



What is Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)?

Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) is an evidence-based approach to learning and behaviour that utilises the child's desire for positive experiences, to support them to develop skills and functional behaviours. It also aims to reduce socially inappropriate or dangerous behaviours. The principles of ABA guide how our Therapists approach the development, implementation, and review of a program of therapy.

What is the connection between ABA and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)?

ABA is a behavioural approach aimed at understanding and improving behaviour. Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) has actually evolved from ABA and even today, ABA is considered one of the therapies used within the Positive Behaviour Support Framework. In fact, ABA has provided a conceptual framework relevant to behaviour change. It has also provided a number of assessment and intervention strategies that allow us to implement PBS.

ABA has also evolved over time and present-day ABA is still data-driven and the focus remains on understanding the function of the behaviour. ABA also determines the Antecedent, Behaviour and Consequence (ABC's) which are used to inform behaviour change. It then utilises task analysis to teach new skills, utilising reinforcement for motivation, in turn reducing undesirable behaviours. Lastly, skill generalisation is considered and developed in order to increase the person's success across all of the different aspects of their life.

Who can benefit from ABA?

ABA is a systematic and evidence-based approach that anyone can benefit from. While the majority of the published research focuses on the efficacy of ABA in supporting skill development and behaviour management for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and similar disabilities, meaningful results can be seen when the principles of ABA are used to support children with or without a disability to learn new skills and manage behaviours of concern.



What does ABA teach?

ABA uses a variety of techniques to breakdown complex skills or behaviours into a smaller sequence of steps, to enable behaviour change or skill development. This process can be applied to the teaching of simple physical activities such as copying hand actions (e.g. motor imitation), academic and daily living skills (e.g. joint attention), and also the reduction of unhelpful or dangerous behaviours (e.g. tantrums or head banging). ABA assesses your child's skills and behaviours, in order to plan a teaching sequence that enables your child to achieve the desired outcome, goals, or skills.

What is involved in an ABA therapy program?

- Observing a particular action or reaction (behaviour).
- Identifying what happened before the behaviour occurred (antecedent).
- Identifying what happened after the behaviour occurred (consequence).
- Analysing the role of antecedents and consequences to identify why the child may be behaving in that way (function).
- Developing a plan to encourage appropriate behaviour, and discourage inappropriate behaviour, by modifying antecedents and consequences, and providing alternate behaviours to assist the child to achieve their needs.
- Responding in planned and consistent way to a child's behaviours, to ensure that they are able to practice and learn with a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
- Teaching parents, family members, and carers the techniques used in therapy, so that they feel confident in being able to manage their child's behaviours.

What does a Junior Therapist do?

A Junior Therapist's role is to implement an ABA therapy program. Having a Junior Therapist on your child's team can assist by increasing the number of contact hours with your child, so that they are able to be given more opportunities to practice new skills across different environments, and with different people. Some families also enjoy having a Junior Therapist on their team as they provide a more economic option for behaviour therapy. Your Junior Therapist will work closely with your child's supervising Therapist through a combination of direct (i.e. attending the session) and indirect (i.e. video review, clinical review) supervision on a regular basis, to ensure that all goals have been targeted effectively. All of Behaviour+ Junior Therapists have been trained to the Registered Behaviour Technician (RBT) level competency in ABA principles.



What is the parent's role?

Behaviour+ specialises in family focused therapy programs that empower parents and other important people in your child's life to use the principles of ABA, to support long term skill development and behaviour support. We do this by involving the parents in the session by providing parent training, so that you feel confident reinforcing the new skills and can provide consistency for your child. The key to a successful program of therapy requires a partnership between the Therapist and parents, as all parties bring valuable knowledge and skills to help children achieve their goals.

ABA training for parents and caregivers

Behaviour+ offers an individualised parent training session with you and your child's Therapist. You are welcome to invite anyone else who spends a significant amount of time with your child and feel would benefit from this information. We strongly suggest participating in this service to learn the foundations of ABA that apply to your child, thus increasing the potential benefits of behaviour therapy.

Some of the many evidence-based benefits of parent training on the practices and theories of ABA include:

- Learning to understand the causes and consequences of your child's behaviour, which is necessary to quickly identify solutions.
- Feeling more equipped and confident to carry out behavioural interventions as suggested by your child's Therapist to manage behaviours such as tantrums and non-compliance.
- Maximizing your child's access to learning opportunities throughout their daily routines.
- Increasing the chances of skill generalisation in your child's natural environment.
- Ensuring consistency of expectations throughout your child's different environments to enhance skill acquisition and decrease behaviours of concern.
- Learning ways to improve communication with your child, which can lead to healthier relationships between your child and the people within their life.

Can my child's sibling be involved?

Absolutely! Behaviour+ delivers a family focused model of service and we acknowledge that siblings are important people in a child's life. Young siblings may join in the therapy sessions, particularly with goals like developing play or social skills. Siblings who are old enough may take on a more formal role in your child's therapy by sharing their knowledge and skills with the therapist, and supporting your child to engage in therapy, or practice their newly developing skills.



Who decides which behaviours or skills are the focus of therapy?

Our Therapists work with your family and other important people in your child's life to develop an individual therapy program that focuses on family priorities. You may have very specific goals such as 'I would like my child to be able to hold a pencil' or 'I would like my child to stop biting their brother'. Or your goal might be broad such as 'I would like my child to be able to play with other children more easily' or 'I would like my child to be ready for school next year'.

Once priorities and goals have been identified, your Therapist will conduct assessments in order to gather essential information required for an individual therapy program. Based on the results of these assessments, your Therapist may make recommendations about:

- Breaking long term goals down into smaller steps
- Skills your child needs to develop before they can begin working towards a set goal
- The order in which to work on your different goals

The Therapist will then develop an individual therapy program based on the goals and priorities you have decided upon, and your child's current skill level. These goals will be periodically reviewed after consulting with you, to ensure that they are still relevant and meeting your child's needs.

How long does therapy go for?

There are no set timeframes on how long therapy goes for, because each child is different and receives an individualised plan. Our programs are delivered with your child's needs and your preference in mind, which may be on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Alternatively, there is the option of using our Junior Therapists to deliver therapy multiple times a week. The Therapists will discuss the possible options, however, the choice is yours. The program duration depends on the child's skill level, how many goals are being worked on, how complex those goals are, the frequency of sessions, and what other supports are available to the child and family. Being family focused, Behaviour+ ensures families are consulted about these aspects throughout our services.

The therapy goals that you select are regularly reviewed by your Therapist, with the opportunity to develop new goals as the other goals have been mastered. As our programs are tailored to account for individual child and family needs, your Therapist can provide recommendations to assist your family to decide what length of therapy is right for your child.

What does a session look like?

Session delivery will depend on a range of things including your child's strengths, how old they are, and the goals that have been prioritised. The length of an individual therapy session may be shorter for a very young child or where a child is working on a skill they find very challenging. As a child gets older or becomes more skilled, sessions may get longer. Typical sessions are usually 60 to 90 minutes depending on the circumstances. The sessions with our Junior Therapists tend to be longer,



usually 2 to 3 hours to allow your child the time to practice with repetition. Typically, the more the child practices the skill, the quicker they can potentially master the goal.

Behaviour+ sessions will generally commence with a catch up on how things have been going since the last session, followed by an opportunity for your child to practice with their Therapist the skills that form their individual therapy program. The Therapist will collect data about how your child responds during these structured sessions, to inform the ongoing review of your child's therapy program. At the conclusion of the session, you will have an opportunity to discuss the session with the Therapist, practice key skills, and to discuss adjustments to your child's program as appropriate. Your Therapist will also likely include an at-home practice component for you to work on between sessions.

Where will therapy take place?

Therapy can take place in our Behaviour+ clinic, in your home, or in another location such as your child's preschool or school, or even in a location like your local park or shopping centre. As part of developing an individual therapy program, your Therapist will discuss options with you and make recommendations about a suitable location for therapy based on the types of goals you have identified.

What services does Behaviour+ offer?

Behaviour+ is a NDIS registered provider that offers a range of therapy services including:

- Behaviour support including Behaviour Support Plans (BSP)
- Skill development
- Early intervention
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Psychology
- School Readiness
- Counselling
- Parent training
- Consultation with external providers, (e.g. school)
- Plan Management

How do we get started?

To access services at Behaviour+ simply visit www.behaviourplus.org and fill in the forms. Alternatively, you can call our friendly Receptionist on (02) 9569 7700 and they can answer any questions as well as email the Registration Pack.

For more information, please contact us on (02) 9569 7700 or info@behaviourplus.org

