Using the ABLLS/ABLLS-R to Address Individual Student Program of Study for Students with Autism

Tris Gilland, Ed. S., BCBA
Georgia Department of Education
Autism Academy 2010
Today we will:

- Discuss what it means to have/follow the GPS and supplemental curriculum and what that looks like for students diagnosed with autism or PDD
- Discuss the key steps in curriculum development to include GPS and supplemental
- Review the ABLLS/ABLLS-R and how we can use it when developing comprehensive program of study
- Determine what we need to teach through skills assessment
- Review how to develop measurable goals/objectives based on skills assessment
- Look at how to schedule opportunities to address program of study
Deciding What To Teach

- Curriculum
  - Is defined as what content you teach (i.e., skills, activities, strategies, concepts)
  - Not only requires choosing what a student needs to learn, but it also includes a process for organizing the skills, activities, and/or content in ways to facilitate mastery
  - Should result in a quality individualized education plan (IEP)
  - Should be a team approach
  - Should incorporate multiple teaching modalities
Deciding What To Teach

• Curricular Areas
  - Has the student already mastered basic social, behavioral, and oral language skills?
  - Does individual curriculum have to contrast significantly from general education curriculum?
  - Supplemental curriculum may not necessarily be organized by grade level initially.
Deciding What To Teach

- Curriculum is based on individual needs and goals
- Is broken down into small chunks of learning and presented in ways that result in mastery
- Curriculum should be functional and cover the following areas: communication, social skills, domestic skills, community living skills, recreation/leisure skills, motor skills, and vocational skills (in addition to already established academic or pre-academic needs)
Deciding What To Teach

- Curricular Considerations
  - Should be functional
    * Results in the student being able to perform essential tasks independently
  - Should be chronologically age appropriate
  - Should be longitudinally
  - Should be horizontally integrated
  - Should be community referenced
  - Should emphasize communication and socialization
Key Steps In Curriculum Development

- Delineating long term and short term goals
- Creating an inventory of what needs to be learned to reach goals
- Assessing what the student has already mastered
- Prioritizing what to teach
- Organizing to achieve mastery
- Developing an IEP
Skill Assessment Within A Curriculum

We use the **Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills** to help identify areas to teach.

- ABLLS/ABLLS-R
- Identification of critical language skills needed to advance skill development in many areas
- Identifies skills in need of intervention
ABLLS-R

- A developmental skills inventory for children with language impairments
- Based on B.F. Skinner’s work in *Verbal Behavior*
  - A behavior analytic account of language development
  - Takes into account environmental conditions that promote learning
Why the ABLLS-R?

- Very comprehensive
- Developmental sequence of items
- Leads to goals and objectives
- Can be used repeatedly
- Used to monitor progress
- Used to develop new skill areas as others are mastered
Why the ABLLS-R?

Although the ABLLS-R appears lengthy, it is designed to be completed combining three methods for assessing student functioning:
- Teacher interview
- Direct Observation
- Direct Skill Assessment
ABLLS Domains

- Cooperation and Reinforcer Effectiveness (11)
- Visual Performance (21)
- Receptive Language (52)
- Imitation (13)
- Vocal Imitation (9)
- Requests (27)
- Labeling (42)
- Intraverbals (42)
- Spontaneous Verbalizations (9)
ABLLS Domains

- Syntax and Grammar (20)
- Play and Leisure (10)
- Social Interaction (22)
- Group Instruction (12)
- Classroom Routines (10)
- Generalized Responding (8)
- Reading (15)
- Math (42)
ABLLS Domains

- Writing (9)
- Spelling (6)
- Dressing (15)
- Eating (10)
- Grooming (7)
- Toileting (10)
- Gross Motor (28)
- Fine Motor (28)
ABLLS-R

After administering all items in all domains:
-mastered and deficient areas can be identified
-can build on strengths
-remediate weaknesses
ABLLS-R Domains

- ABLLS-R leads directly to goals and objectives
- Wording from evaluation can be used on IEP
- Subsequent administrations can be used as data collection systems to monitor IEP goals/objectives (Pre/Post)
ABLLS-R Results

- The ABLLS-R scoring guide describes two different learner profiles:
  - Early Learner
  - Advanced Learner
- Differences are based on a child’s mastery of basic concepts:
  - Early Learner has not mastered basic concepts
  - Advanced Learner has mastered many basic concepts
Early Learner vs. Advanced Learner

- Early Learner ABLLS-R data example programs (1-11):
  - Cooperation/Reinforcer Effectiveness A-1
  - Visual Performance B-1
  - Receptive Language C-1
  - Imitation D-1
  - Vocal Imitation E-1
  - Requesting F-1
  - Play/Leisure Domain K-2
Early Learner vs. Advanced Learner

- Advanced Learner ABLLS-R data example programs (11 and up):
  - Letter recognition
  - Expressive vocabulary
  - Sight word ID
  - Math skills
  - Sequencing
  - Fill in the blanks (Intraverbals)
Let’s take a look at the ABLLS-R protocol...

- Skills Tracking System
- Look at A1
- Look at B1
- Task Objective
- Criteria
Table Discussion…

- If you are currently using the ABLLS-R, share some “positives/negatives” based on your experience.

- If you are not currently using the ABLLS-R, what are you using for curriculum for students diagnosed with autism (low functioning)?
I’ve completed the ABLLS-R. Now what?

***Using the results of the ABLLS-R, you can begin to write measurable goals/objectives.
Goals and Objectives

- What should the learner be able to do? (What is the target behavior or performance?)
- Under what conditions do you want the learner to be able to do it?
- How well must it be done? (Identify criteria for acceptable performance.)
- How will the behavior be measured?
- Once criterion is met, the target is considered mastered and put on a maintenance schedule for retention.
Goals and Objectives

- Determine strengths and weaknesses via assessment….How about the ABLLS?-R?
- Allows for individualized instruction
- After goals and objectives are set, instruction can begin
Goals and Objectives

- Effective behavioral goals include:
  - Identification of the learner
    (Directs the focus on the learner; sounds basic but is often overlooked)
  - Identification of the target behavior
  - Identification of the conditions under which the behavior should occur
  - Identification of performance criteria
Goals and Objectives

- Identification of the target behavior:
  - Clearly identifies the target behavior
  - Definitions should be observable and unambiguous
    (Stranger Test/Dead Man’s Test)
  - Includes verbs to describe specific behaviors
  - Identification of performance criteria
Goals and Objectives

- Good definitions:
  - Common agreement among everyone involved
  - Count the number of times a behavior occurs

- Advantages:
  - Consistent and reliable observation of behavior
Goals and Objectives

- Conditions or context
  - Description of the antecedent stimuli in the presence of which the behavior will occur
  - Verbal instructions ("Point to the cup.")
  - Written instructions ("Diagram the sentence.")
  - Demonstration ("Do this." and model)
Goals and Objectives

- Needs to address:
  - Materials used (paper to trace shapes)
  - Setting (in the hall) or Time of day (Upon arrival…)
  - Frequency (How often?)
  - Level of prompting required (using a sequential least to most three step prompting hierarchy)
Goals and Objectives

- Performance criteria
  - Level of correct performance of the skill (How much do they have to do it?) (In what time do they have to do it?)
  - Accuracy of a response (What does correct response look like?)
- Scoring instructions must be present
- Data collection system must be specified
Performance Criteria

Example:

Given an array of three items and the verbal cue, “Do this”, Joey will imitate the action with the correct item with 80% accuracy across 10 trials for 3 consecutive sessions.
Performance Criteria

Example:

Given 2-D pictures of 10 body parts and the instruction, “What is it?”, Sara will verbally identify the name of the body part with 80% accuracy over 10 trials for 5 consecutive sessions.
Performance Criteria

Example:

Given five 3-D objects and the instruction, “Match”, Christopher will correctly match the objects with 80% accuracy across 10 trials for 3 consecutive sessions.
Use the ABLLS-R

- Use the working and the measurement systems described in the ABLLS-R
- It provides the curriculum
- It uses each of the components described previously (behavior, condition, criteria)
- Measurable
Summary…

- What should the learner be able to do (target behavior)?
- Under what conditions do you want the learner to be able to do it?
- How well must it be done? (Identify criteria for acceptable performance)
- How will be behavior be measured?
- Once criterion is met, the skill is considered mastered and put on a maintenance schedule for retention.
Table Discussion...

- Using the ABLLS-R/present levels of performance, write an objective.

- How might you incorporate the ABLLS-R curriculum into existing classrooms?
How might you incorporate the ABLLS-R as a curriculum into existing classrooms?

Format of the individualized student curriculum:

- Intended to supply day-to-day guidance to implementers
- Teaching formats (DTT = discrete trial training/teaching and incidental teaching)
- Activities (break, lunch, morning meeting, circle/group Instruction, “Jobs”)
- Locations (cubby, cafeteria, classroom, playground, community)
- Verbal Behavior (Speech/Language/Communication Training)
Example of Schedules

SNP Schedule
Autism 3rd-5\textsuperscript{th}
Detailed SNP Schedule
ABLLS-R Curriculum Throughout the Day

- DTT (1:1 instruction)
  (data sheet)
- Circle
- Verbal Behavior (Manding, Tacting, Intraverbals)
  (data sheet)
- More DTT
- Jobs
Other Assessments and Supplemental Curriculums...

- Checklist of Adaptive Living Skills (CALS)
- Adaptive Living Skills Curriculum
- “Rethink Autism” – web-based, subscription
- VB-Mapp – communication/verbal behavior
- A Functional Assessment and Curriculum for Teaching Students with Disabilities – CEC endorsed
- Autism-Pro – technology based
- Autism Skill Acquisition Program (ASAP) – “Big Book” of skills, CD’s for data
- Others shared

**GA DOE does not endorse any specific product specified in this current presentation.**
Resource List

Resource List cont...

Tris Gilland, BCBA, Ed. S.
System Resource, Autism
Douglas County Schools
770/651-4967
tris.gilland@douglas.k12.ga.us