

# Early Start Denver Model

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

**Driven to Discover®**

# Developers

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# Background

- 1960's-80's – Developmental psychology – infant and toddler development knowledge
  - Language, object play, pretend play, imitation
- Children with ASD follow same trajectory of development
- Better sense of what we should be teaching

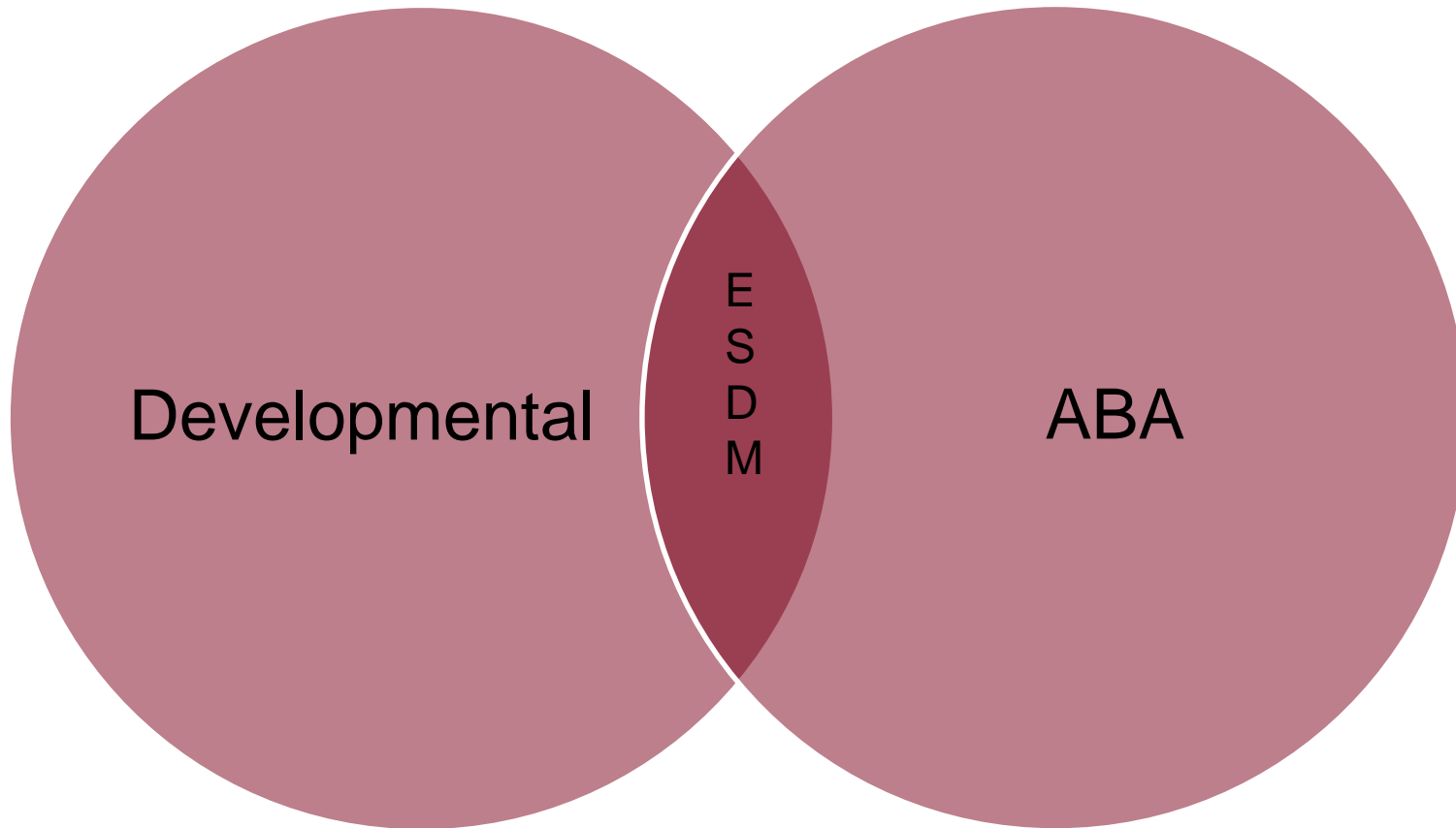


# Background

- Lovaas 1987 showed intensive ABA program 30-40 hours/ week could increase IQ
- 49% in mainstream without dx
- Offered entirely new set of goals
- Results replicated, although not quite same level of outcome

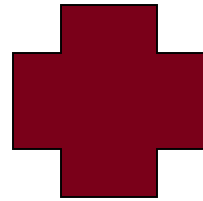


# What is ESDM?



# What Is ESDM?

**Curriculum**



**Specific teaching practices**

For home/ group programs, parent training, or  
disciplinary practices



# What is ESDM?

- Play-based intervention in which the child partners with the adult.
- Designed for children ages 12 months to 48 months



# Elements of ESDM

- **Developmental Framework**
- Relationship-Based
- Parents/ caregivers are key participants
- Uses teaching tool of Applied Behavior Analysis
- Multiple Environments
- All Day Long



# ESDM Curriculum Checklist

- Completed during a play-based observation
- The curriculum follows specific developmental sequences.
- The curriculum targets all affected areas: receptive communication, expressive communication, joint attention, social skills, imitation, cognition, play, fine motor, gross motor, behavior, and personal independence.
- Helps define the child's most mature skills, those that are emerging, and those that the child is n



# ESDM Curriculum Checklist ©

- Expressive Communication (Level 1)
  - Uses goal-directed reach to request
  - Vocalizes with intent
  - “Asks” for help by handing object to adult
  - Expresses refusal by pushing the object away or giving the object back to another person
  - Points proximally to request desired object
  - Makes eye contact to obtain a desired object when adult blocks access/ withholds desired object
  - Points to indicate choice between two objects
  - Combines vocalization and gaze for intentional request



Guilford Press 2010



# Elements of ESDM

- Developmental Framework
- **Relationship-Based**
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# Relationship-Based

- A teaching interaction style that
  - Captures the child's attention (positioning, narrating, imitation)
  - Provides very clear social and communication signals
- First establish positive interactions with the child and then imbed teaching
- Child chooses the activity
- Child learns to both lead and follow



# Relationship-Based

- These ways of interacting promote
  - Language development
  - Social and symbolic play
  - Social initiations from the child



# Elements of ESDM

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- **Parents/ caregivers are key participants**
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# Parents help guide the intervention

- Autism is a social disorder and the child's relationship with the family must be at the forefront of intervention
- Parent preferences and priorities guide the intervention
- Prepares parents for a lifetime of decision-making and advocacy



# Elements of ESDM

- Developmental Framework
- Relationship-Based
- Parents/ caregivers are key participants
- Uses teaching tool of Applied Behavior Analysis
- Interdisciplinary Approach
- Multiple Environments
- All Day Long



# Principles of ABA

- Management of motivation and attention
- Response to intervention
- Use of prompting, fading, shaping and chaining



# What does ESDM look like?

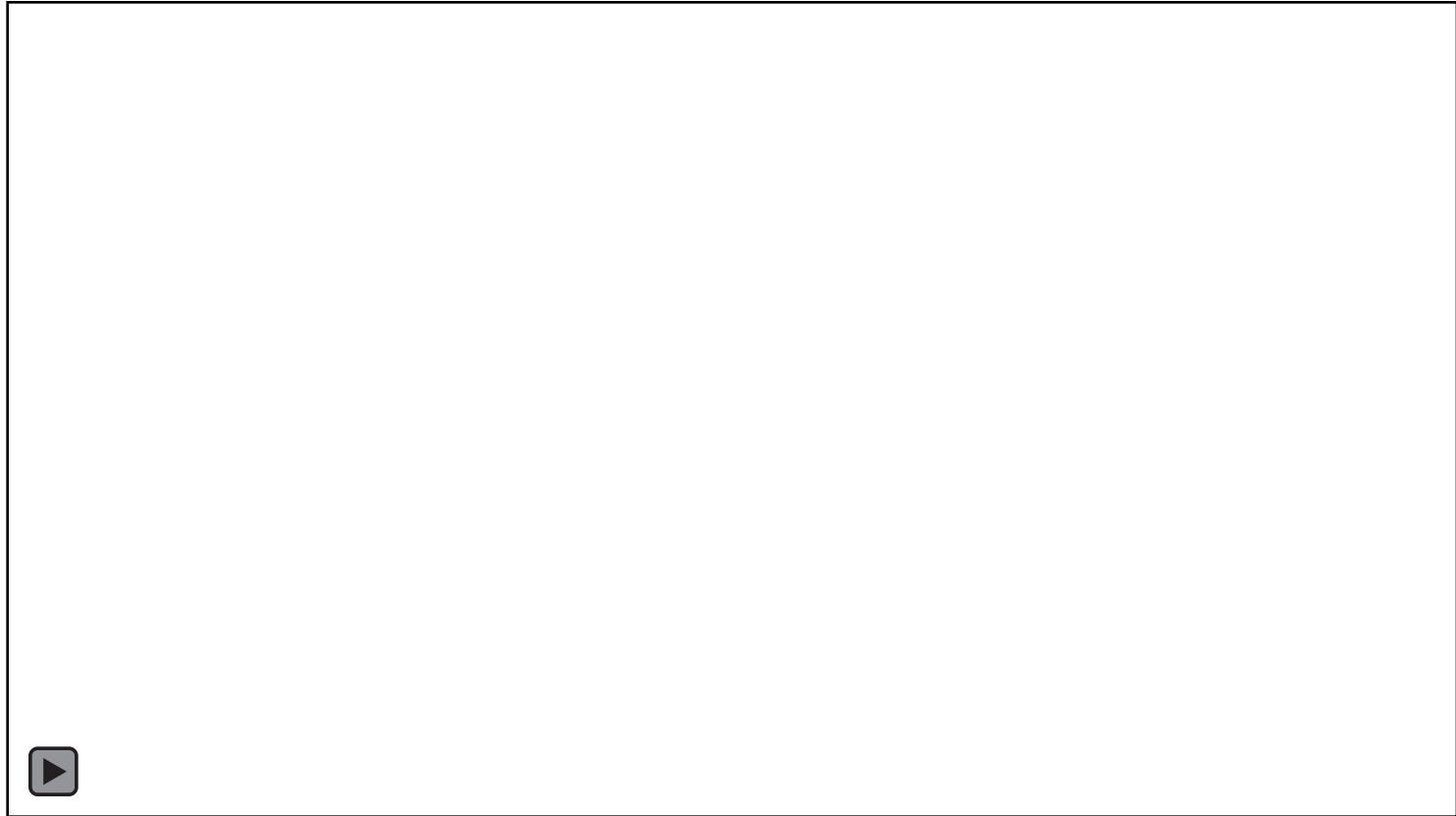
[http://media.mindinstitute.org/video/press/Logan\\_Balls.mp4](http://media.mindinstitute.org/video/press/Logan_Balls.mp4)

[http://media.mindinstitute.org/video/press/Logan\\_PattyFeet.m  
p4](http://media.mindinstitute.org/video/press/Logan_PattyFeet.mp4)

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# Elements of ESDM

- Developmental Framework
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# Research support

Pediatrics

January 2010, VOLUME 125 / ISSUE 1

From the American Academy of Pediatrics

Article

## Randomized, Controlled Trial of an Intervention for Toddlers With Autism: The Early Start Denver Model

Geraldine Dawson, Sally Rogers, Jeffrey Munson, Milani Smith, Jamie Winter, Jessica Greenon, Amy Donaldson, Jennifer Varley

Article

Figures & Data

Info & Metrics

Comments



# Research Support

## **Early Behavioral Intervention Is Associated With Normalized Brain Activity in Young Children With Autism**

Geraldine Dawson Ph.D., Emily J.H. Jones Ph.D., Kristen Merkle B.S., Kaitlin Venema B.S., Rachel Lowy B.S., Susan Faja Ph.D., Dana Kamara B.S., Michael Murias Ph.D., Jessica Greenson Ph.D., Jamie Winter Ph.D., Milani Smith Ph.D., Sally J. Rogers Ph.D. and Sara J. Webb Ph.D.

Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2012-11-01, Volume 51, Issue 11, Pages 1150-1159, Copyright © 2012 American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry




# Research Support

## Effectiveness and Feasibility of the Early Start Denver Model Implemented in a Group-Based Community Childcare Setting

Authors

[Authors and affiliations](#)

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Giacomo Vivanti , Jessica Paynter, Ed Duncan, Hannah Fothergill, Cheryl Dissanayake, Sally J. Rogers,  
the Victorian ASELCC Team



# Research Support

## Long-Term Outcomes of Early Intervention in 6-Year-Old Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder



Annette Estes PhD, Jeffrey Munson PhD, Sally J. Rogers PhD, Jessica Greenson PhD, Jamie Winter PhD  
and Geraldine Dawson PhD

Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 2015-07-01, Volume 54, Issue 7, Pages 580-587,  
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# Who Can Be Certified?

- An ESDM therapist may be a psychologist, behavior specialist, occupational therapist, speech/ language pathologist, early intervention specialist or developmental pediatrician. They need to have ESDM training and certification.
- List of certified ESDM therapists:  
[http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/esdm\\_certifiedtherapists.pdf](http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/esdm_certifiedtherapists.pdf)



# Training of Professionals

- Qualified professionals complete both the introductory and advanced workshops and then submit videotapes showing them using ESDM techniques in therapy sessions. Certification requires that the therapist demonstrates the ability to implement ESDM techniques reliably and with fidelity.
- Introductory training is available online and in person.
- [http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/certification\\_steps.pdf](http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/certification_steps.pdf)



# Training of Parents

- Parental involvement is a crucial part of the ESDM program. If your child is receiving ESDM therapy, the therapist will explain and model the strategies for you to use at home.
- There is also a separate training “manual” for parents: [An Early Start for Your Child with Autism.](#)
- Parents can complete the introductory training (online or in person): <https://www.esdm.co/introductory-workshops>



# Services in Minnesota

- Fraser Early Beginnings Program (offered both in person and via telehealth) – Parent training program, Ages Birth-48 months w/ dx ASD or related diagnosis (612-767-7222)

FYI:

- Telehealth study at the U of M uses this framework, but providers are not ESDM certified (612-624-1450).
- Parent training at the U of M ASD Clinic also uses many strategies from this model, but providers are not ESDM certified. Designed for families of children “at risk” for ASD or dx’d with ASD who are waiting for more intensive services.



# Resources

- Book: "An Early Start for Your Child with Autism" by Rogers, Dawson and Vismara
- Book: "Early Start Denver Model for Young Children with Autism" by Rogers and Dawson
- [http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/certification\\_steps.pdf](http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/certification_steps.pdf)
- [http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/esdm\\_certifiedtherapists.pdf](http://ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/mindinstitute/research/esdm/pdf/esdm_certifiedtherapists.pdf)
- <https://www.esdm.co/introductory-workshops>

THANK YOU

