

Know Your Therapist

How does each therapist work with your child?

What qualifications to expect in each therapist?

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) Therapist

Helps modify behaviour:
Therapist will assess child's behaviour & design behavior-change plan for them.



This may happen through :

- Reducing problem behaviour.
- Teaching appropriate behaviour like :
 - Writing & reading.
 - Language development.
 - Communication.
 - Academic skills.
 - Play skills.
 - ADL skills.
 - Eating.
 - Social skills.
- Increasing the persistence of appropriate behaviours.



- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst –BCBA
- Board Certified Assistant Behaviour Analysts –BCaBA
- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst Doctoral-BCBA-D

Both require at least graduate degree.

Note : ABA certification doesn't mean this therapist is qualified to assess Autism Spectrum Disorders. That certification is separate.



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- Bachelors / Doctorate in Audiology
- Bachelors / Masters in Audiology & Speech Language Pathology (BASLP / MASLP)

Audiologist

Audiologist can diagnose & manage auditory disorders like poor hearing / poor balance.



They can :

- Understand ear anatomy, physiology, & acoustics.
- Teach lip-reading & sign language to help you & your child communicate.
- Fitting of cochlear implants.
- Study your child's condition to design & fit a hearing aid.



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- Bachelors / Masters in Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapist (OT)

Helps your child develop, regain, or improve skills needed for everyday activities.



They use :

- Therapeutic exercises.
- Play activities.
- Assistive technologies.
- Environmental modification.
- Disability equipment like wheelchairs.

This improves :

- Gross & fine motor skills.
- Attention.
- Coordination skills.
- Writing skills.
- Independence level in daily routine activities.
- Sensory awareness.
- Pain relief.



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Behavioural Therapist

Behaviour Therapist tries to understand the reason for your child's specific behaviours.



They may be trained in :

- **Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)**
Focuses on the thoughts & feelings behind behaviour patterns.
- **Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)**
Focuses on child's response to different stimuli. This helps design a strategy to correct inappropriate behaviour.



- Masters / Doctorate in Psychology
- Professional Diploma in Clinical Psychology with MPhil in Psychology
- RCI (Rehabilitation Council of India) Certification



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Counselor

Can help your child (or you) discuss thoughts & feelings about any issue in a constructive way.

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They do so :

- without bias or judgment.
- with complete confidentiality.
- to help explain the problem.
- to help resolve / accept the situation.



- Masters / Doctorate in Counseling psychology



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Dermatologist

Specialist for skin, scalp, hair, & nails.



- They can help your child with skin conditions caused by excessive rubbing / picking.
- They will keep in mind if your child is hypersensitive, hyposensitive, or sensation-seeking while designing a treatment plan.



• MD in Dermatology,
Venereology & Leprosy



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Developmental Pediatrician

Specializes in developmental delays / disabilities.

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They can :

- Assess developmental delays.
- Evaluates your child's age-specific milestones.
- Guide you through bringing your child's development up to speed.



- MD/DNB in Pediatrics with Developmental Pediatrics as super specialty
- Fellowship in Developmental Pediatrics

Note : If you cannot find a developmental pediatrician to assess your child's developmental level, ask the pediatrician about the next step.



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- MD (Psychiatry) or DNB Psychiatry

- With additional Postdoctoral Fellowship (PDF) in Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
- Diploma in Psychological Medicine (DPM)

Psychiatrist

Medical specialist in mental & emotional disorders.



Special-needs children are vulnerable to :

- Anxiety disorders.
- Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).
- Eating disorders.
- Aggressive behaviours.

They can prescribe :

- Behavioural treatments.
- Medication.
- Individual & family therapy sessions.

Their recommendation is mandatory for receiving a disability certificate for intellectual disabilities.



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Physiotherapist

Physiotherapist is the medical specialist for physical & motor development.

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They can help with :

- Posture management.
- Using equipment like a wheelchair.
- Exercise therapy.
- Advise to parents on encouraging good patterns of movement.

Physiotherapy is non-invasive & does not involve medication.

They take the form of :

- massages,
- exercises, &/or
- collective activities

To strengthen & improve the body's movement.



- Bachelors/Masters in Physiotherapy



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Dyslexia Therapist



They can :

- Assess if your child has difficulties with reading / writing.
- Design an intervention based on the assessment.
- Prescribe remedial education / multi-sensory learning techniques.
- Suggest ways to improve concentration, organisation, & memory.



- Teachers / psychologists with certifications in special-needs education/ Dyslexia such as 'Certified Dyslexia Therapist Training Program'



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Financial Consultant



Financial consultant can help create custom financial plans for :

- Analyzing your current financial situation towards the lifetime care of your child.
- Drafting a will.
- Opening up Trust fund for your child.
- Choosing the life / health insurance most suited for your child's disability.
- Designing best suited investment strategies.

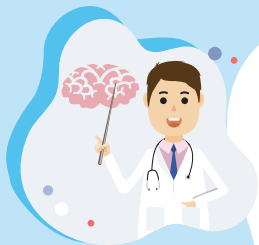


- SEBI Investment Adviser Registration
- Certificate course on Financial Planning (Certified Financial Planner)
- Certificate course on Estate Planning*

Note : Financial Consultant can act as Estate Planner if he/she has expertise*.



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Neurologist

Paediatric neurologist specializes in issues of your child's brain & spinal cord.



They can diagnose & manage :

- Sensory challenges.
- Behavioural disturbances.
- Movement disorders.
- Delayed speech.
- Muscle tone deficits.
- Head injuries.
- Fine & gross motor delays.
- Seizures.



- MBBS, MD (Pediatrics), DM Neurology
- MBBS, DCH, DNB Fellowship in Pediatric Neurology

Note : If you cannot find a paediatric neurologist, find a neurologist (who treats adults) for advice on the next best step.



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Gynaecologist

Specialist for issues of the female reproductive system.

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They deal with your concerns about :

- Reproduction & contraception.
- PMS & menstruation.
- Infertility.



- MD Gynecology
- Super specialization in Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility



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Nutritionist / Dietitian

Deals with issues of food & nutrition.



- Adequate nutrition can make a big difference for children with special needs.
- It can help improve their learning capacity & emotional management.
- *Nutritionist / dietitian can :*
 - Assess your child's nutritional health.
 - Design strategies to improve nutrition.
 - Guide you through ways to encourage your child to eat better.
 - Prescribe supplements / restrictions.



- Bachelors in Nutrition or Dietetics
- Masters in Nutrition or Dietetics



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Pediatric Endocrinologist



Can diagnose & manage hormonal issues like:

- Early / delayed puberty.
- Under / overactive thyroid &/or pituitary gland.
- Ovarian / testicular dysfunctions.
- Diabetes.
- Other growth / sexual developmental issues.

They can guide you through resolving these issues with minimal disruption to your child's daily life.



- MBBS, MD Pediatrics
- Fellowship in Pediatric & Adolescent Endocrinology



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Homeopathic Physician



Homeopathy is an alternative to allopathy.

- Sources of medicine are natural substances like arnica herb & snake venom.
- The medicine may come in the form of
 - sugar pellets.
 - ointments.
 - liquids.
 - tablets.
 - lotions.



- Bachelors in Homeopathic Medicine & Surgery (BHMS)

There is debate on whether homeopathy is effective. World Health

Note : Organisation has warned patients not to consider it as an absolute cure. Give your child homeopathy at your own discretion.



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Pediatric Ophthalmologist

Pediatric Ophthalmologist specializes in :

- Eye diseases.
- Visual development.
- Vision care.
- Head tilting.
- Squints.

They can assess the causes of the problem & prescribe management / treatment.



- Post-Graduation (DNB / MS / MD) in Ophthalmology
- Pediatric Ophthalmology Fellowship (FNB)



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Pediatrician



- Pediatrician is the medical specialist for those from 0 y-o-a to about 18 y-o-a.
- They (along with general physicians) are your first point of contact for children's medical issues.
- They can diagnose intellectual & developmental disabilities.



- Post-graduation (DNB /MD) in Pediatrics



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Remedial Educator



Remedial educator teaches a child through his/her own customized unique learning means, in fields such as :

- Arithmetic.
- Reading.
- Spelling.
- Writing.
- Speaking.
- Memory.

They help children with learning disabilities & other special needs.



- Certificate courses on Remedial Education

Note : Nayi Disha's minimum criteria for listing remedial educators on the service directory is a course of 1-3 months.



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- M.Phil & Doctorate in Psychology with specialization in
 - Developmental Psychology,
 - School Psychology, &/OR
 - Educational Psychology

Psychologist

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A psychologist is a health professional who can :

- Diagnose learning & behavioural disorders.
- Provide counseling.
- Design behaviour management.

A developmental psychologist can :

- Assess developmental delays in the child.
- Use standardized tests to diagnose disabilities.
- Propose treatment programs like
 - Animal therapy.
 - Relaxation therapy.
 - Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT).
 - Art therapy.

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Recreational Therapist



Recreational therapists uses recreational-based treatments like :

- Music.
- Dance.
- Drama.
- Sports.

This helps to :

- Gain confidence.
- Increase independence in everyday activities.
- Improve social integration skills.

The key idea is to focus on the child's interests.

It is hence highly individualized treatment, which makes it more relevant & meaningful.



- Bachelors / Masters in Fine Arts, Psychology, or Social Work
- Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical Music Therapy
- Diploma certification courses in art therapy
- Certifications from reputed organizations conducting art therapy crash courses



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Shadow Teacher

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- A shadow teacher accompanies your child in the classroom & devotes their full attention to your child only.
- They ensure to explain all academic concepts in a manner best suited to your child & their disability.



- Officially even an intermediate holder is qualified

Note : Any Diploma in teaching or learning will add an added benefit.



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- Bachelors / Masters in Social Work (BSW / M.A / MSW)

Social Worker

Liaison between families, governmental organisations & NGOs that provide support services.

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They can :

- Counsel you regarding professional help & government services.
- Inform you of your rights.
- Help you find vocational rehabilitation i.e. training & employment for your child.

May be involved in the administration, management, & policy-planning of government / NGO operations.



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Disability Sports Coach

Can train your child in various physical & outdoor activities.



They adapt the activities based on your child's strengths & restrictions.

They may also act as a :

- Strength & conditioning specialist.
- Sports nutritionist.
- Physiotherapist.
- Sports masseuse.



- Diploma in Sports Coaching
- Certifications in Disability Sports Coaching
- Diploma in Adapted Physical Education
- RKMVU APE certification

Note : Training in India is offered in affiliation with Cricket Association for the Blind (CABI).



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Speech Therapist

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- Bachelors / Masters in Audiology & Speech Language Pathology (BASLP / MASLP)

Specializes in issues of speech & language & swallowing that occur due to :

- Stroke or brain injury.
- Hearing loss.
- Developmental delay.
- Oromotor defects such as cleft palates.
- Cerebral palsy.
- Emotional dysregulation.
- Oro-motor exercises for the jaw, gums, tongue and facial muscles.

They can :

- Help your child speak with clarity.
- Helps your child speak & interact socially.
- Prescribe exercises to strengthen face muscles for speech clarity & improve feeding skills.
- Teach alternative communication methods like sign language, picture/electronic communication.



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Yoga Therapist

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A yoga therapist can improve overall mental health, physical health, & movement through *asanas* & breathing exercises.

They can customize exercises to suit your child's strengths & needs. *Asanas* can be adapted for performance on a wheelchair.



- Registered Yoga Trainer (RYT) certification
- PG Diploma in Yoga Therapy

Note : Yoga is not a cure but a management strategy. Use it alongside your prescribed medical care & other therapy regimes.



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Special Educational Needs (SEN) Teacher

Teaches your child how to learn



They cater to children with :

- Physical disabilities.
- Learning difficulties.
- Hearing or visual impairment.
- Speech or language difficulties.

They can :

- Assess your child's learning level.
- Prepare lesson plans accordingly.
- Use Braille / sign language.
- Help child build classroom social skills & use these in other social settings.



- Diploma / B. Ed. / M. Ed. / PhD in Special Education



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Vision Therapist



A vision therapist provides non-surgical treatment for common visual problems like :

- Lazy eyes.
- Crossed eyes.
- Double vision.

They can provide exercises for the entire visual system. This is useful for issues that cannot be treated with eyeglasses, contact lenses, &/or surgery alone.



- Bachelors in Optometry
- Fellowship in Vision Therapy

Optometrists work only on eye muscles & alignment.

Note : Vision therapists focus on the entire visual system, including areas of the brain that control visual perception.



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Nayi Disha is an NGO that offers information, guidance, and hope to families of children with autism, down syndrome, and other developmental disabilities. Feel free to call or write to us with your queries or visit our website to access more information about IDD.

Nayi Disha Resource Centre

Email : contactus@nayi-disha.org

Helpline number : 844 844 8996

URL : www.nayi-disha.org