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Behavioral Treatments in Autism Spectrum Disorder: What Do We Know?

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Abstract: Although there are a large and growing number of scientifically questionable treatments available for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), intervention programs applying the scientific teaching principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA) have been identified as the treatment of choice. The following article provides a selective review of ABA intervention approaches, some of which are designed as comprehensive programs that aim to address all developmental areas of need, whereas others are skills based or directed toward a more circumscribed, specific set of goals. However, both types of approaches have been shown to be effective in improving communication, social skills, and management of problem behavior for children with ASD. Implications of these findings are discussed in relation to critical areas of research that have yet to be fully explored.