What is Applied Behavior Analysis?
ABA is a science that studies how the things and events around us affect and change our interactions with the world. It is not a single intervention or approach. A number of intervention strategies and programs are based on the principles of ABA (i.e., Discrete trial teaching, naturalistic teaching, structured teaching).

Interventions are based on the idea that behaviors are learned and maintained by the environment, which includes antecedents and consequence.

- **Antecedents:** Events that occur immediately before a behavior. They can be altered to increase or decrease the occurrence of a behavior.
- **Behavior:** A response to the persons or things around us at any given time.
- **Consequences:** Events that occur immediately after the behavior. They can increase or decrease the likelihood that the person will display the behavior again.

What are examples of ABA in action?
School Example:
- **Antecedent:** The teacher instructs her students to walk quietly in the hallway.
- **Behavior:** The students comply and walk quietly to their destination.
- **Consequence:** The teacher praises the students and gives them an extra 2 minutes of recess.

In this example, the students comply (behavior) with the instruction (antecedent) and are provided with extra recess (consequence) for their behavior. The students love recess.

Home Example:
- **Antecedent:** A mother tells her child to put away his shoes and socks.
- **Behavior:** The child complies.
- **Consequence:** The mother gives her child a hug and praises him for cleaning up.

In this example, the child complies (behavior) with the instruction (antecedent) and is provided with praise and a hug (consequence). The child loves hugs.

What behaviors can be addressed through ABA?
A number of skills can be taught using interventions based in the principles of ABA, including social skills, communication, learning readiness, self-care, self-regulation, and other skills that can take the place of challenging behaviors. Behaviors chosen to target with ABA should be socially significant and meaningful to the individual and should be clearly defined.

Who benefits from ABA strategies?
ABA strategies are often with students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other developmental disabilities. However, the effectiveness is not limited to individuals with disabilities. ABA strategies can even be effective with your spouse!

Who can teach ABA strategies?
Interventions and strategies can be effectively used and implemented by different people. Individuals can be certified to deliver ABA services. These individuals are called Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA). You do not have to be a BCBA to effectively learn and use ABA teaching strategies. In fact, a competent behavioral service provider will teach others how to implement strategies and interventions.
Who We Are and Who We Serve
The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) works with and for people with disabilities and their family members, service providers and advocates, researchers and policy makers. It is among only a few centers nationwide to be a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, a Eunice Kennedy Shriver Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center, and a Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Training Program. Center programs and staff can assist families, educators, and other service providers. See vkc.vumc.org or call (615) 322-8240.

Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TRIAD)
TRIAD is a VKC program dedicated to improving assessment and treatment services for children with autism spectrum disorders and their families while advancing knowledge and training. See TRIAD.vumc.org or call (615) 322-7565.

Take Part in Research
StudyFinder is a searchable database that lists current VKC studies. Studies seek people of all ages with and without developmental disabilities. See vkc.vumc.org/studyfinder. Research Match is a secure place for volunteers and researchers to connect. See researchmatch.org.

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder
Provides free information, referral sources, and help with navigating services via phone, email, and website. Assistance is available to individuals of all ages, all types of disabilities, and all languages spoken. Its website database has more than 3,000 agencies searchable by Tennessee county and service. Pathfinder is a project of the VKC and is partially funded by Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities and other state agencies. See DisabilityPathfinder.org or call (800) 640-4636.

Local and National Resources
- Behavior Analyst Certification Board
  A nonprofit corporation established to meet professional credentialing needs identified by behavior analysts, governments, and consumers of behavior analysis services. Their website includes a registry of current Board Certified Behavior Analysts. www.BACB.com
- Autism Speaks
  www.autismspeaks.org
- ABA International
  www.abainternational.org

Print Resources
- Selecting a Behavioral Services Provider Tips and Resources for Parents is a fact sheet that provides information on how to select a qualified and effective behavioral services provider. See vkc.vumc.org/assets/files/tipsheets/behservicesprovidertips.pdf.