Dispelling the Myths

ABA in 2016

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Cooper, Heron and Heward (2007) provide an in depth description of ABA:

- Can be used to change or modify any behavior
- Scientific approach
- Socially significant behaviors
- Measuring and interpreting behavior:
  - Describe, quantify and analyze
The Seven Dimensions of ABA

- Behavioral
- Applied
- Conceptual
- Effective
- Analytic
- Technological
- Generality
ABC data is a common form of narrative data collection in which target behaviors are observed (Cooper et al., 2007).

**Antecedent:** occurs prior to the behavior

**Behavior:** What did the behavior look like?

**Consequence:** occurs after the behavior

**Recording FACTS**
Antecedent Interventions

- Providing choices at work time
- Social narratives
- Video modeling
- Providing scheduled sensory breaks
- Incorporating preferred items with non-preferred items
- Altering a seating arrangement so a student is sitting away from another student who may be a trigger
- Visual schedule

These are just a few examples
Cooper and colleagues (2007) emphasize the importance of the following consequences:

- Reinforcement
  - Positive
  - Negative

- Punishment
  - Positive
  - Negative

- Extinction
Functions of Behavior

- Access
- Escape/Avoidance
- Attention
- Automatic Reinforcement
Replacement Behaviors

• ABA seeks to reduce inappropriate behaviors while increasing appropriate (or replacement) behaviors (Cooper et al., 2007).

• So what do we replace the target behavior with?

• Teaching socially appropriate behaviors

  - Tapping/saying names
  - Asking for a break
  - Asking for items or activities
  - Using a chewy to bite
Teaching Skills with ABA

Teach
• After baseline
• Errorless teaching

Baseline
• New skills
• Completed prior to teaching a skill

Mastery
• Illustrates independence
• Look for generalization
Cooper and colleagues (2007) provide the corresponding terms and definitions of those aspects:

- **Response maintenance** = **Time**
- **Setting/situation generalization** = **Settings**
- **Response generalization** = **Behavior**
What does ABA look like?
What does ABA look like?
Practical uses of ABA

- Natural Environment Teaching
- Functional Living Skills
- Social Skills
- Vocational/Technical Training
Why ABA?
Treatment of ASD

ABA is the most evidence based treatment for individuals with Autism

(Axelrod, McElrath, & Wine 2012)
Why ABA?

• Scientifiy Based and Empirically validated
  • NPDC and NAC studies

• We are the responsible advocates for best practice for children with Autism therefore we should be the informed consumers when guiding parents in treatment
  • Non-scientifically supported treatments for Autism represent more than 75% of treatments mentioned in print media today.
  • Wall street Journal, Daily News and USA Today 97-100% of their coverage
  • LA Times and New York Times had most, but less than half of their references were devoted to ABA
  • Non-Scientiically supported treatments received 4 times as much exposure.
    • Music Therapy, gluten/caesin free diets, facilitated communication, secretin, floortime, sensory integration, serotonin, and chelation.
Why ABA?

• Recent theories support hyper-functioning of the brain
  • ABA teaches children to respond to certain stimuli while simultaneously ignoring other stimuli (teaching children how to learn).

• Data, Data and more Data
  • Beginning, Middle and End
Who benefits from ABA?

ABA is not just for individuals with Autism
Common applications of ABA include:

1. Treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders
2. Organizational behavior management
3. Mental health treatment
4. General education
5. Criminal Justice field
Organizational Behavior Management

• Improve employee performance through ABA principles
• Improve behavior relating to patient safety in hospitals
• Reduction of medical errors in healthcare organizations  (Cunningham & Geller 2011)
Mental Health Treatment

• Treatment for emotional & psychological disorders (Ross 2007)

• Treatment of dementia in older adults (Trahan, Kahng, Fisher, & Hausman 2011)
General Education

• School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports
• ABA in the general curriculum (Axelrod, McElrath, & Wine 2012)
Criminal Justice Field

• Using token economies with inmates (Milan, Rehabilitation Research Foundation, & Others 1974)
Services

What services are available when your child is diagnosed?

What is best?

Who should be involved?
Getting Started: Help Families Apply for Services – Who To Call?

Who’s On the Team?

- Local School Division
- Local Mental Health Department
- Juvenile and Family Court Services
- Social Services
- Medical Provider
- Local Health Department
- Area Community Services Board
Making Contact

• Any above agency can help families apply for services! When making contact, families should,
  • Inform of family situation
  • Ask for FAPT meeting
  • Fill out and sign releases – Important!
Why Sign Releases?

- Privacy laws must be followed
- One release won’t suffice
- FAPT: Comprised of many community agencies
- Agencies require family information to make determination of services
- Determination requires detailed reports from multiple sources
Children in private day schools most likely receive FAPT and/or CSA services.

- Involve Families
  - Organize face-to-face meetings or phone conferences between agencies

Private day school staff provide regular updates on student.

- How To Strengthen Rapport
  - Include private day school staff in monthly meetings
  - Open communication between all involved
  - Organize face-to-face meetings or phone conferences between agencies
Trust is key to building healthy relationships.

One of the reasons it’s critical to build rapport with parents is so that you can gain trust.
Effectiveness of Parent Training

- Parent training is essential, but rarely funded
- Parents coaching strategies that were used:
  - Building rapport
  - Reviewing information
    - Modeling techniques
    - Providing feedback
    - Building independence
Effectiveness of Parent Training

- Children whose parents were trained to carry out interventions continued to make gains.
- Children who were returned to institutional settings lost their previously mastered skills.
- Parents of children with autism were taught a variety of interventions:
  - Increase communication skills
  - Decrease inappropriate behavior
  - Teaching parents to provide intervention has also been shown to increase generalization and maintenance skills over time.
Collaboration with Parents

Clinic
- Weekly parent training sessions
- Consistent schedule of meetings
- Review data and probe for understanding of behaviors
- Check for generalization of behaviors
- Share video of sessions

Schools
- Weekly phone calls
- Face-to-face discussion at pick up/drop off
- Communication notebooks
- Materials sent home with students once mastered in the school environment
- Data sheets for parents to use

In Home
- Parent must be present during therapy
- Parents participate in training during each session
- Monthly summaries are provided to review all aspects of child’s programming
References


