



Pivotal MINDS



# Your Guide to ABA



# What is ABA?

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a scientific discipline concerned with understanding human behavior and applying interventions based on learning principles to improve socially significant behaviors. It's often used in various fields such as education, therapy, and treatment of behavioral disorders, particularly autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Key features of ABA include:

1. Objective Measurement: Behavior is measured and analyzed objectively to assess changes over time.
2. Behavioral Principles: ABA relies on principles of learning and behavior, such as reinforcement, shaping, prompting, and fading.
3. Individualized Approach: Interventions are tailored to the unique needs and characteristics of each individual.
4. Data-Driven Decision Making: Progress is evaluated based on data collected during intervention, allowing for adjustments as needed.
5. Socially Significant Outcomes: ABA focuses on improving behaviors that are important for the individual's daily life and social interactions.

ABA techniques can be used to teach new skills, reduce problem behaviors, increase communication and social skills, and improve quality of life for individuals across the lifespan. It often involves structured teaching sessions, breaking skills down into smaller steps, and providing reinforcement for desired behaviors.



# ABA in Ontario

In some regions, including Ontario, parents or caregivers may have the flexibility to choose the modality of ABA therapy that best suits their child's needs. This means they can select from various approaches within the broader framework of ABA, such as discrete trial training, naturalistic teaching strategies, verbal behavior therapy, or a combination thereof. This choice allows families to tailor the intervention to their child's unique strengths, challenges, and learning style.

Empowering parents to choose the modality of ABA therapy reflects a recognition of the importance of individualized treatment and family-centered care. It acknowledges that what works best for one child may not be the most effective approach for another. By providing families with options, it helps ensure that ABA therapy is better aligned with the preferences, values, and goals of each family.

However, it's important to note that funding and policy details can change over time, so it's advisable for individuals seeking ABA therapy in Ontario to consult current government resources or local service providers for the most up-to-date information on funding and therapy options.



## What comes first?

You need to select a reputable center with a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA) as your initial point of contact. The BCBA will conduct a meeting with you and your child to observe and gather information about your child's history. The purpose of this meeting is to collaboratively determine and agree upon a course of action for your child. Following this meeting, the BCBA will develop a personalized program tailored specifically to your child (and/or family). Additionally, they will draft an "Individualized Service Plan" or "Behaviour Plan," which essentially serves as a documented agreement between you and the BCBA regarding the next steps for your child.



# The Role of the BCBA

A Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) is a professional trained in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). Their duties include conducting assessments, developing individualized treatment plans, overseeing implementation of interventions, training staff and caregivers, and monitoring progress to promote positive behavior change in individuals with developmental challenges or behavioral disorders.

The BCBA will provide directives to the Instructor Therapist regarding the program and will engage in supervisory roles during your child's therapy. Supervision may encompass in-person oversight, documentation, and addressing tailored matters for your child behind the scenes.

An Instructor Therapist is the professional who will collaborate with your child or your family to carry out treatment procedures.



# The Role of the Instructor Therapist

In Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), an Instructor Therapist plays a crucial role in implementing the individualized treatment plan designed by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) or other qualified supervisor. Their responsibilities typically include:

- **Delivering ABA interventions:** Implementing behavior analytic strategies and techniques as outlined in the treatment plan to teach new skills and reduce problem behaviors.
- **Direct client interaction:** Working one-on-one with clients to facilitate skill acquisition, language development, social interaction, and other targeted behaviors.
- **Data collection:** Accurately recording and documenting client progress and behavior data during therapy sessions to track outcomes and inform decision-making.
- **Collaboration with the BCBA:** Communicating regularly with the BCBA to discuss client progress, receive feedback on interventions, and make adjustments to the treatment plan as needed.
- **Parent/caregiver training:** Providing guidance and support to parents or caregivers on implementing behavior management techniques and strategies in the home environment.
- **Maintaining professional standards:** Adhering to ethical guidelines and best practices in ABA therapy, as well as participating in ongoing professional development to enhance skills and knowledge.



# ABA at Pivotal Minds

At Pivotal Minds, we provide standard ABA therapy, primarily utilizing Discrete Trial Training (DTT), the most widely recognized approach in Ontario.

Additionally, we offer Pivotal Response Training. While we can detail the distinctions, the key is that Ontario parents have the freedom to select the approach they deem best.

Our BCBAs are proficient in both methods and can guide you in choosing the most suitable option for your child and/or family.

Pivotal Minds includes a Diagnostic Assessment Centre where your child can undergo testing to determine whether they meet the diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder. We stand out as the sole center in Ontario with a medical director who is a pediatrician specializing in ASD.



# Discrete Trial Training (DTT)

Discrete Trial Training (DTT) (known as “ABA” in Ontario, is a structured and systematic teaching method commonly used in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy, particularly with individuals on the autism spectrum. It involves breaking down complex skills into smaller, more manageable components and teaching them through repeated, structured trials

Each trial consists of three main parts: the antecedent (instruction or cue), the behavior (response from the individual), and the consequence (feedback or reinforcement). DTT typically employs clear and consistent prompts, repetition, and positive reinforcement to teach new skills and behaviors. It emphasizes repetition and reinforcement to promote learning and skill acquisition. DTT is often used to teach foundational skills such as language, social interaction, self-care, and academic concepts. While it is effective for many individuals with developmental challenges, its structured nature may not suit everyone, and modifications may be needed to accommodate individual differences and preferences.

**DTT usually comprises a therapeutic approach that primarily involves the instructor therapist working directly with the child.** (\*At Pivotal Minds, caregivers are always welcome).



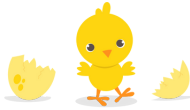


# Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT)

Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) is a remarkable intervention for children, actively involving families and empowering them with skills to use at home. Tailored for children aged 18 months to 6 years, PRT focuses on pivotal behaviors that significantly influence a child's development, such as motivation, self-management, and social interaction.

Unlike traditional ABA methods, PRT emphasizes naturalistic teaching strategies and promotes child-initiated learning, making it engaging and effective. By coaching families and caregivers, PRT extends its impact beyond therapy sessions, fostering continuous growth and progress in children's development, communication, and social skills.

PRT treatment empowers children with developmental challenges through family involvement and naturalistic teaching methods, fostering critical skills like communication and social interaction. By intervening early and holistically, **PRT can positively reshape a child's developmental trajectory, unlocking their potential for lifelong success and fulfillment.**



**PIVOTAL MINDS**

# we've got something for everyone



**1** DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT CENTRE



**2** ABA (DTT) THERAPY



**3** PRT THERAPY



**4** SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS



**5** SUMMER CAMPS



**6** PARENT PROGRAMS

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