



# INTRO TO APPLIED BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS (ABA) THERAPY

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**K.I.D.S. IQ**  
**PROJECT**

Advancing drug development for  
Kids with Intellectual Disability Syndromes

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*info@kidsIQproject.org*

# Today's Webinar Panelists

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**Braden Root-McCaig** (Moderator)

- ▣ Executive Director, K.I.D.S. IQ Project



**Keery Wolf, BCBA**

- ▣ MEd, Early Childhood Special Education
- ▣ Board Certified Behavior Analyst

# What We'll Cover Today

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- ❑ Background
- ❑ What Applied Behavior Therapy (ABA) is... and isn't
- ❑ How you can use ABA with your child
- ❑ How to get your school to use ABA
- ❑ Where to go to get more information

# Keery Wolf, Background

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## Teaching:

- ▣ Special education in Maryland
- ▣ Kindergarten/1st grade self contained class for 3 years.

## In-Home:

- ▣ Left the schools to work with families with children with autism in their homes. Became the lead teacher/trainer at Project BEST-CASE at Munroe-Meyer Institute

## BCBA:

- ▣ Became Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- ▣ Started own company and supervised full and part time home ABA programs.
- ▣ training teachers and para-educators about ABA.

# What ABA is

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- \* **Applied behavior analysis** (ABA) is a scientific discipline concerned with **applying** techniques based upon the principles of learning to change **behavior** of social significance.
- \* ABA can be used with **anyone** that needs to increase a skill (positive behavior) or decrease a negative behavior.

# What ABA isn't

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- \* Only for kids with Autism Spectrum Disorders
- \* Only sitting across from a child at a table, drilling skills and giving candy as a reward
- \* Bribery



Use ABA every day



# The ABC's of ABA

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Looks at all behavior through a three-term contingency:

- \* What happens before the behavior? (***A-antecedent***)
- \* What does the behavior look like? (***B-behavior***)
- \* What happens immediately following the behavior? (***C-consequence***)

The three-term contingency is then used to plan how to teach:

- \* **A**= the command, expectation, or setting event
- \* **B** = response (correct response, incorrect response, no response, negative behavior);
- \* **C** = Depends on the response (reinforcement, prompt, or others)

# Maintaining Variables

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Look at the purpose (function) of the behavior:

- \*Attention

- \*Escape/Avoidance

- \*Tangible (things, i.e. food)

- \*Self-stimulatory

# Instructional Control

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Instructional control is the likelihood that your instructions will evoke a correct response from your child (your instructions “control” the responses of your student).

If you do not have instructional control, you might describe your child as noncompliant or non-responsive.

# 7 Steps of Instructional Control

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1. Control reinforcers
2. Pair yourself as a reinforcer
3. Show your student you can be trusted
4. Following directions = getting what you want
5. Begin by reinforcing all positive responses
6. Demonstrate you know the child's priorities
7. No response = no reinforcement [video](#)

*This approach to Instructional Control comes from Robert Schramm, MA, BCBA and can be downloaded at: <http://www.autismusaba.de/cms/en/aba-infos/aba-articles/the-7-steps.html>*

# Effective Instruction Delivery

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- \* Gain the child's attention, before you deliver an instruction
- \* Deliver instructions as directives, not questions.
- \* Deliver instructions in close proximity (2-4 feet)
- \* Use a quiet-toned, neutral voice
- \* Be descriptive in the instruction
- \* Tell the child what TO do, instead of what NOT to do
- \* Avoid compound instructions
- \* If no response, give a 3-5 second wait period, then prompt *without redelivering the instruction*

# Motivation

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- \* Environmental changes that effect behavior on two levels:
  - \* they increase (or decrease) the effectiveness of an instruction
  - \* they change behavior

*Motivations change all the time, and so do their effects on behavior.*

# Motivation & Instructional Control

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There are three areas to consider when thinking about motivation, or lack thereof:

- \* Setting - Is the setting conducive to learning or distracting from learning?
- \* Task - Is the response effort required for the task appropriate?
- \* Reinforcement - Does the reinforcement match the response effort required? Is the reinforcement reinforcing?

# What is a demand?



# Shape the behavior

# Last Word on Motivation

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- \* Remember: Every time your child shows you that he wants something, you have an opportunity to teach.
- \* Capitalize on your child's "in-the-moment" motivation to present simple instructions to teach something new or maintain instructional control.
- \* Use what you know about the child's general interests and motivations to create a motivating environment for learning.

# The Best Positive Reinforcer

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*Who knows what reinforcer works  
every time?*

# The Best Positive Reinforcer

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*The one that increases the target behaviour!*

# Reinforcement

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- \* Pair yourself with reinforcement
- \* Do reinforcer assessments frequently
- \* Define the target behavior and collect data to determine if reinforcement is increasing the target behavior
- \* **Don't stop reinforcing a behavior because you think the child is doing fine without it**

# Fading Reinforcement

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- \* Begin with reinforcing **all** correct trials
- \* After child begins to be successful, reinforce every 2-3 trials, interspersing mastered tasks.
- \* Be sure behavior continues to increase
- \* Then reinforce every 4-5 trials, continuing to intersperse mastered tasks.
- \* Begin using a token system that will continue to thin the rate of reinforcement.
- \* If it isn't working, it most likely isn't the child. It could be:
  - \* the task
  - \* the setting
  - \* the reinforcement

# Get your school on board

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- \* Build a relationship with the school. Find out what they do already with ABA.
- \* Once you have used the principals of ABA at home, let them know of your success. Show them the data!
- \* If they are reluctant, recommend techniques rather than asking directly for ABA. For instance, request that your child's IEP goals be derived from the ABLLS/VB-MAPP
- \* Find a specialist to help you.

# More information

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- \* Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) - [BACB.com](http://BACB.com)
- \* Robert Schramm - [knospe-aba.com](http://knospe-aba.com)
- \* Autism Speaks - [autismspeaks.org](http://autismspeaks.org)
- \* Keery Wolf - [keeryw@me.com](mailto:keeryw@me.com)



# QUESTION & ANSWERS

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