



What is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)?

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a science that uses laws of learning to understand and teach behavior. Strategies based on ABA take a planned approach to changing what comes before and after a behavior to teach new skills and decrease challenging behaviors. Part of this planning is finding items and activities the child enjoys and using them as rewards.

For example, a parent may begin teaching imitation by showing the child how to roll a toy car, helping the child roll the car, and rewarding the child with tickles. A parent may use ABA strategies to teach requesting by providing juice when the child asks appropriately instead of when the child throws a tantrum.

ABA strategies can be used with anyone of any age and are not limited to teaching children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), although ABA strategies are effective for teaching children with ASD and have been endorsed by the Surgeon General, American Academy of Pediatrics, Autism Speaks, and many more organizations. For more information, please see the WV Birth to Three Family Guide to ABA.

ABA Is....



- Individualized for your child
- Reinforcement/reward driven
- Used with a variety of populations
- Used in a variety of settings
- Planned activities
- Making decisions with data

ABA Is Not...



- One-size fits all
- Punishment driven
- Limited to the treatment of ASD
- Limited to learning at a table
- Plan as you go
- Making decisions without data