



Building Quality ABA Educational Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders



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For presentation handouts go to the Autism Partnership website

→ Click on 'Resources' Link

→ Click on 'Presenters Notes'

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Introductions

- Introductions
- Housekeeping
- Confidentiality
- Breaks
- Group Rules



Behaviour Management for Children with Autism in the Classroom

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Challenging Features of ASD
- Diagnostic criteria
- Common challenges in a school setting



Terms you might hear:

Autism: Developmental disorder usually diagnosed within the first 3 years of life. It is manifested in impaired social, cognitive and communication skills, along with restricted repetitive behaviours.

"High Functioning Autism": Meet criteria for diagnosis of autism, but presentation is not as severe as classic autism.

Asperger's Disorder: Impaired social skills and restricted repetitive behaviours, but communication intact.

PDD-NOS (Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified): have some of the features of autism, but do not meet all the criteria.



Description of the disorder

SOCIAL

Rejecting Tolerant Awkward

COMMUNICATION

Non-verbal Echolalic Atypical

PLAY/LEISURE

Self-Stimulation Perseverative play Restricted range of interests

BEHAVIOUR

Aggressive Tantrums Passive



Associated Impairments

- Difficulty with perspective taking and understanding others point of view
- Naïve, gullible
- Difficulties coping with criticism, feel victimised
- Lack of empathy
- Lack of common sense and problem solving
- Obsessive about topics
- Inflexible and having difficulty coping with change
- Motor skill issues
- Easily stressed and over anxious



What Are We Seeing?

Running off
 Aggression
 Being the “policeman”
 Tantrums
 Refusing to do work
 Minimal participation
 Non-Compliance
 Being the “class clown”
 Protesting/Whining
 Self Stimulatory Behaviour



Common School Challenges

- Understanding complex instructions
- Unstructured situations
- Difficult tasks
- Social situations, especially playground
- Co-operative tasks
- Group learning
- Test taking
- Difficulties coping with criticism, feeling victimized
- Changes in routine
- Working independently
- Fine Motor tasks
- Gross Motor tasks



Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

Principles of ABA
 Use with individuals who have autism



Principles of ABA

A scientific approach to understanding and changing behaviour for any population

- Make a hypothesis
- Conduct a systematic trial
- Evaluate outcome





Principles of ABA

Focus is on **observable behaviours, not inferred mental processes**

Allows us to make predictions about effects of environmental events on behaviour

Only way to definitely evaluate whether change is occurring

Objectively reduces bias and misinterpretation



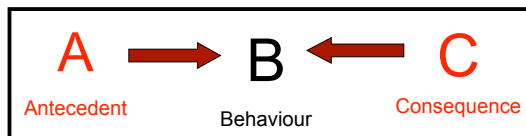
Application to Individuals with Autism

Principles of Behaviour Analysis can be *applied* to teaching individuals with autism

There is a huge evidence base for the effectiveness of behavioural methods in changing behaviour in this population



Principles of ABA



We can control what happens at A and C, in order to change B



Behaviours are learned

When a behaviour is followed by a negative consequence it is less likely to occur in future

When a behaviour is followed by a positive consequence it is more likely to occur again in future



Look Who's talking



Principles of ABA

Intervention of behaviour occurs when:

1. There is a behaviour to excess that needs to be reduced

...OR...

2. Skills are lacking that we need to teach



Learning How to Learn

- ☞ Engagement
- ☞ Attending
- ☞ Responding to Instructions
- ☞ Compliance
- ☞ Understanding the connection between responses and reinforcement
- ☞ Waiting
- ☞ Discriminating Instructions
- ☞ Staying on task for progressively longer periods of time
- ☞ Changing responses based on feedback

Autism Partnership A Discrete Trial

A → **B** ← **C**

Antecedent Behaviour Consequence

Autism Partnership A Discrete Trial

A → **B** ← **C**




Antecedent Behaviour Consequence

"come here"	child comes	"wow! You did it!"
"Where's the door?"	points to table	"no, that's not it"
School bell rings	child stays outside	child gets told off
School bell rings	child comes in	_____
'Shhh' gesture	child is quiet for story	story continues
'Shhh' gesture	child talks during story	pack up, work time
"say blow"	"blow"	blows bubbles

Autism Partnership Reinforcement

"Anything that increases the probability that the behaviour will occur again."

Where's your motivation?
e.g. work for love or money?


Autism Partnership Warning !!


CAUTION

Can't assume what we do is 'reinforcing'

"A reinforcer isn't a reinforcer unless it is reinforcing"

i.e. actually *increases* behaviour






Little Man Tate - tokens

Autism Partnership Guidelines of reinforcement

- ↪ Reinforcers should be CONTINGENT
- ↪ CATCH 'EM BEING GOOD (10:1)
- ↪ Initially reinforcement should occur immediately
- ↪ Initially reinforcement should be provided consistently
- ↪ Reinforcement should be faded as soon as possible
- ↪ Utilise differential reinforcement
- ↪ Use age-appropriate reinforcers
- ↪ Social reinforcement should be paired with tangibles

Autism Partnership Developing Reinforcers

- ↪ Expose to item/activity
- ↪ Force rotation to increase variety
- ↪ Teach how to use and enjoy
- ↪ Pair neutral items with strong reinforcers
- ↪ Make yourself a part of the reinforcer
- ↪ SELL, SELL, SELL!!



Annie reinforcement building



INSPIRATION!!

- Steal these ideas!
- Steal other's ideas!
- Unpredictability and novelty greatly enhance reinforcement value!
- Don't be afraid to look 'silly'!
- ALWAYS THINK ABOUT DEVELOPMENT!



Various reinforcement clips



Token Economy

- A ticket or sticker that can be exchanged for a variety of reinforcing items or activities
- Way of delaying the time until student cashes in for reinforcement
- Have fun with development!



Most Important . . .

MORE TOKENS !!!!!



Behaviour Management

- Functional Behaviour Assessment
- Proactive & Reactive Plans
- Managing Behaviour in a School Setting

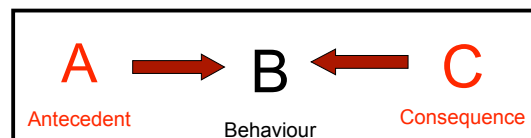


Functional Behaviour Assessments (FBA's)

- FBA's are used in classrooms around the world
- FBA's are an ABA based tool for understanding behaviour and changing behaviour
- Steps in an FBA:
 - ✦ Identify the Antecedents/ Behaviours/ Consequences
 - ✦ List the costs and payoffs
 - ✦ Hypothesise on the Function of the behaviour
 - ✦ Develop a behavioural plan: Proactive and Reactive
 - ✦ Implement the plan, using effective teaching strategies, & evaluate



Step 1: Identify the A-B-C's





Step 2: List Costs and Payoffs

- Look at the consequences



- What are the costs and payoffs to the child
 - ✦ If the costs outweigh payoffs → behaviour will reduce
 - ✦ If payoffs outweigh costs → behaviour will increase/ maintain



Step 3: Identify the Function

To hypothesise about the likely function of a child's behaviour is, we need to go back to the A-B-C model

PAYOFF:

- ✦ What does the child gain from engaging in the behaviour?
- ✦ Out of all the payoffs, what is the most likely to be maintaining the behaviour?
- ✦ Therefore, what is the most likely function?



Functions of Behaviour

- **Attention/Obtain a desire**
engage in a behaviour to gain attention (positive or negative), or to access an item
- **Avoidance/Escape/Reduction of Demands**
try to avoid or delay the onset of a demand
- **Power/Control**
child wants to control the situation/you, may be oppositional
- **Communication**
engage in behaviours as they cannot communicate their needs
- **Frustration/Stress Release**
engage in a behaviour in order to release their frustration
- **Self-Stimulation**
engage in repetitive behaviours for own pleasure



Step 4: Develop a Behaviour Plan

- 2 components to a behavioural plan
 - ✦ PROACTIVE – teaching that occurs away from/prior to behaviour
 - ✦ REACTIVE – how you deal with behaviour once it has occurred



Reactive Strategy Guidelines

1. The absence of disruptive behaviours should be reinforced
2. The presence of appropriate behaviours should result in even stronger reinforcement
3. Disruptive behaviours should result in the loss of reinforcement
4. Disruptive behaviours should result in as little attention as possible. Remain 'neutral'
5. If the disruptive behaviour presents a danger to the child or to anyone else then the least intrusive procedure should be implemented.
6. Pick your battles! (it takes two to argue)
7. This is not the time to teach!



Proactive Strategy Guidelines

TEACH TEACH TEACH !!!



Teach skills that meet the **function** of the behaviour

Identify appropriate replacement skills

Break the skill down

Use effective teaching strategies





Proactive Strategies

FUNCTION	REPLACEMENT SKILL
Attention	-Peer Relationships -Appropriate Initiation Techniques -Talents/ Skills
Avoidance/ Reduction of Demands	-Negotiation -Request Break -Compliance Training
Power/ Control	-Choice Making Skills -Compliance Training -Flexibility Training -Appropriate Areas of Control



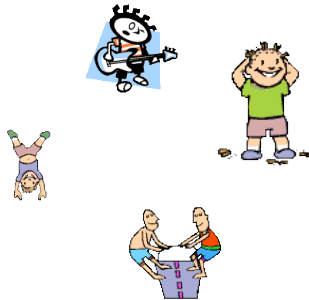
Proactive Strategies

FUNCTION	REPLACEMENT SKILL
Frustration Release/ Stress Reduction	- Stress Management Techniques -Frustration Tolerance -Increased Coping Skills
Communication	- Increased verbal skills -Augmentative Communication -PECS
Self-Stimulation	-Leisure / Play Skills -Occupational Skills



Behaviour Management Guidelines

- ↪ Minimise stigma
- ↪ *Pick your battles !!!*
- ↪ Clear, calm, neutral
- ↪ Consistent
- ↪ Decisive
- ↪ *Planned in advance !!!*
- ↪ Catch 'em being good



What's so bad about bribery?

Bribery = Student is disruptive and then is promised reinforcement if behaviour stops

Problem → it reinforces disruptive behaviour

Problem → child will only comply if promised reinforcer

Problem → it works . . . but not for long

Wanna know the loophole????

Behaviour contract – get in *before the disruptive behaviour*

"First XXXX, then YYYYY"



Specific Behaviour Change Strategies

Reactive Strategies

- Reinforcement (absence)
- Corrective Feedback
- Time-Out
- Extinction
- Logical Consequences



Time out

Time Out = "time out *from reinforcement*"

Not always necessary to move the student

Not recommended for avoidance or or self-stimulatory behaviours!!! **Why not???**

Minimal attention to be given to the student while in 'time out'





Extinction

- Pay no attention to the student when a minor problem behaviour occurs, e.g. screeching when you talk to someone else.
- Ignore the behaviour, not the child
- Very difficult (almost impossible) to implement effectively in classrooms
- Not appropriate for Self-stimulatory or avoidance behaviours
- The behaviour will get worse before it gets better
- Examples:
 - Using a whining voice
 - Burping
 - Tapping pen to get reaction
- Works best if paired with reinforcement for absence of behaviour



Logical Consequence

- Consequence that fits the situation
- Use for mild problem behaviours
- Usually involves removal of the toy/activity that is the centre of the problem, e.g. twirling a puzzle piece
- Tell the student what they need to do instead
- Prompt them if necessary to ensure learning
- Examples:
 - Forget hat → not allowed out to recess
 - Playing with book → remove book
 - Hand in poor quality work → repeat task



Video Critique

Watch these video segments
What approach is the teacher using to change behaviour?



Mary Michael, Patrick



Specific Behaviour Change Strategies

Proactive Strategies

- Reinforcement Plan
- Token Economy
- Systematic De-sensitisation
- Antecedent Manipulation



Systematic Desensitisation

- Used to alleviate fears and phobias
- Helpful for addressing anxiety based behaviour
- Break down the stressful situation into small steps - create a hierarchy
- Expose the student to the least stressful step on the hierarchy and reinforce them for tolerating it
- Work your way up through the hierarchy systematically
- Examples: haircuts, cutting fingernails, dentist



Antecedent Manipulation

- To anticipate and prevent behaviour by changing a situation
- Change the A in the ABC
- Useful when you want to prevent a dangerous behaviour, e.g. absconding from home/school



Antecedent Manipulation

Examples:

- Seating (e.g. closer to teacher, on aide's lap during mat time)
- Reducing distractions (partitions, materials, peers)
- Back to the computers/windows
- Marks on floor
- Picture schedules
- More time
- Modified assignments
- Different grading scales
- Cueing attention (e.g. ready cue, call name, proximity)
- Reduced demands
- Student takes turn early, to avoid waiting
- Take clock off wall
- Student leaves group early to prevent disruptive behaviour



WARNING!!

→ *Antecedent manipulation* does not mean *accommodation*



→ Must have a plan to fade



Video Critique

Watch these video segments

What approach is the teacher using to change behaviour?



Mary Michael, Patrick



FBA

- Conduct Steps 1-4 of an FBA for **Max**
 - ✦ 1: A-B-C
 - ✦ 2: Costs & payoffs
 - ✦ 3: Identify function
 - ✦ 4: Proactive & reactive plans



Step 5: Implement and Evaluate

Hypothesis testing – we've taken our best guess at the function of the behaviour

If plan works → we were right

If plan fails → back to the drawing board

- Maybe the function wasn't right
- Maybe the function has changed
- Maybe the reinforcement for change wasn't strong enough



Managing Behaviour in the School Setting

- Follow the school policies
- Check in with the teacher
- Minimise stigma
- You don't have to win the battle, you have to win the war
- Keep everybody safe
- Consider parents/others in vicinity
- Request help for crisis situations



FBA

Josef

- Josef is in Grade 2. He is very intelligent and very chatty! During mat times, Josef will wriggle, fidget, touch the teacher's feet and whiteboard and pens, call out repeatedly and fall onto nearby peers. He laughs when the children tell him to "Stop it!"
- Reprimands from his teacher stop him for a brief time, but then he starts up again. The teacher feels like she is constantly forced to nag him about his behaviour.
- He is at his worst when the teacher is giving verbal instructions, and at his best when the class is discussing something of interest to him.
- Josef enjoys reading, singing, speaking in public, and having a break from work.

Conduct a FBA and determine how to deal with this behaviour proactively and reactively



Compliance Building

1. Create a compliance hierarchy
 - easy to follow → hardest to follow
2. Establish success in easier compliance areas
3. Utilise errorless compliance training
4. Create behavioural momentum
5. Provide meaningful consequences
6. Ask: "Is the instruction necessary?"
7. Only issue instructions you can follow through
8. If you want to give an instruction → Don't ask - tell
9. Ensure they understand instruction



Frustration Tolerance

1) Information Gathering

- Identify situations that are stressful to the child
- Arrange situations in a hierarchy



2) While child/situation is as relaxed as possible, expose her to the least stressful situation

- Provide reinforcement contingent on calm behaviour
- When child can remain calm for 3+ times, move on to next situation
- Proceed through hierarchy



Frustration Tolerance

3) Teach your child relaxation/stress management procedures

Once your child has learned relaxation strategies, prompt her to use them 'in the moment' when minimally stressed

Fade prompts rapidly



Stress Management

Objectives of teaching stress management:

- Teach an alternative management response to stress
- Increase child's tolerance to situations that can provoke stress
- Discriminate the difference between calm and agitated states
- Learn a relaxation technique
- Use relaxation techniques in a variety of places and situations
- Decrease inappropriate behaviours displayed in times of frustration
- Teach self-awareness of emotions and behaviour & learn to regulate emotional response



Stress Management

Considerations

- Lengthy & labour intensive program
- Relaxation is taught away from stressful situations
- Will not fix current behaviours
- Long term benefits, especially in teens



Stress Management

Step 1. Collect information

- Stress Hierarchy
- Calming items/places
- Behavioural escalation

Step 2. Teach the concept of calm

- Label 'calm' in the moment



Stress Management

Step 3. Teach Relaxation

Determine a relaxation style:

- Deep breathing
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)
- Guided imagery
- Activity (e.g. rocking chair)
- Object (e.g. stress ball)
- Self- talk
- Yoga



Stress Management

Step 4. Expose to mild stressors

Prompt relaxation response: Priming, Imitation, Direct Instruction

Reinforce calm behaviour

Step 5. Increase independent responding

Fade prompts

Step 6. Systematically expose to higher levels of stress

Mild → Moderate → High

Step 7. Systematically Expose to more natural environment

Lighting, distractions, etc.

Using relaxation techniques 'in vivo'