



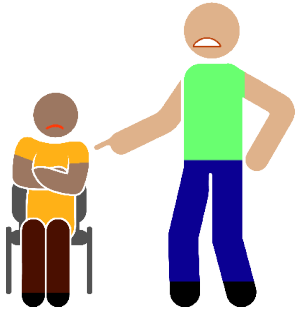
Easy Read Edition

For Whose Benefit?

Evidence, Ethics, and Effectiveness of Autism Interventions

Part 2: Summary

Words to Know in Part 2



Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)

A bad autism service that focuses on changing how autistic children behave. ABA wants autistic children to look and behave like they are not autistic. It teaches autistic children to hide the things that make them “look” autistic.



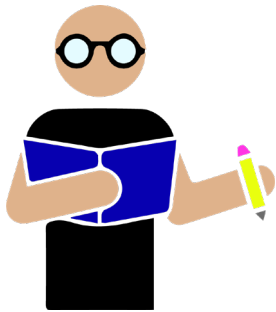
Conversion Therapy

Trying to change someone's gender or sexuality



Evidence

Facts that show something is true. You get evidence from studying something.



Practitioner

Someone who gives a service to autistic people.

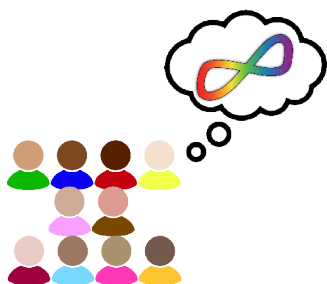


Service

A program that tries to help autistic people. In this toolkit, we also call services “therapies”.

Summary

Why did ASAN do this project?



More people know about autism than in the past.



More people are getting diagnosed with autism than in the past.



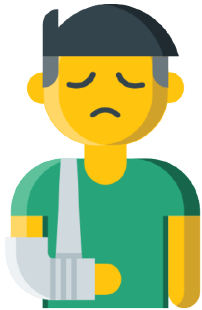
There are a lot of services for autism.



Services are programs that try to help autistic people. In this toolkit, we also call services “therapies”.



Some services don't help autistic people.



Some services even hurt autistic people.



And not many people study whether these services help autistic people.



When people do study autism services, they usually don't include autistic people.



Autistic people usually don't get to help with making new autism services.



We usually don't get to help study autism services.



ASAN is a group of autistic people.



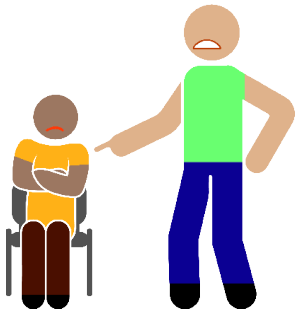
We work on disability rights.



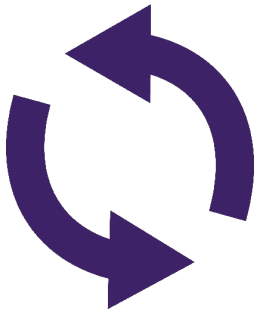
ASAN wanted to know what kinds of autism services there are.



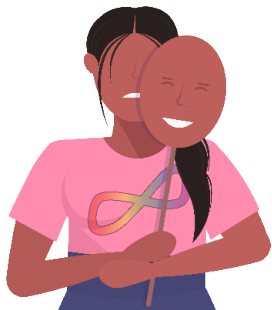
We wanted to know what autistic people think about different autism services.



One of the autism services that people use the most is **Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)**.



ABA focuses on changing how autistic children act.



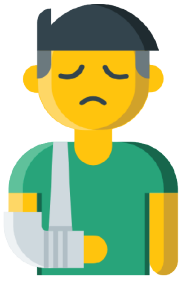
ABA wants autistic children to look and act like they are not autistic.



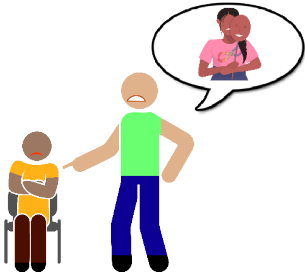
It teaches autistic children to hide the things that make them “look” autistic.



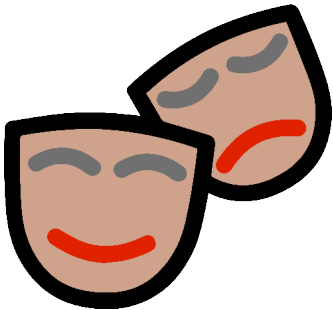
ASAN thinks ABA is a bad service.



We think it hurts autistic people.



ABA teaches autistic children to hide the things that make them look autistic.



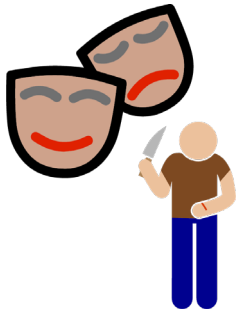
This is sometimes called “masking.”



People have done studies on masking.



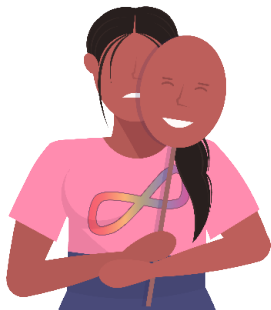
These studies found that masking makes autistic adults more likely to feel bad.



Masking makes autistic adults more likely to hurt ourselves.



Masking makes autistic adults more likely to want to kill ourselves.



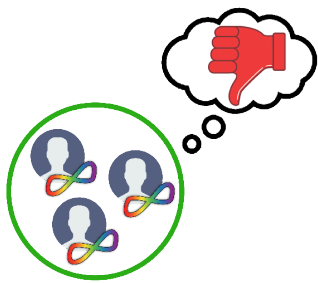
We also know that ABA wants to make autistic children look “normal.”



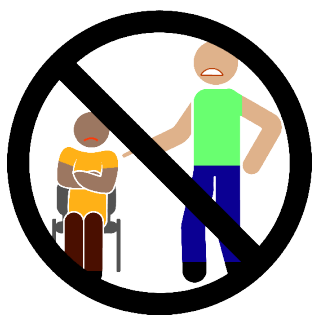
It isn't good at helping autistic children with skills that will help them in life.



ASAN thinks ABA is a bad service.



A lot of autistic people think ABA is a bad service.



We think that nobody should ever use ABA.



But we also have other problems with autism services.



We think other services can be bad.



We want people to be careful with other services, too.

What did ASAN do for this project?



ASAN wanted to know what autistic people think about different services.



So we read what autistic people have written about services.



We read things from autistic people of a lot of different backgrounds.



We read things from autistic people who have gone through different services.



We also wanted to know what evidence there is for different services.



Evidence is facts that show something is true. You get evidence from studying something.



So we looked at studies about services.



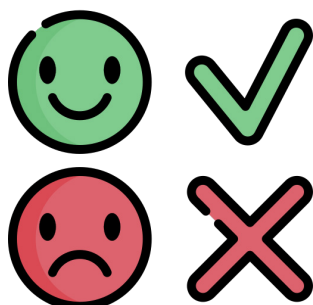
Most of these studies weren't done by autistic people.



But some of the studies were.

What did ASAN talk about in our report?

Good and bad evidence



We talk about how good or bad the evidence for different services is.



The evidence for a lot of services is not good!



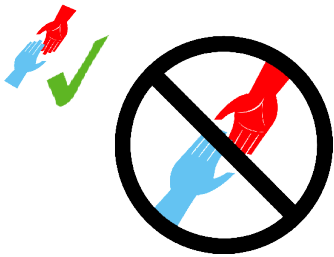
The evidence says that those services don't work.



They don't help autistic people.



Or, the evidence says that the services do work.



But the evidence says that those services don't help very much.

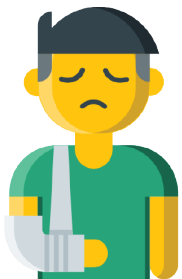
Studies done badly



We talk about how a lot of studies of autism services were done in bad ways.



The people who did those studies didn't treat autistic people right.



They might have hurt the autistic people they were studying.



Some studies did not hurt the people they were studying. But, the science still was not good.

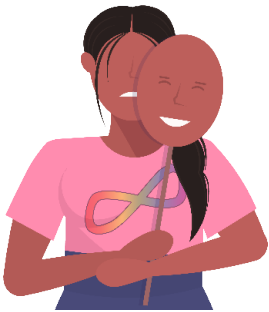


So the evidence from those studies isn't good.

Things we don't like in autism services



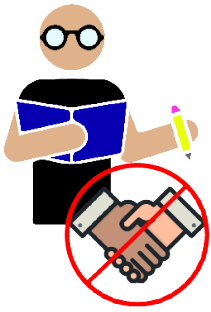
We talk about things we don't like about autism services.



We talk about how a lot of autism therapies try to make autistic people "normal."

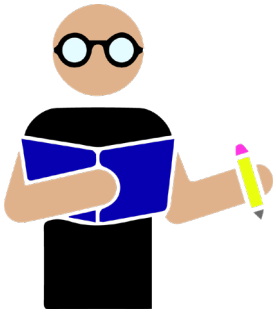


But that's not the only thing we don't like about a lot of services.

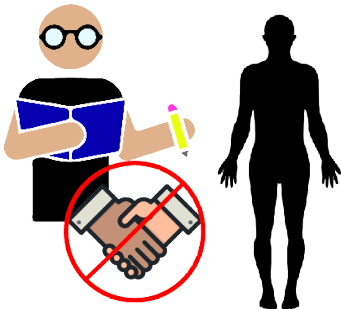


Practitioners don't respect us

We also don't like how a lot of practitioners don't respect autistic people.



A **practitioner** is someone who gives a service to autistic people.



Sometimes, practitioners don't respect our bodies.



They touch us when it's not needed for the service.

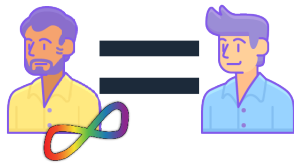


That's wrong.

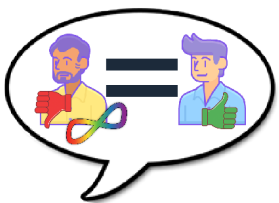
Services say autistic behavior is bad behavior



We don't like how some services say that the way autistic people act is wrong.



Sometimes, an autistic person will do the same thing as a non-autistic person.



A bad service will say the non-autistic person's behavior is okay. But the service will say the autistic person's behavior isn't okay.



That's wrong.

Services can hurt us



Some services affect autistic people badly.

They do things to us like:



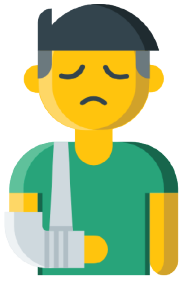
- Have practitioners yell at us



- Force us to do things we don't want to do for no good reason



- Say we're not allowed to stim



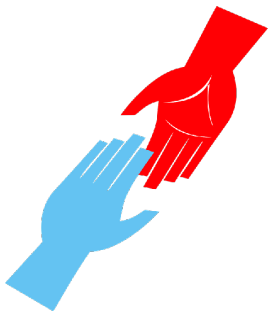
Services shouldn't hurt us.



They shouldn't treat us badly.

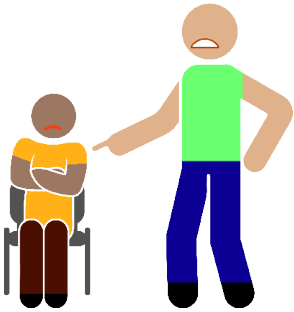


We should get better services.



We should get services that help us.

Things we don't like in ABA specifically



We also talk about ABA specifically.



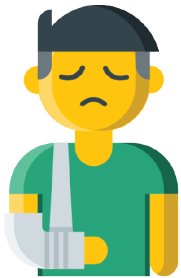
ABA is one of the most popular autism services.



A lot of autistic people go through ABA.



ABA is a bad service.



It hurts autistic people.

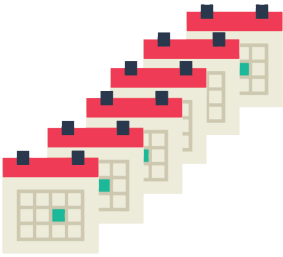


ABA can't help autistic people.



So we wrote 3 reasons why we don't like ABA.

ABA hurts autistic people really badly



ABA has been around for a long time.



It used to do really bad things to autistic people.

It would hurt us by doing things like:



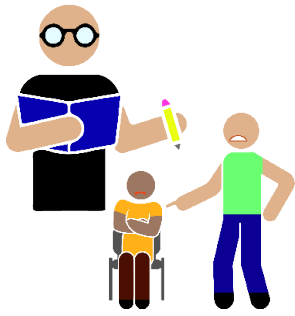
- Not giving us food



- Having people scream at us



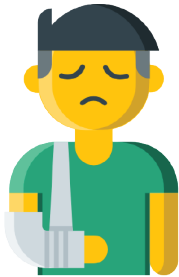
- Shocking us with electricity



Some people who practice ABA still do this.



That's wrong.



It hurts autistic people.



That should *never* happen.

ABA is connected to conversion therapy



Conversion therapy is trying to change someone's gender or sexuality.



Conversion therapy happens mostly to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.



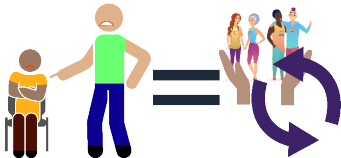
Conversion therapy tries to make them not be gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender.



Conversion therapy is wrong.



Nobody should ever do it.



A lot of autistic people have called ABA
“autistic conversion therapy.”



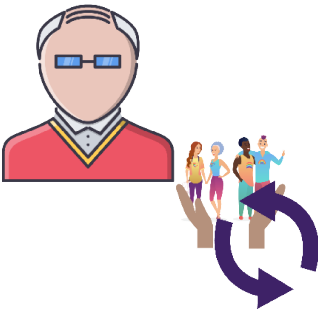
They say ABA tries to make autistic people
not be autistic.



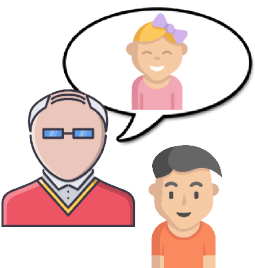
They say it is a kind of conversion therapy.



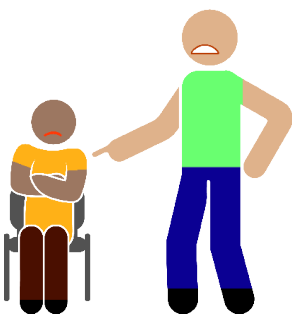
ABA was invented by a man named O. Ivar Lovaas.



He also did a study about conversion therapy.



The study was on a young boy who Lovaas said "acted like a girl."



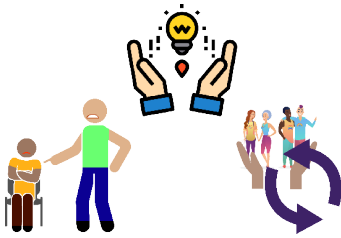
Lovaas used ABA to punish the boy.



He thought this would keep the boy from being gay when he grew up.



Lovaas did this because he thought being gay was a bad thing.

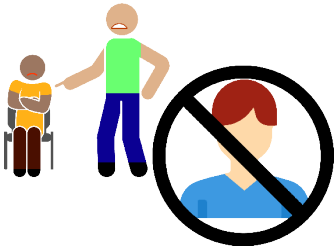


ABA and conversion therapy come from the same ideas.

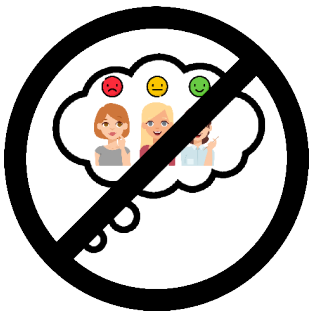


They both use rewards and punishments to try to change who a person is.

ABA sees autistic people as less than human



ABA treats autistic people like we're not human.



It doesn't think about our emotions.



ABA tries to change what we do. It doesn't care about why we do the things we do.



ABA hurts autistic people this way.

Two arguments we hear a lot about autism services



ASAN hears a lot of arguments about autism services.



We chose 2 that we wanted to talk about.



These arguments didn't fit in the other sections.



But they are still important to talk about.

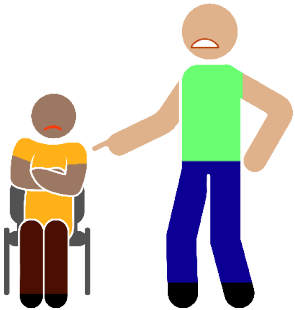
"New ABA" is not okay



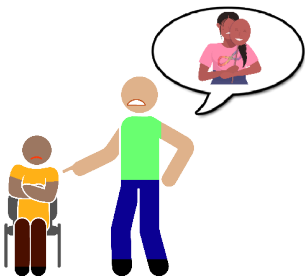
Sometimes, people will say that "new ABA" is okay.



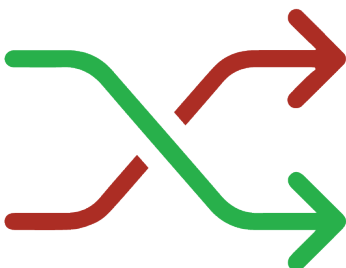
"New ABA" is a type of ABA.



It is like old ABA.



It still tries to make autistic people "less autistic."



It does this in different ways from old ABA.

But new ABA is still bad.



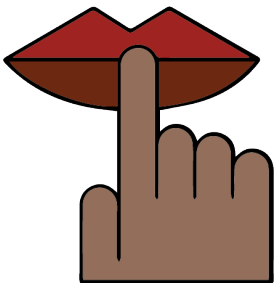
It still hurts us.



People might not be able to tell it hurts us.



New ABA can hurt us in sneaky ways.

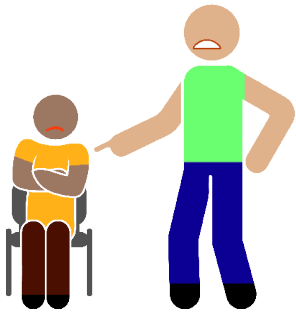


It hurts us in ways that other people can't see easily.





New ABA is still wrong.



It is still like the old ABA.

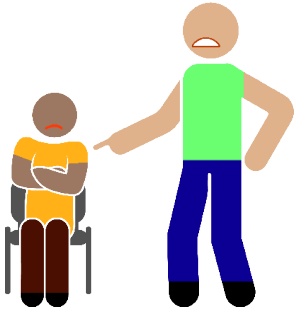


ASAN doesn't like "new ABA."

Be careful with all services



ASAN wants people to be careful of all autism services.



Some services, like ABA, are always bad.



A lot of services can sometimes be good.



But they can also be bad sometimes.



We don't think any service is always good.

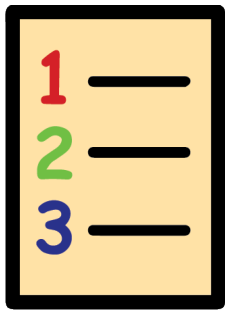


We want people to look closely at services.



We want them to make sure the services are doing a good job.

Core principles for autism services



We wrote a list of things we want autism services to remember.



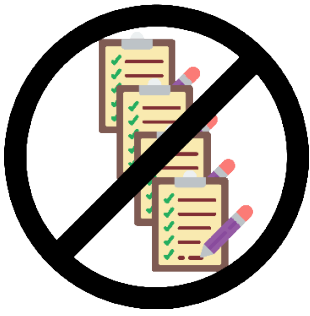
We call these “core principles.”



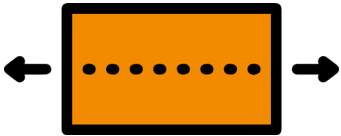
Core principles are things that autism services need to know in order to do a good job.



We know that there are a lot of services out there.



We couldn't write core principles for every one.



So we wrote our core principles as broadly as possible.



We wanted them to apply to as many services as possible.



We don't want to focus on just one kind of service.

5 questions to ask to see if a service is good or bad



We wanted to help people figure out if a service is good or bad.



So we wrote 5 big questions.



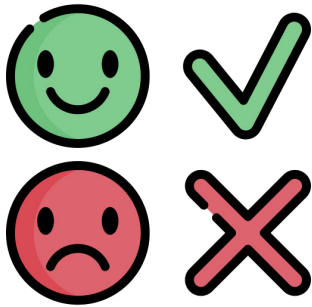
These aren't the only questions people should ask about a service.



These questions can't tell you everything about a service.



But they are a good starting point.



They can tell you some things about whether a service is good or bad.

Question 1



What are the goals of the service?



Who comes up with those goals?



Does the autistic person get to come up with their own goals?

Question 2



What does the service believe about autism?

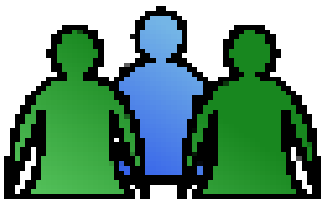


Why does it target a specific skill or behavior?

Question 3



Who gets the most out of the service?



What do various people involved in the service get out of it?

These can be people like:



- the autistic person

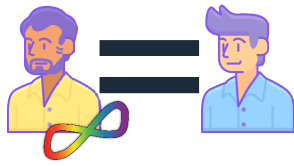


- their parents/family



- their support people

Question 4



Would you say this service was okay if it happened to a non-autistic person?

Question 5



What could happen in the future if the autistic person has this service?



What could happen in the future if the autistic person doesn't have this service?