

APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS ACROSS THE LIFESPAN

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What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

- **Behavior**—Anything you can see, observe, measure
- **Analysis**—the study of
- **Applied**—Using what you've learned

- *ABA is the study of behavior and the use of those findings to change behavior*


Core Principles of ABA

- We learn through conditioning
 - How the environment and those in our environment respond to us shapes our future behaviors (*When I say something funny, people laugh, and I like laughter*)
- We learn through rules
 - If/then (*if you break the law, then you will go to jail*)
- By changing the environment, you can change a behavior
 - Change the consequences of the behavior and the behavior changes (*everyone stops laughing=I stop telling jokes*)



ABA Definitions and Strategies

- **Stimulus**-elicits a behavior to occur
- **Behavior**-action you can see, observe, measure
- **Reinforcement**-consequence following behavior that encourages the behavior to happen again
- **Prompting**-providing supports to make the behavior occur accurately
- **Shaping**-using prompts and reinforcement to get from current skill to goal in sequential steps
- **Fluency, precision teaching**-learning to do a skill proficiently






Definitions and Strategies continued

- **Errorless teaching**
 - Providing prompts so that the behavior performed is accurate
 - No chance for mistake
 - Prompts are faded as child's accuracy becomes more independent
- **Task analysis**
 - Breaking complex behaviors/skills into smaller tasks
 - Teaching each step of the task discretely and combining the mastered skills so the task is completed accurately and independently

ABA Interventions

- **Not just for Autism**
 - Effective for a multitude of disabilities
 - Principles apply to traditional learners and all of us
- Begins with a thorough assessment
- Ongoing data collection to monitor progress
- Variety of settings—home, school, center, workplace
- For all ages (see handout)

ABA and Autism Intervention Methods



- Intensive Behavioral Intervention (IBI, Lovaas)
 - ▣ Adult directed, discrete trials, intensive setting
- Applied Verbal Behavior (AVB, Carbone)
 - ▣ Focused on language development, words skills being taught, combination of table work and natural setting
- Pivotal Response Training (PRT)
 - ▣ Child initiated, takes place in the natural environment
- Best Practice Approaches—Practitioners use strategies from the above and others

What does ABA teach?

- ABA interventions address all developmental domains:
 - ▣ Communication
 - ▣ Social
 - ▣ Cognitive and academic
 - ▣ Motor
 - ▣ Self help and daily living skills
 - ▣ Play



ABA for toddlers/preschoolers

- Intensive, early intervention is critical for successful intervention
- Typically carried out in the home setting by parents or tutors supervised by ABA/Autism consultant
- Consists of sessions during which skills and behaviors are taught with ABA techniques in the child's natural setting
- Follows a plan or curriculum
- Often supported by Speech therapy, occupational therapy, preschool

ABA for school age



- ABA can be very effective and conducive in a school setting
- Can be carried out in a 1:1 setting (pull out) or group setting
- Positive Behavior Intervention plans to address challenging behaviors at school and home
- May continue home based ABA program through school years to supplement school curriculum

ABA for adults



- Continued Positive Behavior Intervention plans for any challenging behaviors
- ABA strategies successful for teaching job related skills
 - ▣ Including social and communication skills needed on the job
- ABA is effective for teaching independent living skills
 - ▣ Self monitoring allows the individual to monitor own progress

What is a Behavior Analyst?



- Practices ABA in school, center, home, or teaching setting
- Credentials:
 - ▣ Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)
 - Master's level
 - ▣ Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA)
 - Bachelor's level
- Coursework, supervision, field experience, licensure exam

What Does a Parent Need to Know?



- ABA is an evidence based, effective intervention for children with Autism (see references handout)
- ABA interventions are individualized
- Parental involvement is expected
- ABA is appropriate for all ages in a variety of settings
- ABA interventions are intensive in hours
- ABA can and should be child friendly and fun (reinforcement is built in!)

References and Additional Readings

- Applied Behavior Analysis International www.abai.org
- Behavior Analyst Certification Board www.bacb.com
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Questions/Comments?