

Apprenticeship in Applied Behaviour Analysis at the Behaviour Institute

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 with autism.

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

About Behaviour Institute

The Behaviour Institute is a private agency providing home-based and centre-based ABA services for children with autism. Its directors, Dr. Joel Hundert and Dr. Nicole Walton-Allen, are both psychologists, Board Certified Behaviour Analysts, and teach at McMaster University. Dr. Hundert is a past director on the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, past president of the Ontario Association For Behaviour Analysis and recently has written a book on ABA-based supported inclusion of students with autism, published by Pro Ed.

There are four Senior Clinicians with a Master’s Degree in Behaviour Analysis, about 20 Senior Facilitators who work directly with children with autism and perform supervisory functions, and over 125 Junior Facilitators who work directly with children with autism. The Behaviour Institute serves about 100 children with autism and their families. The apprenticeship will delivered in our centre-based program (Special Education School), Children’s College, located at 618 The Queensway, Toronto. The school contains 22 children with autism and about 25 staff.

Outline of the Apprentice Program

Length of time: six months

Start dates: Second Tuesday in September, and first Monday in May of each year

Location: Children’s College, 618 The Queensway, Toronto (see www.behaviourinstitute.com)

Maximum number of students: five

Credential: a certificate of completion of the BI Apprentice program, listing the accomplishments of the student

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 with autism (a description of experiences and letter of application describing interest in the Apprenticeship program); c) an interview with one of the directors; d) pass an initial two day orientation.

Learning Arrangements.

a) Hands-on experience. Students will work with two children with autism a day, for four days a week following the treatment programs that have been established for each child. Each student will be trained and supervised by a senior staff and in addition, will have a staff mentor. On-going modeling, coaching, feedback, evaluation and didactic instruction will be provided. Over the course of the six months, we anticipate that each student will gain experience working with at least ten different 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, how to take supervision.

b) “Classroom instruction”. Each week, one half-day will be put aside for instruction in the principles and techniques of ABA. This instruction will be provided by a Senior Clinician and consist of videotapes, readings, Power point© presentations, and exercises. The topics that will be covered will include:

- Diagnosis, etiology, early identification of autism
- Alternative treatments of autism
- History and 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
- Curriculum adaptation
- 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

Evaluation. Evaluation of student skills, both working with children and knowledge of the principles / techniques of ABA is an integral part of the Apprenticeship. Each student will receive once a week evaluation and feedback on their skills working with children with autism from their mentor and once a month feedback from the Apprenticeship Coordinator (a Senior Clinician). Students will need to demonstrate at least a 80% correct implementation of ABA procedures with children and at least 80% correct on paper and pencil quizzes on the concepts and procedures presented. The critical evaluations are: a) pass the two day initial orientation; b) pass ABA implementation and classroom quizzes at 80% after two months

Exclusion: Students who do not pass the initial two 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 2 months will not be allowed to continue on. We expect that all students will be able to complete the entire six months of the Apprenticeship.

Remuneration: For the final two months of the Apprenticeship, students will be employed at the entry level of Facilitators working at Children's College.

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 one of the Directors of Behaviour Institute.

APPLICATION FOR APPRENTICESHIP IN IBI AT BEHAVIOUR INSTITUTE

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

If successful when you would like to start your internship? (Circle one): September May

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 Institute
618 The Queensway
Toronto, Ontario
M8Y 1K3
(416) 251-9277
FAX - (416) 251-4688
Email - apprenticeship@behaviourinstitute.com