HOW TO CHOOSE AN ABA THERAPY CLINIC
essential CHECKLIST

1. Verify Credentials and Oversight Structure

- ☐ Ensure program design, assessments, and ongoing supervision are managed by a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA) or a licensed Registered Behaviour Analyst (RBA) registered with provincial regulatory bodies.
- ☐ Confirm that frontline therapy is delivered by trained Behaviour Interventionists (BIs) or Instructor Therapists (ITs) who receive regular, documented supervision.

2. Identify Quality, Neurodiversity-Affirming Practices

- ☐ **Assent-Based Care:** Look for programs that respect bodily autonomy and adjust the environment when your child shows distress rather than forcing compliance.
- ☐ **Person-First & Strength-Based Goals:** Ensure goals focus on functional communication, life skills, and self-advocacy without suppressing harmless self-stimulatory behaviours (stimming).
- ☐ **Active Family Partnership:** Choose a clinic that integrates caregivers through structured coaching, transparent updates, and home-routine strategies.

3. Ask Direct Questions During Clinic Tours

- ☐ **Clinical Safety:** Ask how teams handle emotional dysregulation, incorporate strengths, and honour verbal or non-verbal refusal (assent).
- ☐ **Transparency:** Ask how often you can observe sessions, meet with the supervising BCBA, and receive home integration support.

4. Watch for Critical Red Flags

- ☐ Avoid clinics that exclude parents from observing sessions, restrict caregiver training, or use pre-packaged, "one-size-fits-all" curriculum templates.
- ☐ Steer clear of providers claiming to "cure" autism, enforcing rigid behavioural compliance, or lacking regular credentialed supervision.

5. Navigate Canadian Funding Options and Financial Setup

- ☐ Determine if you will access provincial budgets (e.g., Ontario Autism Program or BC Autism Funding) or regional health authority services.
- ☐ Confirm whether the clinic offers direct billing to provincial funding bodies or if you must submit receipts for reimbursement.
- ☐ Check if services supervised by a BCBA or Clinical Psychologist are covered by private insurance, and ensure all fees are transparently broken down in your agreement.