



## Frequently Used Terms and Abbreviations

A diagnosis of a behavioral disorder (including Autism Spectrum Disorders), often comes with a steady stream of new terminology and acronyms. Below is a list some of those most common terms.

**BHRS – Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services** - often called “wraparound” services because this model or services “wraps” around the child’s existing services. Wraparound itself is a model, and not a program or service in and of itself. BHRS is a funded through Medical Assistance, providing trained professional support for children under the age of 21 in PA. It is a service aimed at reducing and/or replacing significant problem behaviors with positive, socially appropriate behaviors.

**ABA - Applied Behavioral Analysis** - a discipline devoted to the understanding and improvement of human behavior. ABA provides structured programming that provides positive reinforcement, therefore increasing appropriate behaviors. Data is collected and analyzed by a behavioral specialist. This methodology can benefit children of any age, beginning around 2 years old. It is the only scientifically proven treatment for persons with ASD.

**DTT - Discrete Trial Training** - one of many teaching procedures that fall under the “ABA umbrella.” DTT follows the guidelines set forth by Dr. Ivar Lovaas. FBR does not believe in using punishments or aversives in our approach. Rather, we concentrate on task analysis, and breaking down skills into small, measurable steps that can be reinforced in a positive manner. The format used is *Sd* (the antecedent), *R* (the child’s response), and *Sr* (Reinforcement/consequence). Every “discrete trial” must have these three components.

**AVB - Applied Verbal Behavior** - another ABA-based method that focuses on the language element of learning, based on the studies of B.F. Skinner. It promotes the teaching of language in a functional manner. In a verbal behavior approach, a child starts to understand the true meaning or value of words, rather than using simply a rote labeling vocabulary. A child learns to repeat words, label them, describe them, request them, respond to others using the word, read them, and write them. A child’s language needs can be met by having their behavioral consultant complete The ***Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills, or ABLLS assessment***.

**BSC – Behavioral Specialist Consultant** - a Master’s level clinician who works with a family to develop a treatment plan for the child. The plan will recommend any number of interventions that are based on intensive behavioral modification, acquiring age-appropriate skills, developing positive relationships through social skill development, and more. The BSC consults with parents, and does not work one-on-one with the child. They visit the home, as well as observe classrooms, daycares, or community settings, attend psychological evaluations and the quarterly team meetings. A typical prescription is anywhere from 1-6 hours.

**TSS – Therapeutic Staff Support** – a Bachelor’s level (Associate’s level in cases where the individual has 3 years of direct experience with children) clinician who carries out the interventions recommended in the treatment plan written by the BSC. They work one-on-one with the child in either the family home, community, or school. A typical prescription is anywhere from 5-30 hours, depending on medical necessity for the individual child.

**MT- Mobile Therapist** – a Master’s level clinician who counsel family members as well as the affected child in the home. They are usually assigned to higher-functioning children, since the child is an active participant in this therapy.

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**IDEA- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** – federal law ensuring educational services to children with disabilities . It governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services. It requires that students are provided a “free and appropriate public education” (**FAPE**) in the least restrictive environment.

**IEP – Individualized Education Plan** –document that outlines the goals, specially designed instruction, and modifications required by a student with a recognized disability.

**ISPT – Interagency Service Planning Team** – the team consisting of parents, the **BHRS (Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services)** or “wraparound provider,” Occupational Therapist (OT), Speech/Language Therapist (SLT), teachers, community contacts and/or many others involved in the treatment of the child. ISPT meetings are held quarterly to gather the team together for input and treatment planning.

**BSU – Base Service Unit** – social service agency that provides a **CM (Case Manager)** who will then help you to coordinate any number of services for the child. They may also attend ISPT meetings and participate in planning the child’s treatment.

**SSI - Supplemental Security Income** – federal Social Security disability payments made to individuals who meet both disability and income requirements. In Pennsylvania, a child who meets the criteria for SSI automatically qualifies for Medical Assistance.

**MA - Medical Assistance** – medical insurance provided through the **DPW (Department of Public Welfare)** to those who meet income requirements as well as disabled children who qualify for the services through Pennsylvania’s “loophole”. Those with MA will have an **ACCESS** card which identifies you as a recipient.

**CARS - Childhood Autism Rating Scale** – behavior rating scale used to identify children with autism and to distinguish them from other developmentally delayed children that do not have a form of autism.

**DSM-IV - Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders** – published by the American Psychiatric Association and provides the specific diagnostic criteria for mental disorders. Mental health professionals use this book to help communicate a patient’s diagnosis after an evaluation. Many hospitals, clinics, and insurance companies require a “five-axis” DSM diagnosis for all patients that they see.

**MH/MR - Mental Health/Mental Retardation** – acronym used to describe mental health and mental retardation services.

**504 Plan** – A 504 plan is an educational plan used for children who do not qualify for an IEP. Such children do not meet the “two-prong” criteria for special education services. They may, however, qualify for a 504 plan due to their other physical, medical, or other less-severe behavioral health needs. The plan provides adaptations and additional services, but not specially designed instruction or other like academic supports.

**This is only a sample of the many terms families will encounter when entering the behavioral health system. If you have been presented with any other confusing term or acronym, we encourage you to contact us for further clarification. We will assist you in the process of learning terminology that will help you become your loved one’s strongest advocate.**

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