

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS

A number of terms have been used to describe behavioral intervention approaches used for children with ASD. Such terms include:

- **Lovaas approach**
- **ABA**
- **Behavior modification**
- **Discrete-trial teaching or training**
- **Verbal behavior approach**
- **Milieu teaching**-a group of techniques using a more naturalistic or **incidental teaching** approach (Fenske et al; Koegal)

Confusion in Terminology:

One common example of this confusion is that the term Lovaas Approach is often used interchangeably with terms such as ABA or discrete-trial teaching.

Lovaas Therapy is a specific approach and the term can only be used by programs affiliated with the Lovaas Institute for early Intervention.

In much of the literature, the terms **ABA** and **discrete trial teaching** are also used interchangeably.

ABA- APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS is the science in which procedures derived from the principles of behavior are systematically applied to improve socially significant behavior to a meaningful degree and to demonstrate experimentally that procedures employed were responsible for improvement in behavior.

Many programs that are called ABA are not programs that employ only one technique, but are actually programs that employ a **combinations of strategies** including:

- behavior management techniques
- discrete-trial teaching
- individualized instruction
- structured programming
- reinforcement
- naturalistic teaching
- individualized instruction
- generalization

Discrete trial teaching- a technique that breaks skills into smaller parts; teaches one subskill at a time until mastery; provides concentrated teaching; provides prompting and prompt fading and uses reinforcement procedures.(McEachin and Leaf)

Contemporary ABA techniques

- Incidental teaching
- Pivotal response training

Many practitioners, who use both traditional ABA techniques along with contemporary ABA techniques, recognize that some concepts are best taught through discrete-trial teaching while others are best taught with incidental teaching.