

Intervention/Therapies for Autism Spectrum Disorders

* Please note: This is not an exhaustive list of interventions/therapies. This list has been developed to give you an idea of most of the options that are available for families of children with an ASD. We do not suggest one therapy over another, as it is important that parents do the research to see which treatment they feel would be most beneficial for their child(ren). New therapies and hybrids of older ones are being developed all the time.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Verbal Behavior (VB) Therapies <i>(Skinner and Lovaas)</i>	Developmental, Individual Difference, Relationship-based (DIR)/Floortime Therapy <i>(Greenspan & Wieder)</i>	Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) <i>(Gutstein and Seely)</i>	Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, Transactional Support - SCERTS Model <i>(Prizant, Wetherby, Rubin, Rydell & Laurent, 2006)</i>	Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children (TEACCH) <i>(Schopler and colleagues)</i>
<p>ABA “is based on premise that appropriate behavior...can be taught using scientific principles.”</p> <p>Uses positive reinforcement and other principles to build communication, play, social, academic, self-care, work, and community living skills; also working to reduce problem behaviors.</p> <p>Can be directed by adults in highly structured intervention or in more naturalistic settings.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.autismweb.com/aba.htm</p> <hr/> <p>VB is often seen in conjunction with ABA and focuses on getting child to understand verbal way/language needed to get what s/he wants and when s/he wants it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.autismweb.com/aba.htm</p>	<p>A “form of play therapy that uses interactions and relationships to teach children with developmental delays”</p> <p>“...is based on...theory that autism symptoms are caused by problems with brain processing” affecting number of things including their relationships and senses</p> <p>DIR assumes that a child’s actions are purposeful and believe that by meeting child at their developmental level and building on their strengths, growth can occur in many areas.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.autismweb.com/floortime.htm</p>	<p>“RDI is based on typical developmental stages and utilizes the process of guided participation. Guided Participation is the process each of us engages in as children to train our brains to think.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.crossroads-solutions.net/rdi.html</p> <p>RDI is “parent-based clinical treatment” that focuses on friendship skills, feeling empathy, expressing love, and having a desire to share experiences with others.</p> <p>“A goal of the family-centered program is the ‘normalization of family life for all members.’”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.autismweb.com/rdi.htm</p>	<p>SCERTS Model “focuses on building competences in Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support.”</p> <p>It “is a research-based educational approach and multidisciplinary framework that directly addresses the core challenges faced by children and persons with ASD and related disabilities, and their families.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.scerts.com</p>	<p>TEACCH “developed the concept of the ‘Culture of Autism’ as a way of thinking about characteristic patterns of thinking and behavior seen in individuals with” an ASD diagnosis.</p> <p>Goals: “skill development and fulfillment of fundamental human needs such as dignity, engagement in productive and personally meaningful activities, and feelings of security, self-efficacy, and self-confidence.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.teacch.com</p>

Learning Experiences: an Alternative Program for preschoolers and parents (LEAP)	Diets and Nutrition as Therapies	Sensory Processing/Integration Therapies (Ayers)	Communications-based therapies (PECS and Auditory Integration – AIT)	Traditional Therapies
<p>Based on theories of naturalistic teaching, as well as family-centered programming</p> <p>Uses combined developmental and behavioral approach for teaching children with autism in early childhood environment.</p> <p>Involves a preschool curriculum, as well as a behavior training program for parents.</p> <p>Program also involves non-disabled peers/integrated classroom.</p> <p>prekese.dadeschools.net/leap.html</p>	<p>Some individuals with an ASD have food allergies and vitamin deficiencies. Also, some food may possibly be absorbed/digested differently in individuals with autism.</p> <p>Therefore, there are specific diets that can be followed and vitamin supplements that may be taken.</p> <p><i>Diets:</i> Gluten-free Caesin-free Lactose-free</p> <p>www.autismweb.com/diet.htm</p>	<p>“The sensory integration approach is rich in ...areas where many children with neurological issues have deficits. The approach seeks to encourage the nervous system to process and integrate sensory input in an organized and meaningful way.”</p> <p>OT’s create specific sensory based programs for individuals based on their needs.</p> <p>Goal: to facilitate development of the nervous system’s ability to process sensory input in a more typical way.</p> <p>www.memorialhospital.org/sensoryintegration.htm</p>	<p><i>Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS):</i> “Developed...as a unique augmentative/alternative training package that teachers children and adults with autism and other communication deficits to initiate communication.”</p> <p>www.pecs-usa.com/whatispecs.htm</p> <hr/> <p><i>Auditory Integration Therapy (Berard):</i> Individual/child listens to variety of sounds (which are put together intentionally) with goal of improving language comprehension and reducing negative behaviors.</p> <p>www.aithelps.com</p>	<p><i>Speech/Language Therapy:</i> Goal: to help improve communication by aiding individuals to form words, as well as get better understanding of pragmatics of communication www.webmd.com/brain/autismtherapy-autism</p> <hr/> <p><i>Occupational Therapy:</i> Goal: “to help people achieve independence, meaning, and satisfaction in all aspects of their lives.” steinhardt.nyu.edu/ot/definition</p> <hr/> <p><i>Physical Therapy:</i> Goal: to help people “build or rebuild strength, mobility and motor skills” autism.about.com/od/autismtherapy101/a/PTbasics.htm</p> <hr/> <p><i>Music and Art Therapies:</i> Therapies used to help children and adults express themselves and build language and social skills www.musictherapy.org</p> <p>www.art-therapy.us/autism.htm</p>

Animal Assisted Therapies	Integrated Play Groups (IPG) (Wolfberg)	Social Skills Groups	Social Stories (Gray)	Pharmaceutical and Talk Therapy
<p><i>Hippotherapy</i>: Performed by licensed OT or PT who has advanced training</p> <p>Uses horses 3-dimensional movement to improve “overall balance, strength, muscle control and tone, motor development and coordination.”</p> <p>www.ctrcinc.org/hippotherapy.htm</p> <p><i>Therapeutic Riding</i>: Performed by trained professional</p> <p>“...riders learn horsemanship which stimulates physical, mental and emotional growth.”</p> <p>www.ctrcinc.org/therapeutic.html</p>	<p>“Designed to support children of diverse ages and abilities on the autism spectrum (<i>novice players</i>) in play with non-disabled peers/siblings (<i>expert players</i>) in home, school, and community settings.”</p> <p>“Children meet regularly in small groups led by adult facilitator (<i>play guide</i>). Each group is customized as a part of a child’s individual education/therapy program.”</p> <p>With support, “emphasis is placed on maximizing children’s developmental potential and intrinsic desire to play, socialize and form meaningful relationships with peers...focus [also] on teaching peer group to be responsive, accepting and inclusive of children who relate and play in different ways.”</p> <p>www.wolfberg.com/IPGModel.htm</p>	<p>“Form of behavior therapy used by teachers, therapists, and trainers to help persons who have difficulties relating to other people”</p> <p>Involves teaching about verbal and nonverbal components related to social interactions</p> <p>www.minddisorders.com/Py-Z/Social-skills-training.html</p>	<p>Used as tool for teaching social skills</p> <p>Particular situations are described in detail and there is a focus on a few main points.</p> <p>Social Stories are written in perspective of child/individual.</p> <p>Goal: to increase person’s understanding of, make person more comfortable in, and possibly suggest some appropriate responses for situation being talked about/that may be difficult for a person.</p> <p>www.polyx.com/socialstories/introduction.html</p>	<p><i>Pharmaceuticals</i>: Medications can help with behavior – both internal and learned behavior. Continued research needed to assess success of medications, though some individuals are prescribed and take anti-depressants, anti-anxiety, anti-psychotics and anti-seizure medications.</p> <p>http://www.autismspeaks.org/inthenews/tan_findings_medications.php</p> <p><i>Talk Therapy</i>: Traditional psychotherapy.</p> <p><i>Play Therapy</i>: “A form of psychotherapy used with children to help them express or act out their experiences, feelings, and problems by playing with dolls, toys, and other play material, under the guidance or observation of a therapist.”</p> <p>education.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary/entry/play%20therapy</p>