



## Featured Article:

### STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR PRACTITIONERS OF BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS IN ONTARIO

#### 2010 Revision

#### Revision of Standards developed and approved by ONTABA Board of Directors 2010:

Darryl Nurse-President, Jennifer Porter-President Elect, Carmela Campanella-Borraccia-Treasurer, Carobeth Zorzos-Secretary, Karla Colaguori-Member at Large, Lisa Israel-Member at Large, Charlene Stogren-Member at Large, Jennifer Cunningham-Graduate Student Representative, Sarah FitzGerald-Undergraduate Student Representative

Original 1998 version prepared by the Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis Standards Development Task Force (Bill Kirby, Jim Reaume, Maurice Feldman, Francisco Barrera, Ken Hrančuk, Joel Hundert, Wanda Smith, Kurt Weaver) and approved by the ONTABA Board of Directors in 1998.

#### Preamble

The field of Behaviour Analysis is a unique and specialized discipline based on the principles of behaviour identified through the scientific analysis of behaviour. This document focuses on the use of Applied Behaviour Analysis, which is the science in which procedures derived from the principles of behaviour are applied systematically to improve social significant behaviour and experimentation is used to identify the variables responsible for behaviour change (Cooper et al 2007). In 1998, Ontario Association of Behaviour Analysis (ONTABA), as the affiliate chapter of the Association for Behaviour Analysis International, developed the first version of the standards for behaviour analysis practitioners in the province. The standards were developed based on a wide range of source material. In particular, we acknowledge the standards used in the state of Florida that are a part of its comprehensive and successful professional certification program of Behaviour Analysts.

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## From the President's Desk

Greetings from the President's Desk!

It is hard to believe another year has passed and we are into 2011 already. The board of directors would like to wish all of you a successful and productive year.

We had another exciting and busy year in 2010 as we strive to lead the Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis (ONTABA) into the future. Our annual conference was held November 18-20 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. The event was a great success and your feedback has been positive and helpful. We were fortunate to have some excellent invited speakers and also some cutting edge local research and practice disseminated. Thank-you to all the members that presented and attended the conference and we look forward to seeing you all again in 2011. We will once again be hosting our annual event at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in November.

As some of you may be aware, the Association of Behavior Analysis International's (ABAI) Executive Council has recently released an article providing an update regarding their future directions. In short, the article is a reaffirmation to its mission "to contribute to the well being of society by developing, enhancing and supporting the growth and vitality of the science of behavior analysis through research, education and practice." Your board of director's at ONTABA, as an affiliated chapter of ABAI, has taken the opportunity at our first meeting this year to review and recommit to our mission - "To demonstrate leadership, knowledge, and innovation in education, training, and research for the ethical and effective application of behaviour analysis." As the field is continuing to grow quickly throughout the province, we will strive to provide a quality annual conference for all members and also will support several satellite conferences in different geographical locations. We have recently completed a revision of the ONTABA Standards of Practice to help guide professionals in the field and will remain a source of information and contact for

members and stakeholders who may have questions and concerns. We acknowledge the importance of licensure and certification and have recently established a taskforce to explore the feasibility of establishing a college of behaviour analysis. The board continues to support this work and will receive regular updates; however we will be refocusing on the association's mission in the year ahead.

Some of the initiatives we will be working on in the year ahead will include:

- A review of ONTABA by-laws
- Webpage development and redesign.
- Dissemination of the ONTABA Standards of Practice.
- Expansion of satellite conference agreements.
- Establishment of special interest groups in the province.
- Possible research grants for local educational institutions.
- Increase membership input and participation.

I am excited to work on these and other initiatives with returning board members and also welcome and look forward to working with our new members. I would also like to thank past board members for their time and contributions.

As the field continues to grow in the province, it is my belief that ONTABA needs to be leading this growth and have a prominent position in guiding future directions. We will continue to strive to serve the membership and also fulfill our mission in the year ahead.

Regards,

Darryl Nurse





## 2010 Board Member Bios

Kelly Alves has been working in the field of Intensive Behaviour Intervention in the province of Ontario for over 10 years. She graduated from York University with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, has completed the University of North Texas Graduate Certificate in Applied Behaviour Analysis, is a Board Certified Assistant Behaviour Analyst (BCaBA), and is currently enrolled at Brock University in the B.Ed in Adult Education.



Her current positions as an ASD Trainer/Quality Assurance Supervisor for the TPAS program and an Instructor at Seneca College in the Autism/Behaviour Science program provide her with opportunities to instruct staff and other professionals on key components of a quality IBI program. Kelly's previous experiences include Senior Therapist, Social Skills facilitator and Provincial Autism Resource Consultant.

Shiri Bartman has a Masters degree in Counseling Psychology and is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst. Shiri has been working with children diagnosed with Autism for over 14 years in both the public and private sector providing direct service, clinical supervision, staff training, and consultation. In her work with a wide range of children diagnosed with Autism, Shiri has successfully utilized Applied Behaviour Analysis as well as the analysis of Verbal Behaviour in the programs she has designed. Additionally, she sits on the Seneca College and George Brown College Program Advisory Committees for the Autism and Behavioural Sciences programs.



Shiri is a part time faculty member at George Brown College and has conducted training workshops for both parents and professionals in Canada, France, and Switzerland. She has previously sat on the ONTABA board as the secretary and has now returned as a member at large.

## ONTABA Annual Conference

Save The Date For This Years Conference!

The ONTABA Annual Conference will be held November 10-12th, 2011 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Stay tuned for further information about speakers and registration!



Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten.

- B.F. Skinner



## Continuing Education Credits

### BACB CEU Task Force Update

ONTABA was able to offer a total of 17 CEU's at the Conference last year! There were a total of 36 BACB Certificants that were able to collect and take advantage of the CEUS's offered locally. We anticipate being able to offer CEU's at our next Annual Conference and many Conferences there after. More details to follow.

Charlene Stogren, M.A., BCBA  
ONTABA's ACE Coordinator and Board Member

## ONTABA Satellite Conferences

ONTABA is proud to announce that the call for applications for co-sponsorship of a Behaviour Analysis Event was posted online this year. Organizations that are planning a Behaviour Analysis Conference/Event and would like to seek co-sponsorship have applied, and these applications are now being reviewed. Applications submitted at this point will be filed and reviewed after a second call for co-sponsorship, should additional funding become available. Please be advised that applications will only be considered for review if the majority of the events content focus is Behaviour Analysis. If you require any further information regarding co-sponsorship prior to submitting your application please contact [conference@ontaba.org](mailto:conference@ontaba.org). We look forward to partnering with you!

**ONTABA's Vision:** Fostering a culture of excellence, integrity, and expertise for the advancement and the promotion of the science of behaviour analysis.

**ONTABA's Mission:** To demonstrate leadership, knowledge, and innovation in education, training, and research for the ethical and effective application of behaviour analysis

[www.ONTABA.org](http://www.ONTABA.org)

## Featured Article Continued...

Revision of the standards was conducted in 2010 in light of an increase in behaviour analysis practitioners in Ontario and the establishment of Behavior Analysis Certification Board in the US. In addition, this revision sought to identify current best practice standards in behaviour analysis, along with relevant jurisprudence issues for practitioners in the Province of Ontario. The Behavior Analyst Certification Board's Guidelines for Responsible Conduct 2010 Revision is cited frequently throughout the document. Additional source material is referenced at the end of the documents.

### **The Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis (ONTABA)**

ONTABA is an affiliate chapter of the Association of Behaviour Analysis (International). Members in ONTABA have an expressed interest in Behaviour Analysis and come from a variety of fields including (but not limited to), psychology, education, nursing, health care, developmental services, research, and administration. ONTABA's vision is fostering a culture of excellence, integrity, and expertise for the advancement and promotion of the science of behaviour analysis. ONTABA's mission is to demonstrate leadership, knowledge, and innovation in education, training, and research for the ethical and effective application of behaviour analysis.

### **Purpose of Standards of Practice**

The following standards are intended to provide and promote a framework for the ethical and best practice for practitioners of behaviour analysis in Ontario. These standards are not intended to be prescriptive in that they do not address the implementation of specific behavioural procedures. Rather, the standards provide a set of guidelines for the practice of behaviour analysis. The standards are intended to accomplish the following:

- Promote ethical, high quality best practice within behaviour analysis;
- Provides a framework for practitioners to judge the quality of their practices;
- Provide a foundation for peer-review of clinical practice;
- Provides a framework for service recipients to evaluate the application of behavioural services;
- Provide a reference of best clinical practices for administrators, supervisors, and policy makers managing or involved with behaviour analysis programs.

### **General Description of Knowledge and Skills**

The standard for knowledge and skills of behaviour analysts is certification with the Behavior Analysis Certification Board

(BACB). There are clear requirements outlined for those who are certified with the BACB, which includes Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA or BCBA-D) and Board Certified Assistance Behavior Analysts (BCaBA). Individuals certified with BACB require:

- Specific coursework in behaviour analysis;
- Supervised practice overseen by a BCBA;
- Successful completion of the BACB certification exam;
- Ongoing completion of continuing education activities.

There are many behaviour analysis practitioners in Ontario who do not meet the BACB outlined criteria. For these individuals, the *minimum* criteria for practicing behaviour analysis in Ontario are:

- basic knowledge of the principles of behaviour analysis, learning, and scientific methodology, and ethics, ideally through college or university level coursework;
- skills in the domains of designing and/or implementing behaviour and skill assessment, designing and/or implementing behaviour intervention, and objectively evaluating the effects of behaviour interventions;
- practice of behaviour analysis under the supervision of a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, or a clinician who has significant education and experience in behaviour analysis.

### **Ethical Foundations**

Practitioners of behaviour analysis have an ethical responsibility to the field, clients, their colleagues and to society. The practice of Applied Behaviour Analysis should be predicated on the following ethical guidelines (from Bailey & Burch, 2005 and BACB Guidelines for Responsible Conduct, 2010):

- Responsibility to the Field (BACB 7.0)
  - Uphold and adhere to the values, ethics, principles, and mission of the field of behaviour analysis;
  - Use of scientific knowledge and empirically-validated procedures;
  - Disseminate information to the general public.

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- Responsibility to Clients (BACB 2.0)
  - Respect for the service recipient's personal values, beliefs, desires, abilities, cultural practices, and social context;
  - Protection of the service recipient's rights, freedoms, and dignity;
  - Explanation of all procedures and data in simple language to ensure understanding;
  - The least intrusive model should be followed;
  - The behavioural practitioner should recognize his/her limits of expertise. If the problem encountered is beyond the expertise of the practitioner, then the practitioner should help the service recipient find appropriate services.
- Responsibility to Colleagues (BACB 8.0)
  - Bring attention to and resolve ethical violation by colleagues.
- Responsibility to Society (BACB 9.0)
  - Services must be consistent with the laws and regulatory requirements of Ontario;
  - All statements made in a public forum are based on appropriate behaviour analytic literature and practice.

### **STANDARDS OF PRACTICE**

#### **Assessment Standard**

- The practitioner's assessment should adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) Guidelines for Responsible Conduct (July 2010), specifically under Section 3.0 Assessing Behavior.
- The practitioner must obtain informed consent in writing by the client, legal guardian, or substitute decision maker prior to beginning the assessment and before obtaining or disclosing records (BACB 3.01 and 3.04), consistent with Ontario legislation.
- Before implementing a behaviour intervention, a functional assessment of the target behaviour(s) is conducted, for behaviour reduction and skills acquisition as applicable.
- A functional assessment includes a variety of systematic information-gathering activities regarding factors influencing the occurrence of behaviour (e.g., antecedents, consequences, setting events, motivating operations) including interview, direct observation, and experimental analysis (BACB 3.02).
- Target behaviour (s) are to be clearly defined and measurable, selected with the client (where feasible) or the client's legal guardians/substitute decision maker.
- Practitioners recommend medical consultation if the target behaviour is possibly the result of biological factors (e.g., medication side effects, other biological cause) (BACB 3.0).
- Based on the information gathered in the assessment, hypotheses should be generated that (a) describe the possible functional relationship between the behaviour(s) of concern and environmental, biological, and historical variables (as relevant), and (b) lead to intervention recommendations.
- Results of the behaviour assessment are explained to the client in clear understandable language (BACB 3.03). Behavioural assessment is not a controlled act of communicating a diagnosis as stipulated by the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991.

#### **Intervention Standard**

- The practitioner's intervention should adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) Guidelines for Responsible Conduct (July 2010), specifically under Section 4.0 The Behavior Analyst and the Individual Behavior Change Program.
- A formal behaviour intervention plan should be written by a behaviour analysis practitioner, as outlined under "General Description of Knowledge and Skills."  
The client and all other relevant parties are required to be consulted in the development of the behaviour intervention (BACB 4.0).

- At a minimum, the following must be considered prior to implementing a behaviour intervention program:
  - the expected outcomes should be of benefit to the client (BACB 3.05),
  - the intervention must be based on sound assessment data (see Assessment Standard),
  - empirically validated procedures based on behaviour analytic principles should be used (BACB 4.0),
  - the least restrictive procedure model should be followed (BACB 4.10),
  - consent should be obtained from the client or the substitute decision-maker, according to existing provincial statutes and standards of professional practice (BACB 4.04 and 4.09).
  - At the minimum, a behaviour intervention should include:
    - clear definition(s) of the target behaviour(s),
    - meaningful, relevant, and measurable behavioural objectives,
    - a clear description of the intervention, including descriptions of generalization and maintenance procedures,
    - delineation of responsibilities and training required for individuals responsible for intervention implementation,
    - description of an objective evaluation system based on observable and measurable outcomes to monitor the effects of the intervention (BACB 4.07).

The use of new or non-validated approaches should be considered experimental and extra precautions should be taken in the consent, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of these procedures (BACB 2.10).

### **EVALUATION**

- Behaviour intervention plans should be evaluated objectively. Target behaviours selected for change should be operationally defined to allow for accurate measurement and analysis.
  - Accurate measurement and evaluation should take place during each phase of the intervention process (should be ongoing) to assess the program recommendations. The data may be collected by the behaviour analyst, client, or mediator (4.07 BACB).
  - Individuals who are responsible for the implementation of the intervention should be trained to accurately collect data by the behaviour analysis practitioner.
  - Modifications to the program should be made on the basis of the data (4.08 BACB).
- Objective, clear and concise termination criteria for the intervention should be determined and explained to the client (4.11 BACB).

### **DOCUMENTATION**

- Documentation of all aspects of a behaviour assessment/intervention is essential.
- Practitioners of behaviour analysis should follow employer documentation guidelines, guidelines provided by BACB (BACB 2.07, 2.08, 2.09, 2.11, 2.12), and their regulatory College (if applicable) regarding the creation, maintenance, dissemination, storage, retaining, and disposal of records and data.
- A client record should include at least the following: signed consent forms; assessment/intervention reports and results; progress notes, closure/follow-up reports.

### **Bibliography**

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Shook, G. L., Hartsfield, F., & Hemingway, M. (1995). Essential content for training behaviour analysis practitioners. *The Behaviour Analyst*, 18, 83-91.

### Glossary

**Controlled Act of Communicating a Diagnosis:** Subsection 27 [2][1] of the RHPA, 1991: "Communicating to the individual or his/her personal representative a diagnosis identifying the disease or disorder as the cause of symptoms of the individual in circumstances in which it is reasonably foreseeable that the individual or his/her personal representative will rely on the diagnosis."

**Functional behaviour assessment (FBA):** A systematic method of assessment for obtaining information about the purposes (functions) problem behaviour serves for a person; results are used to guide the design of an intervention for decreasing the problem behaviour and increasing appropriate behaviour.

**Functional analysis:** (as part of a functional behaviour assessment) An analysis of the purposes (functions) of problem behaviour, wherein antecedents and consequences representing those in the person's natural routines are arranged within an experimental design so that their separate effects on problem behaviour can be observed and measured; typically consists of four conditions: three test conditions – contingent attention, contingent escape, and alone – and a control condition in which problem behaviour is expected to be low because reinforcement is freely available and no demands are placed on the person.

**Behaviour intervention:** An effective treatment that stems from well-designed scientific studies, which uses the principles of Applied Behaviour Analysis.

**Least restrictive alternative:** Refers to the use of an intervention in which less intrusive procedures must be considered and/or tried and found to be inappropriate or ineffective before a punishment procedure can be implemented.

**Mediators:** Persons implementing the intervention after being trained and provided with feedback on the delivery of the procedure.

**Generalization:** A generic term for a variety of behavioural processes and behaviour change outcomes.

**Maintenance:** Two different meanings in applied behaviour analysis: (a) the extent to which the learner continues to perform the target behaviour after a portion or all of the intervention has been terminated (i.e. response maintenance), a dependent variable or characteristic of behaviour, and (b) a condition in which treatment has been discontinued or partially withdrawn, an independent variable or experimental condition.

**Federal, Provincial, and Municipal legislation and guidelines that practitioners in behaviour analysis should be familiar with** (Note this is not an exhaustive list):

- Child and Family Services Act, 1990
- Developmental Services Act, 1990
- Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008
- Mental Health Act, 1990
- Education Act, 1990
- Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Canadian Institutes of Health Research)
- Health Care Consent Act, 1996
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990
- Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990
- Psychology Act, 1991
- Public Hospitals Act, 1990
- Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, 2000
- Substitute Decisions Act, 1992
- Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 ■

## 2010 ONTABA Conference

Last year ONTABA was proud to host the 2010 annual conference at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup>. The rooms were filled to capacity on both Thursday and Friday while everyone enjoyed great food, colleagues, and fantastic speakers. For the second year in a row Board Certified members of ONTABA were able to receive a maximum of 16 CEU credits at no additional cost.

This year ONTABA welcomed four keynote speakers Dr. Jon Bailey, BCBA; Dr. James Carr, BCBA-D; Dr. Julie Vargas; and Mr. Kevin Cauley, BCBA; along with many interesting local professionals who spoke during the concurrent sessions. On Thursday morning Dr. Bailey presented two talks on ethics and applied behaviour analysis. In the first thought provoking presentation titled “Ethics and Values In Behavior Analysis: Do Our Consumers Know What They Are?”, Dr. Bailey provided a set of guidelines that could be used to develop value statements for behaviour analysts that would appeal to advocates and consumers in autism, education, rehabilitation, and community treatment.

The second presentation given by Dr. Bailey titled “If ethics were easy...” focused on ethical dilemmas behaviour analysts may face in their day to day work. Dr. Bailey presented a suggested method for analyzing difficult situations so that they conclude in an ethical solution.

Concurrent sessions and a lunch and learn hosted 5 different presentations given by local and international presenters.

On Thursday afternoon Dr. Carr presented a talk titled “The Role of Problem Solving in Teaching Complicated Verbal Repertoires.” The focus of this presentation was language teaching curricula and programs that teach expressive and intraverbal categorization to learners with developmental disabilities. Two investigations and their results were presented where pre-school children were successfully taught visual and verbal imaging strategies to aid in categorization. Implications for individuals with developmental disabilities were discussed and recommendations were made.

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## 2010 ONTABA Conference Cont'd

The afternoon concluded with a talk by Mr. Kevin Cauley who presented a talk titled "Shaping Up! The Benefits of TAGteach and Clicker Training." The presentation focused on the use of clicker training with the animal and human populations, supported by a multitude of videos which demonstrated the use of the strategy. Implications for programming and staff training were also discussed.

The day came to an end with a jam packed poster session, and a little wine and cheese reinforcement! Twenty – two impressive professional posters were displayed for learning purposes.

Friday turned out to be another successful day. The morning began with a presentation by Dr. Vargas titled "Watch your Contingencies: Improving your ABA Practices." The presentation focused on identifying how contingencies in discrete trial procedures could be improved. It also focused on improving the discriminative properties of learning materials so they actually teach their objectives. TAG teaching, precision charting, and the importance of attention to what skills are being strengthened to aid in student progress were also discussed.

During lunch, the Annual General Meeting was attended by members of ONTABA and the achievements and progress during the 2010 year were highlighted by the board. ONTABA was proud to welcome the new members of the board, Kelly Alves (member at large); Shiri Bartman (member at large); and Andrea Paszti (Graduate Representative). The board also said their goodbyes to Carobeth Zorzos (former Secretary) and Sarah Fitzgerald (former Undergraduate Representative), and recognized them for all their fantastic work and support throughout their time on the board.

Concurrent sessions included another four fantastic presentations by professionals and students from the field of Behaviour Analysis.

The afternoon consisted of three presentations by keynote speakers Dr. Carr and Dr. Bailey. Dr. Carr presented a talk titled "Understudied Intervention Procedures in the Early Behavioral Treatment of Autism." During the presentation data from two experiments were presented which investigated two understudied but commonly recommended intervention procedures in Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention. Dr. Bailey presented two talks to conclude the day, "Five Pillars of Professionalism: Infrastructure, Evidence, Ethics, Excellence, Esprit de Corps" and "When Capitalism Meets Professionalism." During the "Five Pillars of Professionalism" Dr. Bailey suggested five major themes that could be used to bring behaviour analysis to light in the marketplace and encourage the finest from upcoming behaviour analysts.

The clash of two cultures was addressed by Dr. Bailey in his presentation "When Capitalism Meets Behavior Analysis", which summarized the specific issues he sees for behaviour analysis and its professionals providing service in a capitalist society.

The conference came to a close on Saturday with two informative workshops. The first workshop "Highlights from Behavior Analysis for Effective Teaching" was presented by Dr. Julie Vargas. This workshop highlighted the importance of picking objectives, stating objectives behaviourally, identifying a skill that needs to be fluent, and applying precision teaching in the classroom. Attendees had the chance to practice picking objectives, charting progress on a precision chart, and designing worksheets to teach their objective.

In the afternoon Mr. Cauley and Dr. Benedetto-Nasho presented a workshop about TAGteaching. The workshop defined TAGteach, identified the benefits of using TAGteach with the human population, identified the benefits of shaping, and areas where TAGteach could be implemented into curriculum. Attendees were also able to gain experience using an audible marker.

When one conference ends, planning for the next ONTABA Conference begins taking place. The ONTABA Board hopes to see you at the next annual conference in November 2011!

For any questions, comments or suggestions about anything conference related, please feel free to email [conference@ontaba.org](mailto:conference@ontaba.org).

Cheers,



2010 ONTABA Board Members from left, Carmela Campanella-Borraccia, Jennifer Cunningham, Jen Porter, Darryl Nurse, Sarah FitzGerald, Carobeth Zoros, Charlene Stogren, Lisa Israel.

# 2010 ONTABA Conference Pictures



**Dr. Julie Vargas on the left**

**Dr. Jon Bailey, BCBA on the right**



**Dr. James Carr on the left**



**ONTABA Task Force for the Establishment of a  
College of Behaviour Analysts In Ontario**





**CONTACTS**

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BACB CEU Task Force:  
Chair—Charlene Stogren

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