



## **Tangible Difference Learning Center**

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# **Presentation of Services 2011**

## **Mission Statement**

TDLC's goal is to effectively serve families with special needs children by providing quality Applied Behavior Analysis, Speech Language therapy, Social Skills classes and Professional Counseling services in the Greater Houston area.

## **Introduction**

Welcome to Tangible Difference Learning Center. We are excited that you made an inquiry into our services and we hope our services fit your specific needs. Look through the presentation and if you have any questions or comments feel free to call or email. Our goal is to make a positive impact on your child and your family's quality of life.

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## What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

ABA, in its simplest terms, is the study and modification of behavior. It is a one-on-one therapy that involves the process of applying behavior modification in order to reduce behavior and improve the learning environment. It is the power of reinforcement that allows therapists to modify a behavior and teach new skills. ABA, in a structured environment, helps children acquire skills that typical children learn naturally. It is the most researched and supported therapy for helping children with special needs improve. Applied Behavior Analysis is the only scientifically proven way to treat children with autism and other special needs, and it is easy to understand because it uses simple rules and procedures.

# Tangible Difference Learning Center – ABA Services

**Center Hours:** Mon, Wed, & Fri 9:00-5:00, Tue & Thu 9:00-7:00, Sat.10:00-3:00

## *Our Learning Center*

Our center offers one-on-one intensive ABA services.

Michael Conteh M.Ed, BCBA is the Executive Director of TDLC, and has been working with special needs children doing in-home and clinical work for over 10 years. Michael received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Houston in 2004. He received his Associate Board Certification in Behavior Analysis (BCABA) in December of 2004, his Master of Arts in Special Education in December of 2008, and his BCBA in 2009. He spent a year as a direct care member at a residential facility, working with children and young adults with severe emotional and behavioral problems. During his career, he has had the opportunity to work with kids from 18 months to 22 years old, covering most children on the Autism Spectrum (including Asperger Syndrome and ADD/ADHD). Michael prides himself on personally training his staff so that they have the same motivation and drive he possesses.

The Learning Center is run on a daily basis by our Office Manager, Carisa Socco. Carisa is a graduate of the University of Houston with post baccalaureate studies related to the field of Occupational Therapy. Aside from day-to-day duties, Carisa is also the liaison between the Center and parents, as well as supervising the staff. She is in charge of scheduling for the Center.

Our Learning Center Programmer and Assistant Director is Alisha Romero. Alisha has been working with special needs children for five years. She obtained a BA in Psychology from the University of Houston-Downtown and is currently completing the Master of Occupational Therapy program at Texas Woman's University. To create an individualized datasheet for each child, Alisha uses our Four Phase Program and the Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VBMAPP) to prepare a child to enter mainstream or special needs schools. The ultimate goal of our program is to teach the child to naturally learn from his or her environment. To ensure quality therapy, Alisha coordinates monthly staff trainings, during which she goes over new programs and changes in our protocols or procedures to ensure that everyone is on the same page. She also takes time to answer any questions staff might have.

Jessica Wooden has been working with special needs children for over four years. She obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology with a Minor in Business Administration from the University of Houston. Jessica currently assists with advertisement and special projects.

Cindy Floyd serves as TDLC's part-time Medical Biller. Cindy obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Coastal Carolina University and is currently completing her Master's Degree in Health Information Management. She has over six years experience in the health insurance industry and was a special education teacher for two years.

### ***Our In Home Treatment Program***

Our In Home Coordinator is Jackie Howell. She is in charge of updating and maintaining all in home programs. Jackie ensures all the materials necessary are in place so that the therapist can work on the datasheet. She also likes to personally go over each program with the therapist working with your child to ensure quality therapy. Jackie has been working with special needs children professionally for a little over six years, but has also grown up at home with a family member who has Autism. She obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from Texas Southern University.

This program is excellent for parents whose location prohibits them from traveling to our Learning Center, or who have difficulty with maintaining their own in home program. What has made us successful is our effective programming and dependable staff. We do have a waiting list for in-home therapy in most areas, so please view our pre-requisites below. We do not service all parts of town, so please contact us to find out about availability in your area.

#### **Requirements of In Home:**

- 15 hour per week minimum. The more hours, the more effective the program.
- Parent or caregiver must be home at all times.

## **Speech and Language Therapy**

TDLC now has on staff licensed Speech and Language Pathologists who will be in charge of assessing, diagnosing, and treating communication disorders in your child.

The Speech and Language Pathologist will help those children who cannot produce speech sounds, those who have problems understanding and producing language, those who have cognitive communication impairments, and those who would like to improve communication skills. Using fun and entertaining activities, the Speech and

Language Pathologist will work on teaching your child how to make sounds and increase oral and written language skills so that he/she can communicate successfully. The main goal of our Speech and Language Pathologist is to help your child develop consistent communication so that he/she can perform his/her educational, occupational, and social roles.

We at TDLC believe that the union of Speech and Language Therapy and Applied Behavior Analysis is highly beneficial in promoting continuity and success. Our Applied Behavioral Analysis therapists will work on reducing undesirable behaviors, allowing our Speech and Language Pathologist the opportunity to provide effective therapy. Some of the communication programs our Speech and Language Pathologist will use are Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and sign language (ASL). These will be used along with verbal communication.

Are you interested in Speech and Language Therapy at TDLC? Let us know! Send an email to [director@tangibledifference.com](mailto:director@tangibledifference.com) or call us at 713-462-6060 and we can put you on our waiting list.

## **Professional Counseling Services**

Tangible Difference Learning Center provides Licensed Professional Counseling services. Services include individual, couple, family, and group therapy to those individuals who are in contact with a special needs child.

Parents and siblings are the ones who spend the most time with special needs children; therefore they are the ones who experience the most pressure and frustration. Having an opportunity to talk about the daily challenges can help release some of the stress. In addition, meeting other families and couples who are experiencing similar emotions can reduce feelings of isolation, as well as having a support system. TDLC provides you a place where you can peacefully sit down and talk while your child is receiving ABA or Speech services.

Teachers also spend a great amount of time with special needs children. Being in a room with a group of 5 to 10 special needs children can be challenging and can generate some feelings of frustration and stress. Talking to friends and family about the challenges of the job might help, but most of the time, family and friends can't understand how we feel because they are not exposed to that environment. Having the opportunity to talk to others who have had similar experiences, and know what it is like, can reduce the feeling of being isolated and overwhelmed. Teachers and professionals in this field must remember that in order to help others, they must make sure they help themselves first.

Are you interested in counseling at TDLC? Send an email to [counseling@tangibledifference.com](mailto:counseling@tangibledifference.com) or call 713-462-6060. The counseling program is separate from all of our other services, and will remain completely confidential.

# Social Skills Programs

**Social Skills Program:** Ages 2-7. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 12:00-3:00 pm and Saturdays from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.

**Social Skills Program:** Ages 8 & Up. Saturdays from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm.

Many children do well in a one on one setting, but have difficulty when placed in a group setting. We have a social skills class that will help on all the areas that one on one therapy cannot provide. Our focus will be working on following group instructions, multiple transitions, independent tasks, and behaviors that interfere in the group environment. The Social Skills curriculum was developed by a Special Education teacher and classes are taught by experienced ABA therapists creating a great learning environment that prepares children for a mainstream setting.

Social skills classes are offered throughout the summer. For younger kids, the ultimate goal of these classes is to improve communication, social interactions, and teach basic skills. For older children, our goals are to create independence, improve social skills, and teach them how to entertain themselves while completing multiple tasks.

# Additional Services

## *Parent Training Program*

This unique program focuses more on the parent than the child. Many times consultants do a great job of programming for the children, but the parents do not get enough information on how to continue the intervention once the therapist leaves.

During the course of the evaluation and training service, the following will take place:

- Observation of the child
- Preliminary determination of the functions of problem behavior
- Preliminary determination of the frequency, duration, and intensity of the problem behavior
- Meet with family (family will fill out questionnaire as well)
- Completion of a report regarding the functions of problem behavior, strategies for reducing problem behavior, setting up reinforcement schedules in order to reinforce alternative behaviors, and general advice on observation of precursors to problem behavior and improving overall communication skills
- 6 hours of parent training over the course of 2 to 4 weeks\*

The price for this package is \$750.

\* It is recommended that parents bring their children to receive one-on-one ABA therapy during the time that they are doing parent training. This one-on-one ABA therapy will be provided by TDLC staff at the rate of \$25 per hour.

## *Workshops*

One of the things Michael enjoys doing is offering different, entertaining, and informative talks to parents, teachers, educators, and people interested in learning about Applied Behavior Analysis and Autism. The talks usually last between one and four hours.

These are a great opportunity to personally ask a Board Certified Behavior Analyst any particular questions you may have, meet other professionals and colleagues in the field, and network with different families who might be in a similar situation. Some of the topics about which Michael likes to talk include: how to improve communication, how to reduce maladaptive behaviors, how to troubleshoot problem behaviors, and how to incorporate videos for training purposes.

## How to Get Started

If you would like to learn more about Tangible Difference Learning Center, please send an email to [director@tangibledifference.com](mailto:director@tangibledifference.com) or call us at 713-462-6060.

To set up an appointment to meet our team and tour the Center, call us at 713-462-6060. The first appointment lasts 45 minutes to an hour, during which Michael or someone from the administration team will give a tour of our facility and talk with you about how we can best assist your family. **Please note that we cannot accept walk-ins, appointments only.**

After the first meeting, if you are interested in starting services we will set up an appointment to assess your child. The assessment will last between an hour and an hour and a half, and will be performed by a member of our Programming staff or Michael (our Executive Director). Using data obtained in the assessment, a personalized datasheet and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be made.

After the assessment is completed, the next step is to set up a schedule for your child to receive therapy. In general, it can take two to three weeks for us to get started, depending on insurance verification, scheduling availability, and the services to be provided.

We are located at: **7010 Northwest 100 Drive, Suite A104**  
**Houston, TX 77092**

