

Morning Breakout Sessions

75 min	MassABA Presentation Title	Speakers	Abstract
A-1: Morning Keynote	Teaching “Technologies” to Support Literacy Instruction	Dr. Janet Twyman	With the premise that technology encompasses both tools and techniques, this presentation will focus on best practices in helping learners (especially those with autism spectrum and related disorders) acquire foundational literacy skills. Often educators and parents struggle to effectively teach functional reading skills to these learners who exhibit significantly limited language skills, narrow vocabulary, rapidly shifting attention, difficulties with delay, a tendency to focus on irrelevant stimuli, and other behaviors that can interfere with learning. Teaching any complex repertoire requires a thorough analysis of the behaviors that make up that repertoire. While most experts agree that reading involves deriving meaning from print, understanding a reading repertoire requires a component/composite analysis of essential antecedent-behavior-consequence relations (e.g., how speech sounds and print are related, deriving sound and meaning from print, fluently recognizing and comprehending increasing larger units of print comprehend print). The presenter will share specific strategies for teaching literacy to individuals with autism, intellectual disabilities, or a history of difficulty in learning to read. The effective use digital technologies to support early literacy will be incorporated.
A-2 (Supervision)	Variations in Supervision Practices: How to Best Conduct BCBA Candidate Supervision	Dr. Cheryl Davis (Sage Colleges and Supervisor ABA)	As stated by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, the supervisee's primary focus should be on acquiring new behavior analytic skills related to the BACB Task List, with activities consistent with the dimensions of applied behavior analysis (Bare, Wolf, & Risley, 1968). Providing appropriate supervision includes clinical case reviews, direct observation and ensuring the supervisee is proficient in the application of the BACB Task List items. The presentation reviews ethical considerations for the BACB supervision, as well as, recent supervision publications that discuss current practices being utilized in BCBA supervision. In addition, the authors will also present an activity-based model that sets project-defined benchmarks for progress through supervision, and includes specific and clear rubrics for evaluation of mastery of each project aligned to the BACB Task List.
A-3 (Ethics)	It's the Law! An Overview of Laws Governing Insurance-Funded ABA Services	Ashley Williams (Applied Behavior Analysis Consultation Services)	Per the BACB guidelines, behavior analysts should be familiar with and follow applicable laws in providing ABA services. In this presentation, authors will present summaries of the laws and regulations that govern insurance-funded ABA services in the state of Massachusetts. This presentation will primarily focus on key laws with which clinicians should be familiar, including but not limited to: The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA), the Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the state Autism Mandate. By the end of the presentation, attendees will be able to locate and identify select laws as well as have a general understanding of common violations of these laws. Attendees will also have an opportunity to discuss how these laws impact the service delivery at their agencies, and how behavior analysts can continue to be informed on legislative changes in the health care system.
A-4 (Ethics)	Delivering Effective Behavior Analytic Services in Public Schools: Lessons Learned in the Field	Symposium chair: Anne Donovan Presenters: Elise Stokes Kerrie Otipoby James Sherman, Gregg Lineman Darryn Witzgall	Panel members will discuss the unique challenges that Behavior Analysts face in developing high quality behavioral programming for students with special needs in public school settings. A focus will be made on current efforts of Behavior Analysts working in public school systems to develop standardization in the role of BCBA's and streamline the delivery of ABA services in schools. Consideration will be made to the diverse roles/responsibilities that BCBA's employ, potential ethical dilemmas that present in public schools, and challenges related to staff training and supervision. Examples of best practices from various public school districts in Massachusetts in the structure and delivery of behavioral supports that align with Massachusetts' Tiered System of Supports (MTSS/ SFSS) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) will also be examined.
A-5	Enhancing Emergence of Untrained Skills with Individuals with Autism	Symposium Chair: Sarah Frampton (May Institute) Presenters: Brittany Juban, Meghan Silva, Sarah E. Frampton, Discussant: Dr. Ivy Chong	Procedures aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of instruction for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are critical, not only to the advancement of the science of applied behavior analysis (ABA), but for addressing the practical limitations of clinical settings. This symposium will focus on three ways to maximize efficiency during instruction. The first study utilized matrix training to teach color-shape tacts and evaluated combinative generalization within the same matrix and responding across untrained matrices. The second study utilized instructive feedback relating to the feature of a stimulus, then evaluated emergence of listener-by-feature responding, tact-feature responding, and intraverbals. The third study utilized instructive feedback in combination with observational learning and evaluated emergence of tact and intraverbal responses. Collectively, all three studies demonstrate the viability of these procedures by showing “for free” learning. Implications for design of ABA services for individuals with ASD will be discussed.

Mid-Morning Breakout Sessions

1 hour	MassABA Presentation Title	Speakers	Abstract
B-1 (Supervision)	Using Technology to Enhance Clinical Supervision in Education Settings	Dr. Jamie Hughes-Lika (Summit Autism Services)	The purpose of the BACB supervision experience is to improve behavior analytic, professional, and ethical repertoires of the supervisee, and monitor supervisee's performance in the field. As with everything in behavior analysis, there should be a clear course of study, supervisees' behavior should be operationally defined with objective and measurable goals to determine the application of their skills, and they should receive prudent guidance from an experienced expert who is able to enhance their professional development. A growing body of published literature is forming a research basis to inform supervisors on how, when, and why to use technology-based supervision and training. In order to meet the ever-increasing need for clinical supervision in educational settings, supervisors are turning towards technology as a mechanism for supervision. The use of technology provides opportunities to implement evidence-based supervision, evaluate staff competencies, and provide feedback to shape effective interactions between supervisees and clients. A review of an empirically based approach to clinical supervision in educational settings will be presented. In addition, implications and suggestions for future research in this area will be discussed.
B-2 (Supervision)	The Feedback Formula: A Behavior Analytic Approach to the Analysis and Implementation of Performance Feedback	Adam Ventura (World Evolve, Inc.)	Feedback is a natural part of our existence and helps to shape and maintain our daily behavior. Feedback is also very commonly used intervention to improve performance in a variety of different settings from for-profit corporations to institutions of higher learning. However, the definition, form, and function of feedback have been widely disputed throughout the years despite a regular propensity for its use. This presentation will examine some past and current organizational behavior management (OBM) literature on feedback and propose a new operational definition for feedback from a behavior analytic perspective. Furthermore, we will discuss why feedback is important and how to deliver /accept performance feedback effectively and ethically.
B-3	Applications of Behavioral Skills Training to Life Skills and Water Safety Instruction	Dr. Einar Ingvarsson (Virginia Institute of Autism)	Behavioral skills training (BST) is an instructional framework that involves instructions, modeling, role-play, practice, and feedback. BST has been widely used in staff and parent training and also to teach safety skills to individuals with and without developmental disabilities. The current presentation describes two recent applications of BST with children with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. In the first study, we used BST to teach Life Skills (e.g., functional communication, instruction following, self-control, and social skills) to nine children in a special education classroom. To maximize efficiency, the instruction was organized according to a three-tiered approach influenced by the response-to-intervention model, starting with class wide instruction and proceeding to small-group and one-to-one instruction as needed. In the second study, we evaluated the use of in-situ BST to teach water safety skills (e.g., rolling onto back, floating and yelling) to three children with ASD. Instruction started with total task presentation, followed by individual component teaching as needed. Both studies resulted in acquisition and maintenance of the targeted skills. I will discuss the steps that might help to further disseminate effective and efficient interventions based on BST.
B-4	Symposium Title: Assessing Variables That Affect Learning for Individuals with ASD	Symposium Chair: Dr. Joe Vedora (Evergreen Center) Presenters: Dr. John Ward-Horner, Tiffany Barry, Discussant: Dr. Laura Grow	Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) require individualized assessment and instruction. There are several variables that may affect learning and identification and assessment of these variables may expedite learning for many individuals with ASD. This symposium will review three different assessment procedures and their results. The first presentation will review student performance under conditions with different response-reinforcer arrangements, specifically a larger number of trials with a longer duration of access to reinforcers versus fewer trials with smaller but more frequent access to reinforcers. The second presentation will describe results of a comparison of two different stimulus presentation formats used during matching-to-sample procedures: comparison-first vs. sample-first presentation of stimuli. During the second phase, participants were exposed to different stimulus formats based on the outcome of the pre-exposure assessment. The implications of individuals' learning histories will be discussed.
B-5	Bringing Evidence-Based Practice to Adults with Autism	Samantha Russo (Endicott College)	As children with autism age out of the entitled world of education and into the much less entitled world of adult services the realities of their programming is going to change. This is an ongoing crisis in the field as increasing numbers of individuals age into adult services. Current employment, day and community needs far exceed the number of available resources. There is a huge need for continued research in effective evidence based practices for adolescents and adult learners (Gerhardt & Lainer, 2011). Adults are no less worthy of evidence based practices and interventions. This presentation will encompass using various evidence based practices in adult services including restraint reduction, restraint fading, and the use of functional analysis in an adult population. Additionally, there will be a focus on choosing functionally appropriate goals for adults that will have a positive impact on their lifestyle. An emphasis will be placed on quality of life indices and social significance.
B-6	Visualizing Complex Data Sets: Beyond Line Graphs and Bar Charts	Paul Heering (May Institute)	As behavior analysts we are trained to use visual inspection of data to inform our assessment and treatment decisions. This is typically done using line graphs or bar charts. This presentation will show alternatives to use when complex data sets would require multiple graphs or one graph with multiple series. The first example used will be the use of tree or hierarchy graph to display sets of data with a large number of categories (for example, looking at data by person for 200 people). Second the use of "heat maps" created in Microsoft Excel will be demonstrated to show multiple examples including behavior across time of day, locations of incidents, and prompts used. Lastly the use of business intelligence software to create interactive dashboards with multiple graphs will be demonstrated. Business intelligence software allows the user to create connected graphs that can filter each other by clicking any of the graphs. For each of these alternatives, attendees will be shown traditional line graph versions of these graphs, demonstration of the alternative graphs, be shown quick steps of how they were created, and be given links to online tutorials with specific instructions for creating these visualizations.
B-7	Multi-tiered Systems of Support a.k.a. SWPBIS: What is the Role of the Behavior Analyst?	Dr. Robert Putnam (May Institute)	Behavior analysts, who work in schools, have primarily received training in working with individuals who need behavior support and/or skill acquisition. In particular, behavior analysts often work with those individual students who have the most challenging behavior in their respective schools and/or districts. Multi-tiered Systems of Support also known as School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (SWPBIS) is a framework for the introduction and delivery of evidenced based practices for all students. This session will review the development and implementation with fidelity of SWPBIS from a behavior analytical perspective. The session will review recent legislation and regulations that support the use of SWPBIS in schools and how the knowledge may assist the behavior analyst in the dissemination and implementation of behavior analytical practices in schools. The session will examine the different roles within a SWPBIS framework that behavior analysts could be involved in within their school system. An examination of the competencies from the BACB task list that behavior analysts bring to these roles will be explored that enhance the SWPBIS framework.
B-8	Building Capacity in Schools: Scaling Up Behavioral Interventions for Students with Autism	Dr. Cynthia Anderson (May Institute)	The number of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) being served in public schools is growing, yet there exists a significant gap between research and current educational practice for students with ASD (Kasari & Smith, 2013; Wong et al., 2015). Students with Autism Accessing General Education (SAAGE) is comprehensive intervention model that provides a framework for intervening across all core and associated features of ASD (i.e., social skills, communication, restricted/repetitive behaviors, challenging behaviors, cognitive/academic challenges), but it is also flexible enough to accommodate the diverse needs of students using a modular intervention system. SAAGE also utilizes collaborative problem-solving teams and active coaching for educators that allows schools to build the capacity to implement evidence-based practices over time. This presentation will focus on the initial pilot testing of the SAAGE model across multiple school districts, and provide attendees with strategies for bringing various components of applied behavior analysis to scale in school settings, such as forming problem-solving teams, identifying target behaviors and setting goals with stakeholders, methods for training school staff and providing support during implementation, and monitoring procedural fidelity.

Afternoon Breakout Sessions

75 min	MassABA Presentation Title	Speakers	Abstract
C-1 (Ethics)	Special Education Law and Ethical Issues for Behavior Analysts Practicing in the Schools.	Dr. Missy Olive (Applied Behavioral Strategies)	This presentation will focus on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) and the issues faced by behavior analysts practicing in schools. Participants will learn about federal requirements for conducting FBAs, writings BSPs, understanding the term positive behavior supports as used in IDEIA, and the requirements for independent educational evaluations including FBAs. The legal and ethical responsibilities of a behavior analyst will be discussed throughout.
C-2 (Ethics)	Navigating collaboration challenges: Adhering to ethical principles, analyzing resistance, and managing interpersonal differences	Dr. Mary Jane Weiss (Endicott College)	Collaboration is a critical component of interdisciplinary team treatment, and is mandated by the complex needs of individuals with ASD. For behavior analysts, collaboration presents several common challenges. Working with individuals from other disciplines involves addressing differences in worldview, in the definition of evidence, and in the concept of evidence-based practice. The successful navigation of these challenges leads to more effective team processes and thus improved outcomes for clients. Adherence to our ethical code and fidelity to the behavior analytic worldview are not flexible. On the other hand, flexibility when dealing with other disciplines is mandated. Understanding differences of perspective and treatment requires a functional assessment of those positions, which will suggest ways that behavior analysts can maximize collaborative efforts, maintain fealty to our code and worldview, and maximize client success.
C-3	Alternatives to Pseudoscientific and Non-Evidence Based Procedures Like Social Thinking® and Social Stories™	Dr. Justin Leaf (Autism Partnership Foundation)	There are a multitude of social skills interventions propagated for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Most of these interventions have limited empirical evidence demonstrating their effectiveness, fail to meet the standards of evidenced based practices (EBPs), and are pseudo- or anti-scientific. Two of these procedures that are commonly implemented at Social Thinking® and Social Stories™. The purpose of this talk is to provide an overview of what constitutes EBPs and evaluate common interventions with respect to these standards. Additionally, we will evaluate if Social Thinking® and Social Stories™ meet the standards of evidence based practice and empirically supported procedures. Finally, we will provide the audience with alternatives that are grounded in science, that have empirical support, and which would be considered an evidence based practice.
C-4	Mystifying Mentalisms: Executive Functioning Redefined	Dr. Mariela Vargas-Irwin (Applied Behavioral Learning Services)	Executive Functioning has traditionally been defined by psychology as the series of neurologically-based skills involving mental control and self-regulation. Executive Functioning has also been defined as set of processes that have to do with managing oneself and one's resources in order to achieve a goal. Notwithstanding the obvious importance of the brain in executive (and most other) behavior, we propose that Executive Behavior is akin to Cooper, Heron, & Heward's Self-Management: The personal and systematic application of behavioral principles that result in the desired modification of one's own behavior (1987). Examples of naturalistic and contrived methods to teach Executive Behavior will be presented, as well as a brief review of the research on the effect of stress and sleep deprivation on executive functions.
C-5	What Does Applied Behavior Analysis Have to Offer Neurorehabilitation?	Dr. Michael Mozzoni (Mozzoni Associates LLC)	Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) occurs at an alarming rate from a variety of sources. This presentation will review CDC incidence and demographic data. Social impact, long term effects and increased risk of Alzheimer's disease will be noted. ABA training methods found in the literature will be reviewed to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness. The need is great and behavior analysts must diversify their application areas. Our science is powerful and can be used to help a variety of persons in differing impairment groups. While ABA has proven highly effective helping people with ASD, Intellectual Impairments and Developmental Disabilities we must be mindful that we do not become overly focused and miss broader opportunities for our science.
C-6	Finding the Right Fit: The Utility of Brief Experimental Analysis in the Identification of Effective Academic Interventions for Students with and Without Autism	Dr. Whitney Kleinert (May Institute)	Identifying effective academic skill and/or performance strategies can be onerous and time-consuming for clinicians. This leads to students losing immediate access to valuable supports and inhibits the progression of their skills. Brief Experimental Analysis (BEA) is an evidence-based procedure for quickly identifying effective skill and performance strategies. This presentation explores the applicability of the BEA procedure with an emphasis on academic instruction. The purpose of this presentation is to provide attendees with (a) an introduction to the methodology of the BEA procedure, (b) supported practice opportunities for participants to discuss how or why a BEA may be useful when working with students, and (c) case study examples. The case study examples in this presentation include students both with and without autism spectrum disorder, were conducted in multiple settings (i.e., in a public school and in a private school for students with autism), and used the BEA procedure to identify effective skill and performance intervention components.
C-7 (Ethics)	Professional Collaboration Approaches for BCBAs Working on Interdisciplinary School Teams	Lisa Gurdin	As BCBAs who work in special education, we work with professionals from a wide range of disciplines, including psychology, social work, education, occupational therapy, physical therapy, medicine, and speech therapy. As such, collaboration has become a necessary component of our jobs. While there are many benefits to collaboration, there are also challenges and ethical questions. For example, what do we do when we have an FBA that suggest function-based interventions when there are conflicting non-behavioral approaches being recommended? How do we handle situations when we encounter other professionals or parents who do not know, or sometimes, value ABA? These situations pose ethical questions that, if not resolved, may negatively impact the students we are supporting. During this presentation, we will outline challenges, benefits and approaches for creating positive professional relationships with members of our interdisciplinary teams. We will look at the literature and review case studies that show how we can maintain our ethical code as BCBAs while effectively working together to help students reach their goals.
C-8	Integrating Students with ASD into Inclusion Settings: Action Planning and Data-Based Decision Making	Dr. Sarah A. Weddle (May Institute):	According to the most recent statistics provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2016), approximately 1 in 68 people are on the autism spectrum. With this high number of individuals with ASD, it is critical to consider how their needs are being addressed within the public school setting. Challenges arise due to the wide variability in the presentation of ASD including restrictive/repetitive and problem behavior as well as deficits in social interaction and communication. This variability can make it substantially difficult for schools to systematically identify and address the individual needs of students with ASD in the least restrictive environment. Specifically, questions arise as to (a) how to identify students who are good candidates for inclusion settings, and (b) how to successfully transition these students into an inclusion setting while still demonstrating progress toward skill acquisition and reducing the socially-stigmatizing problem behavior. In this presentation, we will (a) describe challenges experienced by students with ASD and how to address these challenges in the inclusion process, and (b) discuss empirically-supported strategies for supporting students with ASD to enhance the likelihood of a successful transition (and ongoing success) in an inclusion setting.

Late Afternoon Breakout Sessions

75 min	MassABA Presentation Title	Speakers	Abstract
D-1: Late Afternoon Keynote	Higher Education in Behavior Analysis Today and Tomorrow	Dr. Michael Perone (West Virginia University; Accreditation Board ABAI)	This talk is concerned with two of today's methods for ensuring the quality of educational programs in behavior analysis: accreditation by the Association of Behavior Analysis International and verification of course sequences by the Behavior Analyst Accreditation Board. I will describe these methods in terms of the contingencies they impose on institutions and faculties and the historical context of the development of accreditation and certification processes throughout higher education. I also will discuss the development of the Accreditation Board of the Association for Behavior Analysis, some of the challenges faced by the Board and the programs that seek accreditation, and future directions that will influence the science and practice of behavior analysis.
D-2 (Supervision)	Providing Effective Consultative Services: A Review of Evidence Based Supervision Practices	Dr. Christina King (RCS Learning Center)	The majority of BCBAs provide consultative, rather than direct behavior analytic services. As a result, the person developing the intervention procedures must transfer this technology to others who are implementing the protocol, often requiring these individuals to acquire new instructional skills. Effective training of direct staff is critical and an ethical responsibility. Despite evidence based training protocols being documented in the literature, application of these procedures is lacking and maintenance of treatment integrity is uncommon. The following tutorial will provide a review of recent literature in the areas of evidence based training, the characteristics, types, and effect of performance feedback, as well as, the challenges to maintaining procedural integrity and strategies for overcoming such barriers.
D-3	ABA: The Science Behind the Procedures	Dr. Bob Ross (Beacon ABA Services);	The tremendous growth in the need for ABA based intervention services for individuals on the autism spectrum has led to a rapid increase in the number of individuals receiving "ABA" training and providing this form of intervention. This has resulted in an overall decrease in the amount of experience that such personnel have both implementing and overseeing ABA programs. It has also led some training programs and agencies to focus more on implementation of procedures rather than a solid understanding the science behind the effective use of these procedures. This talk will highlight and describe the directly observable and measureable behavior of both the learner and the instructor that are indicative of an effective and appropriate ABA based intervention program for individuals with ASD. Specific processes and documents to enable session participants to evaluate and improve their practices will be provided.
D-4	Assessing the Reinforcing Value of Social Interactions Among Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder	Dr. Laura Grow (Garden Academy)	Pictorial depictions of social stimuli are most common for preference assessments of social interactions (Kelly, Roscoe, Hanley, & Schlichenmeyer, 2014; Lang et al., 2014). However, social stimuli are dynamic and videos may better depict the salient features of social stimuli (Synder, Higbee, & Dayton, 2012). The purpose of the study was to assess the preference and reinforcing value of social stimuli using a video-based preference assessment and subsequent reinforcer assessment. To date, two children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder between 3- and 5-years old participated in the study. The study was conducted in three phases. First, the experimenter interviewed caregivers to identify a list of preferred social interactions. Next, the experimenter evaluated the top six ranked social stimuli using a video-based, paired-choice preference assessment. Finally, the experimenter evaluated the reinforcing quality of high- and low-preference social stimuli using a concurrent operant, progressive-ratio reinforcer assessment. The video-based preference assessment results were predictive of the reinforcer assessment results. The results will be discussed in terms of future research directions and clinical practice.
D-5	Can't Do That Here! Bringing the Practice of Functional Analysis to Applied Settings	Symposium chair: Dr. Susan Ainsleigh (Bay Path University) Presenters: Kristen Serwecki, Spencer Deschenes, Amylynn Macaluso, Molly O'Connor	Functional analysis (FA) procedures are considered to be best-practice in the treatment of problem behavior. Indeed, such procedures have been described as 'the gold standard assessment method' in the field of applied behavior analysis (Plavnick & Normand, 2013), leading to the selection of function-based treatment more accurately and reliably. Despite this, FA procedures are often avoided in settings where ABA services are delivered. Functional analysis procedures have also been utilized across a far more narrow scope of behavioral challenges and a more limited range of participants than their effectiveness dictates. Many reasons for such omissions prevail; again, behavioral research has responded with adaptations for a variety of settings and exemplary models of a variety of applications (Hanley, et al., 2014; Northrup et al., 1991; Wallace et al., 2004). This symposium presents a process for disseminating the practice of functional analysis into the everyday practice of applied behavior analysis: into the homes, public schools, and community-based settings where ABA is provided. It reviews a university-based, behavioral skills training model for teaching and supervising the implementation of FA methodologies in any setting, by any well-trained individual, and with any participant who will benefit from ABA methodologies to achieve socially valid outcomes.