

ABA for Families

The following series is designed to introduce families to the use of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) in their everyday life. ABA has proven to be a helpful approach for working with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The principles of ABA are used in a variety of settings including schools, daycares, business and sports.

Definition:

- Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) is a field of study that examines the relationship between the environment, behaviour and consequences. ABA is a scientific approach to change behaviour by either increasing desirable skills or decreasing undesirable ones and can be used as an instructional approach with people of all ages (Alberto & Troutman, 2003).

Also known as:

- Principles of Behaviour

Why Use ABA?

By applying the principles of ABA you are supporting the learning style of your child with ASD because it:

- May help prevent challenging behaviours
- Increases positive behaviours
- Provides structure and routine
- Builds skills
- Enhances motivation
- Focuses on achieving independence
- Ensures generalization of skills

Some of the effective teaching principles that will be explored in this series include:

ABA Language	Family/Educator Language
Reinforcement	Motivating the child
Prompting	Providing assistance
Fading	Reducing assistance
Generalization	Transferring skills
Task analysis	Steps to teaching skills
Supporting Transitions	Moving from one thing to the next
Antecedent Strategies	Proactive strategies implemented before a behaviour
Functional Behaviour Assessment	Determining the reason for a behaviour

You may already be using many of these effective strategies in your home.

What are ABA-Based Services?

- ErinoakKids and Kerry's Place Autism Services have co-lead responsibilities for the implementation and ongoing service delivery of ABA-Based services
- Children and youth between the ages of 0-17 (up to 18th birthday) are eligible for these services if they have a confirmation of an ASD diagnosis. Parents/Caregivers may apply
- ErinoakKids is the lead for providing services for the younger children from birth to age 8 (grade 3) and is working in partnership with Woodview Children's Centre, KidsAbility, and Dufferin Child and Family Services.
- Using an ABA approach, services and supports will focus on addressing the needs that children and youth with ASD have in the following key developmental areas: Communication, Social/Interpersonal, Daily Living, Behaviour Management/Emotional Regulation
- Priority goals will be identified based on input from the family as well as the needs of the child
- Services are typically provided between 2 and 4 hours per week for a period of 2 to 6 months
- Some goals will be supported with in-home and individual support whereas other goals will be better met in a small group format in a variety of settings
- Following completion of service, children are able to be re-referred to the wait list for additional blocks of service, if needed

What is Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI)?

- ErinoakKids and Kerry's Place Autism Services have co-lead responsibilities for the implementation and ongoing
- A structured approach based on the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)
- Uses systematic methods to encourage development and change behaviour
- Program goals are individually tailored to each child based on a thorough assessment of the child's unique strengths and needs including input from families
- It's practical- the focus is on developing the skills each child needs for greater independence
- Erinoakkids provides IBI for children who have been diagnosed toward the severe end of the autism spectrum. Intense instruction is provided across developmental areas including: Cognition, Language, Social Skills, Self-Care Skills
- Services are typically provided between 12 and 21 hours per week
- When it comes to receiving Intensive Behaviour Intervention services for their child, parents have two options:
 - 1) Direct service option (DSO): Children can receive the services directly from trained staff at Erinoakkids or a partner agency
 - 2) Direct funding option (DFO): Parents can receive funding directly. The family then arranges for services from a private service provider.

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