

the ONTABA ANALYST

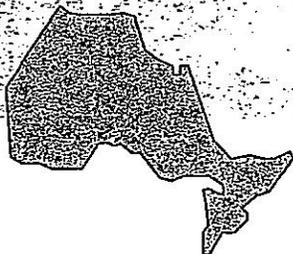
Ontaba

The Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis

An Affiliate Chapter of The Association for Behavior Analysis International

*Caroll Drummond
Editor, Production Manager.
Ross Violo
Associate Editor, Submissions*

Introducing the Vision and Mission of ONTABA



ONTABA's Vision:

Fostering a culture of excellence, integrity, and expertise for the advancement and 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.

Our vision and mission were created by the Board of Directors through a collaborative process. These statements lead toward goals that are ambitious, attainable, and necessary in order to establish ONTABA as the voice of behaviour analysis in the province of Ontario.

**Reminder: Please join ONTABA for 2005
or pass your Membership form on to a colleague!
If you joined already, Thank you!**

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From the President's Desk

**Rosemary Condillac
RACK Consulting
ONTABA President**



There has been a lot of activity within ONTABA since the last newsletter. First and foremost, I would like to thank Shiri Bartman, Michelle Turan, and Nathalie Croteau for their outstanding work as conference co-chairs. The conference included presentations across many areas of behaviour analysis, including invited addresses by Dr. Linda Hayes (current president of ABA international), Dr. Richard Malott, Dr. Dean Fixen, and many excellent local presenters. The conference takes many hours of planning and co-ordination and we sincerely appreciate the work of the conference committee.

The annual report and minutes from the Annual General Meeting are enclosed in this newsletter. Within these documents, you will find updates from all committees, as well as the goals and accomplishments for the organization. We would like to extend our gratitude to the members of the committees and task forces who give so generously of their time and creativity.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the exiting members of the board of directors for their contributions to the organization. Scott Bark, Adrienne Perry, Liane Tackaberry, and Dorothy Wemer have completed their current terms as board members, and we hope that they will continue to contribute to the organization. I am pleased to welcome the new members of the board, and have a few updates since the Annual General Meeting. Andrew MacNamara, Michelle Turan, & Carobeth Zorzos were elected as members-at-large. There were no nominations for treasurer or for student representative. The board has appointed Michelle Turan (member-at-large) as Treasurer, Janet Valcourt (website committee chair) as a member-at-large, and Thomas Rhee as student representative. These appointments are for a 1 year term, as per the by-laws. A full list of the current board of Directors appears on the back of the newsletter.

We believe that having a clear vision and mission can help ONTABA to shift our focus from day-to-day operations to "bigger picture" issues in our field. The task of developing our vision and mission was first on my list of goals for the organization for this year. We held our first board of directors meeting for 2004-2005 on December 11th and hired consultant Glennie Mercer to assist us in creating our vision and mission statements. Through a collaborative process, the board has crafted the following:

ONTABA's Vision:

Fostering a culture of excellence, integrity, and expertise for the advancement and promotion of the science of behaviour analysis.

ONTABA

President:
Rosemary Condillac
2003-2005

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Bill Kirby
Joel Hundert
Maurice Feldman
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Andrew McNamara
Michelle Turan
Carobeth Zorzos

Student Representatives:

Betina Clancy
Thomas Rhee

Continued on pg.10

ONTABA Committee Updates

ONTABA COMMITTEE UPDATES:

Conference Committee:

Conference Chair: Shiri Bartman

The ONTABA Conference 2004 summary and pictures are on pages 6 and 7. A summary of feedback and attendance will be in the next edition of the Analyst. Anyone wishing to help with the conference for 2005 please contact Shiri at 416-925-5141 or shiri.bartman@surreyplace.on.ca

Elections Committee Update:

The Elections Committee will be formed in the new year.

Membership Committee:

Board Liaison: Mary McMillan
Chairperson: Amy Barker

Total Members for 2004 was 294. Members to date for 2005 are 47. There are 15 new Members, 28 renewing Members and 4 returning Members. Of these Members there are 11 Sustaining Members, 22 Full Members, 9 Student Members, 4 Affiliate Members and 1 Member Emeritus (Dr. Larry Williams)

If you have address changes, please let us know so that we can forward your ONTABA materials to you.

Membership forms are now available on the ONTABA website at www.sl.on.ca/ONTABA

Recruitment Committee:

We are actively seeking members and a chair for the new recruitment committee. We need an energetic team to develop a recruitment plan that will tap all aspects of service delivery and the many academic programs that offer courses in the field of behaviour analysis. If you are interested in Volunteering on this committee, please contact Rosemary Condillac, rackconsulting@sympatico.ca.

Newsletter Committee:

Board Liaison: James Porter
Editor: Carol Drummond



I am proud to announce that Ross Violo, currently a student at George Brown College in the BST program has volunteered with the ONTABA Analyst. Thanks so much to him! You may be hearing from Ross if you presented a poster or gave a talk at the ONTABA

Conference. He will be seeking your input in the form of articles, book reviews etc. Contact him at sifuross@rogers.com

Webpage Task Force

Board Liaison: Katrina MacDonald
Chair: Janet Valcourt

The ONTABA Website Committee is currently updating the website.

There are currently three volunteers willing to help out with this project and Katrina McDonald (ONTABA Board Member at Large) will act as board liaison. More volunteers are welcome. Please e-mail mcdonak2@pccchealth.org if you would like to be involved in the website. It is hoped that much of our work can be done via e-mail so geographical area is not an issue.

Public Policy Task Force

The Board of directors is excited to announce this new initiative with the goal of researching and advising the board of directors on public policy matters related to applied behaviour analysis. Terms of reference for this task force will be developed shortly. We are actively seeking members for this task force. We need a dedicated team of volunteers who are interested in learning more about the field of behaviour analysis and public policy development. If you are interested in Volunteering on this committee, please contact Rosemary Condillac, rackconsulting@sympatico.ca.

Awards and Recognition Task Force

The Board of directors is pleased to announce this new initiative with the goal of researching and advising the board of directors on potential awards and recognition strategies to encourage study, research, and excellence in the practice of behaviour analysis. We are actively seeking members for this task force. We need a creative team to recommend ways that we can reinforce students, clinicians, policy makers and other individuals who do work related to the ethical and effective application of behaviour analysis.

Transitional Certification Panel

The Transitional Certification Panel will meet in mid-January 2005 to finalize current active tasks and to work on policies, procedures, and bylaws. An update will appear in the next ONTABA Analyst.

Lack of Teacher Training in ABA Promotes Punishment in School Settings: A Case Study with General Implications

By: Elizabeth Sparling B.Sc., B.Ed., M.Ed,
Behavioural Consultant, MAPCL-Laurel Division

Abstract: Teacher training does not equip educators to manage severe problem behaviours. This lack of training has a significant impact on the intervention and education of children in British Columbia who exhibit challenging behaviours. For many teachers, the extent of their training for working with aggressive students is a 2-day Non-Violent Crisis Intervention Training class, which includes the use of restraint. Although "holds" are accepted by school systems because of their protective quality for staff, it is recognized that a secondary, punitive role is played by the use of restraint. Therefore, it is often assumed by teachers, that the introduction of "holds" will be sufficient to eliminate problem behaviour. This study shows the fallacy of this assumption; instead it supports the use of positive reinforcement for both the efficacy and the social validity of this process.

Introduction:

Special Education teachers, in British Columbia, do not receive training in applied behaviour analysis (ABA) as part of their certification; however, many children, who require special education services, would benefit from ABA support for problem behaviour. Lack of training and education for special education teachers has perpetuated a state of "accepted punishment" in BC School Systems. School Districts allow the use of punishment procedures such as restraint, to help manage aggressive behaviour. Not only is this methodology ineffective, but the greater implications for social modelling regarding the acceptance of children with special needs in the school system, should be closely examined. Indeed, the social validity of any intervention strategy should be examined under the light of an ingrained oppression of people with disabilities, which perpetuate unequal social relations and implicit power (Carniol, 2000, p.115). This paper provides a case study contrasting the effectiveness of punishment versus differential reinforcement of alternative behaviours, (DRA). Moreover, it draws attention to the limitations of the school system in British Columbia caused by a lack of education and training for special needs educators.

The Case Study:

The subject, Lisa, is a female teenager with a dual diagnosis of Autism and Down Syndrome. Her school records indicate a long history of non-compliance and aggression. Moreover, as Lisa matured, the episodic severity of her aggression increased. She was transferred to a high school setting a year early, because of escalating aggressive and asocial behaviours which, combined with her size, placed younger, smaller children at risk. Furthermore, Lisa was no longer attending any classes with her peers, nor was she participating in a structured educational program. Her final year at the junior high was characterized by frequent aggressive behaviour, which resulted in her removal from the school setting on an almost daily basis.

It is useful to classify Lisa's aggression using LaVigna and Willis's (unpublished) concept of episodic severity (ES): "defined as a measure of the gravity or intensity of a behavioural incident" (p.4). Use of an episodic severity scale provides another measure of the problem behaviour, which yields more information than duration or total number of incidents alone could provide in describing Lisa's problem behaviour. Therefore, Lisa's aggression can be defined using the following episodic severity scale:

1. Aggression consisting of one or more of the following behaviours: hitting, slapping, pinching, scratching, punching or kicking to the body of the victim, leaving red marks or bruising and requiring first aid attention.
2. Aggression consisting of one or more of the following behaviours: hitting, slapping, pinching, scratching, punching or kicking to the head of the victim leaving red marks or bruising and requiring first aid attention.
3. Aggression consisting of one or more of the following behaviours: hitting, slapping, pinching, scratching, punching or kicking to the body or head of the victim, in conjunction with charging (involving running at the victim and pushing with her own body weight) requiring first aid attention.

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Lack of Teacher Training..., Cont. from pg.4

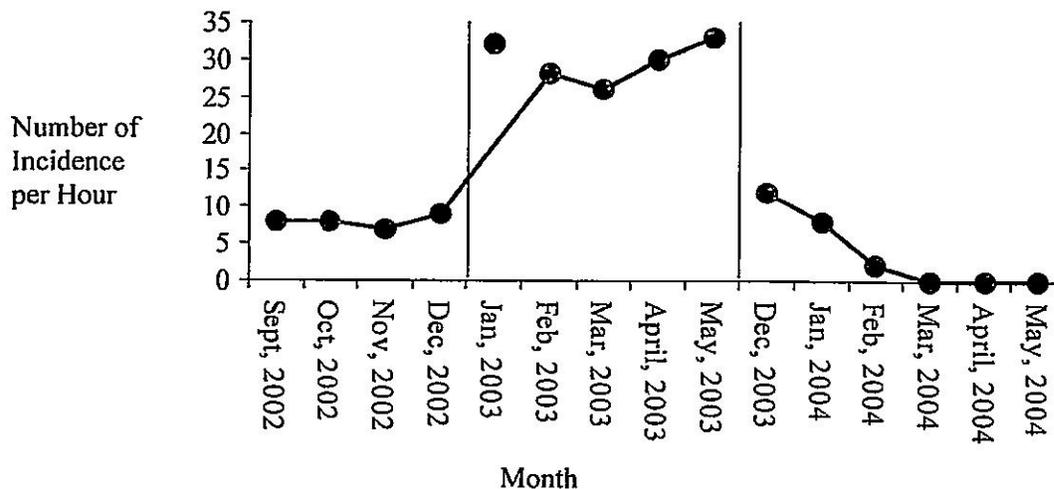
4. Biting occurring with or without aggression consisting of one or more of: hitting, slapping, pinching, scratching, punching, or kicking causing red marks or bruising and requiring first aid attention.
5. Biting occurring alone or together with aggression consisting of one or more of: hitting, slapping, pinching, scratching, punching, or kicking requiring medical intervention from a physician.

Moreover, aggression is considered a discrete event when there is a pause of at least one minute between incidents. Biting is considered a discrete event when Lisa momentarily releases the bite to reposition, or if she releases.

Initial data from Lisa's first year in the high school setting shows that she engaged in an average of eight episodes of aggression per week with an episodic severity of three or greater. Moreover, total data for all incidents of aggression indicate that she engaged in aggression at a lower episodic severity (ES 1 or 2) an average of eight times an hour. A variety of interventions were attempted during Lisa's first year at secondary school (2001-2002), including a token system and use of natural consequences; none of which were effective for a number of reasons including the durability of the behaviour, inexperience of staff, and the lack of a cohesive plan of intervention.

Due to the risk to staff, in January 2003, Lisa's behaviour was reviewed by a District Committee, which felt that the use of restraint for staff protection should be introduced. Training in the use of two-person restraint using Non-Violent Crisis Intervention techniques was provided to staff. Permission was granted by the parents to allow restraint for behaviours, which were of an episodic severity of 3 or greater. Introduction of the hold immediately reduced the behaviour from an average of thirty-two times per month to eight times per month; however the incidence of low episodic severity aggression (ES 1 or 2), depicted in Graph 1, increased dramatically to over thirty times an hour. Moreover, new problem behaviours such as flopping to the ground, spitting, destruction of property and tripping of staff began to emerge.

Graph 1: Incidence of Aggression with Low Episodic Severity



Although, B.C. schools do not support the use of physical punishment procedures, the use of restraint often goes unquestioned, if implemented under the rationale of staff protection. Moreover, the acceptance of hold procedures for use amongst the disability population requires further examination because of its wider societal implications: "most oppression today is systemic and unintentional because it is built into our social institutions and carried out unconsciously in our day-to-day activities" (Mullaly, 2002, p.41). Restraint, although intended to protect staff, meets the definition of punishment: "a procedure that decreases the future probability of the behaviour it follows" (Foxx, 1982, p.61), and as such should be used very sparingly.

The ABA community has embraced the concept of social validity, a paradigm, which could be passed on to the field of education. Geller (1991) outlined the objectives of social validity as an evaluation scheme "to assess the social significance of intervention goals, the social appropriateness of intervention procedures, and the social importance of intervention outcomes or effects" (p.1). Introduced in 1978 by Mont Wolf, social validity provided the societal mirror for applied behaviour analysts to determine the community acceptance of their proposed interventions. The school system,

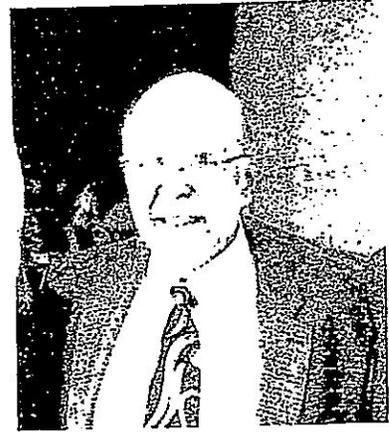
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Linda Hayes



Richard Malott



Dean Fixen

ONTABA CONFERENCE 2004

The 2004 ONTABA conference, was a great success this year, with over 250 people in attendance at the elegant Atlantis pavilion. Highlights of the conference included the range of topics presented by speakers from various settings. We were fortunate to have an invited address from Dr. Linda Hayes, president of ABA International, from the University of Nevada, Reno. She spoke eloquently on Private Events and participated in an active panel discussion on Positive Behaviour Support with Dr. Rosemary Condillac, Dr. Maurice Feldman, and James Hughes. Featured presenter Dr. Richard Malott presented on Self-Management in his typical dynamic powerpoint fashion, which included lots of humour and great music.





He also included a tribute to Skinner's 100th birthday which detailed B.F. Skinner's entire career, as well as an interesting glimpse of the must-see sights in and around Toronto. Dr. Dean Fixsen, our second featured presenter, did an excellent job of reminding us what constitutes evidence-based practices and the necessity to be implementing and advocating these strategies into our clinical applications. It truly was a fantastic conference and we look forward to the 2005 year. We would like to thank all of our speakers, poster presenters, and attendees for making this year's conference a success!

Shiri Bartman will be chairing next year's conference committee and those who wish to volunteer may contact her directly at shiri.bartman@surreyplace.on.ca.

Editor's Note: Many Thanks to all the Volunteers at the Conference. Special Thanks to the Conference Chairs!



Lack of Teacher Training..., Cont. from pg.5

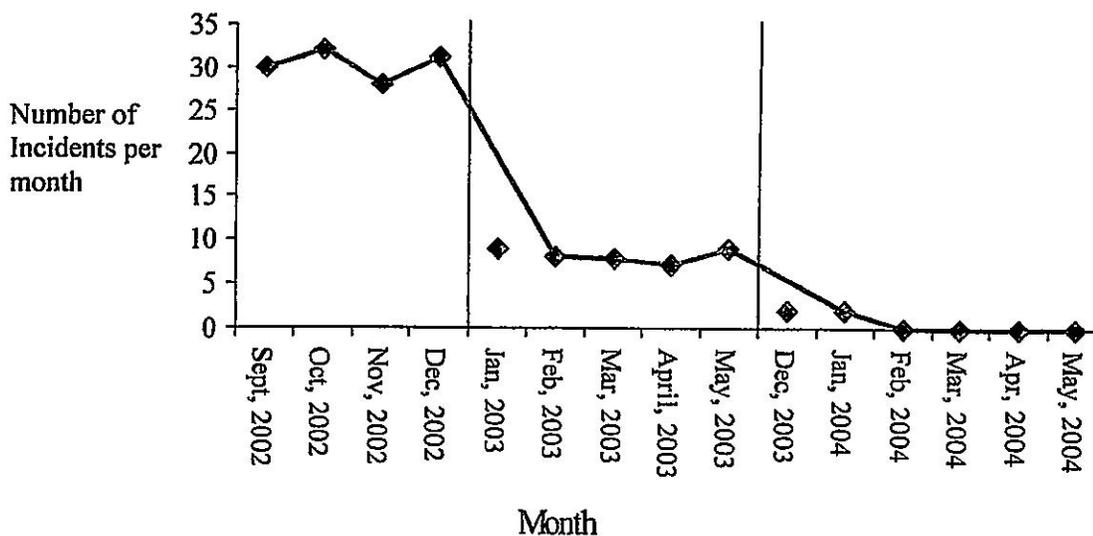
however, is heavily directed by ministry policy and procedures. Mandates about what should be taught; legislation regarding how many minutes of service each teacher is required to provide; conflict over class size; and shortage of money for resources has drawn attention away from students, especially from students who exhibit challenging behaviours. Indeed, the narrow parameters placed on teachers, combined with a lack of training, is a recipe for disaster. For many teachers, the choice to use punishment is made out of desperation; without a full understanding of the implications.

Cooper, Heron and Heward (1987) provide a significant amount of discourse for consideration regarding the ethical considerations surrounding punishment. They endorse the need of a decision making model which includes the doctrine of least restrictive alternative (LRA), advocates that: "other less intrusive procedures must be considered and or tried and found to be inappropriate or ineffective before punishment is presented" (Cooper Heron and Heward, 1987, p.416). One could argue, that in Lisa's case, LRA was considered prior to the implementation of a punishing procedure, however, a key point to consider within the decision making process is the level of training and understanding of personnel regarding the impact of aversive stimuli.

The literature abounds with examples of the side effects of punishment procedures. Lisa's situation was an exemplary case of the undesirable aspects of punishment. Graph 1 indicates that the overall number of aggressive incidents increased dramatically with the introduction of the punishment procedure. Lisa exhibited both respondent aggression, through the destruction of property, as well as operant aggression, in the form of a dramatic increase in low-level aggression. Hence, as Lisa learned that the more severe forms of aggression led to punishment, emitting low episodic severity aggression allowed the Lisa to harm staff, but it also provided avoidance of the restraint.

Lastly, and probably of most concern, in the introduction of a punishment program, is the effect of negative reinforcement on the punisher (school staff). It has been suggested that the negative reinforcement provided by aversive stimulus perpetuates its use in society. In other words, school staff, who are administering the punishment, are reinforced by the cessation of the behaviour when the aversive stimulus is applied (Cooper, Heron and Heward, 1987, p.424). In Lisa's case, the use of punishment was allowed for aggression at an episodic severity of three or greater. When Lisa learned that low-level aggression did not result in punishment, she increased the incidence of this behaviour. At the time, there was a corresponding pressure from front line staff to seek permission to use punishment for any incidence of aggression, in the hopes that consistent application of the punishing condition would eliminate the behaviour. Escalation of the less severe forms of the problem behaviour was tolerated for a year. In December 2003, however, a differential reinforcement of alternative behaviours (DRA) was introduced; during which time "keeping my hands to myself" was reinforced as the alternative behaviour, restraint was prohibited, and extinction was put into place for aggression with an episodic severity of one or two. Graph 2 provides a dramatic indication of Lisa's aggression prior to intervention and post intervention.

Graph 2: Incidence of Aggression at School with an ES of 3+



Cont.on pg.9

As mentioned, to meet Lisa's needs, the use of a differential reinforcement of alternative behaviour (DRA) was selected. Differential reinforcement of alternative behaviour provides "reinforcement of those behaviours which are topographically different from the target behavior" (LaVigna and Donnellan, 1985, p.41). Using a DRA methodology, reinforcement was provided on a variable interval of 5 minutes ($VI = 5$). The primary reinforcers used in this study were chocolate milk and grapefruit juice – approximately 3 tablespoons were delivered at each reinforcement. Lisa's family removed all access to beverages other than water prior to and during this intervention. The DRA was effective in eliminating aggression within three months of its introduction.

Moreover, once Lisa's responding to the DRA was stable, staff could look towards building her success as a learner. Therefore, it became imperative to choose new behaviours for reinforcement, which were within her repertoire, although shaping of existing behaviours was also required to refine some of Lisa's skills. Furthermore, the behaviours, which were chosen, included: skills which were strengths; activities which were preferable; as well as, skills which were based on the areas for development as, outlined on her Individual Education Plan. Indeed, Cooper Heron and Heward (1987) caution that behaviours should be selected "for their usefulness and relevance to the learner" and that these behaviours should "continue to be reinforced under natural environmental contingencies" for long-term maintenance and "transfer to other environments" (p. 393).

Consequently, in March 2004, Lisa began a program to increase her repertoire of functional, adaptive behaviours. As part of the fair-pair philosophy: new, positive behaviours were chosen for reinforcement. Behaviours from the following domains were selected:

- Development of independent living skills;
- Development of academic skills;
- Development of employment skills;
- Development of friendships; and
- Participation in community activities.

To increase the probability of Lisa's participation, in addition to the DRA for aggression, a separate token system (DRO) was established to provide reinforcement for learning and using new positive behaviours while decreasing other problem behaviours such as spitting and non-compliance. Lisa's token system had three forms of reinforcement built into it. First, Lisa earned stars and praise immediately after completion of the task indicated on her visual schedule. Secondly, a less desirable activity was followed by a more desirable activity (Premack Principle). Lastly, Lisa earned time with her favourite stuffed animals at home, based on the number of tokens she earned (5 minutes per token). Lisa's parents keep her toys locked in a trunk at all other times. Again this, system was highly motivating for Lisa, and a result she has made tremendous progress with her adaptive skills.

Problem behaviour in school settings can become the focus of attention for an entire staff. Unfortunately, teachers and support staff often focus on the undesirable behaviour, inadvertently reinforcing it, or they may incorporate punishment as a method of decreasing the behaviour. If teachers had information and training around ABA, then perhaps the implementation of an intervention plan, which uses positive reinforcement to increase desired behaviour, would become the methodology of choice. There is no doubt that the time and expertise required to implement a positive reinforcement program is substantially greater than a punishment program; however, the outcome of a positive reinforcement program is significantly greater.

This paper outlines the general implications in relation to the use of punishment as a method of reducing problem behaviour. Special education teachers in British Columbia are facing more demands from a diverse caseload, with inadequate training. Punishment, as a result, is becoming a more prevalent method of treating problem behaviour with disastrous results. Although unintentional, the lack of training of teachers, in Applied Behaviour Analysis methodology, has led to the introduction and use of restraint, not only as a safety measure, but also as a punishment. Although sometimes necessary for the protection of staff, restraint should never be the only intervention for a child exhibiting aggressive behaviours, which is unfortunately the case in many B.C. schools. It is time to recognize the importance of effective behavioural interventions for our students and to provide encouragement and incentives for educators to obtain appropriate training.

Lack of Teacher Training..., Cont. from pg.8

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From the President's Desk..., Cont. from pg.2

ONTABA's Mission:

To demonstrate leadership, knowledge, and innovation in education, training, and research for the ethical and effective application of behaviour analysis.

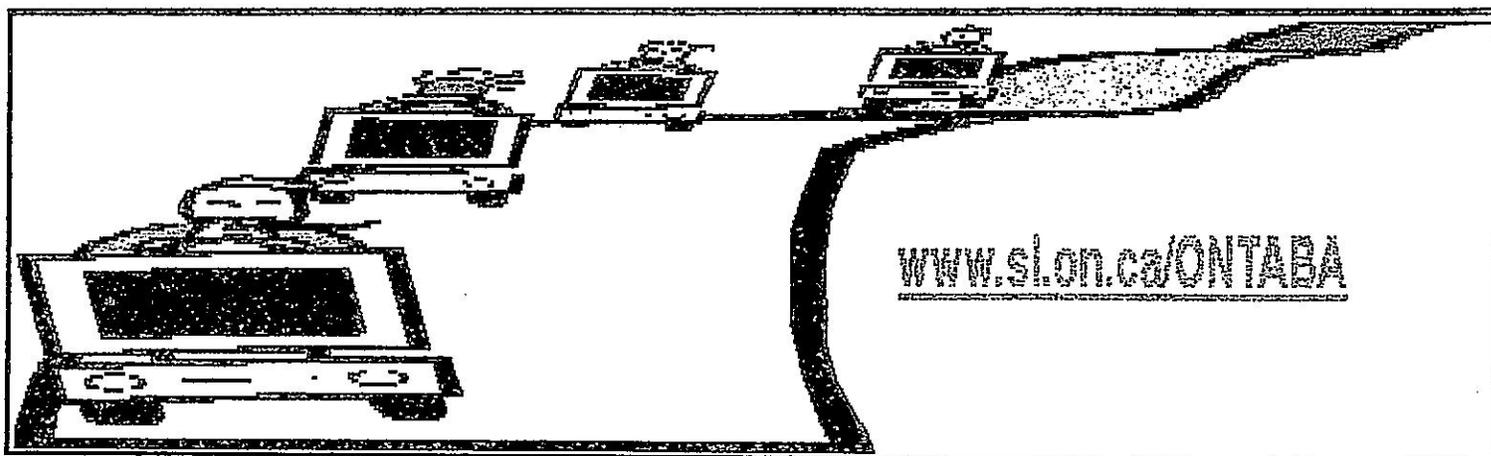
In order to fulfill these ambitions, we are proud to announce the development of two new task forces: the Awards and Recognition task force, and the Public Policy task force. We believe that it is time for ONTABA to step up to the plate and take an active role as the voice for behaviour analysis in Ontario.

The board will be meeting again in January, and will be operationalizing the draft terms of reference for these new task forces. Members who are interested in these areas should contact the board of directors by email: board@ontaba.org.

Finally, I would like to remind you that it is time to renew your ONTABA membership for 2005. A blank membership form is included. If you have already renewed, please use this form to recruit a colleague.

I hope that you have a happy holiday season,

Rosemary



Getting connected

ABA International Information

ABA website:
<http://www.abainternational.org>
 ABA Email:
mail@abainternational.org
 Phone: (269) 492-9310
 Fax: (269) 492-9316
 Address: 1219 South Park Street,
 Kalamazoo, MI 49001

ONTABA HOME PAGE

Internet address:
<http://www/sl.on.ca/ontaba/>

CONTACTING ONTABA

ONTABA
 564 Yonge Street, Box 43
 Toronto, Ontario
 M4Y 1Y8

Phone #: (416) 410-6141
 (voice mail)
 E-mail: ontaba@sl.on.ca

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Membership
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ONTABA Analyst Submissions

Your newsletter is only as good as your contributions.

The *ONTABA Analyst* is a forum for us to stay connected in many ways. All members are encouraged to submit articles on topics related to behaviour analysis; theoretical, practical or topical issues, perspectives from different regions of the province, jobs or schools, research accounts, news, announcements, your biography, reviews, student practicums, etc.

Article submissions:

We reserve the right to edit without changing the intent of an article, request further editing by the author, publish articles relative to the content of the current Analyst, publish them at a later date with due respect to the timeliness of a given article, or refuse an article. You will be informed of acceptance, rewrite or refusal of an article. Announcements will be published at the discretion of the editor. *ONTABA* will not be held responsible for the views and opinions of *ONTABA Analyst* contributors.

Advertising in the *ONTABA Analyst* is available for a fee payable to *ONTABA* (\$100.00 1/4 pg., \$200.00 1/2 pg., \$300.00 full pg.). Job ads may be posted on the *ONTABA* website for up to 30 days.

Submissions for the next *ONTABA ANALYST, Issue* must arrive to **Caroll Drummond** at carolld@sympatico.ca by **February 15th** for the **March 1st** issue.

Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

International Conferences

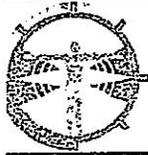
- 31st ABA International Conference, Chicago, May 27 to 31, 2005
- 3rd International ABA Conference: November 25-27, 2005. Beijing, China

Upcoming ABA Chapter Conferences (See ABA Website for more...)

- California ABA, February 17-19, 2005 Dana Point, CA
- Michigan BAAM, February 24-25, 2005 Ypsilanti MI
- North Carolina, February 23-25, 2005. Wrightsville Beach, NC, Blockade Runner Beach Resort
- Texas ABA, March 4-5, 2005. Houston, TX

Ontario Conferences/Workshops/ Events

- **Treating Aggressive Youth: A Scientist-Practitioner Dialogue on Brain and Behavioural Changes**, January 14, 2005. Senate Chambers, York University. Free
- **Working with Drug Users from a Harm Reduction Perspective**. City of Toronto, Train the Trainer Workshop. Duration: 2 days. Jan. 12&13, Feb23&24, March 23&24.. Metro Hall, Toronto. Free.



Contact: ONTABA Board Members and Committee Chairs

President: Rosemary Condillac
p. (416) 769-2910
f. (416) 769-6127
e. rackconsulting@sympatico.ca

President-Elect: James Porter
p. (905) 841-6611 ext. 301
e. jporter@kerrysplace.org

Treasurer (Interim): Scott Bark
p. (416) 925-5141
f. (416) 923-8476
e. scottb@interlog.com

Secretary: Shiri Bartman
p. (416) 925-5141 ext.410
f. (416) 925-5301
e. shiri.bartman@surreyplace.on.ca

Student Representatives:
Betina Clancy
e. betclancy@hotmail.com

Thomas Rhee
e. trhee@yorku.ca

Members at Large:
Katrina MacDonald
p. (613) 546-1101 ext. 5859
f. (613) 548-5585
e. mcdonak2@pccohealth.org

Mary McMillan
p. (416) 925-5141 ext.990
f. (416) 925-5301
e. mandjathome@sympatico.ca

Andrew McNamara
p. (416) 415-5000 ext.2978
f. (416) 415-2646
e. amcnamar@gbrownc.on.ca

Michelle Turan
p. (905) 331-1380
f. (905) 331-5627
e. mtomson@cogeco.ca

Carobeth Zorzos
p. (416) 240-1111 ext.332
f. (416) 240-7999
e. carobethz@etobicokechildren.com

Conference 2005:
Shiri Bartman*

Membership:
Chair: Amy Barker
p. (416) 243-3600, ext. 2605
f. (416) 243-0832
e. abarker@westpark.org

Recruitment & Elections 2005:
TBA

Webpage Task Force
Katrina MacDonald*
Chair: Janet Valcourt
e. janet.valcourt@surreyplace.on.ca

The ONTABA ANALYST:
Editor/Production:
Caroll Drummond
p. (416) 925-5141
f. (416) 923-8476
e. carold@sympatico.ca
Associate Editor/Submissions:
Ross Violo
sifuross@rogers.com

Member Emeritus
Larry Williams

2004/2005 Sustaining Members

Francisco Barrera
Natalie Croteau
Maurice Feldman
Christy Johnston-Garrity
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Diane Thornton

Gary Bernfeld
Rita DiGangi
Nancy Freeman
Erla Juravsky
Mary McMillan
Ali Uzunoz

Debra Charlesworth
Caroll Drummond
Shayna Guenther
Bill Kirby
Sandi-Lee Parker
Niicole Walton-Allen

Barbara Claiman
Karin Earle-Williams
Hranchuk Ken
Laurie Leeming
Adrienne Perry
Rebecca Ward

Rosemary Condillac
David Factor
Sheelagh Jamieson
Bruce A. Linder
Wanda Smith
Benj.B.C. Wu

ONTABA, the Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis,
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ONTABA currently has members from professions such as
education, nursing, health care, and psychology.

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

ONTABA
564 Yonge Street, Box 43
Toronto, Ontario
M4Y 1Y8

Phone: (416) 410-6141 (voice mail)
<http://www.sl.on.ca/ontaba/>