



CARD Rochester Autism Conference

Successful Collaboration in Language Intervention for Children with Autism: A Team Approach to SLP and ABA

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Participants will be able to:

- define and discuss roles of Speech Language Pathologists and Behavior Analysts.
- discuss similarities and differences between Speech Language Pathologists and Behavior Analysts.
- ask questions of each discipline as to how goals can be addressed collaboratively.



Old African proverb: “It takes a village to raise a child”; exact origin unknown.



The Village: A Multidisciplinary Approach

- Parent
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- Special Educator
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Music Therapist
- Teaching Assistant
- Service Coordinator, Dietician



Speech Language Pathology **AND** Applied Behavior Analysis

- We don't have to say "vs"
- Separate areas with their own range of interests
- Overlap and are similar in many ways
- Purpose today is to highlight similarities to promote collaboration for more effective treatment practices



What is SLP?

- Speech Language Pathology is a field dedicated to enhancing communication abilities.
- Assess, diagnose, treat delays/disorders related to:
 - Language
 - Developmental or acquired
 - Expressive, receptive, pragmatic language abilities
 - Voice
 - Cognitive-Communication Disorders
 - Fluency (stuttering)
 - Speech sound production
 - Articulation
 - Apraxia/dyspraxia
 - Oral Motor
 - Augmentative communication needs
 - Dysphagia – feeding and swallowing



What is SLP? *(cont'd)*

- Presence of speech/language delay or disorder may be secondary to:
 - Developmental delay
 - Presence of disorder
 - Downs Syndrome
 - Cerebral Palsy
 - Autism Spectrum Disorders
 - Apraxia of Speech
 - Acquired
 - Stroke
 - Traumatic Brain Injury
 - Parkinson's Disease



What is SLP? *(cont'd)*

- Graduate degree
- State licensure
- CCC - Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA)
- required to complete 9 month Clinical Fellowship (CF) under the supervision of a licensed SLP with valid CCC (CCC/SLP)
- SPECIALTY AREAS!
- www.asha.org



What is ABA?

- Applied Behavior Analysis
- A systematic approach to teaching involving the manipulation of antecedents (what comes before) and consequences (what comes after) of behavior to teach new skills and eliminate maladaptive and excess behaviors.

INSTRUCTION > RESPONSE > REINFORCEMENT



What is ABA? *(cont'd)*

ABA is dedicated to enhancing a person's

- Language abilities
- Cognitive abilities
- Academic skills
- Social skills
- Play/leisure
- Independent living skills
- Executive Function
- Social Skills/Social Cognition
- Decrease problem behaviors
 - E.g. Spinning, hand flapping, aggression, scripting



The BCBA.....

- Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- Provides behavioral assessments and interprets the results; develops behavior treatment plans and supervises intervention
- Able to provide information regarding the function of a behavior:
 - attention
 - avoidance
 - access to something



The BCBA..... (cont'd)

A Board Certified Behavior Analyst would define behavior as **anything** a person does:

- Hitting
- Talking
- Scripting
- Hand flapping
- Babbling or jargoning
- Singing



The BCBA..... (cont'd)

- o 3 levels:

- BCBA (masters degree required + course requirements + exam)
- BCaBA (bachelors degree required + course requirements + exam)
- BCBA-D (doctoral degree required + course requirements + exam)

- www.bacb.com



What do SLPs and ABA Professionals Have in Common?

- Support individuals with communication impairments
- Work to improve overall language abilities:
 - Receptive, expressive abilities
 - Vocabulary – objects, actions, body parts, prepositions
 - Functional communication
- Address production and use of speech sounds in conjunction with language
- Recognize challenging behaviors as being communicative; focus on replacing those behaviors with positive and appropriate communication
- ** rely on data collection procedures in order to document and report goal progress
- Advocate for evidenced based practice
- Use of prompting, chaining, shaping procedures and reinforcement in treatment
- When teaching new skills, both start in a structured manner and progress to natural contexts



Why are there misconceptions between the two?

- Different professions with different backgrounds
- Different terminology
- Both focus on increasing function/use of language for interacting with others/environment
- Use of the term “behavior”
- BCBAs may be most often associated with “problem” behavior
- Community misconceptions



Basic Terminology Differences:

BCBA

“Verbal Behavior” (Skinner)

Echoic

Mands

Tacts

Intraverbal

Vocal

Verbal

Generalization

SLP

Imitation (verbal)

Requests/Demands

Labels/Commenting

Conversations/exchanges

Vocal/speech/oral speech

Speaking

Carry Over



Their Roles: SLP

Speech Language Pathologist
assesses, diagnoses, treats
delays/disorders related to:

- speech
- language
- voice
- cognitive communication abilities
- fluency
- feeding and swallowing



Their Roles: SLP *(cont'd)*

Knowledge and training is in development of speech and language and age expectations

- What happens at age level
 - Child is 4 years old and has difficulty producing the "th" sound, as in "thumb", or as in his therapist's name, "Heather"
- What happens at ability level
 - Child is 3 1/2 years old and talks in single words; estimated vocabulary of 100 words
 - Child is demonstrating emerging speech abilities at age 3 - consider developmental expectations



Their roles: BCBA

- Conduct behavior assessments and interpret the results
 - Behavior assessments are not only for problem behaviors!
- Develop behavior treatment plans
- Supervises intervention and implementation of treatment plans
- Recommends behavior approaches for specific behaviors



What can we get from each other?

SLP:

- Information on developmental norms and expectations
 - Speech sound development; acceptable substitutions
 - Language development and typical sequence
- Language sample analysis
 - Form of the language
 - Content of the language
 - Use of the language

EXAMPLES:

- Child has learned to use actions
- Child is at a point where he can learn prepositions



BCBA:

- Recommendations and interventions plans based on what is best for that child; an intervention plan would be different based on the function of the behavior

EXAMPLES:

- Aggression – attention or avoidance
- Scripting – attention or way of initiating a conversation



BCBA (cont'd)

- Provides information on Verbal Behavior
 - EXAMPLE: A 4 year old child is described as having “lots of language” or “her language is not delayed”, BUT she doesn’t use it. WHY NOT?



What this can look like in treatment:

- Articulation.....Verbal Imitation
- Language.....Actions, pronouns, prepositions, attributes, vocabulary/labels, mands, tacts, PECS
- Fluency..... * * * *
- Voice..... * * * * prosody of speech
- Feeding/Swallowing.... * * * *



How do we do this?

COMMUNICATION!



Benefits of Effective Collaboration

- Collaboration does not have to refer only to direct clinical practice
 - Research projects, conference participation, discussion groups, listservs
 - www.health.groups.yahoo.com/group/SLPABA
 - SLPs often have more direct clinical time with the clients than BCBAs; more opportunity for ongoing assessment of goal progress
 - More overall clinical time with a client between professionals addressing the same goals could result in more timely modification of treatment goals and needs when obstacles are identified



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- BCBA and SLP training can complement each other. BCBAs - trained in scientific principles of learning and motivations; SLPs - trained in the development of speech and language
 - With open communication that occurs on a regular basis, SLP and BCBA professionals would be able to discuss goals and needs that are specific to their discipline and determine how each area can be addressed across the entire program



What can we do to promote collaboration?

- Communication
- Share information on treatment efficacy
 - The Journal of Speech Language Pathology and Applied Behavior Analysis
 - The Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis
 - Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in the Schools
 - The Analysis of Verbal Behavior



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- Share basic information – any information that seems to be frequently misunderstood, including terminology
 - Share reports of successful collaboration, informally or within participation of a discussion group or listserv; share how a past collaborative effort was successful and make suggestions
 - Read articles in journals associated with the other profession
 - Websites: www.behavioralspeech.com; www.asha.org; www.bacb.com



QUESTIONS?

Center for Autism and *Related Disorders*, Inc.