



Autism Spectrum Disorders Key Terms and Acronyms

ABA

See Applied behavior analysis

Accommodations

Alterations to the environment, equipment, or format of a curriculum to allow equal access to the content; accommodations do not alter the actual content of the material being taught.

Adaptive behavior

An individual's manner of dealing with the demands of daily life, including self-care skills, organizational skills, basic interpersonal skills, and conformance to community standards (obeying rules, taking responsibility, etc.)

Antecedent:

An event or activity that immediately precedes a behavior

Applied behavior analysis (ABA)

Based on behavioral theory, a prescribed set of interventions designed to improve socially relevant behaviors and skills

Assistive technology

Means any device or service that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability

Attention

The ability to concentrate as needed

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Any of a range of behavioral disorders in children characterized by symptoms that include poor concentration, an inability to focus on tasks, difficulty in paying attention, and impulsivity. A person can be predominantly inattentive (often referred to as ADD), predominantly hyperactive-impulsive, or a combination of these two.

Auditory processing

How the brain processes and interprets what is heard through the ear

Autism

"Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences. Autism

does not apply if a child's education performance is adversely affected because the child has an emotional disturbance," 34 CFR Section 300.8 (c)(1)(i-iii)

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause for autism. *ASD is a lifelong disorder with no single cause.* (Autism Fact Sheet)

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

See Autism

Baseline

Data collected prior to starting an intervention

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

A plan that defines how a setting will be changed to improve a learner's behavioral success

Body language

Information about a person's thoughts or feelings that is unconsciously conveyed through physical mannerisms

Cognition

Conscious mental activity, including thinking, perceiving, reasoning, and learning

Collaboration

Working together for a common goal

Communication

The deliberate conveying of information to another person

Communication disorder

Stuttering, impaired articulation, language or voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance

Community of Practice (CoP)

Concept referring to the process of social learning that occurs when people who have a common interest in some subject or problem collaborate over an extended period to share ideas, find solutions, and build innovations. This work is meant to expand knowledge and/or improve practice.

Consequence

The response (positive or negative) to a behavior

Contingency

Something that occurs as a result of another factor

Data Based Decision-making

Instructional decisions based on student performance data

Data collection

Any method of recording behavioral data for subsequent analysis

Dialogue Guides

Tools for building shared understanding and shared implementation efforts through conducting interactive discussions that seek common ground and encourage application

DSM-IV-TR

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fourth Edition Text Revised is the main diagnostic reference of mental health professionals. In this manual, autism spectrum disorders are referred to as Autistic Disorder, Asperger Syndrome, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder not otherwise specified.

Echolalia

The repetition of sounds, words, or phrases heard in the environment

Emotional regulation

Control of emotions, stabilization, ability to recognize your emotional state and make changes as necessary

Empathy

The ability to understand how another person feels or what he/she may be thinking; sometimes referred to as “putting yourself in another person’s shoes.” Sometimes referred to as theory of mind.

Empirically Supportive Intervention

Educational practices/instructional strategies supported by relevant scientific research studies or research-based “best practice”.

Evidence-based Practice

Educational practices/instructional strategies supported by relevant scientific research studies or research-based “best practice”.

Executive Function

A collection of brain processes which are responsible for planning, flexibility, abstract thinking, rule acquisition, initiating appropriate actions and inhibiting inappropriate actions, and selecting relevant sensory information.

Fading

Decreasing the level of assistance needed to complete a task or activity.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Special education and related services that – (a) Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; (b) Meet the standards of the SEA, including the requirements of this part; (c) Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the State involved; and (d) Are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that meets the requirements of §§ 300.320 through 300.324. [IDEA 2004 Part B Regulations, §3

Fidelity of Implementation

Implementation of an intervention, program, or curriculum according to research findings and/or on developers' specifications

Flourishing

Positive mental health

Fluency

A stage of learning, during which a person can perform an activity with little to no thought

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)

A problem solving process for addressing challenging behavior. An assessment which involves collecting data to determine the possible cause of problem behaviors and identifying strategies to address the behaviors.

Functional communication

The ability to receive or to convey a message, regardless of the mode, to communicate effectively and independently in a given environment

Generalization

Transferring a skill/behavior into other environments

Graphic organizer

Strategy for graphically representing concepts and providing links among concepts.

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004

Original passage in 1975; latest reauthorization 2004; federal statute relative to education and services to students with disabilities ages 3 through 21

IDEA Partnership

IDEA Part D federal grant; collaboration of 55 plus national organizations, technical assistance providers, and State and local organizations and agencies, together with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)

Individualized education program (IEP)

A written plan developed by a specified group of people who know the child, including parents, that specifies the services and accommodations the school will provide to a child with a disability.

Intervention

Specialized activities that target students' individual needs to develop their knowledge or skills in their area of weakness.

Intervention strategies

See Intervention

Joint attention

Consciously focusing one's attention on the same event or object as another person.

Least Restrictive Environment

A student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent possible.

LEA– Local Education Agency

Refers to a specific school district or a group of school districts in a cooperative or regional configuration

Linguistic

Related to language

Mental Health

“a state of successful performance of mental function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with people, and the ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999, p. 4). Mental health is not merely the absence of mental illness but the presence of something positive

Motivation

Wanting to partake of an object or activity. Intrinsic desire within one's self.

Natural reinforcers

Reinforcers that are logically related to the task at hand For example, if the student points at a book and says “book,” handing him the book is the natural reinforcer. Consequences that increase the likelihood of the reoccurrence of the behavior.

Nonverbal behaviors

Deliberate behaviors other than speech/vocalizing

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)

A chronic anxiety disorder most commonly characterized by obsessive,

distressing, repetitive thoughts and related compulsions

Operational definition

Describes a behavior in observable and measurable terms such that any person may identify the behavior when it occurs

Overt behaviors

Behaviors that can be observed

Peer network

A group of peers that includes an individual with ASD and is structured around a specific purpose such as tutoring or play.

Positive Behavior Supports

Evidence-based practices embedded in the school curriculum/culture/expectations that have a prevention focus; teaching, practice, and demonstration of pro-social behaviors

Positive psychology

The study of processes and conditions that promote optimal functioning in people including positive affect, positive character strengths, and positive institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000)

Positive Youth Development

Building and improving assets that enable youth to grow and flourish throughout life (Larson, 2000).

Priming

See rehearsal below

Prompts

Supplemental support to elicit the target behavior

Punishment

Events that follow a behavior and decrease the likelihood of the behavior reoccurring

Reciprocal interactions/conversation

Social situations that involve give-and-take or back-and-forth exchanges

Regression

A child appears to develop typically but then begins to lose speech and social skills, typically between the ages of 15 and 30 months, and is subsequently diagnosed with autism.

Rehearsal/Priming

Acting out a situation in order to practice skills in a structured, positive environment

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)

A decision making framework that guides the selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students. Services are often organized within a three-tiered approach including universal, targeted and tertiary prevention.

Positive Reinforcement

Presentation of something immediately following a behavior that makes that behavior more likely to occur in the future

Response to Intervention/Response to Instruction/Responsiveness to Intervention (RTI)

Practice of providing high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction or goals and applying child response data to important educational decisions

Role-playing

Acting out a situation in order to practice skills in a structured, positive environment.

Scaffolding

Adjusting the level of support provided based on the child's level of comfort and competence. This can include supports in the form of modeling, prompts, direct explanations, and targeted questions.

SEA – State Education Agency

Refers to the Department of Education at the state level

Self-advocacy

Speaking up for oneself-- asking for what one needs.

Self-awareness

The ability to monitor, assess, and modify one's own behavior.

Self-determination

Deciding one's own fate/future.

Self-monitoring

Recording data about one's own behavior

Self-regulation

In sensory processing, an individual's method of responding to sensory input

Self-stimulatory behaviors

Repetitive, apparently non-functional behaviors that provide some sensory input (e.g., finger flicking or rocking); also known as "stereotypies"

Semantic mapping

Incorporates visual strategies to help students stay on a selected topic.

Sensory integration

The organization of sensory input for use. The use may be a perception of the body or world, an adaptive response or learning process.

Sensory Processing

A person's way of noticing & responding to sensory messages from their body and the environment. A complex set of actions that enable the brain to understand what is going on both inside your own body and in the world around you.

Individuals with disabilities may respond to sensory input in more extreme ways.

For example, persons with autism may be more sensitive to sounds and touch.

Two major patterns of sensory processing:

- Over-responsive to sensory input (hypersensitive) - Responds to sensory input more intensely, more quickly, &/or for a longer period of time. The person may display patterns of sensory avoidance or hyper-reactivity to sensory input.
- Under-responsive to sensory input (hyposensitive) - Responds less to sensory input. Person misses stimuli that others notice easily; system needs stronger input to activate. (Dunn, 2007)

Shaping

Development of a new target behavior by the reinforcement of closer approximations the target behavior (e.g. target behavior placing utensils appropriately in a place-setting, reinforcement initially occurs for getting utensils to table, then placing utensils at each place-setting and then finally for placing the fork on the left and the spoon and knife on the right).

SLA - State Lead Agency

The state agency designated to provide oversight for IDEA Part C Program

Social cognition/social thinking

How a person processes and interprets information about other people and their interactions.

Social communication

The reciprocal use or exchange of information that has a deliberate effect on another person's concentration, thought processes, or emotions

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) -

Social emotional learning is the process of teaching children and youth skills needed to handle ourselves effectively in everyday life and establish meaningful relationships. These skills include recognizing and managing emotions, developing caring and positive relationships, making responsible decisions and handling life challenges effectively. (www.casel.org)

Social interaction

Dynamic, changing sequence of social actions between individuals or groups who

modify their behavior in response to one another.

Social learning

Learning to understand others' perspectives and to behave in ways that others will consider socially appropriate

Socialization/Social skills

Socially acceptable learned behaviors that enable a person to interact with others in ways that elicit positive responses and assist in avoiding negative responses

Social validity

The extent to which the people directly involved with social skills programming believe it is valuable for the child or adolescent with ASD and, therefore, are likely to be enthusiastic about supporting and implementing it.

Stakeholder

Anyone affected by or invested in the implementation and outcomes of a process or activity. For example, teachers, students, administrators, and families are all stakeholders in education

Structured leisure participation

Participation in organized activities that possess the following characteristics: regular participation schedules, rule-guided interaction, direction by one or more adult leaders, an emphasis on skill development that increases in complexity and challenge, and performance that requires sustained active attention and the feedback (Mahoney et al., 2005). Participation in structured leisure is associated with both personal and interpersonal development.

Symbol

An abstract representation that communicates an idea; symbols can range from pictures to written and spoken language

Symbolic communication

Use of symbols of any sort to communicate meaning

Token

An item that may be earned for displaying an appropriate behavior and redeemed later for a reinforcer. Examples include stickers, points, fake coins.

Transition

Any environmental change, such as a change of location, activity, or support personnel. 1) Transitions can be minor, such as changing activities within the classroom, or major, such as moving from elementary school to middle school. 2) The change from school to post-school life.

Visual Schedule

A visual schedule will tell the student what activities will occur and in what sequence. Schedules can be object-based (e.g. a shopping bag means student is

going shopping), photograph/picture symbol (e.g. a picture of the grocery store) or traditional orthography.

Visual supports

Tools that are used to increase the understanding of language, environmental expectations, and to provide structure and support. For example a photograph of the staff member with whom the child will be working or a skittles candy wrapper that is handed-over to request a skittle snack.