ABA for Children with Disabilities: Generative Instruction
A one-day conference with presentations and an interactive panel.

Keynote & Presentations

CEs Pending: APA, BACB®, LCSW & SLP

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Rob Holdsambeck, LCP, BCBA-D
Vice Chair, Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies
CEO, Holdsambeck and Associates, Inc.

Dr. Holdsambeck has over 35 years of clinical experience delivering ABA services to people with developmental disabilities, including those on the autism spectrum. He served his country as a Captain in the USAF-R; his community as a professor of behavior analysis for over 25 years; and his field as a board member of the prestigious Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. He is a frequent presenter at state, national and international conferences. He was selected as the 2010 distinguished colleague by the Chicago School LA’s department of ABA. In 2011, he received the outstanding service award from the Cambridge Center for his work in bringing evidence based practices to California.

Autism Insurance 101 for Parents and Providers

Lorri Shealy Unumb, J.D., Vice President, State Government Affairs, Autism Speaks

In 2004, the New York Times wrote that “no disability claims more parental time and energy than autism.” Families dealing with autism face many hardships, not the least of which is financial hardship. One reason for the financial hardship is the failure of the health insurance industry to cover treatments for, and sometimes even diagnosis of, autism. Access to health insurance for individuals with autism has been limited in two primary ways: (1) insurance was altogether unattainable, as insurers simply refused to write a policy on an individual or family member with autism, or (2) individuals could obtain a policy, but the policy failed to cover the treatments being prescribed, particularly interventions using ABA methodology.

Recently, there has been a national movement toward legislating meaningful health insurance coverage for individuals with autism. Since 2007, more than 30 states have enacted legislation requiring meaningful coverage for autism spectrum disorders. In this session, we will explore the reasons autism treatments have historically not been covered by health insurance and discuss arguments to refute those reasons. We will examine the language of the new autism insurance laws, including a comparison of their key terms and features. We will learn about the different types of public and private health insurance plans and discuss pitfalls that providers and consumers should watch out for when attempting to utilize benefits. We will talk about

Continued
Continued from Autism Insurance 101 for Parents and Providers/ Lorri Shealy Unumb, J.D.

Complexity, Generativity and Behavior

Dr. Kent Johnson, Morningside Academy

Although behavioral engineers employ a wealth of procedures for teaching basic repertoires under controlled conditions, far fewer teach complex repertoires, and teach that repertoires that will survive under the novel, natural contingencies that prevail in the real world. I will offer a behavioral account of complexity, and describe a 4-level framework for engineers to use to direct their efforts toward complex outcomes. The first level of complexity involves procedures for explicitly programing conceptual behavior, such as responding chair or proper fraction in the presence of all chairs or proper fractions, even those not presented during instruction. The second level of complexity involves procedures for programing principles that combine two or more concepts, such as round things roll, or how to make an inference about a character in a story so that they occur in the presence of events not presented during instruction. The third level of complexity involves presenting complex stimuli and events that recruit novel re-combinations of a learner’s current relevant repertoires, as novel contingencies require. For example, a dog that has been taught to limp under one command and walk under another command may limp forward in the presence of a new command that combines the previous two. The fourth level of complexity involves teaching generative repertoires such as thinking, reasoning and questioning routines. For example, a student may make a prediction without having been explicitly instructed how to do so, after recruiting two current relevant repertoires: how to draw a conclusion and how to describe behavior in the future.

• Participants will describe three levels of complex behavior.
• Participants will give an example of each of three levels of complex behavior.
• Participants will identify a complex behavior appropriate for a current client, and illustrate how to program for its occurrence.
Should Behavior Analysts be Focusing on Engineering Learning Environments to Produce Generalized Repertoires that Can Combine and Re-Combine to Generate New Learner Behaviors Under Novel Circumstances?

Vicci Tucci, M.A., BCBA, Tucci Learning Solutions

B.F. Skinner and his early colleagues have provided Applied Behavior Analysis with a wealth of operations, processes, and tools (e.g., principles of human behavior, evidenced-based contingencies, direct measures, and predicting the likely effects of our practices) to assist in “engineering learning environments” to produce desired learner outcomes. For example, Skinner’s analysis of the types of reinforcement contingencies (i.e., educational, social, and automatic) that can be arranged and rearranged to construct instructional conditions in learning environments can be a very effective process that contributes to producing desired learner outcomes. Behavioral engineers, given the arrangement of existing contingencies, can predict the likely effects on the learners’ performance. As Skinner suggested, these reinforcement contingencies require proper arrangement to produce the desired effects. How behavioral engineers arrange even the physical structures of instructional conditions can interfere with impacting desired learner outcomes. Given all of these wealth of tools, processes, and operations bestowed upon applied behavior analysts, are behavioral engineers arranging suitable contingencies to produce desired learner outcomes that include functioning successfully in novel circumstances in their communities? Is explicit teaching of every skill (i.e., discrete trial training) always the best approach to take to develop independent functioning? What are the side effects of explicit instruction? Are the desired learner outcomes assisting the learners to live successfully in their communities? Should behavioral engineers focus more on developing generalized learner repertoires (e.g., imitating, manding, and participating) that can combine and re-combine making acquisition of new or “free” behaviors likely without explicit instruction. These questions will be posed in order to assure that the “best” learner outcomes are being developed using the tools, operations and processes bestowed upon the behavioral analysts.

• Participants will state the 3 types of reinforcement contingencies that can be arranged in learning environments.
• Participants will state 3 examples of the wealth of operations, processes and tools behavior analysts have had bestowed upon them from B.F. Skinner and his colleagues’ findings.
• Participants will state what type of repertoires should be developed that can combine and re-combine making acquisition of new or “free” behaviors likely without explicit instruction so learners are more likely to be successful in novel environments.

Where are the Data? Investigating the Effects of Generative Teaching

Dr. Janet Twyman, Department of Pediatrics, University of Massachusetts Medical School

Applications of behavior science have resulted in tremendous gains across a range of human and non-human endeavors, from health and daily life, to business and industry, to education—especially with learners with special needs. Numerous effective teaching practices have derived from a science of behavior, including those that appear to bring about novel or complex learning. However we must remember that the development of an evidence base, supported by research, is necessary

Ms. Tucci has a Masters degree in applied behavior analysis from the University of the Pacific and is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). For the last 30 years, she has dedicated herself to implementing the Competent Learner Model (CLM) for naïve learners (e.g., autistic learners and challenged learners). She is committed to naïve learners becoming more successful in home and school settings by collaborating with instructional teams to engineer learning environments.

State-wide CLM Implementations are currently occurring in CA., PA., VA, and WV. International CLM Implementations are currently occurring in Abu Dhabi, Paris, and Sicily. Ms. Tucci is working with CLM Coaches to implement in Northern Africa, Italy, and many other Arabic countries.

Also, Ms Tucci has developed curricula for naïve learners (e.g., learners with disabilities such as autism) and assessment tools to monitor the progress of these learners and their instructors. Also, she has developed a ‘Teaching Machine’ that delivers content (e.g., ABA, DI, and PT) by combining behavioral and instructional technologies (e.g., active student responding, immediate feedback, provisions for fluent student performance, and behind the scene data collection on each User’s performance). She is currently working on a new learning solution’s APP with Dr. Kent Johnson of Morningside Academy called Fluency FlashCards that will be released March 1, 2013.
Generative Instruction

A evidences-based and legal practices to serve children with disabilities

Continued from Where are the Data? Investigating the Effects of Generative Teaching

Janet S. Twyman, Ph.D., BCBA, is a noted educator and proponent of effective instructional practices. She is committed to evidence-based instruction and has a strong record in the transfer of instructional technology and developing web-based programs for wide-scale distribution. As Vice President of Instructional Development, Implementation and Research at Headsprout®, she led the design, development, and dissemination of the company’s highly regarded educational programs, and oversaw program implementation in over 1,000 public and private schools. Dr. Twyman serves on the boards of numerous organizations including the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies (where she chairs the Education Group) and PEER International (assisting township schools in Port Elizabeth, South Africa). In 2007-08 she served as President of the Association for Behavior Analysis International. Currently an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Massachusetts Medical School / E.K. Shriver Center, Dr. Twyman was also recently named as the Director of Innovative Technologies for the U.S. Dept. of Education’s National Center on Innovations in Learning. Dr. Twyman's research and publication interests involve the continuum from understanding basic processes related to learning and communication to ultimately building meaningful instructional technology with broad-based application and sustainability.

INTERACTIVE PANEL DISCUSSION

Evidences-based and Legal Practices to Serve Children with Disabilities

Panel Members: Lorri Shealy Unumb, Janet S. Twyman, Kent Johnson, Rob Holdsambeck, and Vicci Tucci

Numerous studies have demonstrated that Applied Behavior Analysis and explicit behavior analytic teaching methods are effective in strengthening, weakening, maintaining, or generalizing behaviors of significance. However, is explicit teaching the always the best or most efficient way to develop independent functioning and generalized responding, and can this approach target all the skills learners require for success in schools, homes, and community environments? Can we arrange or engineer instructional conditions that occasion novel behavior without explicit instruction?

This panel will discuss and answer questions from the conference participants about applied, theoretical, and conceptual topics related to generativity, adduction, application, discovery learning and behavioral cusps, and methodologies such as fluency that promote these topics. Engineered generativity and complex responding examples will be provided across learner characteristics, and skills and research opportunities will also be discussed.

A legal expert on the panel will also answer questions from participants about how to access insurance benefits and the legal channels that can be pursued to pay providers to deliver ABA services as well as other professional services. A clinical Psychologist on the panel will answer questions relating to the applications of behavioral techniques to children and adults with developmental disabilities.

• Participants will learn at least 3 legal channels to access insurance benefits for children with disabilities such as autism
• Participants will learn about the four instructional conditions that can be arranged to develop the schedule of reinforcement required to develop repertoires
• Participants will identify a complex behavior appropriate for a current client, and illustrate how to program for its occurrence.
• Participants will identify three ways in which Psychologists and SLP’s can access behavioral techniques in their current practices.

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