What Do We Know??

Components of Effective Intervention
The National Academy of Sciences, Educating Children with Autism

- Young kids need lots of learning opportunities (active engagement in intensive instructional program)
- Active plan for generalization
- Time with typically developing peers
- Emphasis on communication, imitation and play
- Require direct, active instruction
- Intervention should be systematic, goal focused and planful
- Needs family involvement, parent training
Interventions

Questions for Parents or Caregivers to Ask Regarding Specific Treatments and/or Programs

- What characteristic behaviors of ASD/PDD am I trying to target?
- Does the program/therapy and anticipated outcomes address these targeted concerns?
- Does the method meet the unique strengths/challenges/goals for my child?
- Are there any harmful side effects associated with this treatment? What are the potential risks? Is there any risk of discontinuing the intervention?
- Are there any activities, foods, etc. that will be restricted during treatment?
- What positive effects of treatment would I hope to see?
- What are the short-term and long-term effects?
- Can the treatment be integrated into my child’s current program?
- How will the goals/outcomes be evaluated? How will I know if the child is making progress toward desired outcomes? What method will be used to evaluate the child’s progress?
- What is the cost of treatment? What funding source will pay for it?
- How much time does the treatment take? Can I realistically devote the time required to the treatment?
- Has this treatment been validated scientifically? Have I collected information about this from a variety of sources?
- Was I able to interview other parents and professionals about the treatment? If so, list pros, cons, and other areas of interest.
- Do proponents of the treatment claim that this procedure can help nearly everyone? If so, this should be seen as a “red flag” to slow down and be more careful in consideration of this technique, considering the wide range of abilities represented on the autism spectrum.
- What do my pediatrician and other professionals involved with my child think about the treatment’s appropriateness?
- Are there alternatives that are: less restrictive? better researched?

Source: Ohio Parent’s Guide to ASD
Three levels of ASD Interventions

Comprehensive: Interventions target all three, core deficit areas of ASD (communication, social, repetitive behaviors/routines) as well as other issues, such as sensory, sleep, GI, etc.

Eclectic: Interventions that include aspects of two or more approaches

Lifestyle: Interventions using natural community resources (typically for older children); perhaps recreational activities in the community or hiring teenager to spend time with child for social skills practice

Focused: Interventions are focused on one ASD area, such as speech, OT, or social skills

Values of ASD Intervention

Interventions have different philosophies and approaches. Can be thought of as a continuum from very skill-based behavioral intervention, to more developmental and relationship-based.

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<th>Early Start Denver Model</th>
<th>Relationship-Based</th>
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