



## Using Applied Behavior Analysis in Daily Activities

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) is an scientifically-based intervention which focuses on teaching new skills; maintaining or increasing appropriate behaviors; helping to generalize skills in different environments; and reducing or eliminating inappropriate or problem behaviors. ABA has been proven to be an effective intervention for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) when supervised by a certified behavior analyst. ABA techniques may sometimes seem un-natural, prompted, and rigid. However, these structured and consistent teaching methods reduce distractions and allow for focused learning.

ABA techniques can be used in all aspects of life and can improve the quality of life for a child and his or her family.

- Often, children ASD need to learn appropriate skills for routine daily activities. When teaching and practicing these skills, it is important to reinforce the child when he or she is successful to encourage these actions to continue.
- Larger activities may need to be broken down into smaller parts and reinforced before a full activity is learned. Sometimes these rewards may seem out of place, as the child may not understand the efforts toward a larger goal. These reinforcers motivate continued learning.
- When working to change inappropriate or challenging behaviors, it is helpful to identify why the child may be engaging in the behavior. See a challenging behavior from his or her point of view in order to intervene effectively.
- Prompting may be needed to assist the child in learning a skill, but should be reduced or eliminated as soon as possible. Use the least amount of prompting necessary. If the child is not doing the activity independently, first try to tell him or her to do it. If the verbal instruction doesn't work, point or make a gesture. Then, if the instruction is not followed, physically prompt to carry out the task but back away to allow the child to complete the task without full assistance. Keep practicing and fading away your prompts to promote independence.
- It is important to teach a child appropriate skills in order to replace inappropriate behaviors. Take the time to observe what happens before and after the behavior occurs. Notice how you or others respond to this behavior as that can be reinforcing the actions. You can use an "A-B-C" (Antecedent, Behavior, Consequences) worksheet to identify behavior patterns and motivators for problem behavior and help to develop strategies to change the behaviors. A blank worksheet can be found at [www.childrens-specialized.org/KohlsAutismAwareness](http://www.childrens-specialized.org/KohlsAutismAwareness) .

