

Growing Together

ABA Strategies for Family Services Series



Anderson
Early Learning
Academy



**Understanding Speech and Language
Development Through ABA**



What is ABA?

- ABA is an evidence-based approach to understanding and improving behavior.
- In language development, ABA focuses on teaching communication skills through structured, positive reinforcement.
- Skills are broken down into small, teachable steps and practiced consistently.

Key Areas of Language Development in Pre-Schoolers

Expressive Language

- Using words, signs, or pictures to communicate wants, needs, and ideas.
- Includes labeling objects (Tacts), answering questions (Intraverbal), and making requests (Mands).

Receptive Language

- Understanding and responding to spoken language.
- Includes following directions, identifying objects, and responding to questions.

Social Communication

- Using language in social contexts (e.g., greetings, turn-taking, asking for help).
- Includes eye contact, joint attention, and conversational skills.

Tips for Success



- Be patient and consistent.
- Celebrate small wins.
- Use clear, simple language.
- Make learning fun and engaging.
- Communicate with your child's AELA team for ideas and support.

ABA Strategies That Support Language Development

Discrete Trial Training (DTT)

- Structured teaching method using clear instructions, prompts, and reinforcement.
- Example: “What’s this?” → Child responds → Praise or reward.

Prompting and Fading

- Helping the child respond correctly, then gradually reducing help.
- Builds independence and confidence in communication.

Natural Environment Teaching (NET)

- Teaching language during everyday activities and play.
- Example: During snack time, prompting child to say “more” or “juice.”

Reinforcement

- Providing praise, toys, or other rewards to encourage communication.
- Reinforcement makes learning fun and motivating.

How Parents Can Support Language at Home

During Daily Routines

- Narrate what you’re doing: “We’re washing hands. Wash, wash, wash!”
- Offer choices: “Do you want apple or banana?” using visuals cues if needed.
- Encourage requests: Pause before giving something to prompt “more” or “please.”

During Reading Time

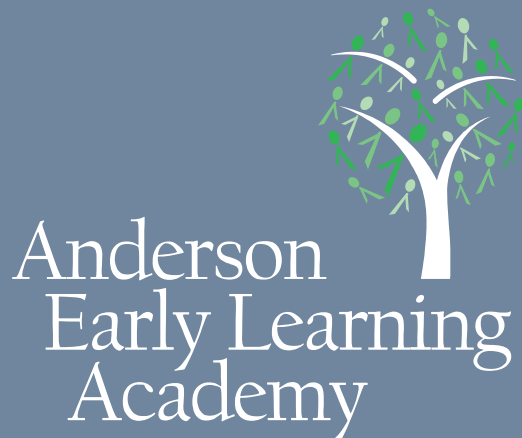
- Ask simple questions: “What’s that?” “Who is this?”
- Point to pictures and label them together.
- Repeat favorite books to build vocabulary and confidence.

During Playtime

- Play turn-taking games and model simple phrases: “My turn,” “Your turn.”
- Use toys to label and describe: “Red car,” “Big truck,” “Go fast!”
- Follow your child’s lead and expand on their words: Child says “dog” → You say “Yes, the dog is running!”

Encouraging Social Language

- Practice greetings and farewells: “Hi!” “Bye-bye!”
- Encourage sharing and asking for help: “Can I have it?” “Help me, please.”
- Celebrate all communication attempts—even gestures or sounds.



Anderson Early Learning Academy (AELA) is a NYS approved 4410 program that provides children ages 3-5 years of age opportunities to learn in an environment that is developmentally appropriate and teaches the skills needed to be successful in kindergarten

Anderson Early Learning Academy
www.AndersonEarlyLearningAcademy.org



CONTACT US:

Dan Rounds MS Ed, SBL : Director of Early Childhood Education
DRounds@AndersonCares.org

Shanna Kangas, BCBA : AELA Preschool Coordinator
SKangas@AndersonCares.org

Meredith Wait, BCBA : AELA Behavior Analyst
MWait@AndersonCares.org