**Brief Introduction to Applied Behavioral Analysis Basics**

**Things to know about behavior:**

- All behavior is communicative.
- All behavior is logical from the point of view of the person exhibiting it.
- Even though behavioral challenges are upsetting and difficult to cope with, children don’t normally misbehave with the purpose of upsetting you, unless upsetting you results in something the child wants (i.e. attention, or to see you “give in” due to the annoyance).
- Behaviors occur because the child is trying to tell us something, or to ask us for something.
- All behavior is functional—people do not continue to exhibit behaviors that don’t “work” for them.
- When a behavior no longer “works,” then the person will abandon the behavior for another behavior that does “work.”
- Children repeat behaviors because the behaviors are being reinforced, or “rewarded” in some way, shape, or form.
- Behaviors cannot be eliminated, but they can be replaced and shaped

**Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)** is a scientific approach to:

- Observing, evaluating, and developing a plan to address undesired behaviors.
- Careful study of behavior, along with understanding of the role of environment and events just before and right after behaviors occur, can give parents and other caretakers the information they need to begin shaping a child’s behavior.

**Relevant websites:**

There is a lot of useful information about ABA here:

http://www.kennedykrieger.org/kki_misc.jsp?pid=4761&bl=1

and on this website:

http://www.autismspeaks.org/whattodo/what_is_aba.php

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