

Lesson 17 Transcript
Somebody Just Tell Me What To Do
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I'll just show you some things that are out there and try to put them into context for you because autism is sort of the fad magnet. Everything comes down the pike. Remember facilitated communication? And some are not without consequences. Facilitated communication you thought was sort of a harmless thing. Does everybody know what that was? It was hand over hand. And then they would type. And then it was seen as apraxia. It wasn't really a disability but it really was a failure to communicate and there really was a little boy inside who had all this stuff and if I type it out they'll be fine if I guide them. Everybody thought that was the way to go. It was like cold fusion of autism. It was on the news. Everybody was doing it, but it wasn't without consequences. Some people have said they were abused. People went to jail. So some of these things are not without consequences in terms of treatments and strategies. When they tested that. It would be real easy to test. What they did is they put a screen...it was a hand over hand thing so they put a screen so the person being asked the question and the facilitator couldn't see each other's response. So, in other words, I'd ask the question to the kid and the facilitator couldn't hear the question. They never got any of the questions right. I ask the question so the facilitator could see it and always got the question right. So they showed that the real author of that facilitation, even though the person claimed, they were just convinced, the person was doing it, they were actually authoring that communication by guiding their hand at type. Kind of a Ouija board thing. The sad thing was, it wasn't without consequences.

What do you pick? Evidence based versus research based and sometimes programs will have research based practices in them but the program itself is not evidence based. If you look at reading now, phonics is a research based practice, but maybe that particular reading program or basal series the school uses hasn't been evidence based. In other words that program itself may never have been tested even though they used bits and pieces of research based practices. So they may not be using it in a way that's really all that effective.

There is a difference between evidence based and research based. I don't really want to go through this all that much, but evidence based has an instructional strategy that has been tested and has some science behind it in terms of trying to control. It's really difficult in this business to do that. Usually they're published in journals, demonstration through experimental control and group designs or single subject designs.

I just want to put these into context for you. There's a communication speech-based approach and that's Lovaas's stuff and he has a book about teaching developmental disabilities. McEachin who by the way was a graduate student of Lovaas. He has a book called The Work in Progress and we'll send out the list of all these books. Maurice: Behavioral Interventions for Young Children. That's probably one of the most popular. She was the one who wrote Let me Hear Your Voice. She also wrote another book called Behavioral Intervention for Young Children. All of which are driven by Lovaas, his original work. And then you have this guy, Krug, who put together the STARS curriculum which is actually a kind of canned curriculum. It has three levels of kits, 800 bucks.

And then this one, the ABBS, which we showed you which is a behavioral approach using a skill based assessment. And then we have scripting and then educate towards recovery.

So this was the first book, The Me book, that came out. It was nineteen eighty. In it we'll talk about how to get a kid ready to learn, how to teach imitation, matching, basic self-help skills. His next book was Teaching Individuals with Developmental Delays and it has a lot of the same stuff but there's no punishment in it. It's all reinforcement based and it's a little more sophisticated, but it's all that basic level stuff for young kids. A Work in Progress written by Ron Leaf and John McEachin is also the same sort of book and it will have in it programs like this, teaching same and different, and you'll see there will be an objective, procedures, how to prompt, phases and so forth. This is a pretty good book with actual teaching programs in it. All these are books with programs you have to pick and choose in them. This is the one that's most popular, Behavioral Intervention for Young Children, another book. It will have a program like imitates actions with objects, tell you how to do it, give you a little program and give you a list of skills to teach. All those are sort of curriculum and they're geared towards young children with trying to teach that imitation and eventually build the verbal language. They did another one, Maurice did. The next one we call Making a Difference, and it is more social skills. It's got all those same kind of programs but they're social skill programs. The ABA companion is another one. They all give you basic information on how to present a discrete trail, how to do it, and also the programs themselves are in it. This actually has a computerized disc with it and all the programs are on a disc with a tracking form so it's kind of nice.

The only ones that are really evidence based practice is the Lovaas program. It's the only one that has a group design, we talked about, where there are forty kids and they've replicated that. There are several replications of that. They don't get the same level of outcome but there's still pretty good outcome data from it and it's been replicated several times. A lot of people argue about it because it's a hard study to do because it's hard to match. In research it's hard to take Kid A and Kid B and have them be exactly the same. If you have autism, they're all a little different. It's hard to control for everything. So people kind of argue about the research.

The next thing you have is ones that are communication based that are augmentative communication. That's sign language, and that Carr, that language is in one of Lovaas's books where he talks about how to teach sign language. You have Lovaas's reading and writing programs for kids who are more visual and then they have the PECS program. You've probably seen the PECS program. It has a series of specific phases you go through. Let's see if I have them. There's a series of phases. You can't read it but it's actually a curriculum that teaches how to teach that Picture Exchange Communication System. It ends up teaching attributes like what do you see and it gets pretty complicated. I've never been able to get very far with it. I'm not sure why. Well I have some theories about it but, we get kind of stuck down on I want and just requesting kind of things.

Lovaas has a reading writing program that ends up teaching kids how to type using the same sequence of events where the kids aren't verbal, they teach them to read and then teach them to type like I was showing you. It's a good program if you are interested in going in that direction.

The other one you get is the Communication Pivotal Skill Building where you're teaching a single skill to try to get a lot of gain and that's Koegel who has a lot of pivotal response training and another one by Mundy was Joint Attention.

She didn't have a program but did a lot of research in it. Koegel again was a graduate student of Lovaas. He has a book. There are no programs in that book. It is just a lot of reading and a lot of here's how you do it. There's no real sequence. It's kind of hard to implement unless you have a set of skills you're gearing towards. It's more like Judi talked about as a naturalistic training strategy. That's the contents of it.

The next one is relation based programs and you'll hear about them, SonRise, and Greenspan Floortime, RDI. You may have heard of those. SonRise, they have a big website. People think they're not around anymore but they are. What you do is you mimic and imitate the kid, and you get in their space and connect with them and then we morph out of this thing and we're better. There is not a lot of evidence to support those strategies. This RDI would be a good book for skill pinpoints but I don't know if these things are real research based if you adhere to them real precisely. I always go back to, if you look at them, it's really an ABA model they're doing. They're interacting in some way. They might give you some pinpoints, but there's really limited evidence about these.

Another one is developmental Approaches where you just try to follow a developmental sequence. There are no real books out for that but you go through a basic prelinguistic skills and try to move through those systematically.

The other thing you see is physiological approaches, sensory integration, auditory training, vision therapy, diets, vaccinations, medications. Remember auditory training? That was where they thought the kids had hearing problems so they put them through these special sequences of hearing stuff and listening to these things and a couple of thousand dollars and they'd go over to Portland or Salt Lake and get this auditory training and then come back and be OK. It didn't work out. So all these are really not very well researched strategies. But you'll run across them.

Then there's psychotherapy. You do psychoanalysis, holding therapy, options therapy. Those aren't very popular anymore. Another one is biological approaches. We have parents who get into these. Secretin, gluten, diets, vitamins, yeast, candida yeast stuff. There's an organization called defeat autism now that puts out all this stuff. There's not much evidence to that. In fact the secretin, where you go get secretin injections is dangerous because it might produce diabetic or insulin problems. But a lot of parents jumped in the car, drove to Salt Lake, paid lots of money, and got their kids shot with the secretin. That's a real problem in this business. It's a real magnet for these fly in fly out sort of strategies. That's why we like the ABA because it's been around so long.

Other approaches are a little harder to categorize would be the SCERTS and I think we had that. Prizant is a speech therapist and he put together a model that I don't completely understand it. I usually stay away from things that I don't really understand. TEACH, that's a program back in North Carolina where they put together a classroom that really capitalizes on kids' visual skills and you really capitalize on that. It's not much of an inclusion model, I don't believe. And then LEAP, which is a preschool program. Those also have limited evidence.

So ABA really is the one we use because it's the best one for analyzing and it gives us the most flexibility and it's the best researched approach. That's what we've tried to get across today in the approach that we're taking.

This is the series of components to a good program. We've talked about all these. You have systematic instruction. You have a comprehensive learning environment.

Specific curriculum content. We showed you some of those with the ABBLS and so forth. You have families involved. Use a functional approach to problem behaviors which we showed you. And we had individualized supports and built the program individually around that kid. That was something that was done in 2003 where they tried to identify, what are the critical components to succeed. And when they looked at the research, these were all those components. Those were the ones we tried to get across to you today.

The last thing I want to point out is that over time, you go from the naïve learner or the brand new learner, the guy who is not very good at much of anything. The amount of child led stuff he does is pretty low compared to more adult led up here. So this is child leading, this is adult leading. As we move down the curriculum, as the kid gets more independent the program moves from being adult led to being more child led. Does that make sense? It's the kid becomes more independent like we talked about. They work more independently at those skills. We get more sustained engagement and responding.

So over time the child initially is getting a lot of direct instruction and then as we move down this curriculum in time, we're using more of the naturalistic environmental things. That's what we see. We start out with a lot of structure and that structure sort of fades out over time. That's in a nut shell. We're going to send you a list of all those curricula and you can look at them. A lot of them are geared for young children at the top of that chart but they give you good pin points and they might be good language pinpoints and places to begin, but you're going to end up having to develop your own program.