



The Relationship Between ABA and PBS

A Collegial Alliance with a Common Aim: Socially Significant/Quality of Life Outcomes for Individuals who Engage in Challenging Behaviour



Goals of Webinar

- Understand contemporary definitions of ABA and PBS
- Understand historical development of PBS within field of ABA
- Recognize ABA as core conceptual foundation of PBS for understanding challenging behavior and developing behaviour support plans
- See through common myth about ABA and PBS
- Recognize PBS as marriage of science with human values in service to creating socially significant outcomes in the lives of persons with challenging behaviour.
- Share an exemplar of PBS/ABA Practice in Great Britain that has achieved socially significant outcomes for a young man with a disability and challenging behaviour through mutual respect, collaboration, and evidence-based practice.



First, A Reflection:

Who Do We Serve in this Work of PBS/ABA?

- Children, youth, and adults who engage in challenging behaviours that diminish their health and development, their access to the full benefits of family and community life, and that may cause harm to themselves or others.
 - A young boy with autism who cannot speak and only eats one non-nutritious food
 - A young adult who engages in severe aggression that has injured staff in a supported living home of two residents
- Families and caregivers who, due to challenging behaviour, experience extreme levels of stress that affect their physical and mental health.
 - A mother experiencing a stress-induced autoimmune disease because of her daughter's chronic challenging behaviour
 - A father afraid to spend time with his son for fear that he may hurt him if he has to respond to one of his son's intense daily tantrums.

What is the Ultimate Aim of This Work?

- To decrease suffering
- To increase happiness
- To build nurturing relationships
- To empower those who we support to do the same

Definition of Applied Behaviour Analysis (Cooper, Heron & Heward, 2020, p. 19)

- "**Applied Behavior Analysis** is the science in which tactics derived from the *principles of behavior* are applied systematically to *improve socially significant behavior* and experimentation is used to identify the variables responsible for behavior change."

Characteristics of Applied Behavior Analysis

Baer, Wolf & Risley (1968)

- Applied
- Behavioural
- Analytic
- Technological
- Conceptually systematic
- Effective
- Generality (i.e., durable and sustainable)

Cooper et al., (2020)

- Accountable
- Public
- Doable
- Empowering
- Optimistic

Definition of Positive Behaviour Support (Kincaid et al., 2015)

- PBS is an approach to behavior support that includes an ongoing process of *research-based assessment, intervention, and data-based decision making* focused on *building social and other functional competencies, creating supportive contexts, and preventing the occurrence of problem behaviors.*
- PBS relies on *strategies that are respectful of a person's dignity and overall well-being* and that are drawn primarily from *behavioral, educational, and social sciences*, although other evidence-based procedures may be incorporated.

Critical Features of PBS (Carr et al., 2002)

- Comprehensive lifestyle change and quality of life
- Lifespan perspective
- Ecological validity
- Stakeholder perspectives & participation
- Social validity
- Systems change & multicomponent intervention
- Emphasis on prevention
- Flexibility with respect to scientific practices
- Multiple theoretical perspectives

PBS as a Scientific Discipline
(Homer & Sugai, 2018)

- “...[T]he science of PBS is organized as a set of social, behavioral, educational, and medical principles that define the applied technology needed to reduce problem behavior and enhance quality of life. We are not an organization supporting a particular science or approach to science, though we rightly recognize a major affiliation with applied behavior analysis.” (p. 19)

Empirical Development of ABA and PBS as Science of Behaviour Change
In Service to Children, Youth and Adults who Engage in Challenging Behaviour

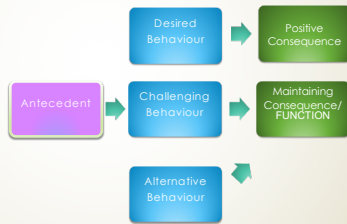
1960s-70s: ABA as a Science of (Primarily) Teaching and Consequences

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graph LR; A[Desired Behaviour] --> B[Positive Consequence]; C[Challenging Behaviour] --> D[Negative Consequence];
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1960s-70s: ABA as Technology of Teaching & Consequences

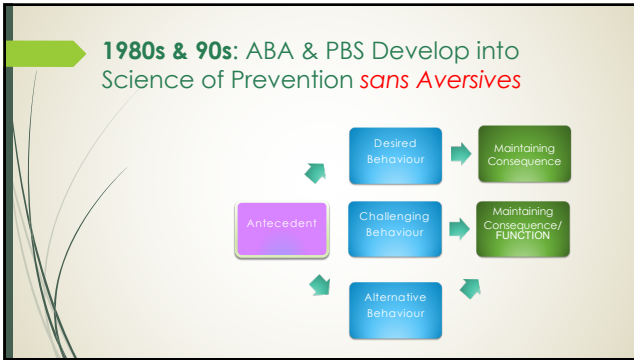
Teaching Strategies	Consequence Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cues & Instructional Prompts • Backward & Forward Chaining • Discrete trial training (DTT) • Direct Instruction (model-lead-test) • Errorless teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Reinforcement • Differential Reinforcement with Extinction • Punishment • Time Out • Response Cost • Aversive

1970s-80s: ABA Returns to its Roots: FBA and Alterative Replacement Behaviour



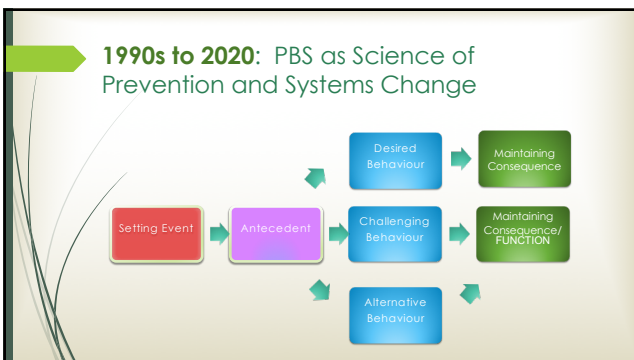
1970s-80s: ABA as Technology of FBA and Teaching Alternative Replacement Behaviour

Preventive Strategies	Teaching Strategies	Consequence Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive contingency statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional Communication Training (FCT) • Pivotal Response Training (PRT) • Effective instructional Prompts • Backward & forward chaining • DTT • DI • Errorless teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement of desired Behaviour • Positive or negative reinforcement of alternative behaviour • Differential Reinforcement with Extinction • Punishment • Time Out • Response Cost • Aversive?



1980s & 90s: ABA & PBS as Technology of Prevention and Non-Aversive Behaviour Support

Preventive Strategies	Teaching Strategies	Consequence Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive contingency statement Visual schedule & task sequence Offering Choice Advance warning High-P request sequence Safety Signal Pre-corrections Functional tasks Demand fading Noncontingent reinforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use FCT to teach person to express wants and need Teach desired behaviour using errorless or direct instruction teaching methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide praise & reward contingent on desired behaviour Honour use of language to request want or need or use safety signal Actively ignore and redirect minor challenging behaviour Withhold functional reinforcer for challenging behaviour



1990s to 2020: PBS as Technology of Prevention and Systems Change

Setting Event Strategies	Preventive Strategies	Teaching Strategies	Consequence Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good nights sleep; healthy breakfast • Increase predictability of day • Build rapport • Embed reinforcers in tasks/activities • Enhance Quality of Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • > choices • > preferred activities • friendships • If difficult day at school or work, > choice, < demands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive contingency statement • Visual schedule & task sequence • Offering Choice • Advance warning • High-P request sequence • Safety Signal • Pre-corrections • Turn-taking • Demand fading • Noncontingent reinforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use PCT to teach person to express wants and need • Teach desired behaviour using errorless or direct instruction teaching methods • Teach mindfulness practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide praise & reward contingent on desired behaviour • Honour use of language to request want or need or use safety signal • Redirect <i>minor</i> challenging behaviour • Withhold functional reinforcer for <i>major</i> challenging behaviour and/or use mild acceptable punishers (time-out, response cost)


You start behavior support by [helping a person] get a life. You don't start the process by decreasing problem behaviors




Who Said the Following?



'We have to build communities based on positive reinforcement. However, it is difficult to do because punishment works swiftly while positive reinforcement takes time.'




Myth or Fact



Myth or Fact

- Positive Behaviour Support is old school applied behaviour analysis with a new name that focuses primarily on the use of consequence strategies such as punishment to decrease problem behaviour



Myth or Fact

- Decisions on educational and behavioral treatment goals are best led by the behaviour analyst due to their expertise in educational and behaviour change methods, and their training in the education and treatment of persons with autism and/or with intellectual disabilities

Myth or Fact


- Behavior Analysts recognize the importance of the following areas in service delivery:
 - Compassionate care
 - Therapeutic relationships
 - Cultural humility
 - Mindfulness training
 - Diversity and Equity

The Importance of Human Values

A Significant Concern of ABA Leadership in the 1990s

- "I am concerned that we have, in our zest for science and technology, taken the human concerns out of behavior analysis. We have the technology, but where is the value system to accompany it?" - Jon Bailey, 1991

Founders of PBS Responded to this Concern



- They sought to *marry* the science of behaviour change with human values
 - **Respect** for all participants in a process of behaviour support
 - **Collaboration** with key stakeholders when designing individual behavior support plans as well as systems level supports
 - **Empowerment** of others to create successful outcomes for themselves and for those they teach and/or support.
 - **Professional humility**. Listening to and learning from others; recognizing error and taking responsibility

Leaders of ABA also have responded to this concern

- The Training Experiences of Behavior Analysts: Compassionate Care and Therapeutic Relationships with Caregivers (LeBlanc et al., 2020)
 - The results of this survey seem to support Taylor et al.'s (2018) premise that graduate training programs for behavior analysts are not teaching skills in the **area of compassion, empathy, and building therapeutic relationships with caregivers**. Despite most behavior analysts viewing this as a very or extremely important skill, respondents indicated that they received little or no training in this area at their training program. Additionally, the survey results revealed that the responsibility of teaching these skills seems to fall to supervisors and employers in applied settings, who themselves may not have had explicit training in these skills.

Importance of Relationships in BACB Code of Ethics & 5th Edition Task List

- BACB Ethics Code highlights the importance of:
 - **relationship** between the BCBA and clients (1.05)
 - clear, **effective communication** in language that is **fully understandable** (3.04)
- *Ethics for Behavior Analysts* (Bailey & Burch, 2016, 3rd ed.) highlights foundational ethical principles related to relationships
 - Respect autonomy
 - Accord others dignity and respect
 - Treat others with care and compassion

The Challenge for Us All (Horner et al, 2011)

- "The science of behavior analysis has defined an important set of mechanisms that describe how human beings learn from their environment. This science has been transformed into teaching and support procedures that have the potential to produce important changes in the behavior of children and adults with disabilities --PBS is the joining together of this science with the fundamental beliefs about the way that persons with disabilities should be part of our society.
- The challenge is to use the science with precision and the beliefs with distinction. Those implementing PBS need the self-discipline to learn the science before they venture to change someone else's behavior, the wisdom to learn the values so that they apply the technology with discretion, and the humility to work collaboratively and to continually assess the impact of interventions on the lives of those who receive support."

A Few Words that may guide you through this challenge




- "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."
- "All the great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: freedom, justice, honor, duty, mercy, hope"
- "Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb."

Exemplar of Collegial Alliance between PBS and ABA Practitioners


A focus on achieving meaningful and durable behavioural and quality of life outcomes dissolves distinctions and builds amity in service to individuals with behaviour and learning challenges.

Jersey ABA/PBS Team



- Young man, 20 years old,
 - Affectionate with family; loves hugs, laughs a lot, full of fun
 - Loves music and singing, viewing YouTube videos, swimming, and cinema;
 - Likes peaceful environments and predictable days.
- Autism diagnosis, non-verbal
- Severe physical aggression against residential care home staff

Jersey ABA/PBS Team



- Behaviour Support Process
 - Functional assessment
 - Collaborative design of multicomponent behaviour support plan with key stakeholders (e.g., family, current and former staff, Nurse Team Leader, OT, Psychologist)
 - Due to collaborative design, plan has good contextual fit
 - Quality of life plan developed with young man and his family
 - New home, individual tenancy, purpose adapted, adult chooses furniture & decorations
 - Choice and control increased
 - Holiday to France planned

Multicomponent Behaviour Support Plan


- Enhance quality of life
- Provide predictable day through visual schedules and supports
- Increase choices throughout day
- Provide stimulating, preferred activities interspersed with down time.
- Provide fidget toys and chew sticks to moderate anxiety
- Teach him to communicate want/need for help
- Praise and honour use of alternative/augmented way to communicate wants and needs
- Redirect precursor behaviours before they escalate

Outcomes

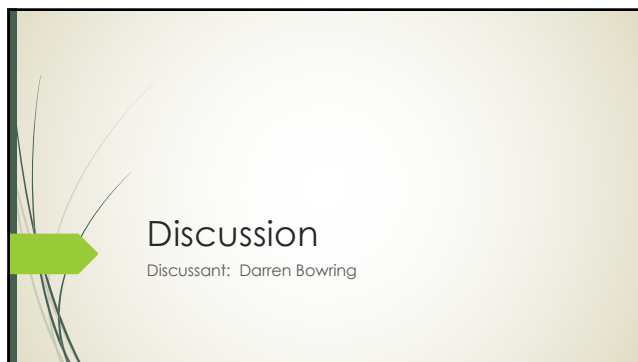
- Decrease in aggressive behaviour
- Enjoyable trip to France,
- Staff motivated to continue quality of life enhancements

Final Thought to Ponder

Building Nurturing Environments
(Biglan, 2015)



- "We can boil down what we have learned [in behavioral science] in the last fifty years to a simple principle: We need to ensure that everyone lives in a nurturing environment. . . . [A]ll evidence points to the fact that people become prosocial members of society when they live in environments that nurture their prosocial skills, interests, and values.
- Suppose that following the simple dictum "Make our environments more nurturing" could guide us in preventing almost every problem we face?"

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Discussion
Discussant: Darren Bowring
