

# **ECHO IDAHO: AUTISM**

## Understanding ABA:

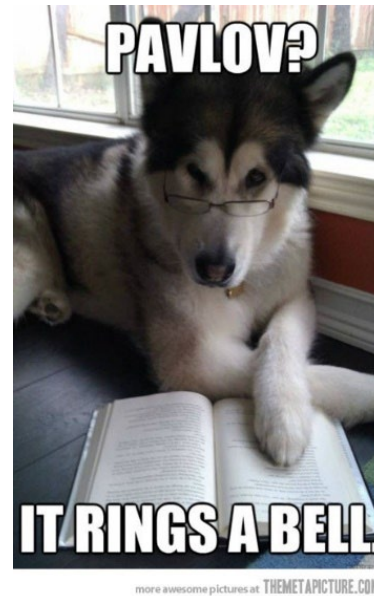
How to support common behavioral strategies

4/25/2024

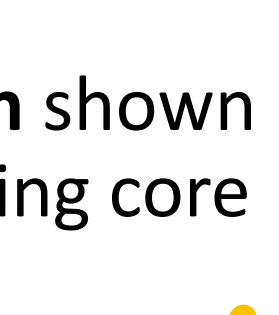
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Parent Advocate, Lewiston

# What are Behavioral Treatments?

- Based on the theories and principles of Behaviorism
  - Human behavior, both adaptive and maladaptive, is **learned**
    - Theories
      - Classical Conditioning
      - Operant Conditioning
      - Social Learning
    - B.F. Skinner



## Why Focus on Behavioral Treatments?

- Behavioral treatments are **effective** for skill development and improvement, and reducing challenging behaviors in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
  - The earlier intervention is started – the better the outcome
  - There is **no medication** shown to be effective in treating core autism symptoms
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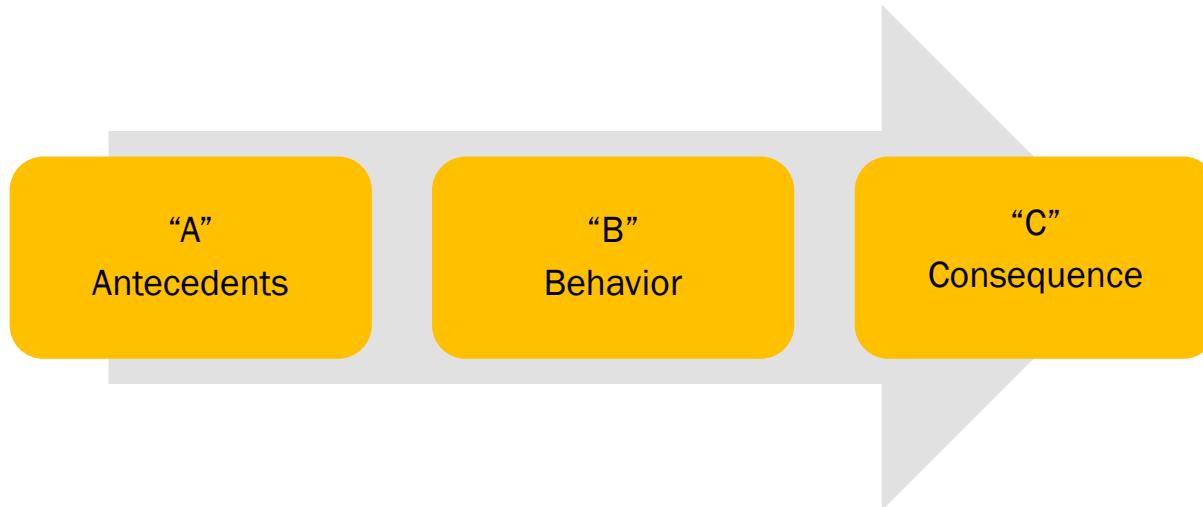
# Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

- The **systematic** application of behavioral principles to **socially important behaviors**.
- An umbrella term – not a single technique
  - Grounded in operant conditioning
    - Extends experimental methods beyond the lab to applied settings
    - Systematic, **data driven**, dynamic process, **individualized**
    - Behavior principles: reinforcement, prompting, shaping, extinction, antecedent control



# Applied Behavior Analysis

- Focuses on extending both the principles and methods of operant conditioning to behaviors that make a difference in everyday life
  - Understanding behavior and how it is affected by the environment
  - What is the function of the behavior?



# Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)



## Skills-Based Therapies

Discrete Trial Teaching (DTT)

Incidental Teaching (Natural Environment)

Early Start Denver Model (ESDM)

Verbal Behavior (VB)

Feeding Services

Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI)

Pivotal Response Training (PRT)

Organizational Behavior Management (OBM)

Challenging Behavior Services

Functional Analysis (FA) / Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)

Prompting Assessment  
Preference Assessment

# Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

## Skills-Based Therapies

- Discrete Trial Teaching (**DTT**)
  - Breaks skills into discrete teachable steps, using positive reinforcement
  - Trials are repeated until mastery
- Incidental Teaching (**Natural Environment**)
- Pivotal Response Training (**PRT**)
  - Focuses on **motivation, self-management, and self-initiation**
- Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (**EIBI**)
  - **Comprehensive** intervention using multiple strategies
  - Targeting broad developmental skills & behaviors
- Early Start Denver Model (**ESDM**)
  - Early intervention model
  - Uses both developmental and behavioral principles
  - Play- and relationship-focused
- Many others!

## Challenging Behavior Services

- Functional Analysis (**FA**) / Functional Behavior Assessment (**FBA**)
  - Identify the function (reason) for challenging behavior
  - Develop treatment plans based on function to decrease challenging behavior and increase appropriate behavior
- Preference Assessment (**PA**)/ Reinforcer Assessment
  - Identify relative preferences for people, tasks, items, etc.
  - Incorporate preferences into treatment plan
    - Often as reinforcers
- Prompting Assessment
  - Identify what prompting strategies reliably elicit the target behavior
- Many others!

# Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

- **Who** can provide ABA?
  - **Anyone** can implement behavioral strategies!
  - ABA programs should be designed and supervised by qualified professionals:
    - **Examples:**
      - **Licensed Psychologists** with training in ABA
      - **Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA)** with supervised experience in ABA treatment for autism



# Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

- **What** does ABA involve?
  - **Assessment & Development of Behavior Change Program**
    - Assessing skills, behaviors and motivators
    - Developing goals based on assessment results with caregiver and individual input on what they want to target
  - **Implementing Program**
    - Delivering interventions & collecting ongoing data
  - **Training**
    - Parents, teachers, implementers and/or therapists
  - **Progress Monitoring**
    - Reviewing progress, adjusting as needed, is the individual and their family satisfied with the program (both how it's being implemented and the results)
  - **Supervision**
    - Typically by Psychologist or Behavior Analyst

# Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

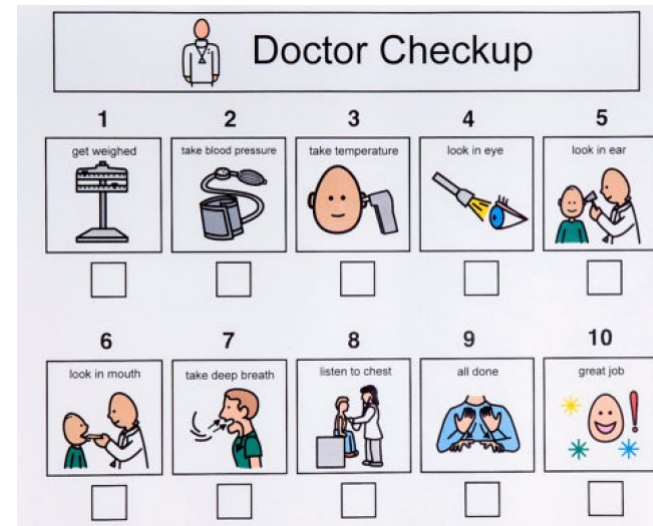
- **Where is ABA delivered?**
  - **ABA can take place anywhere!**
  - **ABA interventions can be:**
    - Home-based
    - Clinic-based (outpatient, inpatient or residential)
    - School-based
    - *Any combination!*
      - *Use across settings can help with generalization*
- **Programs can vary in intensity & duration**
  - High intensity (e.g., 20-40 hours per week)
  - Low intensity (e.g., 1-2 hours per week)
  - Long-term (several years)
  - Short-term

# How Can You as a Provider Support Behavioral Strategies

- Communicate with ABA provider, share reports
- Help the family rule out physiological reasons for the behavior of concern (this should be done prior to trying to apply behavioral principles)
  - Ear infection
  - Constipation
  - Sinus infection/Influenza/Covid
  - Urinary Tract Infection
  - Ringworm
  - Strep Throat
  - Broken bone in foot
  - Cavity/toothache
  - Medication side effects

# How Can You as a Provider Support Behavioral Strategies

- Use strategies in your office
  - Use a Visual schedule for office visits for predictability
  - Have a visual timer available, if needed
  - Reinforcers for completing parts of the exam (talk to caregivers about favorite items, characters)
  - Talk to the individual, not about them (neg attn)
  - Give them time to process
  - Let them be involved, touch the instrument/item you're using
  - Have a basket of sensory items they might enjoy/distract them (pop its, fidgets, stress balls, oil/water timers, bubbles, etc)



# Helping Families to find an ABA Provider

## Training

1. Degree level – BS, MS, BCBA/ESDM
2. Basic knowledge in behavioral theory, principles, & procedures
3. Practicum and supervised experiences vary

## What to Ask

1. Services provided and to whom, including insurance coverage, Behavior Intervention Services from Developmental Disabilities Program - IDHW
2. Concerns addressed in therapy/treatment
3. Length of therapy/treatment & where it's provided
4. Training and support to caregivers (e.g., parents, teachers, etc.)
5. Involvement of your child in the process

BCBAs & BCBA-Ds  
*(as well as BCaBAs & RBTs)*

Special Education  
Teachers &  
Consultants

Licensed  
Psychologist

Developmental Disability  
Agencies, Independent  
Providers – various levels  
of training/expertise with  
ABA principles



# Finding an ABA Provider

- [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com)

The screenshot shows the top portion of the BACB website. On the left, there is a navigation menu with 'About', 'Credentials', and 'Public Resources'. In the center is the BACB logo, which consists of a globe with the text 'BEHAVIOR ANALYST CERTIFICATION BOARD' and 'BACB' in the center. On the right, there is another navigation menu with 'Ethics', 'News & More', and 'Contact Us', along with a 'My Account' link. Below the navigation is a search bar that says 'ENHANCED BY Google'.


The main banner features a background image of books and papers. Two call-to-action buttons are overlaid on the left: 'VERIFY A CERTIFICANT' and 'FIND A CERTIFICANT'. A red arrow points to the 'FIND A CERTIFICANT' button. On the right side of the banner, there is a red notification box with white text that reads: 'For current application processing times, please visit the Application Processing Updates web page.' Below this text is a link that says 'View Update >>'. The background image includes a blue pen, a stack of books (one with 'CAMBRIDGE' visible), and some papers.

# Finding an ABA Provider

My Account

About ▾ Credentials ▾ Public Resources ▾

Ethics ▾ News & More ▾ Cont



General Search  
 Certification Number

**Certification Type \***

RBT  
 BCaBA  
 BCBA  
 BCBA-D

**Status \***

All  
 Active  
 Inactive  
 Expired

**Only list certificants who:**

Have completed supervision training  
 Are willing to supervise BCaBAs  
 Are willing to supervise those pursuing BCBA or BCaBA certification  
 With current disciplinary actions

**Country \***  
United States ▾

**State/Territory**  
Select a US state/territory ▾

**Postal Code**  
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**Postal Code Range**  
5 Miles ▾

# Common Misconceptions about ABA – How to Address them

- Choosing Target Behaviors – eye contact
- Methodology for each target behavior – many think it's only discrete trial
- Many think ABA is only consequence based – sticker charts and bribery
- Some criticize ABA as being traumatizing – we have an ethical compliance code
  - Consent/assent, procedures in detail, progress monitoring, all are discussed prior to starting so any concerns can be addressed
  - Also discussed periodically through the process
  - As a BCBA, I make sure the children I work with want to spend time with me, I want to be their favorite person – building rapport, using lots of positive reinforcement and being flexible with a plan B, C, and D.



# Finding an ABA Provider

## [ECHO Autism's ABA/BCBA Resource Guide](#)

[Home](#) [Learning Groups](#) [Catalog](#) [Calendar](#) [Contact us](#)

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### Features

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ECHO Autism

[Overview](#)

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[Accreditation](#)

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that 1 in 36 children in the United States have autism spectrum disorder (ASD). American Academy of Pediatric guidelines state that early diagnosis and early intervention have significant outcomes.

Led by a panel of subject matter experts in pediatric family practice, developmental pediatrics, pediatric psychology, speech pathology, patient care coordination and parent advocacy, our series will enhance your competencies and provide the opportunity to learn best practices for screening and treating ASD in pediatric care.

### Resources

[ECHO Autism YouTube Playlist](#)

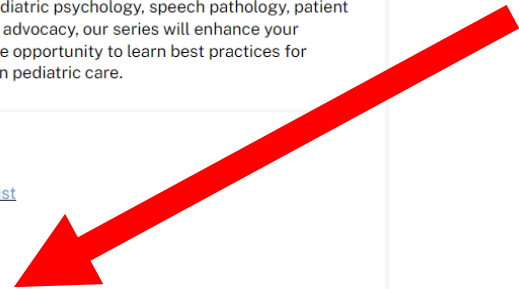
[ECHO Idaho ASD Resources](#)

[ABA/BCBA Resource Guide](#)

[Disability Placard](#)

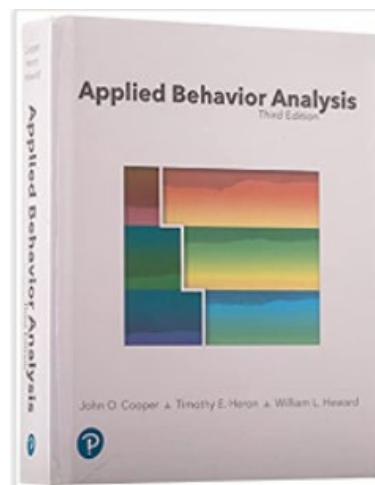
[How to Apply for Katie Beckett](#)

[IDHW's Children's Developmental Disabilities Program](#)



# Resources

- [Brief description of ABA](#)
- [What is Applied Behavior Analysis \(English\)](#)
- [What is Applied Behavior Analysis \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Behavior Analyst Certification Board \(BACB\)](#)
- Applied Behavior Analysis, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition by Cooper, Heron and Heward (book)



# Session Resources & Claiming CE/CME

To access session resources, return to the course page and select today's session date.

Note: A link to the case recommendations will be added within 1 week of today's session.

If you wish to claim CE/CME credit, please return to the course page and click the **NEXT** button. Then advance to the survey section for this course, claim credit applicable to your profession and select **DOWNLOAD CERTIFICATE**. If you experience issues, please email us at [echoidaho@uidaho.edu](mailto:echoidaho@uidaho.edu).

Note: You will have until the 8:00 a.m. MT the morning of the next session to claim your CE/CME.