian/Telemetrynd** provides services to members age 18 and up who live in all states not covered by Inpathy. Call Arcadian/Telemetrynd at **1-866-991-2103**.

Member testimonial

“You took a mom who was hopeless and **gave her hope**. You took a family falling apart, and because of the time you spent — which you did not have to — helped put it back together again.”



Bright Horizons Special Needs™ program

What if your child could take their whole self to school? Torchlight can help. It's a Bright Horizons' program available to you and your family at no charge. Access an interactive online platform to find content from industry experts, information on federal special education laws and resources to help you get organized. You'll also have access to monthly webinars and personalized assistance.

Learn more at **Child.Torchlight.Care**, employee code: **adobesn**.

Spring Health

Spring Health gives you and your family no-cost access to a range of support, from digital mindfulness activities to therapy sessions with a world-class network of providers. Spring Health supports you in living a happier life and acts as a single point of contact to help guide you through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefits.

You can enroll by:

- Going to **Adobe.SpringHealth.com**, access code: adobe.
- Calling **240-558-5796**. For crisis support and immediate assistance, press 2.
- Downloading Spring Health Mobile on your phone or tablet.

Teladoc®

Talk to a licensed therapist seven days a week by phone or video chat. Call **1-855-TELADOC (1-855-835-2362)**, visit **Teladoc.com/Aetna** or download the Aetna Health® app on your mobile device to get started. Services are covered the same as other care under your medical plan.



The right support at the right time

Whether it's a new ASD diagnosis or you've been managing it for a while, your Aetna® autism advocates are here for your child and your whole family. They can help connect you with:

Health professionals

Get help finding doctors, specialists and mental health professionals with expertise in ASD.

Support groups

Connect with a support group in your area to share information and experiences.

Childcare services

Get help finding caregivers trained and experienced with special needs children.

Early childhood intervention (ECI) programs

Learn about programs that include developmental and medical services, physical/occupational/speech therapy, counseling, family education, and service coordination.

Schools, camps and more

Get referrals to education programs, tutors, before- and after-school services, camps, and recreation and respite programs to meet your family's needs.

Health professionals

Get help finding doctors, specialists and mental health professionals with expertise in ASD.

Local, state and federal agencies

Get help accessing potential local, state and federal benefits for families affected by ASD.

Information

Stay up to date on credible resources and research.

Benefits coordination

Make sure your child receives the appropriate level of care and has the required authorizations with specialists who step in to monitor treatment reviews and intervention outcomes.

Providers are independent contractors and are not agents of Aetna. Provider participation may change without notice. Health information programs provide general health information and are not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment by a health care professional. Refer to [Aetna.com](https://www.aetna.com) for more information about Aetna plans.

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We're here for you

The Aetna ASD support program brings value to families with autistic children in several ways:

Help with the legwork

Specialists do the legwork of identifying resources, overseeing the integration of related benefits and ensuring all providers involved are well informed.

Best use of benefits

Families get the most value by using all benefits effectively and efficiently, eliminating duplication and tapping all resources at their disposal.

Assurance of quality care

Parents are confident their child with ASD receives the appropriate level of care and that interventions are effective.

Enhanced quality of life

Support for families helps equip them with the skills needed to manage the challenges of an ASD diagnosis, improving health and well-being of the whole family.

Let the Aetna ASD support program help the entire family — because it truly takes a village to ensure the best life possible for families impacted by autism spectrum disorder. To get started, call your Aetna Concierge at **1-800-884-9565 (TTY: 711)** and ask to speak with an autism advocate.

