

Hope awaits autistic children

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Before starting Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy, Laxmi's eighteen month old daughter used to bang her head to the floor. Confined to her own world she used to gaze at the fan for hours and play with few pieces of paper. But the therapy has changed it all.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy has proved to be a blessing for children affected with autism. However, with few therapists available in the country many children are left in the lurch.

Sumana mother of three year old autistic son, says that the therapy was started six months ago. "With this behavior modification therapy there is a world of difference as it had increased his world of difference as it had increased his sitting endurance, he had started responding, environmental awareness, picking up words and even identifying of objects which earlier was his major problem areas.

But all are not lucky like Dev and Sanjana who benefited from ABA.

"Due to absence of applied behavior courses in Indian universities, professionals in India depend on studying ABA abroad. Therefore there is a need to introduce scientific course in ABA", said Smita Awasthi President ABA-India.

She also maintained that there are only three behavior analysts the country and about seven are currently studying the course abroad.

She further added that in the year 1988, one in 10,000 had detected of autism, but this year the ratio had fallen to one in 150.

According to Smita, ABA works to reinforce positive behavior by breaking goals into smaller more achievable tasks that give the child a sense of structure and control. It also aims to monitor day to day progress. She added that research shows that early intervention can help autistic children and 25 hours a week of therapy had shown positive result.