

ABA: Myths & Facts



MYTHS

FACTS

ABA causes harm, trauma, or long-term damage.



There is no credible scientific evidence that ABA causes trauma or harm.

ABA is inherently abusive or equivalent to past punitive practices.



ABA contributed to ending institutional abuse and promoting community inclusion.

ABA is grounded in the medical model and pathologizes disability.



ABA is based on functional, environmental, and behavioural analysis.

ABA must avoid certain strategies to avoid appearing ableist.



Avoiding effective teaching strategies reduces learning opportunities and access to services.

Emotional appeals or ideology can replace scientific evaluation of ABA.



Universal scientific standards require objective observation, critical appraisal, and confirmed knowledge.

ABA tries to make autistic people “normal” or erase autistic identity.



ABA emphasizes choice autonomy, dignity, communication, and strengths-based teaching.

Removing preferred items or giving instructions are “traumatic.”



Standard ABA procedures do not meet clinical definitions of trauma.

Growth of the ABA field ensures *all* practitioners are trained scientifically.



Growth has led to variations in training. Evaluation and adherence to evidence-based practice are essential.