



Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions (NDBI) for Neurodiversity

What is NDBI?

Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions (NDBI) is a term used to describe a set of research-backed strategies that focus on teaching children with autism in a way that matches their natural development. This approach highlights the importance of using both behavioral techniques and developmental principles to help children grow.

Key Benefits

There are many benefits to using NDBI for children with autism or other developmental delays. First, NDBI helps improve **social communication** and **language skills**. Research shows that this approach can increase a child's ability to communicate and interact with others. Another key benefit is that NDBI helps **enhance play skills**. Play is important for children's social and cognitive growth, and NDBI encourages activities that support this development.

The approach also **promotes social engagement**, giving children more chances to interact and build relationships. Social engagement is important because it helps children understand social norms and improve their peer interactions. Lastly, NDBI can also have a positive impact on a child's **cognitive development**, helping them improve their thinking and learning skills.

How Does NDBI Work?

NDBI works by building on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), a well-known therapy that focuses on increasing positive behaviors and reducing unwanted ones. However, NDBI differs from traditional ABA methods, like Discrete Trial Training (DTT), because it is more child-led. This means that the therapy follows a child's interests and natural motivations.

In NDBI, parents play an important role. They are encouraged to participate in the process, creating a collaborative environment that can make the therapy more engaging and effective for the child. The idea is to teach in a way that feels natural and enjoyable, rather than forcing the child to follow a rigid structure.

NDBI offers a flexible, child-centered approach to learning that can be both effective and enjoyable for children. Whether used on its own or in combination with other therapies, NDBI is a great option to consider for children who need support with social skills, language development, and more.

NDBI and Neurodiversity

NDBI supports neurodiversity, which is the idea that people have different ways of thinking, learning and developing. NDBI recognizes and values these differences, promoting practices that celebrate each child's individuality. It aims to support each child in a way that fits their unique needs, rather than trying to make them fit a specific mold.

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Models Under the NDBI Umbrella

NDBI encompasses a variety of models that have shown consistent research support over the years. Some of these include:

- Pivotal Response Treatment
- Incidental Teaching
- Early Start Denver Model (ESDM)
- Project ImPACT
- JASPER (Joint Attention, Symbolic Play, Emotion Regulation)
- Social ABCs
- Enhanced Milieu Teaching

Moving Forward with NDBI

If you are considering NDBI for your child, it is important to work with professionals who are trained in these techniques. They can guide you through the process and help make sure that the interventions are tailored to your child's needs. By collaborating with trained experts, you can increase the chances of success and help your child make meaningful progress.

Reviewed by Senior Director – Clinical Strategy, Research & Autism, LCSW, BCBA, CCM

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