



## **SIG Chair Summaries – AGM 2018**

- **ABA Tutor SIG**

The ABA Tutor SIG continues to grow and we currently have 53 members in our group. Our main form of communication is through our closed Facebook group, only for members of the UK-SBA. We have members in our group from all 4 UK countries (In a Facebook poll at the beginning of 2017, of the 32 members who answered, 75% work in England, 13% work in Wales, 9% work in Northern Ireland, 3% work in Scotland). In 2017, members were recruited through word of mouth and by posts to the UK-SBA Facebook page, as well as the ABA Scotland and ABA Ireland Facebook pages (as we had only a small number of members from Scotland and Northern Ireland).

At the beginning of 2017, in order to increase active participation, increase learning opportunities and set targets, I posted a number of probe questions, including:

1. **What would you like to see targeted in this group?** : Multiple choices for this were allowed but the options that came out top were 'Topic discussions' and 'Sharing materials.'

From this, myself and fellow admins, introduced the idea of 'Topics of the week' to 1) Build behavioural momentum of posting relevant resources, engaging in topic conversation etc., 2) Increase knowledge/Act as a refresher.

'Topic of the week' was targeted across January/February and derived from the RBT task list:

- **Week 1:** Ethics and Professionalism
- **Week 2:** Reinforcement
- **Week 3:** The 7 Dimensions of ABA
- **Week 4:** Skill acquisition

This did increase participation but in the past 6 months, the focus of the group has more so shifted towards job postings, advertising any Tutor trainings that are being run in the UK, advertising any conferences/workshops, sharing resources and ideas for programme implementation (with a recent example being the generating of ideas for an Intraverbal songs/nursery rhymes fill-in programme!), and providing peer support (with the group adhering well to the rule of not providing clinical advice).

We are still working towards ensuring the group is being utilized effectively and in particular can play its part in increasing the procedural integrity, professionalism and skill level of Tutors working in the UK. This has been an area of concern for our members throughout 2017. Leading on from this therefore, the main proposal that has come out of our activity this year, is our Tutors within the group, propose working with the UK-SBA committee in developing the following:

- ❖ Addition of an information page on the UK-SBA website that acts as a guide to parents beginning an ABA programme. Content on this page could include average UK pay scale for a Tutor (with consideration of geography, London vs N. Ireland for example), role of a Tutor compared to role of supervising BCBA, qualifications, what you should expect from your Tutor with regards training level, professionalism.

- ❖ Concerns have been raised with regards reports of Tutors in the UK who have been charging excessive rates per hour that are not in line with their level of experience, Tutors who are unreliable and acting unprofessional (e.g. Not turning up for work, calling in sick, quitting with short notice).
- ❖ The ABA Tutors SIG also proposed working collaboratively with the ABA Parents and Carers SIG on this.

### **Mission Statement**

Our mission statement continues to be that the SIG is there as “a forum for ABA Tutors, for networking and peer support.”

- **Acquired Brain Injury SIG**

2017 was the first year of operation of the Acquired Brain Injury SIG. Three meetings took place throughout the year. All these meetings were well attended and reached out to audiences beyond traditional use of Applied Behaviour Analysis. This included a presentation of the use of ABA in the military and post-traumatic stress disorder with the presenter Caroline Potter, Behaviour Analyst describing the work she had carried out with the Help for Heroes charity. The final group of the year had a visiting presenter from the University of Bangor Dr Rebecca Sharp who explored the use of ABA for populations with dementia and traumatic brain injury. The group also conducted a review of current literature in this field and compiled a reference list and began to gather resources that can be shared with other clinicians.

The ABI-SIG aims to support and network clinicians and professionals who have an interest in or are working with people with Acquired Brain Injury using an Applied Behaviour Analytic approach to share and disseminate best practice.

### **Mission Statement**

The groups’ mission:

- To collate and share current information sources in this area
- To highlight the use of Behaviour Analysis beyond traditional and well established applications.
- To promote professional development and training opportunities through various avenues including, workshops, conferences and other appropriate means,

- **Crime and Justice SIG** - Newly Appointed SIG

With the launch of this SIG, I would like to create a space where professionals in the field can discuss behaviour analysis and crime and justice, connect with other professionals and access research and articles about this area. A key goal for the next year is to generate a discussion amongst behaviour analysts about how we propel behaviour analysis into the domain of crime and justice and how we can really make a difference to people’s lives in this area. Given the enormity of this task, I feel the more members we have in this group (and therefore the more expertise we have) the more likely it is we will be able to make some progress towards some of the goals of this SIG.

- **Positive Behaviour Support SIG**

The PBS special interest group met in person four times throughout 2017, each meeting included updating the SIG members on PBS news, case study discussion and subjects that were agreed and were of interest to the members. Subject discussions last year included debriefs and PBS, sensory integration and PBS and setting up local PBS groups linked with the transforming care agenda. The PBS news section ensures that all members are aware of developments within PBS nationally and what links the members have with other PBS groups. Through the PBS news section members discussed the NICE guidelines that are due for publication in March 2018 and resources that have been developed by the PBS academy. At the meeting in June the SIG members were informed of the PBS festival that was held in September 2017 where several numbers of members attended and presented.

The case study section of the meetings enables member to present cases they have worked on or research that they have conducted for feedback and discussion. During 2017 one member presented their research to the group to prepare for presenting at the Seattle Club. The discussion following this presentation included data presentation and enabled the member to decide on the best way to present their data for a non-ABA audience.

PBS SIG members have been involved with local PBS groups and there are members of the SIG in Surrey, SHIP and Northants local groups. During two meetings of the group this year, the SIG consulted and provided feedback on a document for the PBS academy.

The PBS SIG has conducted a small piece of research on the quality of PBS plans linked with the training level of the author of the plans, this research was presented at the Experimental Analysis of Behaviour Group conference in April 2017. The aim is that this research will be expanded on in 2018 and there will be a working party within the SIG to work on this.

What's happening in 2018 -

- Working groups are being set up to work on each of the SIG aims.
- Each meeting will have the following rolling agenda items:
  - PBS News
  - Working group updates – to present progress on the SIG aims
  - Case study presentation
- Topics that have been chosen to be discussed in addition to the rolling items are:
  - March – Punishment
  - June – Medication and PBS
  - September – Mental health and PBS
- The option for SIG members to attend the meeting remotely will be introduced
- Social media introduced for the SIG (in discussion with the UK SBA board members)

**Mission Statement**

The Positive Behaviour Support Special Interest Group (PBS SIG), brings together practitioners, educators, researchers and students interested in Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), and aims to improve the quality of PBS as it is practiced in the UK and to support those involved in its delivery and dissemination.

- **Organisational Behaviour Management SIG**

The OBM special interest group this year have been very pleased to have started to increase the profile of OBM in the UK behaviour analytic field through virtual groups meetings, webinars and the Facebook page. We were very pleased that the UK SBA agreed to have an OBM speaker this year and that their invite to Aubrey Daniels was accepted for one of the two-day workshops. This was well attended and has helped raise the profile of OBM. Sig members were very pleased to be able to spend the evening with Aubrey Daniels talking about his work in the OBM field and gaining expert tips.

The OBM sig has been pleased to make stronger links with professionals from the US who are part of the OBM network as well as having extensive experience in OBM. Through these connections we were able to invite Manny Rodriguez, Shannon Biagi and Dan Sundberg over to the April conference of the Experimental Analysis of Behaviour Group, organised by Bangor University. Manny and his colleagues gave an informative and succinct presentation about OBM and key areas for application. During the conference, the OBM sig facilitated OBM consultation sessions, provided by Manny and his colleagues to four members of the group.

The OBM sig had two meetings in 2017. Organising these as virtual meetings has ensured that the group have been able to meet and network with those interested in this field who are geographically distant from each other. Virtual meetings have also reduced down the time and costs for members to attend. In the June meeting of the OBM Sig, Nick Barratt kindly presented the Activate programme which has been created at Dimensions. It was great to hear about a service wide initiative being implemented in large supported living service. In the October meeting Manny Rodriguez gave a presentation about the OBM certificate provided by Florida Institute of Technology. Manny also provided the group with an opportunity to ask questions and clarify various points about the certificate. The OBM sig is aware that a number of people have completed some or all of the OBM certificate and we hope that in future meetings members can share their experience and potentially gain support or collaborate with each other.

The OBM, UKSBA Facebook page continues to be an easy to access place to share information for group members and others who are interested in OBM. The OBM sig have been able to share links to wider OBM webinars by the OBM network, which have been made free to access for the UK SBA OBM SIG members.

All in all, 2017 has been a great year for the OBM Sig and we look forward to developing the virtual meetings and establishing interesting topics for discussion in 2018 to increase the learning of our members in this area and pushing forward awareness of OBM in the UK.

**Mission Statement**

- To promote awareness and knowledge of research and practice in OBM within the UK behaviour analytic community and wider industry.
- To promote and develop training opportunities in the UK and provide a platform for continuing professional development.
- To provide opportunities to collaborate on research and service evaluations focussed on OBM.
- To provide opportunities for professionals to network.

- **ABA in Schools SIG**

We have met 3 times in 2017, with BeyondAutism hosting 2 meetings and TreeHouse School hosting the other. Our meetings usually take a split format with the Heads of Services meeting first. The second half of the meeting is for practitioners. Our October meeting was attended by the whole group and focused on evaluating our objectives and taking steps forward as a SIG.

The Heads of Services take the opportunity to share information about the current status of their services including pupil numbers, issues and challenges, successes and new service development. Each meeting then takes a specific focus and this year we have explored the Comprehensive Application of Behaviour Analysis to Schooling (CABAS), prompted by a previous discussion on what makes an ABA school.

Most of the settings in this group were set up by parents and so it is essential that what we teach doesn't end when they leave school but goes home and can allow parents to understand more. **The focus of this discussion was about what drives quality.**

Quality and CABAS (Greer, Keohane & Healy 2002):

- Instruction is individualised (doesn't mean 1:1 necessarily)
- Educationally & socially significant repertoires are taught
- Teachers continuously measure teaching and pupil responses
- Graphs are used for decisions about which scientifically-tested tactics are best for pupils
- Logically and empirically tested curricula and curricular sequences are used that repertoires of behaviour
- Classroom is positive environment
- Progress of pupils is always available for view

This led to us exploring what this might mean in the context of **what makes us, as ABA schools, different?** Most mainstream schools within their context will do this, except the graphs bit. If you're trying to set standards, what does this actually mean?

The question being explored is whether there is a need for us to set standards as a group. All our settings do the same things in essence, even if called by another name. The question is whether we still need to set standards as a forum group, given that all our settings have to work to the Code of Ethics and being a member of the UK SBA Voluntary Register (once running).

We have also explored strategic elements affecting all of our services:

- BeyondAutism were able to feedback from an LA audit review; there was little that wasn't already known to the group however it helped to form actions around tackling issues of the perception of ABA.
- PBS or SW-PBS (School Wide PBS) and the need for PBS to remain under the umbrella of Behaviour Analysis. Katy L and Bangor are setting up a UK certification or standards, rather than have standards set by the US. Alison H thought the acronym for this UK version might be PLEAS (Positive Learning Environment across Schools System), to indicate that it is different from SW-PBS. This area is still very much in development.
- As a developing Free School, Forest Bridge raised how difficult it can be when the DfE advisor/ inspector comes in with a strong pre-conceived idea about the setting and ABA in particular. The changes to the Ofsted framework and its focus on outcomes should work in our collective favour, as the data collection tools are already robustly in place. However, now that P-Levels are no longer needed, how do different settings compare? It might be worth setting up a separate practitioners' Focus group to discuss/ work on moderation and common assessment tools.
- Dynamic Purchasing Systems and whether settings were part of their local consortiums. There is a lot of pressure on settings to join, as the system is meant to make admissions and placements simpler. In fact it can create a lot of work, when settings receive too little or too much information or pupils/ learners of the wrong age for that setting.

The practitioners focus on operational matters and take the opportunity for CEUs. This year we have covered and discussed:

- **The TPRA** used by Jigsaw. The consideration is whether it would be a faster way to do observations than using some of the other models (e.g. used at TreeHouse) and would be good to have included in Class Leads/ Teachers job role. This works well if the teacher is from an ABA background, but if they do not they may not pick this up. It would also depend on whether supervisors/ class teachers are supernumerary to be able to do the TPRA's or whether they have to cover in class a lot.
- **Pastoral care for pupils;** how does it get addressed? Do pupils get debriefed, both those involved in the incident and those who witnessed it? The CBT (anxiety/ anger gremlins) books were recommended, but not all pupils are able to access these and some do not want to, once they notice it is intended for children aged 5. TreeHouse have adapted a CBT book for individuals with special needs to help deal with anxiety. Research done by Sutherland House (non-ABA school) in Nottingham under Phil Christie (clinical psychologist) and Susanne Farrell, about girls becoming women, with an interesting underlying model of developing emotional intelligence for young people with autism.
- **Some pupils witness incidents and can become scared,** some can have that debrief as a conversation or the staff can have it with parents. The problem can be when pupils won't talk or only talk to some staff, and when debrief gets delayed. The hardest thing to manage is when a pupil becomes scared of another pupil and they are forced to be in the same room, or the pupil's behaviours have massively decreased but others are still scared of him/her. Or pupils with higher cognitive ability tend to have increased anxiety and can perseverate on things, but not all of them can verbalise it. What if their behaviour is always that high and anxious? TreeHouse shared a Checklist for Health that parents can do, but it still based on the judgment of the person working with them.
- **Dealing with things that fall outside of one's comfort zone.** If a member of Senior Management feels out of their comfort zone, how must a junior member of staff feel? Would a counsellor be suitable? Image in Action, which TreeHouse have used quite successfully to deal with sexual health and dealing with pupils and parents on this topic, especially those parents who deny this part of a pupil's life happens. This is particularly helpful when it relates to masturbation and legalities around teaching a pupil under or over 16 on how it happens. Image in Action has dolls and images that they can provide and are happy to adapt if you feedback what could make it more ABA.
- For **anxiety**, strategies include referrals to CAHMS and the possibility of medication. The issue could be that some pupils are (already) over-medicated. Signs of Regulation (red, amber, green zones) can help individual pupils and those in their environment, or you could work collaboratively with SaLT or OTs on topics like social migration, feeling intervention and masturbation, who have more experience or training. Talking Mats could also work, as it's a communication tool for pupils to express how they are feeling.
- It is hard to know whether a child exhibiting behaviour towards another child is **bullying**; is the intent there? Do they know that the reaction (the fear of that other child) is a bad one? There are some pupils who may understand, but either way it would need addressing.
- Whether any of our settings have a **school pet**. Some schools have dogs, which would not be okay under Ofsted unless it was brought in as a therapy dog. TreeHouse don't have a pet, but one of the Deputy Heads did bring in a chick and duck hatchery for a couple of weeks, for pupils to learn from, and one of the primary classes had caterpillars. The biggest issue is probably that of health and safety, e.g. electric wires (for a tank), drowning (in ponds), being bitten by e.g. a dog or a pupil ingesting for example a fish. Harm to the animal would be prevented by teaching pupils how to treat them.

- **Potential of ABA in non-ABA/ mainstream schools.** Why the British education system could not get ABA teaching into mainstream schools. One example mentioned was SW-PBS. Eagle House officially runs SW-PBS but only for those 40% of non-verbal pupils. More and more schools or LAs are asking for BA input, but the risk is that you are being parachuted in to solve that specific challenging behaviour rather than implement a wider strategy.

The whole group meeting resulted in significant actions being agreed:

- Forest Bridge to hold a separate practitioners meeting on Moderation of VB MAPP and Essential for Living.
- Set up a framework of moderation.
- Step by Step to hold moderation meeting for EYFS
- Digital data collection – seeking a solution as a group

### **Mission Statement**

The ABA In Schools SIG aims to be a group that promotes the development of high standards of practise in the application of behaviour analytic principles in schools in the UK. Our mission includes

- Promoting acceptance, knowledge and understanding of behaviour analytic approaches within a school context
- Supporting existing and emerging schools and units
- Sharing information innovation
- Promoting and generating new research
- Contributing to the development of standards for ABA service delivery and accreditation, where possible

- **Parents and Carers SIG**

#### **1.0- Establishment of the SIG**

The UK SBA Parents and Carers SIG was first established in December 2015 and it is chaired by Veronica Dunning. Founding members are Veronica Dunning, Jane McCready, Shujaat Trambo, Risca Solomon and Veronique Kaboha.

#### **2.0- Number of members and location**

There are currently 41 people in our facebook group and 25 official members in the UK SBA Parents and Carers SIG facebook group, which was established in July 2016. The Parent and Carers SIG also have a google group which has been set up via e-mail, as an alternative group to the one in social media.

Members of the SIG are located in different areas of the UK. From the members who have provided details, please see areas represented as follows:

- England: London (11 members), Maidenhead (1), Merseyside/Liverpool (2), Staffordshire (1), Kent (1), Birmingham (1)
- Wales: Cardiff (2), Haverfordwest (1)
- Scotland: Fife (3)
- Northern Ireland/Belfast (3)

#### **3.0- Membership representation**

The group consists of parents of individuals diagnosed with autism and/or other types of developmental delays. Expertise within the group include:

- Full time carers
- ABA practitioners (including 2 BCBAs, one ABA Consultant with a completed ABA MSc and completed supervised practice and one ABA Therapist)
- Parent advocates with experience in tribunal processes and EHCP drafting and transfer
- Educational psychologists
- Public relations
- Parents who have expertise in assisting individuals with transition to adult services.

Some members of the group voluntarily run websites and facebook groups that are aimed at supporting other families of children receiving ABA services and they also support ABA Practitioners.

#### **4.0- UK SBA Parent and Carers SIG meetings**

Since the establishment of the group, the Parent and Carers SIG held two official meetings. The first meeting was held in March and the second one in November 2017. Both Meetings were held in members' homes in London and members had the option to attend via Skype or in person.

The main point of discussion at these meetings was to the topic of 'risks' and to hear parent feedback on services received which include positive and constructive feedback. The concerns highlighted by the group have been shared with the UK SBA Consumer Committee in subsequent meetings.

#### **5.0- UK SBA Consumer Committee Involvement**

The UK SBA Consumer Committee is currently run by Mandy Williams (CEO of Child Autism UK and UK SBA Member). In November 2016, representatives of the ABA Parents and Carers SIG attended a joint meeting with the UK SBA Consumer Committee and Parent SIG. The group was given an update on Accreditation of ABA, the role of the Consumer Advisory Committee and consumer issues were discussed. Consumer issues include access to good information, safe and good practice and identifying and ameliorating current and future risks.

The Parent and Carers SIG was approached in Autumn 2017 by Mandy Williams, who was looking for two representatives for the Consumer Advisory group, that would be established with representatives of the different SIGs that are part of the UK SBA. Due to Veronica Dunning's dual role as a parent and an ABA practitioner, it was agreed that it would be more appropriate for an alternative member to represent the group during consumer committee meetings, whilst Veronica remains the chair of the overall group and manages the activities that run alongside the Consumer committee.

Jane McCready is now the Chair of the Consumer Advisory group and attends meetings alongside June Goh (member of the parent SIG). Meetings with the consumer group were held in November and December 2017. Representatives of the consumer committee include members below:

- Jane McCready and June Goh (UK SBA ABA Parents and Carers SIG)
- Tracie Linehan (CEO, Beyond Autism)
- Mandy Williams (CEO, Child Autism UK and UKSBA board member)
- Charlotte Cochrane (Step by Step School)

Members representing other areas of ABA practice (eg NHS) are also now being sought. The meeting is a crucial component of the forthcoming introduction of the new Professional register, a process overseen by the PSA - <https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/>.

The Consumer Committee has taken feedback from the parent SIG and other parent or ABA client

sources (eg the ABA schools) and drafted a summary of the risks involved in having an unregulated ABA profession. This draft will go to the UKSBA board in February 2018.

The Consumer Committee will continue to represent the ABA Consumer voice to the UKSBA board. But it will be separate from the complaints process, which will be formally launched once the register is up and running, expected early this year.

**Mission Statement**

The ABA Parents and Carers SIG aims to provide the UK SBA with their perspective on ABA services so that there can be high standards in ABA service delivery and provision, and consumers can be assured and reliably informed about all aspects of ABA through access to a verified database.