

Apprenticeship in Applied Behaviour Analysis: Behaviour Innovations

Revised February 2015

Rationale

Applied behaviour analysis (ABA) is an intervention that has been successfully used for the treatment of autism, particularly in its more intensive form of Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI). There is a large and growing body of research studies indicating that ABA, if delivered intensively, early in the development of a child with autism, by trained therapist, supervised by qualified behaviour analysts, can result in large gains in the cognitive, language, and social adjustment of those children. However, there is a significant shortage of “hands-on” opportunities for prospective ABA therapists to learn how to implement ABA programs for children, taught by professionals who have experience in the field. We want to offer an exciting but challenging apprenticeship program for individuals who have completed an undergraduate degree, and want to learn how to implement ABA programs for children and young adults with autism.

For us, we are hoping that the Apprentice program will be a way of recruiting excellent staff to work at Behaviour Innovations.

About Behaviour Innovations (formerly Behaviour Institute)

Behaviour Innovations is a private agency providing home-based and centre-based ABA services for children and young adults with autism. Its directors, Dr. Joel Hundert and Dr. Nicole Walton-Allen, are both Psychologists, Board Certified Behaviour Analysts, and are affiliated with McMaster University as external thesis supervisors.

The mission of Behaviour Innovations is to improve the life quality of individuals, families, and their communities through the provision of innovative, evidence-based, and lifelong solutions.

Our services include Intensive Behavioural Intervention at home and at our school (Children’s College), supported inclusion in schools, diagnostic assessments, as well as day programming for young adults with developmental disabilities in the SOAAR program. In addition to therapeutic services, BI also provides training and consultation to families, professionals, organizations, public/private schools, and residential care facilities.

Outline of the Apprentice Program

The apprenticeship will be completed at our Toronto location, located at 618 The Queensway, Toronto. Two programs run out of the Toronto location: Children’s College, which supports IBI for children with autism and SOAAR (Successful Options for Adults with Autism Re-envisioned), a day program for young adults.

Length of time: 4 months

Location: Behaviour Innovations Toronto, 618 The Queensway, Toronto

Enrollment: Enrollment within the Apprenticeship program occurs three times per year for the following time periods: January – April, May – August or September – December. Enrollment may be flexible outside of these time periods dependent on positions available.

Maximum number of students per enrollment time period: 3

Credential: A certificate of completion of the BI Apprentice program, listing the number of hours completed will be presented upon completion.

Admission Criteria: a) completion of an undergraduate degree in the social sciences with a preference for a degree in psychology (a transcript would be submitted); b) a desire to work with children or adults with autism (a description of experiences and letter of application describing interest in the Apprenticeship program); c) an interview with the Supervising Coordinator; d) pass an initial two day orientation and subsequent training.

Learning Opportunities:

1. Discrete Trial Teaching Experience:

a) **Hands-on experience for Discrete Trial Teaching.** Students will be trained to work with two children with autism a day, following the treatment programs that have been established for each child. Each student will be trained and supervised by a senior staff as well as have access daily to staff mentors. On-going modeling, coaching, feedback and evaluation will be provided. Over the course of the four months, we anticipate that each student will gain experience working with 3-4 children. Students will learn how to follow ABA programs, implement different ABA interventions, keep data, prevent and deal with problem behaviours, work as part of a team, and how to receive and implement feedback.

b) Learning Goals in DTT Experience:

- Definition of applied behaviour analysis
- Treatment effectiveness of ABA
- Physical arrangements
- How to give instructions
- Generalized imitation training
- Forms of modeling
- Types of prompts and prompt fading
- Conditional discriminations
- Stimulus equivalence
- Chaining
- Shaping

- Error correction procedures
- Reinforcement systems
- How to deliver reinforcement
- Data collection
- Incidental teaching of language
- Social script training
- Picture Activity Schedules
- Picture Exchange Communication Systems
- Priming
- Teaching self-care
- Teaching conversation
- Supported inclusion
- Embedded instruction
- Individualized group instruction

2. Community Support Facilitator with SOAAR

a) The purpose of SOAAR is to provide adults and older adolescents with developmental disabilities with a supportive and enriching community experience that builds life skills and independence. We value inclusion, accountability, and individualization of supports. Services associated with SOAAR are goal-directed, evaluated and built on principles of applied behaviour analysis. Apprenticeship students will learn how to support participants during the community outings and learning opportunities within the center using ABA strategies.

b) Learning Goals in SOAAR

- Definition of applied behaviour analysis
- Treatment effectiveness of ABA
- Physical arrangements
- How to give instructions
- Generalized imitation training
- Forms of modeling
- Types of prompts and prompt fading
- Chaining
- Shaping
- Reinforcement systems
- How to deliver reinforcement
- Incidental teaching of language (PECS, Ipad, Verbal)
- Priming
- Teaching self-care and self-help skills
- Teaching leisure and social skills
- Teaching vocational skills

Evaluation. Evaluation of student skills and knowledge of the principles / techniques of ABA is an integral part of the Apprenticeship. Students will need to demonstrate at least an 80% correct implementation of ABA procedures in order to maintain their placement with the apprenticeship program. The critical evaluations are: a) pass the one-day initial orientation; b) pass two evaluations with two different children on your case load at 80% or above for clinical implementation or 80% or above on implementation of ABA with your SOAAR participants.

Exclusion: Students who do not pass the initial one day orientation will not be admitted into the Apprenticeship program. Students who do not demonstrate criterion-level skills working with children and knowledge of ABA after 1 month will not be allowed to continue on. We expect that all students will be able to complete the entire four months of the Apprenticeship.

Remuneration: There is no remuneration for this program, however many Apprentice students have been offered a paid position following the completion of the program. Paid positions are not guaranteed and are dependent on the Apprentice's overall evaluations and ability to implement all programs with clinical excellence (80% or above) as well as staffing needs based on client ratios within Children's College and SOAAR.

Application Procedure: The steps for application are: a) complete the attached application form; b) send the application form, along with a copy of your university transcripts to the address indicated; c) you will be interviewed by the Supervising Coordinator at Behaviour Innovations in Toronto.

APPLICATION FOR APPRENTICESHIP AT BEHAVIOUR INNOVATIONS

Name:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address

Undergraduate Degree

University

Program

Year Graduated

Grades in Final Year

Work Experience

Dates	Organization	Activity

Volunteer Experience

Dates	Organization	Activity

Names of two individuals who can be contacted for a reference:

Name
Organization
Position
Address

Telephone
Email

Name
Organization
Position
Address

Telephone
Email

Please include: a) your university transcript; and b) a 100-200 word statement of why you would be interested in the Apprenticeship program.

PLEASE SEND YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

Behaviour Innovations
618 The Queensway
Toronto, Ontario
M8Y 1K3

(416) 251-9277
FAX - (416) 251-4688
Email – erin.troubridge@gmail.com