

1 Parent-Child Services Group, Inc.

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Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

ABA is a well-developed discipline, dating back to B.F. Skinner in the 1950's. ABA is a science of applying experimentally derived principles of behavior to improve socially significant behavior, also known as improving a persons' quality of life. ABA takes what we know about behavior and uses it to bring about positive change (Applied). Behaviors are defined in observable and measurable terms in order to assess change over time (Behavior). The behavior is analyzed within the environment to determine what factors are influencing the behavior (Analysis). ABA is beneficial to all children with any range of disabilities, but is most commonly used with children who have been diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum.

ABA programs are individualized for each child's need. The child's strengths and weaknesses are first assessed using the Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills (ABLLS). After the assessment is complete, individualized goals are determined, teaching materials are made, and one-on-one therapy with an implementer begins. During the therapy sessions, the implementer works with the child on the predetermined goals while in a formal teaching environment (such as at the table) and an informal teaching environment (such as on the floor during play). This type of structure aids the child in generalizing his or her skills from the formal teaching environment into everyday life.

Therapy sessions can be done in the clinical setting at Parent-Child Services Group, Inc., in the child's home environment, or in some cases in the child's classroom. These sessions can range from 2 to 3 days a week for 1 to 2 hour sessions, to 5 days a week for 4 to 5 hour sessions or more. The number of hours will be determined by the parents and the Programmer and will take into account the child's schedule and needs. Research has shown that children who receive active engagement with intensive instructional programming, such as ABA, make the most progress if they receive at least 5 hours per day, 5 days per week (25 hours) year around. Our goal is to help each child learn skills as quickly as possible and reach his or her full potential.

Parent-Child Services Group, Inc. has a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) who has received her Master's of Science Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis from the Florida Institute of Technology. To become a BCBA, one must complete the appropriate course work, receive extensive supervision from a BCBA, and pass a rigorous national Behavior Analyst Certification Board examination. Currently, two other Programmers have completed their coursework and are working on finishing their supervision hours to sit for the Board examination in August, 2009.

The BCBA and Programmers train and work with Implementers during the ABA sessions. The implementers are generally students working on their Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree with backgrounds in education, speech-language pathology, or psychology. These students receive specialized training by our staff with weekly meetings to review strategies and learn new techniques for individual programs.

For more information on how ABA may help you and your child, call Parent-Child Services Group, Inc. at 865-584-5558.

References:

American Academy of Pediatrics
Autism Advocate
Behavior Analyst Certification Board
Wikipedia