

GLOSSARY

Advocate: Someone who pleads the cause of another and/or defends or maintains a cause or proposal for another person.

Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence: ABC: Used in applied behavioral analysis to determine what is in the environment that may be setting off or maintaining a behavior. Knowing the *antecedent* or situation before the behavior occurs can help predict whether a behavior may happen in the future. The *behavior* is an observable action performed by an individual. The *consequence*, or what follows the problem behavior, can effect whether a behavior will occur again.

Applied Behavioral Analysis: Method designed to analyze and change behavior by use of detailed measures and structure.

Assessment: A process to determine a child's strengths and weaknesses including testing and observations performed by a team of professionals and parents usually to determine special education needs. Used interchangeably with *evaluation*.

ADD: Attention Deficit Disorder: Individuals with this disorder are described as overactive, restless, impulsive, inattentive, distractible, easily frustrated, aggressive and unpredictable.

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: A clinical diagnosis in which an individual displays developmentally inappropriate degrees of inattention, impulsiveness and hyperactivity, usually across all settings. Characteristics include falling, bumping into things or knocking over things because of distractibility and impulsivity. Symptoms and characteristics may be present in Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) and the diagnosis of PDD will take greater clinical priority.

Audiologist: A doctor specializing in the branch of science dealing with hearing and the therapy of individuals with impaired hearing.

Auditory Training: A sensory based hearing treatment that retrains the ears to hear and to listen properly, especially at different frequencies. Originally developed by Dr. Guy Berard in France. Many individuals with autism are very sensitive to certain sounds and auditory training has some success in reducing this hypersensitivity in some people. Research is still being conducted as to the effectiveness of this method.

Augmentative Communication: A method of supplemental communication utilizing pictures, symbols, gestures or sign language either in place of, or in conjunction with, vocalization. Also known as augmentative and Alternative Communication. (AAC)

Autism: A pervasive developmental disorder affecting all major areas of functioning. Major characteristics include lack of responsiveness to people, severe language impairment and strong resistance to change in routine or environment, although there may be substantial variations in intensity and frequency of behaviors. The disorder begins prior to thirty (30) months of age. No specific cause is known, although, it is believed to be biological in origin.

Aversive: A stimulus (physical object or concourse) that an individual will actively work to avoid. An aversive may be used as part of a behavior designed to decrease behavior and is presented whenever that behavior is displayed.

BD: Behavior Disorder: Term used to describe individuals whose behaviors are considered developmentally inappropriate, excessive or interfering with his/her ability to learn in school or other environments.

CDC: Child Development Center: A department of Rhode Island Hospital that provides multi-disciplinary evaluations and treatment of children and adolescents with developmental disabilities, mental retardation, and multiple handicapping conditions. The CDC also contains specialty programs for long term follow-up for a number of disorders including adolescent handicaps, genetic counseling, seizures, neuromuscular and learning disabilities.

Cognition: The ability to know and understand the environment.

Communication: The process in which information is exchanged between individuals using a common system of words, symbols, signs or behavior that denotes meaning.

Contingent: Something that is dependent on a behavior or event. Contingent reinforcement, given following a specific response, is used to strengthen or maintain a behavior.

Core Evaluation: Every three (3) years, in conjunction with a Child's IEP, the educational placement is intentionally requested to perform a number of evaluations including a Social History, Psychological Evaluation, Psychiatric Evaluation, Educational Assessment, Speech and Language Evaluation, Vocational Evaluation and an Occupational Therapy or Physical Therapy Evaluation if applicable. Also known as a re-evaluation.

Cue: A signal such as a specific act, item or event that prompts a person to perform a behavior or activity. After prompting is faded, a cue is enough to remind the person to perform that behavior.

D#: An identification number used when receiving medical assistance (Medicaid).

Developmental Delay: Children between the ages of three and five who show delayed development in one or more of the following areas: behavioral organization and control; social/emotional adjustment; receptive or expressive language; visual perception; or fine or gross motor control.

DD: Developmental Disability: A handicap or impairment that began before the age of eighteen and may be expected to continue indefinitely and which constitutes a substantial disability.

DDD: Department of Developmental Disabilities. Agency responsible for funding and overseeing the issues of clients with special needs over the age of twenty-one (21).

DCYF: Department for Children, Youth and Families. Agency responsible for providing services for the care and treatment of children under the age of 21 in foster homes, licensed child care

agencies or within their own home. Department is also responsible for the intake, evaluation and assessment necessary for the protection of children and their families and responds to and investigates reports of child abuse and/or neglect.

DHS: Department of Human Services. Funds and oversees respite services and other programs related to Medicaid waiver.

DOE: Department of Education. A primary licensing agency of schools in Rhode Island.

DRA: Differential Reinforcement of Alternative Behavior: A behavioral procedure in which a reinforcer is given following the performance of a pre-scheduled behavior that is functionally and physically incompatible with a targeted inappropriate behavior (example: reinforcement given for keeping hands occupied with a puzzle instead of hand biting).

DRO: Differential Reinforcement of Other Behavior: A behavioral procedure in which a reinforcer is given at the end of a specific period of time for not displaying a targeted behavior during that interval (example: a smile face is given to a child for not swearing between 10 am and 11 am.)

Discrimination: The ability to behave one way in a given situation and a different way in another situation.

Echolalia: A “parrot-like” repetition of words or phrases either just after hearing (immediate echolalia) or heard hours, days, weeks or even longer after a period of time (delayed echolalia).

Edible Reinforcer: Small amounts of food that an individual prefers and for which they would be willing to work.

Education for all Handicapped Children Act: See IDEA.

EIP: Early Intervention Program: Special education program for children from birth to age three who have handicaps or who are at risk for developing handicaps. Public Law 99-457, passed in 1986, guaranteed that parents have access to early intervention programs and testing to determine if placement is appropriate.

EEG: Test used to determine levels of electrical discharge from nerve cells, usually to determine whether seizure activity is present

Etiology: The cause and origin of a disorder or disability.

Expressive Language: The ability to use words, gestures or written symbols to communicate.

Extinction: A behavioral intervention used to decrease inappropriate behaviors where no reinforcement follows the behavior.

Fading: The gradual removal of prompts or cues designed to increase the independence level of an individual.

Fine Motor Skills: The ability to control the small muscles of the body such as those in the hands and fingers needed to do things such as writing, picking up small objects, etc.

Generalization: The ability to transfer a skill taught in one place or with one person to other places and other people.

GSP: General Service Plan. Serves a similar function to an IEP for adults over the age of 21 living in Rhode Island.

Gross Motor Skills: The ability to control the larger muscles of the body such as the arms and legs needed to coordinate movement such as walking, running, climbing stairs, etc.

IDEA: A federal law passed in 1975 guaranteeing children with disabilities the right to a free and appropriate education and outlining the steps parents may take to secure these rights for their children.

IEP: Individualized Education Plan: A multi-paged document containing: description of specific special education and related services to be provided to the child; statement about how those services meet identified needs; statement describing the extent the child can participate in integrated activities; date services are expected to begin; period of time through which services will be provided; location of services; statement of your child's present levels of educational performance; statement of annual goals including short term objectives and appropriate objective criteria; evaluation and re-evaluation procedures and schedules to determine at least annually whether the short-term instructional objectives are being met; supplementary aids and services; modification and accommodations to support the child; statement of state/district assessment; and finally a Transition Services section for those over the age of fourteen (14).

ISP (Individualized Service Plan): Similar to an IEP in its function. An ISP is written by the Department of Developmental Disabilities and is created with an individual who is over the age of 22 and living in Massachusetts, focusing on adult programming issues.

IQ: A measure of cognitive ability based on scores obtained from specific standardized tests.

Imagery: A coping procedure emphasizing self-control, developed at the Groden Center, involving frequent rehearsal of potentially stressful or problematic scenes that have positive and appropriate endings.

Language: A process utilizing speech and/or pictures, symbols and gestures to label or express meaning.

LEA: Local Education Agency: The Agency responsible for providing educational services on the local level (usually the local school district).

LRE: Least Restrictive Environment: The maximum extent appropriate that a child with special needs is educated with children without disabilities. A child may be removed from a regular educational environment if the nature and severity of his or her needs is such that even with the use of supplementary aids and services, it would not be of satisfactory quality, or could have a potentially harmful effect on him or her.

Meds: An abbreviation for any type of medication but usually pertains to seizure, behavioral or psychotropic medication.

Medicaid: A federal program that provides payments for medical care to people who are receiving Social Security payments.

MR: Mental Retardation: A general term that describes delayed intellectual development resulting in developmental delays in areas such as academic learning, social skills, communication, etc. Standardized tests measuring IQ may determine which of the three (3) levels of mental retardation an individual possesses: Mild Mental Retardation, Moderate Mental Retardation and Severe/Profound Mental Retardation.

Model: To act out a behavior for another individual to see, with the hope that she or he will repeat it.

Multi-handicapped: Individuals having a combination of impairments such as mental retardation and deafness or autism and blindness, which cause such educational difficulties, they cannot be accommodated in programs for any one impairment.

MDT: Multi-Disciplinary Team: All school districts are required to have a team of professionals who decide whether the child should be evaluated for services. Members of the team must include: Director of Special Education or other certified administrator; school psychologist; special education teacher trained in diagnostic technique; and a school social worker or guidance counselor experienced in working with families.

MRI: Magnetic Resonant Imaging: A diagnostic procedure which focuses on the tissues reaction to external magnetic force. It provides information on what chemicals are present in an organ and tissue. It can be used to assess many things including tumors, mental disorders, effects of toxic drugs, strokes, heart disease and progress of a disease.

OT: Occupational Therapy: A specialist who provides therapy targeting the improvement and development of fine motor and adaptive skills.

PDD: Pervasive Developmental Disorder: General clinical category of which autism is a more severe subgroup. Characteristics of this disorder include difficulty in social interactions, difficulty in communication, restricted repertoire of activities and interests and self-stimulatory (stereotypic) behaviors. The age of onset is usually before age three (3), although some cases have been reported after age five (5) or six (6). The degree of impairment may vary considerably from individual to individual.

PT: Physical Therapist: A specialist who provides therapy targeting the gross motor skills.

Perseveration: Continuing or repeating an activity or response, either verbal, motor or mental, past the point in time when it is appropriate and becomes inappropriate.

Prompt: See Cue.

Punishment: A behavioral intervention used to decrease inappropriate or problematic behaviors where something unpleasant follows the behavior (example: time out).

Reinforcement: An action, item or event occurring after a behavior that increases the likelihood of the behavior's future occurrence.

Receptive Language: The ability to understand verbal, written or gestural communication. Also known as comprehension.

Relaxation Training: A procedure used to reduce levels of anxiety and stress. Training utilizes deep breathing and the identification of tense muscles and how to relax them. The Groden Center specializes in the teaching and use of this procedure.

Respite: The provision of trained individuals to provide child care so that parents of individuals with special needs may receive a break and therefore reduce their levels of stress.

Satiation: When a reinforcer has been presented past the point where it is effective in maintaining or producing a behavior (example: after earning pretzels for three hours, a child no longer cares to work for more pretzels).

Shape: To gradually reward behaviors that are more and more like the desired behavior.

Social Language: The ability to accomplish a specific interpersonal function through communication (example: requesting, responding, greeting, protesting). Also known as pragmatics.

Special Education: Specialized instruction based on the strengths and weaknesses of an individual as determined by a team evaluation.

Speech: The act of vocally, or through mouth positions, expressing approximations of sounds, words or phrases.

Speech and Language Pathologist: A therapist who works to improve skills in the areas of speech (verbal output) and languages (communicating via speech, pictures, gestures, etc.)

SSDI: Social Security Disability Insurance: Money which has been paid into the Social Security system through payroll deductions on earnings. Disabled workers are entitled to these benefits. People who become disabled before the age of twenty-two are entitled to collect SSDI under a parent's account if a parent is retired, disabled or deceased.

SSI: Supplementary Security Income: A federal program based on need not on past earnings, which provides monthly payments to minimum-income people who have permanent disabilities, are blind or aged.

Sensory Integration: The process in the brain which organizes sensations into meaningful information. A form of therapy which involves supplying a carefully planned series of sensations to an individual with the intent of facilitating their ability to process their environment. These sensations may include tactile stimulation such as applying light pressure with hands or ace bandages or rhythmic vestibular motion such as swinging or using a rocking chair.

Stereotypic Behavior: Repetitive movements without observable purpose such as hand-flapping and rocking.

Supported Employment: Employment supported by an activity such as a job coach, designed to provide paid employment for individuals with disabilities for whom competitive employment at or above minimum wage is unlikely.

Time-Out: A procedure used to decrease inappropriate behaviors where positive reinforcement is removed for a pre-specified period of time after the display of an inappropriate behavior.

Total Communication: A system utilizing many different combinations of communication modes such as speech, sign language, pictures, written words, gestures and spelling. Total communication can be used to give input to a person and is accepted as communication by that person in return.

Vocational Education: Structured, formal training designed to provide individuals with necessary work skills for a certain job or occupational area.