

AutismHearts: 15 Questions to Ask a New Provider

A clinical, ethical, and neurodiversity-affirming interview guide for evaluating therapy clinics.

Category 1: Neurodiversity & Clinical Philosophy

- 1. How do your therapists respect bodily autonomy, stimming, and sensory regulation needs?
- 2. Are sessions predominantly child-led, play-based (e.g., NDBI/DIR Floortime), or compliance-driven?
- 3. How does your clinic support emotional regulation during distress without isolation or punishment?

Category 2: Clinical Qualifications & Oversight

- 4. Who delivers direct 1:1 sessions (licensed therapists vs. registered behavior technicians)?
- 5. How many hours per week does a Board Certified Behavior Analyst or licensed therapist directly observe?
- 6. What is your clinic annualized staff turnover rate, and how do you handle therapist transitions?

Category 3: Family Collaboration & Transparency

- 7. Are parents allowed an open-door policy to observe sessions at any time without advance notice?
- 8. How are meaningful family priorities incorporated into individualized treatment goals?
- 9. What is your protocol for systematically fading therapy hours as the child transitions to school?

Category 4: Insurance, Pricing & Waitlists

- 10. Do you accept in-network insurance, Medicaid waivers, or single-case agreements?
- 11. Are there mandatory assessment, onboarding, or materials fees billed outside insurance?
- 12. What is your verified waitlist timeline for after-school or prime appointment slots?
- 13. What is your cancellation and illness policy when sensory overload prevents attendance?
- 14. Do you provide home, clinic, or community-based hybrid service modalities?
- 15. What empirical data tracking system or parent portal do you provide for progress reviews?