ABA Research Summary: 2025 Mid-Year

Key Findings for School-Based Practice

Implementation Science Advances

Key Finding: Contextual Adaptation

Research increasingly supports adapting evidence-based interventions to context rather than rigid protocol adherence. Interventions modified for classroom realities maintain effectiveness while improving implementation fidelity.

Implication: Work with teachers to adapt interventions to their specific context rather than expecting exact replication of research protocols.

Functional Assessment Developments

Brief Functional Analysis in Schools

New research validates abbreviated FA procedures that can be completed within typical school schedules. 15-minute session protocols show comparable accuracy to traditional methods.

Interview-Informed Synthesis

Studies confirm that structured interviews combined with direct observation can accurately identify function in many cases, reducing need for experimental analysis.

Trauma-Informed Behavior Analysis

Integration, Not Replacement

Emerging consensus supports integrating trauma-informed perspectives with behavioral assessment rather than treating them as competing frameworks. Function-based thinking remains valid while expanding to consider trauma-related setting events and physiological states.

Technology and Data Collection

Area	Finding
Digital Data Collection	App-based collection produces comparable data to paper while reducing data entry time
AI-Assisted Analysis	Promise for pattern recognition; still requires human interpretation

Inclusive Settings Research

- Peer-mediated interventions show strong outcomes for social behavior goals
- Self-monitoring procedures effective across disability categories
- Universal behavior supports benefit students with and without IEPs
- Teacher consultation models more effective than pull-out for many students

Staying Current

Recommended ways to stay evidence-based:

- Join a journal club or reading group
- Follow key researchers on professional networks
- Dedicate summer PD time to recent publications
- Attend conferences or webinars on current research