

SPRING 2025

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**Our Vision:
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advancement
and
promotion of
the science of
behaviour
analysis.**

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research for the
ethical and
effective
application of
behaviour
analysis.**

From The President's Desk

BY JAIME SANTANA



Dear member,

It is hard to believe we are already 4 months into 2025. It is exciting to reflect on all the work that our amazing board members, with the support of our volunteers and consultants, have been able to accomplish. In such a short period of time, we have been able to release multiple resources, thanks to the [Regulation Resource Task Force](#), and so many more are on the way. We also collaborated with Autism Ontario on a webinar aimed to support caregivers to understand what the changes in regulation mean to them, as well as to describe and explain the changes in titles and credentials.

I am also really proud of the [Service Fees for ABA Services by Ontario Service Providers: A Summary by the Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis](#) report, its aim is to provide information about ABA services to private insurance providers. Although we do not have an interest in developing a rate card, many of our members have inquired about private insurance coverage for ABA services, and we felt it was important to provide support for these insurance providers in order to speed up the process. This report should not be taken to be an attempt to develop a rate card, or to be one, but rather as a summary of the information our members provided us over the course of a month. Thank you as well to all who contributed to the content of this report.

Another milestone is on the horizon for behaviour analysis in Ontario, the College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analysts of Ontario (CPBAO) announced the first administration of the [Ontario Examination for Professional Practice in Applied Behaviour Analysis \(OEPPABA\)](#) will be on May 26, 2025. With over 1600 professionals already registered with the CPBAO, we are excited to see this number grow. We look forward to collaborating with the CPBAO on a resource for members about the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) cycle and continuing education requirements. We are [looking for your questions](#) on this topic, so that the resource can be tailored to the needs of our membership.

From The President's Desk

BY JAIME SANTANA

Exciting news about our annual Evening for Behaviour Analysis (EFBA) event: we heard you when you told us you wanted more events outside of Toronto and the GTA, and so, this year's EFBA event will be hosted in London, as chosen by you. We have not yet chosen the date for this event, as we are waiting to hear from you which month would be the best fit. Our plan is to have all future locations of this event to be chosen by our membership, which means that EFBA will be a traveling event. More details about the process for this selection will be shared in the coming months. We have another event to add to the calendar - a Student Conference, to be hosted virtually. This conference will give students of ABA across Ontario the opportunity to disseminate their work, and to develop their presentation skills. The majority of the talks will be student-led. More information on this event will be released in the coming weeks. EFBA and the Student Conference are not the only events we have planned for the year, keep an eye on our event calendar for live updates of all our events for 2025. Do you have FOMO? Fear not, there's an option to add our event calendar to your Google calendar, so you'll always be up to date!

Lastly, we are excited to continue with our commitment to practicing and operating in a manner that promotes and champions diversity, equity and inclusion. Our DEI representative has begun the process of surveying our board about our experience and opinions about DEI within the work of the board. This will be followed up with surveying our membership about the same experience. The results of these surveys will ensure that ONTABA and its board of directors remain accountable to ensuring our commitment to DEI. ONTABA is committed, now more than ever, to ensure that everything we do will benefit all of our members, as much as possible, regardless of location, identity, race, or area of practice. We look forward to hearing from you all through this survey.

As always, we welcome any feedback, thoughts and ideas you may have. Contact us any time via email at contact@ontaba.org.

Yours in science,



Jaime Santana, M.ADS, BCBA, R.B.A. (Ont.)
He/Him
Board President
Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis™



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AN EVENT COMING TO YOU..

May 16th 6pm Online Webinar with Portia James



Beyond the Surface: OBM Through a DEI Perspective

With Portia James
M.A., BCBA



BIO:

PORTIA JAMES IS A SOUGHT-AFTER BOARD-CERTIFIED AND LICENSED BEHAVIOR ANALYST AND ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST. WITH A CAREER THAT SPANS NEARLY TWO DECADES, PORTIA DOESN'T JUST BREAK DOWN BARRIERS; SHE BUILDS BRIDGES FOR BLACK BUSINESS OWNERS AND ADVOCATES FOR INCLUSIVE AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE WORKPLACES. IN 2023, SHE PUBLISHED "RADICAL OBM: ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT FOR REGULAR FOLKS" WITH A CLEAR AND BOLD MISSION TO "BUILD WORKPLACES THAT PEOPLE DON'T HAVE TO RECOVER FROM." AS FOUNDER AND CEO OF BEHAVIOR GENIUS® AND CO-FOUNDER OF GENIUS OPERATIONS™, SHE HELPS LAUNCH AND SCALE BUSINESSES THAT THRIVE. WITH HER EXPERTISE, PORTIA HAS TOUCHED THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES IMPACTED BY AUTISM AND STAFF IMPACTED BY SYSTEMIC RACISM AND WORKPLACE TRAUMA. OUTSIDE OF WORK, PORTIA IS A WIFE, A MOTHER OF THREE, AND A COLLECTOR OF EXPERIENCES IN THE FORM OF CONCERT TICKETS, SKY MILES, AND RECIPE BOOKS.

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FEEDBACK SURVEY LINK



THE ANALYST - PODCAST

Did you know that ONTABA has a podcast? In The Analyst we invite guest speakers in the field of ABA to join our host to have thought provoking and informative discussions.

If you or someone you know is interested in being a guest speaker - please reach out to contact@ontaba.org and submit a brief bio.

Episodes can be accessed for CEU'S on Behaviorlive!

Disclaimer - all submissions will be reviewed and only those chosen will be contacted.



NEW SIG!

We're thrilled to announce the official launch of the Behaviour Analysis in Publicly Funded Schools Special Interest Group (BAS-SIG), which has already garnered significant interest from members. We had great turn out at our event on April 7th! This event was a fantastic opportunity for fellow members to connect, learn more about the BAS-SIG's vision and goals, and explore the exciting opportunities that lie ahead. Join us and be part of shaping the future of BAS-SIG!
Email: ontariobas.sig@gmail.com



Research Spotlight!

Fostering Friendship, Inclusion, and STEM Engagement through S3 Camp at Western University



The S3 Summer Camp, hosted by the Faculty of Education at Western University, is a research-informed initiative designed to foster friendship, inclusion, and STEM engagement among youth ages 9-14, with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Led by Dr. Nicole Neil and Dr. Anton Puvirajah, the interdisciplinary team blends science education, social skills instruction, and disability awareness using frameworks from STEM education and applied behaviour analysis. Camps have long been recognized as powerful spaces for promoting social-emotional growth, independence, and quality of life. However, children with intellectual and developmental disabilities have historically been excluded or limited to specialized settings. ¹The S3 camp challenges this by creating an inclusive environment, serving as both a pilot program and a research site to examine youth's social and learning experiences in community-based settings.

The five-day camp includes structured social-emotional lessons, peer-based STEM learning, and unstructured play. Daily sessions begin with disability awareness and social skills instruction incorporating hypothetical scenarios, videos, behavioural skills training, and guided discussions. STEM activities follow, using tools such as Ozobots, Makey Makeys, and Sphero RVRs. Lessons are designed using Universal Design for Learning principles and include teacher-directed inquiry, hands on materials, and graphic organizers. ²⁻⁴. Research shows that autistic youth and those with developmental disabilities often express heightened interest in STEM yet face participation barriers, resulting in lower postsecondary participation overall than their peers. ^{5,6}By facilitating high-interest, low-barrier STEM activities alongside inclusive social learning, S3 Camp creates meaningful opportunities for collaborative problem solving and peer engagement.

Evaluation data were collected using pre- and post-camp surveys, staff observation notes, and free-play coding. Outcome measures included (1) friendship formation, (2) attitudes toward disability, and (3) observed social engagement during unstructured play. Preliminary results suggest that while friendships were formed between children with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities, there were no statistically significant changes in social skills or disability attitudes from pre- to post-camp measures.



Research Spotlight!



However, qualitative observations painted a more encouraging picture; staff noted that participants were highly engaged, enjoyed the experience, and continued friendships after camp. Parents also shared that they felt their child was genuinely understood and supported, highlighting the camp's impact on connection and belonging.

The S3 Camp model offers a promising, replicable framework for inclusive, STEM-enriched programming and is shifting toward broader capacity-building efforts. In May 2025, the Inclusive Camp Hub (www.inclusivecamp.ca) will launch to provide training and resources for educators and community leaders to implement inclusive camps in their own settings. Future research will focus on sustaining these models by identifying effective training and support mechanisms.

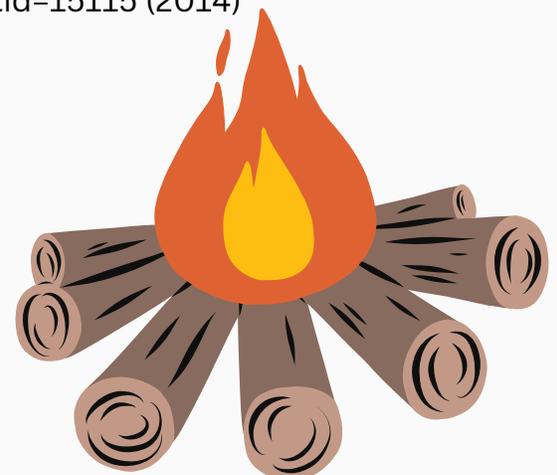
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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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What Would You Do?

Ethics Column

Welcome to the “What Would You Do?” column on ethical and professional dilemmas in ABA. Please submit your questions, issues, dilemmas, or tricky situations to newsletter@ontaba.org.

My responses are my own and are not intended to represent the Behavior Analysis Certification Board (BACB[®]), ONTABA, or any other organization with whom I am affiliated. Responses should not be taken as specific legal or professional advice as it is not possible to have or provide enough information in a column of this nature. Consider emailing your ethics questions to contact@ontaba.org or reach out to the ABA ethics hotline.

Before responding to one of the questions I was sent for this column, I wanted to comment on the recent announcement in the BACB’s March 2025 Newsletter changes removing required Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) content from the 2027 Education Requirements and from the 2027 Continuing Education Requirements for BCBA. Though the BACB will no longer be issuing certificates to residents in Ontario after July 1, 2026, this announcement is relevant to those of us who intend to maintain our certification status, to the education programs that we rely on within and outside of Ontario, and the future of the field of ABA.

At the APBA Conference in Texas, Dr. Jim Carr from the BACB provided an update on this situation explaining the changing legal landscape in the US and on April 8th the BACB released an update podcast with additional information regarding the BACB’s decision making process on this issue. The Canadian ABAI Chapters, including ONTABA, issued a joint statement on these changes on April 17th available here. I felt it important to share these resources in this column and to clear up some misinformation that I have seen posted on social media. First, it is important to note that currently posted BACB Ethics Code remains unchanged since August of 2024. We are still responsible to consider diversity and offer culturally relevant services. Second, all course content relating culturally responsive practice and supervision as described in the Code is still included within the required course content and maintains its relevance to all aspects of practice. Third, as BCBAs we are responsible to select CEUs that keep us current and increase our knowledge and skills. ACE providers are still encouraged to cover content relating to culturally relevant practices that can continue to be included in all CEU categories.

Finally, as Registered Behaviour Analysts in Ontario our Continuing Education responsibilities (50 hours) for maintaining our registration include 10 hours of Ethics/Jurisprudence, 5 hours of DEI, and 3 hours of Supervision.

From my perspective, as there have been no changes to the ethics code, trainees are still required to learn to provide services that are appropriate for the context in which they work and the unique needs of those supported and supervised. Most ABA publications related to DEI are focused on inclusive practices in service delivery, developing culturally sensitive and responsive services and describing diversity in the discipline. These publications are not divisive, they apply equally across all of us. Further, as a member of a visible minority, I believe that every person’s culture and identity must be considered in practice, not just those cultures which differ from the majority. I am equally responsible to understand and appreciate cultural differences between my minority culture, other minority cultures, and the multitude of cultures that comprise the majority. Many of us have been teaching these concepts and using them in practice long before they were acknowledged in our code. There is great diversity in the identities of behaviour analysts in Ontario and those we support. I believe that we are stronger when we recognize and celebrate diversity and work together to elevate voices, remove barriers, and create a culture of inclusion and acceptance.



How should an ABA practitioner ethically respond to a parent who is demanding 1:1 ABA services for their child, despite the practitioner's recommendation for group-based programs that align with the center's approach and the child's needs? What considerations should the practitioner take into account to balance the parent's wishes, the best interest of the child, and professional recommendations?

Differences of opinion are commonplace in service provision and require careful attention. Having a supervisor or mentor to talk through these situations can be extremely helpful.

Given the range of services available in Ontario, it is important to consider whether these are funded services requiring the child to meet particular eligibility criteria or if this is a fee-for-service situation. If the child is not eligible for 1:1 ABA services, that would need to be explained. If this is fee for service and the parent is ultimately looking for something other than what the practitioner and Centre can offer, then referring to a different service provider might make more sense.

From an ethical standpoint, the client's needs are paramount and should be the priority. There is also an issue of consent to consider. Valid consent needs to come from the legal consent source be informed, be voluntary, and be revocable. The practitioner would not want to pressure the parent to agree with their recommendation, but rather provide information on the risks and benefits of both approaches so that the parent can make an informed decision. To do this well, the practitioner would benefit from obtaining more information from the parent, reconsidering their own perspective, reflecting on the differences in perspective, and determining how best to proceed.

First, it is important to consider why the parents would prefer 1:1 ABA services to what is being offered. The practitioner in this situation would benefit from understanding the parent's perspectives on their child's needs, services they are requesting, and group-based programs being offered. Some questions to ask the parents could include: Why did the parent refer their child for ABA services? What goal(s) were they hoping that the service could focus on? What is their perspective of their child's strengths and needs? Why does the parent specifically want 1:1 ABA Services for their child? What does the parent understand 1:1 ABA Services to be. Does this family have previous learning history with group and individual ABA that may be influencing their request?

Second, the practitioner might consider their own perspective. Why are they recommending group services? Is the referral area more consistent with group intervention? Did they learn anything from hearing the parent's perspective that might alter their recommendation? Could the service be delivered 1:1?

Third, the practitioner would want to work to reflect on the differences between their's and the parent's perspectives. Is the practitioner's perspective on the child's needs vastly different than the parent's? Is the parent's understanding of 1:1 services and/or group services different than what the practitioner provides? Are there differences in terms of risks/benefits? Are the services that the parent wants available in their Centre?

Finally taking all of this information into account, the practitioner needs to plan the way forward in collaboration with the parent. Together they need to refine the goal for service, determine the options for meeting this goal, evaluate the risks and benefits of each option and select the option that works best for the child and their parent. Ideally embedding these conversations into the early steps of the intake process can minimize conflicts further into service.

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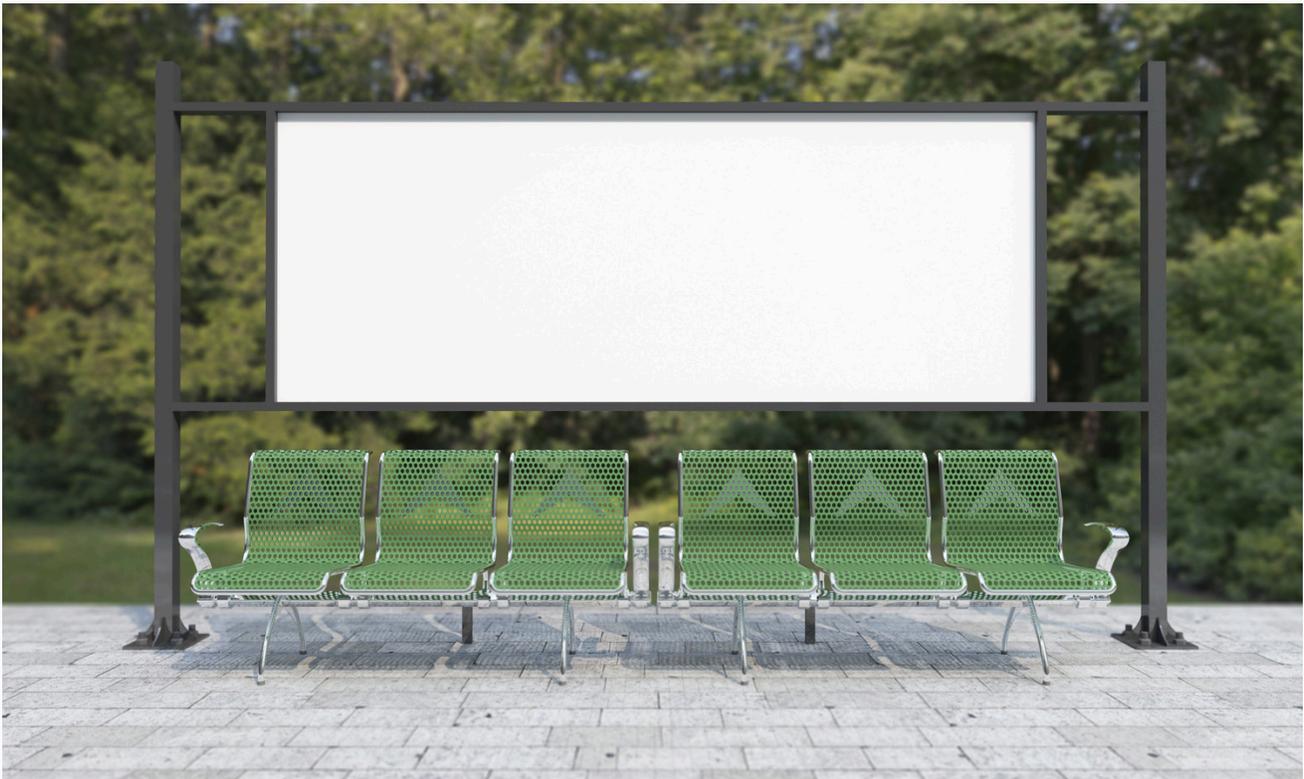
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