



Best Practices in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Applied Behavior Analysis is simply the application of behavioral principles, to everyday situations, that will, over time, increase or decrease targeted behaviors. (www.appliedbehavioralstrategies.com)

- Start with comprehensive assessment of skills across developmental areas (cognitive, academic, adaptive/self-care, communication, social, play/leisure, self-management, coping, safety, vocational, behavior) to identify strengths and potential goals
- Functional Behavior Assessment to determine a reason or function of any challenging behavior
- Treatment Plan is Individualized, based on needs of the client and priorities of parents
- Ongoing assessment to monitor progress and guide decisions
- Focused <25 hours/week or for a limited number of targeted goals, vs. Comprehensive ABA 25+ hours/week and multiple developmental areas targeted
- Developmentally appropriate
- Parent/Family/Staff and other professionals training component
- Goal development includes input from parents, family, caregivers, cultural contexts
- Target increasing socially relevant behaviors that increase functional independence and decreasing problem behaviors
- Data driven decision making – goals, progress and mastery are determined by objective observational data collection
- Build in generalization to different settings, individuals (home, school, community) and maintenance of mastered skills
- Goals move from individual 1-1 teaching when needed to small group to large group where appropriate
- Supervision of program by competent Psychologist/BCBA
- Incorporating natural environment training from beginning or as soon as possible
- Program procedures may include but are not limited to reinforcement, shaping, chaining, prompting and fading, behavioral skills training, extinction, functional communication training, preference assessments, activity schedules, modeling, peer training etc.
- Coordination with other professionals involved with client

Resources:

BACB.com: Applied Behavior Analysis Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Practical Guidelines... 2014

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