

**2024
ALABAMA
CONFERENCE**

October 17-18, 2024

Hilton Downtown Birmingham at UAB

2025 ALABA PRESIDENT

Dr. Laura Senn is currently a Clinical Assistant Professor for the M.S. in ABA Program at the University of Alabama in Huntsville. Dr. Senn graduated with a B.A. in Psychology from Auburn University and began her career in an inclusive preschool program that provided behavior analytic early intervention to children with autism. She later received an M.Ed. in Early Childhood Special Education from Auburn University Montgomery and continued to work in the same preschool program as a certified teacher and later served as interim director. Dr. Senn left this position to pursue her M.S. in Behavior Analysis at Jacksonville State University. There, she worked in an early intervention preschool program, in the university precision teaching lab, and as a supervisee for an in-home and school consulting agency. Following graduation, she earned her Ph.D. from the Florida Institute of Technology. There, she worked as a BCBA for the Scott Center for Autism Treatment and assisted in developing a summer camp for children with ADHD or autism. After receiving her Ph.D., Dr. Senn completed a postdoctoral fellowship through Johns Hopkins School of Medicine at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in the Neurobehavioral Unit Severe Behavior Outpatient Program. There, she was a case manager and assisted with an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) informed group training for parents of patients receiving outpatient services. Dr. Senn's current clinical and research interests include severe problem behavior, functional analysis, parent and staff training, and autism services across the lifespan.

INVITED SPEAKERS

Dr. Caio Miguel is a Professor of Psychology at California State University, Sacramento. He is an Associate Editor for the Journal of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior, a former Associate Editor for the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, and a former editor for The Analysis of Verbal Behavior. Dr. Miguel's research focuses on the study of verbal behavior and emergent stimulus relations. He has given hundreds of professional presentations around the world, and has had over 100 manuscripts published in English, Portuguese, and Spanish. He is the recipient of the 2013 award for outstanding scholarly work by the College of Social Sciences at Sacramento State, the 2014 Outstanding Mentor Award by ABAI, the 2019 Award for Excellence in Teaching Verbal Behavior by the VBSIG, the 2019 Alumni Achievement Award from the Department of Psychology at Western Michigan University, and the 2020 Jack Michael Award for Outstanding Contributions to Verbal Behavior.

Dr. Holly Gover has been working to improve the lives of individuals with and without developmental disabilities and their communities for the past decade. She completed her doctoral degree in Behavior Analysis at Western New England University under the advisement of Dr. Greg Hanley, where she conducted research on the assessment and intervention of challenging behavior and food selectivity. Dr. Gover is passionate about evaluating interventions that promote client agency within therapeutic processes and takes a skill-based approach when addressing challenging behavior. She values clinical and research practices that are person-centered, safe, and dignifying. She currently is a faculty member in the Department of Pediatrics at Vanderbilt University Medical Center where she serves as an Associate Director of Behavioral Outcomes within Vanderbilt Kennedy Center's (VKC) Treat and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TRIAD).

INVITED SPEAKERS (cont.)

Dr. Tomeny is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at The University of Alabama. He received his Ph.D. from The University of Southern Mississippi and completed a pre-doctoral internship at Indiana University School of Medicine in the autism emphasis. His research explores the functioning and quality of life of autistic individuals and their families, with a primary focus on the experiences of siblings, parents, and other stakeholders.

Sarah Frampton is an assistant professor at the University of Nebraska Omaha in the Psychology Department. Before accepting a faculty position, Sarah served in leadership roles in organizations providing ABA services across the country including the May Institute, Inc. and the Marcus Autism Center. Sarah has published research on interventions related to teaching new skills to learners with and without disabilities across the major behavior analytic journals. Sarah has served on the editorial board of the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis and is currently on the editorial board for Behavior Analysis in Practice and The Analysis of Verbal Behavior. She was recognized with student research grants from 3 different Special Interest Groups within Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI), the award for Excellence in Behavior Analytic Research from Simmons University, and the Researcher of the Year Award from the Language and Learning Clinic at Marcus Autism Center.

Alice Shillingsburg, PhD, BCBA-D, LP is the Yale Family Endowed Professor and Director of the integrated Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (iCASD) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-Meyer Institute. She received her PhD in child clinical psychology at Auburn University and completed her APA Accredited doctoral Internship at the Marcus Institute in Atlanta, GA. In prior roles, she has served as Sr. Vice President of Children's Clinical Services and Training at May Institute, Director of the Language and Learning Clinic at Marcus Autism Center, and previously held an appointment as Associate Professor at Emory University School of Medicine in the Department of Pediatrics.

Dr. Shillingsburg's research and clinical interests involve the development and implementation of comprehensive and focused interventions to promote meaningful skill development for children and adolescents diagnosed with autism. Dr. Shillingsburg has published over 60 empirical research articles and book chapters, is current Editor-in-Chief of Operants Magazine, and is past Associate Editor for the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis and The Analysis of Verbal Behavior. She is appointed to several editorial boards and is regularly invited to speak at national conferences.

INVITED SPEAKERS (cont.)

Adithyan (Dithu) Rajaraman has been blessed to teach, interact with, and learn from children and adolescents with and without disabilities for 15 years. Dithu completed his Doctorate in Behavior Analysis at Western New England University, under the advisement of Dr. Greg Hanley. In the fall of 2022, Dithu joined the faculty at Vanderbilt University Medical Center as an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, where he serves as Director of Behavior Analysis Research within Vanderbilt Kennedy Center's (VKC) Autism Institute, TRIAD. In his current position, Dithu works alongside neurodivergent professionals and advocates, behavior analysts, students, and public-school educators on a broad research agenda aimed at refining and scaling trauma-informed and neurodiversity-affirming approaches to addressing dangerous behavior. This research aim is intimately connected to the goal of being able to provide safe, dignifying, yet highly effective behavior-analytic services to underrepresented individuals in underserved communities.

Robin Landa, PHD, BCBA, LBA, currently serves as Senior Director for Glenwood's Children's Center, located in Birmingham, Alabama. She received her Master's Degree in Applied Behavior Analysis from Auburn University and her Doctorate in Behavior Analysis from Western New England University. Her experiences providing behavior analytic services span various settings, including private and public schools, residential care, specialized clinics, and community-based programs. Her clinical and research interests include assessing and treating severe problem behavior, supporting the development of effective behavioral repertoires, and promoting compassionate behavior analytic care.

Dr. Falligant is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences at Auburn University. Dr. Falligant is a clinical psychologist and Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA-D) with more than a decade of research and practice experience in the area of severe problem behavior. He received his Ph.D. from Auburn University and completed his Doctoral Internship and a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in the Department of Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and the Department of Behavioral Psychology at the Kennedy Krieger Institute. Prior to returning to his alma mater, he held the rank of Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and Senior Behavior Analyst in the inpatient Neurobehavioral Unit at the Kennedy Krieger Institute.

Dr. Kimberly Tomeny is a clinical associate professor in the Department of Special Education at The University of Alabama. She holds a Ph.D. in Special Education (with an emphasis in Early Childhood) from The University of Alabama. Dr. Tomeny received her bachelor's degree in Psychology and master's degree in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Virginia, and she also completed a post-graduate fellowship in Child Development and Early Childhood Education at Yale University. Dr. Tomeny's clinical and research interests focus on coaching early childhood professionals on implementation of best practices and supporting caregivers of infants and toddlers with confirmed or suspected autism. She has partnered with Alabama's Early Intervention System and colleagues statewide on the development of a sustainable system of care for families of young children with autism through intervention and screening initiatives. Dr. Tomeny has also served on state and national committees that focus on best practices for working with infants and toddlers with confirmed or suspected autism and their families.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

CEUs Offered: 1

An Overview of the Cliff in Alabama – Where We Are and Where We Can Go

LAURA SENN, Ph.D., BCBA-D (University of Alabama in Huntsville)

Estimates conducted in 2020 indicated there were over 78,000 adults with autism living in Alabama at the time. Given the steady increase in autism prevalence beginning in the 1990s, more and more autistic individuals will come of each year in the future. This means a steadily increasing need for adult autism services and providers who are well versed in the unique needs that come with adulthood. Despite this growing need, the majority of these individuals and their families will face a “service cliff” as they make the transition into adulthood. For many, this “cliff” may not mean just an end to services and further progress. Research shows that the loss of services in adulthood often results in overall regression in skills, increased dependency on caregivers, and greater social isolation. This talk will provide an overview of statistics and service needs related to adult autism services. It will also explore ways other states have assessed the needs of their autistic adult populations and how those states applied their data toward creating initiatives and policy change. Finally, we’ll examine information available regarding the need for adult services in Alabama, existing initiatives, and how practitioners can get involved to help effect change.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to identify:

1. Current need as well as common barriers for adult autism services at both a national and state (Alabama) level
2. Common service preferences of autistic adults and their families
3. Actions they may take to support improved services for autistic adults

10:10 AM - 11:10 AM

CEUs Offered: 1

Bidirectional Naming and the Integrative Verbal Behavior Approach

CAIO MIGUEL, Ph.D., BCBA-D (California State University, Sacramento)

The term bidirectional naming (BiN) has been used to describe the integration of listener and speaker behaviors that leads to speaking with understanding. In other words, it is the basic behavioral unit for the establishment of verbal behavior. In this talk, I will explain the importance of bidirectional naming, as well as how it is established during a typical child's development. Finally, with examples from the behavior analytic literature, I will suggest ways by which some of the skills that lead to the development of BiN can be targeted and prioritized during intervention with early learners diagnosed with autism and other developmental disabilities. The emphasis on teaching developmentally appropriate cumulative-hierarchical skills that allow children to learn from natural contingencies of reinforcement is the hallmark of the integrative approach to verbal behavior.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will:

1. Be able to define Bidirectional naming and differentiate it from tacts/naming.
 2. Describe all skills associated with the development of BiN.
 3. Learn strategies to remedy failures to perform verbally (acquire BiN).
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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 (cont.)

11:10 AM - 12:10 PM

CEUs Offered: 1E

Prioritizing Choice and Assent in the Assessment and Treatment of Food Selectivity

HOLLY GOVER, Ph.D., BCBA-D (Vanderbilt University Medical Center)

Food selectivity is a pervasive problem among children and adolescents, particularly with individuals on the autism spectrum. Gover et al. (2023) described a model for assessing and treating food selectivity that leveraged synthesized reinforcers, choice-making opportunities, and shaping without escape extinction to increase consumption of novel foods. In this presentation, I will describe on-going research on extensions of this model to novel settings and populations. Modifications to the model will be described when conducting the process in preschools and general education settings, and when working with individuals without robust communication and adolescents. In addition, I will discuss how feeding interventions can incorporate trauma-informed care commitments to increase safety and feasibility. Implications and suggestions for practitioners looking to address food selectivity in applied settings will be discussed.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Describe a shaping process for treating food selectivity that is capable of promoting consumption of non-preferred foods without occasioning emotional responding or severe problem behavior.
 2. Describe how to modify treatment procedures when working with individuals without strong language skills and with adolescents.
 3. Describe how to incorporate trauma-informed care commitments into their interventions for food selectivity.
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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 (cont.)

1:20 PM – 1:50 PM

No CEUs Offered

POSTER SESSION & DATA SHARING

Discussant: EMILY SULLIVAN, Ph.D., BCBA-D (University of Nebraska Medical Center, Munroe-Meyer Institute)

Navigating Puberty: A Comprehensive Review of Sex and Puberty Education for Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder

Victoria A. Boatright, Shannon M. Kirshy, Justess Rice, Bailey Tollett, Lauren Wheeler, & Caroline Richter (University of Alabama at Birmingham)

Skills-Based Treatment and its Effect on Staff

Shelby DiPilla (Beacon of Hope ABA)

Process for Conducting Ethical Research in Alabama Using Glenwood's Research Review Committee

Laura Senn (University of Alabama in Huntsville) & Mary-Kate Carey (Glenwood)

The Effects of an Intensive Toilet Training Package on Establishing Urinary Continence in an EIBI Setting

Robin Landa, Jessaka Jackson, Kelsie Kilgore, & Kenya Terry (Glenwood)

Future Ready: Teaching Justice-Involved Adolescents Interview Skills

Ashley Anderson, John Rapp, Esteban Cabassa, Daniel Sheridan, & Shane Phillips (Auburn University)

A Computational Model of Response-Dependent Reinstatement

Shane Phillips & John Michael Falligant (Auburn University)

Are Children in Foster Care Settings More Likely to Display Challenging Behavior on Specific Days of the Week?

John Rapp, Jodi Robeson, & Jaicee Williamson (Auburn University)

Delineating Behavioral Phenotypes of Stereotypic Movement Disorder With Self-Injury via the Aberrant Behavior Checklist

Hastings Gray & John Michael Falligant (Auburn University)

A Comparison of Instructional Methods for Teaching APA Skills

Renee Renda & Zach Hooten (Jacksonville State University)

Treatment Validation Following the Performance-Based IISCA

Robin Landa, Elise Clodfelter, & Alysia Holt (Glenwood)

Peer-Network Intervention for Increasing Vocal Emissions in a Center-Based Program

Kayla Jenssen, Emma Melton, & Lauren Revelle (University of North Alabama)

Performance-Based Interview-Informed Synthesized Contingency Analyses: Consecutive Applications

Robin Landa, Elise Clodfelter, Eleanor Rafferty, Isha Tomar, & Joe Fields (Glenwood)

Stereotypy During a Performance-Based IISCA

Robin Landa, Haley Phillips, & Amber Patton (Glenwood)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 (cont.)

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

CEUs Offered: 1

Of-Overlooked Nonautistic Siblings: Intervention and Outcomes Across the Lifespan

THEODORE TOMENY, Ph.D. (University of Alabama)

Despite siblinghood being our longest relationships, siblings of autistic individuals are an often-overlooked group. Whereas the literature on parents of autistic individuals is fairly extensive and well-established, the research on outcomes for siblings is more sparse and less conclusive. This presentation will explore existing research on various psychosocial outcomes among nonautistic siblings and will identify risk and protective factors for sibling adjustment across the lifespan. Intervention and support approaches that involve siblings will also be reviewed. Finally, sibling involvement in the long-term care needs of autistic adults and their aging families will be discussed.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will:

1. Be able to identify risk and protective factors of nonautistic sibling adjustment
2. Gain knowledge about intervention and support approaches that involve nonautistic siblings
3. Gain knowledge about nonautistic sibling involvement in long-term care for autistic adults and their aging families.

3:10 PM - 4:10 PM

CEUs Offered: 1

Applications of Skinner's Analysis of Problem Solving to Teach Complex Behaviors

SARAH FRAMPTON, Ph.D., BCBA-D (University of Nebraska Omaha)

Designing programs to teach useful skills to individuals with developmental disabilities is challenging. Thankfully, Skinner's method of molecular analysis provides the necessary tools to analyze even highly complex human behavior. Applying his analysis has many advantages when designing instruction to teach meaningful skills to individuals with and without disabilities. This presentation will focus on translating Skinner's theoretical analysis of problems and problem solving into real world applications. Examples from applied research will be reviewed with recommendations for ways to integrate the findings into practice.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will:

1. Define a problem and problem solving using a Skinnerian analysis
 2. Pinpoint examples of problem solving within complex responses
 3. Analyze the role of motivation and stimulus control in problem solving
-

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 (cont.)

4:20 PM – 5:20 PM

CEUs Offered: 1

Strengthening Gestures: A Critical Component to Building Robust Communication Skills for Autistic Children

ALICE SHILLINGSBURG, Ph.D., BCBA-D (University of Nebraska Medical Center, Munroe-Meyer Institute)

The use of gestures in early child development is highly related to the development of language and communication. Research has repeatedly shown that children who are later diagnosed with autism use fewer gestures to point things out to others (i.e., show and share) and to request things from others (i.e., mand). Recent research has shown that these differences can be seen even before 12 months of age. Given the altogether lower levels of gestures observed in children with autism and the important role they play in learning language and other important social interaction skills, early intervention programs should focus on developing gestures as foundational to building robust communication repertoires. This presentation will provide an overview of how gestures are related to language development, how providers may inadvertently diminish gestures, how to implement procedures to strengthen and improve gestures, and how to capitalize on gestures as an active ingredient in quality mand training for children diagnosed with autism.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will:

1. Describe how early gesture use is related to later language outcomes
2. Describe how gesture use differs in early childhood development for children with and without autism
3. Describe the importance of indicating responses in quality mand training

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

8:00 AM – 8:45 AM

OPEN BUSINESS MEETING

No CEUs Offered

Everyone is welcome to join the Executive Committee in Hamilton I (the same location as the presentations) for discussion about ALABA's goals and activities.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024 (cont.)

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

CEUs Offered: 1E

Advocating for Trauma-informed Care in Applied Behavior Analytic Services for Individuals who Exhibit Dangerous Behavior

ADITHYAN RAJARAMAN, Ph.D., BCBA-D (Vanderbilt University Medical Center)

Although the construct of trauma has largely eluded a thorough behavior analysis, considerations surrounding trauma and trauma-informed care (TIC) have indubitably entered mainstream applied behavior analysis (ABA). In the absence of clear findings and guidance from a TIC research program, conversations surrounding the matter—which have permeated published literature, peer review, everyday practice interactions, and social media—have been polarizing. Some submit that ABA has not done enough to incorporate TIC, while others assert it is entirely unnecessary, perhaps even harmful for the discipline. Yet others remain skeptical to embrace TIC in ABA until more data reveal the utility (or lack thereof) of the framework. This talk is an attempt to bring clarity, vocabulary, and nuance to this timely discussion. I will first define trauma across multiple levels of scientific understanding and provide a defensible behavior-analytic interpretation. Then, I will outline core commitments of a TIC framework and describe how to incorporate them into ABA. Finally, I will articulate and respond to several concerns and questions that have entered the discourse surrounding trauma and TIC. My primary intention is to increase your capacity and willingness to advocate for TIC in ABA in conversations and collaborations with colleagues, caregivers, and clients.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Define trauma and delineate behavioral and medical health risks associated with experiencing potentially traumatic events
2. Outline the core commitments of trauma-informed care as they relate to ABA
3. Articulate reasons why we have a responsibility to not contribute to trauma in the name of ABA

10:10 AM – 11:10 AM

CEUs Offered: 1E

Compassionately Addressing Severe Problem Behavior in Applied Settings

ROBIN LANDA, Ph.D., BCBA (Glenwood)

Behavior analysts have been increasingly called upon to incorporate more compassion into their practice, which includes decision-making that minimizes client distress (e.g., LeBlanc et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2019). Commitments associated with compassionate behavior analysis include prioritizing rapport and assent, teaching meaningful and empowering repertoires, and minimizing behavioral escalation. Such commitments often require that practitioners carefully weigh both short- and long-term treatment priorities (Rodriguez et al., 2023), but striking an appropriate balance between short- and long-term goals is often challenging for practitioners tasked with addressing severe problem behavior. In this presentation, I will distinguish between behavior analytic treatment and management of severe problem behavior and propose a general framework for compassionately teaching individuals at risk for severe problem behavior in applied settings.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Distinguish between behavior analytic treatment and management of severe problem behavior
 2. Describe the benefits of a compassionate approach to severe problem behavior
 3. Identify three strategies for compassionately teaching individuals at risk for severe problem behavior in applied settings
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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024 (cont.)

11:20 AM – 12:20 PM

CEUs Offered: 1

Response Dynamics in Automatically Maintained Self-Injury: Insights and Future Directions

JOHN MICHAEL FALLIGANT, Ph.D., BCBA-D (Auburn University)

More than three million individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the United States engage in self-injurious behavior (SIB; head banging, self-biting, striking one's body). SIB causes injuries that vary from minor (e.g. superficial scratches) to very severe (e.g., concussions, bruising, lacerations, amputation of digits, tooth fractures, retinal detachment, broken bones). SIB is also extremely concerning because it is a major source of suffering for caregivers, can necessitate restrictive behavioral and pharmacological interventions, limits opportunities for educational and community inclusion, and is a costly strain on healthcare systems. In most cases, SIB is maintained by social consequences (e.g., caregiver attention). However, in approximately 25% of cases SIB occurs independent of social contingencies. This class of behavior, referred to as automatically maintained SIB, can be highly resistant to reinforcement-based interventions. In the first part of this presentation, I will overview a subtyping model delineating treatment-resistant and non-treatment-resistant phenotypes of automatically maintained SIB. In the second part, I will discuss some analytic methods, along with illustrative data, that may inform applied research on variables contributing to treatment-resistant SIB.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Describe contrasting response dynamics observed in treatment-resistant vs. non-treatment-resistant self-injurious behavior (SIB)
2. Understand how the study of behavioral dynamics complements the analysis of treatment-resistant SIB and may provide insight into its causal and treatment-action pathways
3. Use multiple analytic approaches to examine some temporal dynamics of behavior maintenance and change in research and practice

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

CEUs Offered: 1

Panel Discussion: Reflections and Predictions for Skill Acquisition Programs in ABA

SARAH FRAMPTON, Ph.D., BCBA-D (University of Nebraska Omaha)

HOLLY GOVER, Ph.D., BCBA-D (Vanderbilt University Medical Center)

ROBIN LANDA, Ph.D., BCBA (Glenwood)

ADITHYAN RAJARAMAN, Ph.D., BCBA-D (Vanderbilt University Medical Center)

Speakers will discuss and comment on their experience teaching skill acquisition programs to learners with autism in light of current trends in ABA to become more trauma-informed and assent-based.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Identify how active clinicians are incorporating trauma-informed and assent-based practices into their skill acquisition programs
 2. Suggest some ways to determine when trauma-informed and assent-based practices can successfully be included in skill acquisition programs
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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024 (cont.)

2:40 PM – 3:55 PM

CEUs Offered: 1

Alabama Research Symposium: Current Research From our State

Comparative Analysis of Human and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Collection on Discrimination of Motor Movements

CORY JOHNSON, M.Ed., BCBA (Glenwood)

Over the past year, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) has released its first position statement on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). It is important for research practitioners to evaluate if and how this tool can ethically be used to improve services for autistic people. AI could improve service delivery by increasing fidelity of behavior data collection. Often, direct care staff are asked to both respond to challenging behavior and simultaneously collect data on the behavior, which may lead to low fidelity in behavior data collection. Because important life decisions are made based on this data, it is important that the data be accurate. Glenwood's team is partnering with a software engineer at Alpaca Health to evaluate how artificial intelligence may eventually be used to automate human behavior data collection. A comparative analysis is currently underway to determine if output from a human data collector, a motion detection-based camera system, or video uploads to an artificial intelligence software program are more effective at calculating frequency of human gross motor movements. Additionally, the comparative analysis aims to determine which tool is more effective at discriminating between topographies of gross motor movements in humans. Results from this analysis could aid in automating data collection, which would allow direct care staff to spend more time preventing challenging behavior and increasing skill acquisition.

Comparing Size of Relapse Effects and Their Combinations in Rats: Reinstatement, Renewal, and Resurgence

MARY BRIDGES, M.S., BCBA (Coosa Behavioral Services) and **Rusty Nall, Ph.D.** (Jacksonville State University)

Behavioral treatments to reduce undesirable behavior exist, but recurrence of previously reduced behavior (relapse) often occurs. There are at least three major types of relapse. Reinstatement is induced by re-exposure to stimuli previously paired with reinforcement. Renewal is induced by transitions to contexts other than treatment. Resurgence is induced by worsening of alternative reinforcement conditions. Relapse-mitigation techniques are typically specific to the anticipated relapse type, and behavior is often susceptible to each of the different relapse types and their combinations. Therefore, clinicians may dedicate significant resources to implementing several relapse-mitigation techniques or risk safeguarding against one type of relapse only to have another emerge. The present experiment assessed relative magnitude of different relapse types and their combinations with the goals of determining the largest magnitude relapse effects and developing a translational testing ground for novel relapse mitigation techniques across relapse types. Using a translational model of food seeking in rats, magnitudes of reinstatement, renewal, resurgence, and their combinations were assessed by changing cues, contexts, and/or alternative reinforcement contingencies across baseline (VI 20s reinforcement), extinction (VI 20s alternative reinforcement for groups including resurgence components), and relapse phases. Results and implications for behavioral clinicians and scientists will be discussed.

Evaluating Emotion as a Motivating Operation for Residential Staff Behavior

ASHLEY ANDERSON, Ph.D., BCBA and John Rapp, Ph.D., BCBA-D (Auburn University)

Motivating operations offer a conceptual framework to understand and evaluate emotions within the context of behavior analysis. Emotions are antecedent variables that can have value- and behavior-altering effects on stimulus events as reinforcers and punishers, indicating they are antecedent variables with motivational properties. The conceptualization of emotions as motivating operations provides a framework for the assessment and treatment of behavior. Anger is an emotion particularly relevant in the use of harsh discipline by staff members for children and adolescents who reside in residential facilities. If behavior in response to the subjective feeling of anger is maladaptive it could result in deleterious outcomes for these youth. The current study utilized a translational approach to assess emotion as a motivating operation for staff members' responses toward residents. Qualtrics randomized undergraduate students into one of three experimental groups. Two groups experienced an emotion induction procedure for either anger or happiness, and the third group recalled the details of their last 24 hr (i.e., the control group). Directly following the writing procedures, the participants responded to four vignettes in one of four sequence orders depicting the behavior of a resident (two appropriate and two problem behaviors) from the perspective of a residential staff member. The results indicated the induced emotion did not significantly alter responses to resident behavior. Instead, the findings suggested that repeated resident behaviors and order sequences had the greatest influence on the participants' responses. Additionally, responding to problem behavior had an association with reduced reinforcement for appropriate behavior.

Understanding the Response: A Shift From Fixing Infant Crying

JENNIFER BRUZEK, Ph.D., BCBA-D (University of Alabama in Huntsville)

Infant-caregiver interactions are crucial for infant development, caregiver well-being, and the dynamics of their relationship. While research has mainly focused on how these interactions promote infant growth, the impact of infant crying on caregivers has received very little attention. To address this gap, our research includes experimental studies and reviews exploring several key areas: the current literature on crying as a stimulus for caregiver behavior, ethical implications and potential biases in existing research, and the experimental evaluation of infant crying as a form of negative reinforcement. Recently, we have expanded our focus to include the concepts of stimulus-as-event and stimulus-as-function. This approach examines how perceived aversiveness does not always lead to predictable behavioral outcomes, such as aggression, and how seemingly benign events can unexpectedly trigger aggressive responses in some caregivers. By exploring these complexities, we aim to enhance our understanding of caregiver responses to infant crying and the implications for caregiving practices.

NOTES

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024 (cont.)

4:05 PM – 5:05 PM

CEUs Offered: 1

Empowering Families: Collaborative Strategies to Promote Caregiver-Implemented Intervention

KIMBERLY TOMENY, Ph.D. (University of Alabama)

Caregiver-implemented approaches to autism intervention often rely on successful collaboration with families. This presentation explores essential strategies and best practices for practitioners to effectively engage and empower families in the process of implementing interventions with their autistic children in natural environments. The session will highlight the significance of building strong partnerships with families, offering practical guidance on how to navigate common challenges and involve families meaningfully throughout the intervention process.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will:

1. Understand the importance of collaboration with families when working with autistic children
2. Be able to identify strategies for involving, supporting, and empowering families throughout the intervention process
3. Be able to describe and determine feasible strategies to overcome common challenges when partnering with families to maximize intervention effectiveness

NOTES



2024 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President-Elect

Laura Senn (University of Alabama in Huntsville)

President

Sheridan O'Brien (Simplified Behavioral Health)

Past-President

Mary-Kate Carey (Glenwood)

Members-at-Large

Lauren Elliott (Simplified Behavioral Health)

Tara Cook (ABA Associates)

Amanda Niedfeld (Glenwood)

Jodi Robeson (Auburn University)

Students-at-Large

Donna Perez (Jacksonville State University)

Shane Phillips (Auburn University)

Executive Directors

Paige McKerchar, Outgoing (Jacksonville State University)

Sarah Richling, Incoming (Auburn University)

2025 Executive Committee Elections

The following Executive Committee positions will be filled for 2025:

- President-Elect (3-year term)
- Member-at-Large (3-year term)
- Member-at-Large (3-year term)
- Student-at-Large (1-year term)

Full members of ALABA are eligible to vote for all positions; student members may vote for the Student Representative. Newly elected Executive Committee members will take office beginning January 2025.

OUR SINCEREST APPRECIATION GOES OUT TO

Our Invited Speakers

John Michael Falligant
Sarah Frampton
Holly Gover
Robin Landa
Caio Miguel

Adithyan Rajaraman
Alice Shillingsburg
Kimberly Tomeny
Theodore Tomeny

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Save the date for the 2025 Conference

October 9-10, 2025

at the Hilton Downtown Birmingham at UAB

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Schedule of Presentations and CEUs Available

Thursday, October 17, 2024

Time	Event	CE Hours (6)
9:00-10:00	Laura Senn <i>Presidential Address – An Overview of the Cliff in Alabama – Where We Are and Where We Can Go</i>	1
10:10-11:10	Caio Miguel Bidirectional Naming and the Integrative Verbal Behavior Approach	1
11:20-12:20	Holly Gover Prioritizing Choice and Assent in the Assessment and Treatment of Food Selectivity	1 Ethics
12:20-1:20	Lunch Break	NA
1:20-1:50	Poster Session with Discussant Emily Sullivan	NA
2:00-3:00	Theodore Tomeny Of-Overlooked Nonautistic Siblings: Intervention and Outcome Across the Lifespan	1
3:10-4:10	Sarah Frampton Application of Skinner’s Analysis of Problem Solving to Teach Complex Behaviors	1
4:20-5:20	Alice Shillingsburg Strengthening Gestures: A Critical Component to Building Robust Communication Skills for Autistic Children	1

Friday, October 18, 2024

Time	Event	CE Hours (6)
8:00-8:45	Open Business Meeting	NA
9:00-10:00	Adithyan Rajaraman Advocating for Trauma-Informed Care in ABA Services for Individuals Who Exhibit Dangerous Behavior	1 Ethics
10:10-11:10	Robin Landa Compassionately Addressing Severe Problem Behavior in Applied Settings	1 Ethics
11:20-12:20	John Michael Falligant Response Dynamics in Automatically Maintained Self-injury: Insights and Future Directions	1
12:20-1:30	Lunch Break	NA
1:30-2:30	Panel Discussion: Reflections and Predictions for Skill Acquisition Programs in ABA	1
2:40-3:55	Alabama Research Symposium: Representative Research From the State	1
4:05-5:05	Kimberly Tomeny Empowering Families: Collaborative Strategies to Promote Caregiver-Implemented Intervention	1