

Connections Newsletter

September 2026



New Behavioral Network ABA Success Stories

Story # 1

One of the most meaningful successes incorporating ABA therapy that our BCBA CM has observed is with a learner who previously demonstrated significant controlling behaviors toward her mother. Historically, she would not allow her mother to eat in front of her, wear jewelry, or use the bathroom independently. During a recent session, this client shared a s'more with her mother, tolerated her mother wearing a necklace throughout the entire session, and allowed her mother to take a shower without interruption. Previously, her mother taking a shower would often result in tantrums and self-injurious behaviors. These changes have significantly improved family functioning and increased her mother's independence within the home.

Story # 2

Another notable success involved a client who engaged in severe aggression and property destruction when services began, including kicking and punching holes in the walls of his home. Intervention focused on teaching him appropriate ways to communicate his needs and preferences. He was taught to use gestures to indicate when he wanted someone to move from a particular seat and where he wanted them to sit. As his communication skills developed, he independently created an even more socially appropriate strategy by patting the spot next to him on the couch or chair when he wanted someone to sit beside him. This simple but meaningful change replaced destructive behaviors with functional communication and significantly improved interactions within the home.

Story # 3

One of the most rewarding experiences our BCBA, NW had was discovering that one of her clients had a stronger understanding of American Sign Language (ASL) than anyone had realized. During one of their sessions, the BCBA began by testing whether she understood a few basic signs, including "more," "help," and "all done." To the BCBA's surprise, she independently demonstrated that she knew each one. Wanting to explore further, the BCBA signed "I love you," and she immediately recognized and returned the sign.

Her mother, who was present during the session, asked what the sign meant. The BCBA explained that it meant "I love you," and her daughter immediately signed it directly to her. It was an incredibly emotional moment. Her mother became tearful and shared how grateful she was to discover another meaningful way to communicate with her daughter. While her daughter has an AAC device, she does not always choose to use it and is still developing fluency with it. Learning that she had another reliable form of communication opened up new opportunities for connection.

Since that day, the family has embraced using ASL in their daily lives. They now incorporate signing across home and community settings, giving their daughter another consistent and meaningful way to express herself. The BCBA said "Moments like these remind me that communication is not limited to one modality and that discovering an individual's strengths can profoundly impact not only the learner but also their entire family. Witnessing the joy and connection that came from such a simple discovery is something I will never forget."

NW - BCBA

These stories demonstrate how ABA services can improve not only the learner's skills but also the overall quality of life for the entire family by replacing challenging behaviors with effective communication and increasing independence for both learners and caregivers.

**Send us your success story! We might print it in our next edition
of
Connections Newsletter!! email esherr@nbngroup.com**



Seven Autism-Friendly Summer/Fall Activities Enhanced by ABA Principles



Here are a few activities that [many on the spectrum](#) from all walks of life enjoy during the summer/Fall season. When planning your loved one's activities, make sure to schedule them at consistent times each day and communicate the plans clearly beforehand to ensure they are appropriate and suitable to the individual!

1. Water Play

Splashing around is a classic summer/Fall activity that can be adapted to incorporate ABA principles and be highly engaging for those on the spectrum. Whether it's playing in a pool or bathtub, sprinkler, or water table, activities with water can provide sensory stimulation and more opportunities for social interaction for those with ASD who appreciate it.

Caregivers can also enhance the learning potential of water play by incorporating tasks such as pouring and measuring water, filling containers, counting objects in the water, and following directions to turn the hose off and on.

2. Scavenger Hunts

Scavenger hunts are an excellent way to promote problem-solving, communication, and collaboration in ASD children while having fun outdoors. You can create a custom scavenger hunt with pictures or words depending on your child's capabilities and passions. For example, if they love Paw Patrol, include themes from the show in your clues or prizes. To incorporate ABA principles in this game, try setting specific goals, such as finding a certain number of items or completing the hunt within a time frame. Additionally, use prompts like visuals when appropriate.

3. Arts and Crafts

[Arts and crafts](#) projects offer endless opportunities for creativity and self-expression in neurodiversity and neurotypical individuals. Crafting can also enhance fine motor skills, following directions, and hand-eye coordination for those with autism. Additionally, creating art can also demonstrate the gratifying process of completing a project. To enhance this activity's ABA potential, incorporate techniques such as breaking down crafting into tiny steps and using positive reinforcement to help your child stick to finishing the project.

4. Outdoor Adventures

Getting outdoors is great for everyone's physical and mental wellness. Fortunately, summer /Fall provides ample opportunities for outdoor adventures with autism. Whether it's a quiet nature walk, bike ride, or trip to the park, you can incorporate ABA principles by setting goals related to behaving appropriately outdoors. These goals may include teaching skills like following safety rules, taking turns on equipment, or identifying objects in nature. Furthermore, parents and providers can utilize natural elements like leaves or rocks children find outside as rewards when practicing positive behaviors. Incorporating natural elements like these can also make the activity educational and provide opportunities for imaginative play or curiosity.

5. Cooking and Baking

Cooking and baking can be fun ways to engage children with autism while also teaching them an essential life skill. To include ABA in this activity, create a visual schedule of recipe steps and reinforce the child each time they complete a step accurately. You can also tailor recipes to your child's interests or dietary needs to make the results more enjoyable, like buying a Disney-inspired cookbook and remaking your child's existing favorites. Remember to focus on the process rather than the result to promote follow-through, self-assurance, and confidence.

6. Music Play

Music and movement are great ways to enlist children with autism in a calming and therapeutic activity at any time of year. Furthermore, music can promote self-expression, both indoors and outdoors. Planning dance parties outside or listening to music on a cozy Summer/Fall night indoors under excellent lighting are examples of awesome autism-friendly activities.

Caregivers can also incorporate ABA principles into musical play by setting targets related to following rhythms, singing, or playing an instrument. Additionally, caregivers can implement positive reinforcement in music play by allowing children to select song choices and instruments or choose where and how to move.

7. Field Trips

Summer/Fall can be a fabulous time for outings to local museums, zoos, or other places of interest for your child with autism. These trips provide opportunities for new sensory experiences, social interactions, and introductions to unfamiliar topics.

To incorporate ABA learning during your outing, discuss appropriate behavior in public settings, like waiting appropriately to pay for something or keeping voice volume at the proper level.

Enhancing Your Child's Summer/Fall with Autism-Friendly Activities That Include ABA Can Make All the Difference!

With these ABA principles in mind, you can make this Summer/Fall a fun and rewarding experience for your neurodivergent child and your entire family unit. When designing your incredible autism activities, feel free to get creative and think outside the box! In most cases, adapting activities to your child's individual preferences leads to much better results in whatever you are teaching or exploring.

We hope these tips and ideas have been helpful in planning a fun and meaningful summer/fall for your child with ASD. So, keep exploring, learning, and having fun! Happy playing!



What content would You like to see more of? We look forward to your comments and ideas! We would love to hear your stories of success.

Please send your reply to esherr@nbngroup.com

Send comments and replies to Elissa

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