Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Therapy

Brief Informational Guide



Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a science-based approach that applies principles of learning to produce meaningful changes in behavior. ABA therapy uses individualized interventions to increase essential skills like communication, social skills, and independence skills, in addition to reducing behavioral barriers for autistic children and their families.

What Does ABA Look Like?

ABA programs vary widely based on each child's needs, with some requiring several hours of therapy daily. Programs may take place in a center, at home, in schools, or across multiple settings, and schedules should be tailored to the child. There's no "one-size-fits-all" approach, as different programs suit different families.

ABA therapy provides structured teaching delivered by trained professionals. Programs may involve caregiver guidance and collaboration with teachers to support positive behaviors both at home and in school. The key is finding a program that fits the child's unique needs.

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Things to Consider

Is your child...

- ☐ having difficulty learning?
- ☐ having problems acquiring new skills?
- ☐ having difficulty communicating?
- ☐ having difficulty completing activities of daily living?

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Benefits of ABA

ABA therapy works well in many situations and helps kids learn important skills while reducing interfering behaviors. It's especially helpful for children who need extra support to learn. ABA focuses on finding out why certain behaviors happen and uses positive ways to support growth. Each child gets a plan made just for them. This therapy can help people with different abilities learn new skills.

More Information

Common Teaching Strategies in ABA Programs:

- **Incidental Teaching (Natural Environment Training):** Integrates learning opportunities into everyday activities.
- **Pivotal Response Training:** Targets key areas that can lead to broad improvements.
- **Verbal Behavior:** Focuses on improving communication skills.
- **Natural Language Paradigm:** Encourages the use of natural language in learning contexts.
- **Discrete Trial Learning:** Breaks down skills into small, teachable components.

ABA Therapy Must...

1. Have an assessment that outlines short-term and long-term goals of therapy in the treatment plan.
2. Have ongoing collaboration with caregivers and teachers.
3. Use observation to assess progress towards goals.
4. Use individualized approaches to understand why behavior occurs and encourage positive behaviors.
5. Adjust therapy based on the child's progress and the family's needs.
6. Have therapy delivered by trained, certified staff: Registered Behavior Technician (RBTs), Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), or Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA).



Referrals

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NOTES:

If you have questions about ABA therapy, please talk to your healthcare clinician.