

EXPERIENCES TO ACKNOWLEDGE

ABA has not historically honored neurodiverse experiences.

ABA seeks to target behaviors that interfere with a child's ability to engage in their environment. Most often, this means reducing behaviors that inhibit their ability to functionally communicate. However, many programs in the past and some programs today still target self-regulatory stimming behaviors, like hand flapping, as target behaviors to decrease. If this is a concern for you, ask your BCBA how their program interacts with stimming behaviors.

ABA has historically used punishment procedures.

And unfortunately some companies still do. This refers to responding to a child's behavior with verbal reprimands, time-outs, or withholding items/activities. While punishment procedures can decrease a behavior long-term, this method has proven to be ineffective as it does not teach the child alternative skills to adequately cope or communicate.

Teaching skills in ABA typically requires physical contact.

Hand over hand teaching is a common mechanism used in ABA. If physical touch is a trigger for your child, or you have concerns about the level of prompting required to teach your child, speak with your BCBA.

APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS

What is ABA and
how can it help my
family?

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Special thanks to the providers
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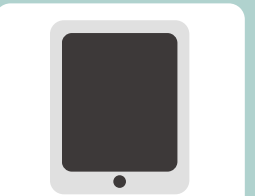
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video format by Hopebridge
Autism Therapy Services.

WHAT IS APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS?

Applied Behavioral Analysis is a behavioral therapy meant to support Autistic children. The goal of ABA is to build skills and reduce challenging behaviors. See the section outlines detailed right to learn how ABA does this!

FIRST	THEN
 <p>work</p>	 <p>tablet</p>

VISUAL SUPPORTS

In ABA therapy, you may often see the use of visual supports. A common example of this is the First, Then (pictured above). This tool helps to set clear expectations and communicate rewards or transitions to the child. Another common visual support is the use of PECS (pictured below). These are pictures that help to visualize options and communicate needs.



1. BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

ABA believes that behaviors like screaming, crying, biting or hitting are used to communicate one of four needs: wanting something, avoiding something, needing a change sensory input, or wanting attention. Because these are all valid needs, ABA seeks to reduce these inappropriate behaviors by replacing them with functional communication. Below is an example of a typical behavior response:

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Two children are playing with a toy, one child is **denied access**.
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Denied child cries, screams and stomps (these are his **behaviors** indicating that he wants **access** to the toy).
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The therapist instructs the child to point or vocally ask for the item (this is teaching **functional communication**).
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If the desired item is not an option, staff presents choice board (this teaches the child to **redirect** while indicating their choice).

2. SKILL BUILDING

Each child receives a series of goals which are meant to teach functional skills. These goals, called programs, can focus on areas like communication, play, and attention! Programs are determined based on the parent's goals and what skills are present when entering services. Here is an example of a program you might find in your child's curriculum:

Requesting

Overall goal: The child will be able to request for items / activities using the phrase "I want item, please."

Small skill	Start date	Pass date
Individual imitates "item."	2/1/24	2/4/24
Individual states "item" independently	2/5/24	2/11/24
Individual imitates "item, please."	2/12/24	2/16/24
Individual states "item, please" independently	2/17/24	2/26/24
Individual imitates "I want item, please."	2/27/24	3/7/24
Individual states "I want item, please" independently	3/8/24	

BREAKING IT DOWN!

To teach complex skills, ABA breaks up overall goal into small skills. Once the first small skill is learned, a new layer is added until the overall goal is achieved.