

NORTH CAROLINA EXPANDS ACCESS TO CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

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RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES, October 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In recent

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Dr. Sheena Piehota

years, there has been a significant rise in the number of children diagnosed with autism in North Carolina. According to the latest statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in every 36 children is diagnosed with autism in the United States. This has created a significant need for more practitioners to support these children and their families in North Carolina. As a result, North Carolina has taken steps to address this issue by adding Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) practitioners certified by the QABA Credentialing Board to ABA licensing.

The state of North Carolina is taking a significant step forward as it officially recognizes and accepts the [Qualified Applied Behavior Analysis Credentialing Board \(QABA\)](#) certifications for licensure. This momentous decision by the North Carolina General Assembly reflects North Carolina's commitment to providing high-quality ABA services and ensuring that individuals with autism and other neurodiverse needs receive premier access to care.

Governor Roy Cooper signed House Bill 125 into law on September 29th, making QABA a certifying entity that can qualify someone for a license as of October 3, 2023.

"North Carolina's decision to recognize QABA certifications demonstrates the state's commitment to supporting access to care and supporting military families. There are many military spouses certified through the QABA that serve the families stationed at Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune," said Dr. Sheena Piehota, who has extensive experience working with military families in the Fort Bragg area.

The QABA Credentialing Board is a renowned and internationally recognized certification body that sets rigorous standards for ABA professionals. Through the acceptance of the [Qualified Behavior Analyst \(QBA\)](#) and the [Qualified Autism Service Practitioner-Supervisor \(QASP-S\)](#)

certifications, North Carolina is broadening the pool of highly trained and qualified ABA practitioners. Given QABA's work with the United States Armed Forces, this will have an even greater impact on the military families in the state who can make a positive impact on the lives of individuals with autism.

"QABA's mission has always been to establish the highest standard of care for military families impacted by Autism or related diagnoses." Stated QABA President, Claire Norris. "This includes increasing access to qualified providers who possess the necessary skills and expertise to serve military populations in North Carolina."

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects communication, social interaction, and behavior. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in 36 children are now diagnosed with ASD in the United States. The studies have shown that boys are nearly four times more likely to be diagnosed with ASD. By including QABA practitioners, North Carolina will expand access to care with highly qualified practitioners and bring in more job opportunities for people to work with individuals who are neurodiverse.

About QABA:

The Qualified Applied Behavior Analysis Credentialing Board's (QABA) mission is to establish the highest standard of care for individuals that receive ABA therapy. Through access, transparency, and dedication to best practice, QABA provides all communities opportunity for consistent high-level care. They are one of the premier accreditation boards for behavioral therapy in the world.

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