



Busy Analytical Bee

NEWSLETTER April

Welcome to the April edition. In this edition we are looking at research around Prader-Willi and associated challenging behaviours. We also celebrate the career of Linda LeBlanc, a look at using chalk to teach and generalise skills and review 'Ethics' in the terminology section. There are some fantastic events coming up, so check out the events section. Have a great month, and a fantastic bank holiday over the Easter period!

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PRADER-WILLI SYNDROME AND FOOD-SEEKING BEHAVIOURS

Prader-Willi is a rare genetic condition, which is caused by faulty genetics within chromosome 15. This chromosome is related to the growth and development of the hypothalamus, which controls hormones associated with appetite and growth. The most distinguishing characteristic with this syndrome is overeating and problems behaviours related to food, stealing food, hoarding food, etc.. It is also categorised by learning difficulties, delayed growth, weak muscles, and behavioural problems.

The most common difficulties surrounding this disorder is the frequency and intensity of behaviours, and the health implications, associated with food. People with Prader-Willi have hyperphagia, which means they have a strong desire to eat large quantities of food. Behaviours observed usually include, consuming food quickly and in large quantity, stealing and/or hoarding food. These behaviours can be challenging for their family and carers. Families and carers may try their best to restrict access to food, but may have little success, as people with Prader-Willi can become very deceptive with their food-related behaviours, as they are highly motivated.

Investigations into the use of a negative discriminative stimulus has been successful with one teenage girl



Picture from: <https://flic.kr/p/bpeFyW>

(Maglieri, et al, 2000). Stickers were associated with reprimands if food from a stickered container was consumed (containers weighed before and after session and participant was left unsupervised during session, or was observed through a one-way mirror). The reprimand was an effective punishment, which when followed food consumption or weight difference in containers, reduced the frequency of food consumption. The stickers were successful at reducing eating. This could have important social significance if this could be generalised into a home environment (study conducted in a clinic). Further research into this intervention would be beneficial.

Many other interventions have concentrated on food/diet and exercise, although some success has been found using mindfulness (Singh et al, 2008). Mindfulness is an intervention which promotes awareness of events inside and outside of the body. This is done through meditation and other therapies to improve mental well-being. Singh et al (2008) compared exercises, food awareness and mindfulness in several phases. Exercise alone did not impact the participants weight, although the combination of these interventions did have a positive impact. The participant achieved a goal weight, although weight loss was modest across the period of the study.

There is need for further research into reducing these behaviours with this population. Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) relies on principles of reinforcement and



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punishment which can impact the future probability of behaviours. In addition ABA focuses on manipulating the environment. This means ABA could have success in developing interventions that aim to reduce challenging behaviours that are focused on food consumption, stealing or hoarding food and also improve health and well-being. This is of important social significance.

As mindfulness has shown to be effective, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) may have a positive impact on these behaviours too. ACT is a therapy which derives from Clinical ABA and involves accepting events that are out of the person's control and making a commitment to change. This clinical approach is similar to mindfulness, although involves a wide approach to behavioural change. Research into the impact of ACT on food-seeking behaviours and weight gain/loss, and also ACT and other components (exercise, negative discriminative stimuli, reinforcement, etc.) is a future consideration for the field. If you want to discuss developing an intervention for someone with Prader-Willi, contact a BCBA or BCaBA who has experience with this population (or is receiving supervision from someone with experience).

NHS Choices, Prader-Willi Syndrome, Retrieved from: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/prader-willi-syndrome/>

Maglieri, K. A., DeLeon, I. G., Rodriguez-Catter, V., & Sevin, B. M., 2000, Treatment of covert food stealing in an individual with prader-Willi Syndrome, *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 33, 615-618.

Singh, N. N., Lancioni, G. E., Singh, A. N., Winton, A. S. W., Singh, J., McAleavey, K. M., & Adkins, A. D., 2008, A Mindfulness-Based Health Wellness Program for an adolescent with Prader-Willi Syndrome, *Behavior Modification*, 32(2), 167-181.

STUDY TIPS

Want to learn more about Precision teaching? [Precision Teaching University](#) to is the place to go!! There are some courses for Behaviour Analysts and teachers which cost \$497 (£355.90, google conversion on 14/3/2018). There are also a series of free webinars. Supervision is also available. Go to the website to find out more!

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT TEACHING (NET) IDEA

This month's NET is chalk drawing. This activity is fun during the summer and great for incorporating a variety of targets. Chunky chinks are great for younger children who have not yet developed the pincer grip. The main aim can be writing, as many targets may be for children to copy or trace different patterns/lines, including curved lines, zig-zag lines, straight lines, swirls, etc., or shapes (writing, 11d-11M. 12b-12M). Also you can work on letters or words as writing (writing 13a. 13M) or reading (reading 13M, 15b) targets. This activity can be done on the pavement or on a wall. This can be adapted to include paint brushes and water. You can draw a visual model with chalk, and then the learner can trace over it with a wet paintbrush. This will help support their hand-eye co-ordination. This activity can include current tact (labelling) targets of objects, which you can draw and then ask your learner to label (tact 10M). This will be fantastic for generalisation! Alternatively, ask them to point to or show you a specific target to demonstrate receptive understanding of items you've drawn. Also, if your learner is able to draw a variety of things, you could do these same targets receptively, "show me...", or "point to the..", (LR 6M) or ask them or allow them to draw a larger picture (writing 13b, 13c).

Preceding skills reference to the VB-MAPP Assessment tool:

Sundberg, M. L. (2008) Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program: The VB-MAPP. Concord, CA: AVB Press.

*LR: Listener responding

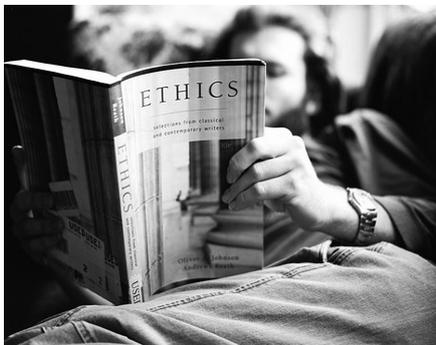


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TERMINOLOGY

Ethics are behaviours and practises within the field that address what is right and fair. Ethics discuss decisions that may be difficult to make, due to the implications to what is morally right. The Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (BACB) have provided us with a set of guidelines called the [Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behaviour Analysts](#). This discussion answers questions about intervention choices, and the importance of the client. It also advises on payments, termination of services and relationship with colleagues and clients. It also discusses the role of the Behaviour Analyst, with regards to keeping up-to-date with the field and research and promoting the field. To learn more, familiarise yourself with the guidelines from BACB, and deepen your understanding with some of these Ethic

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books in this [Amazon wish list](#).

PEOPLE WHO INSPIRE US

This month we are celebrating the career of the fantastic Linda LeBlanc. Linda LeBlanc PhD BCBA-D is the President and Founder of [LeBlanc Behavioural Consulting](#) and previously was an Executive Advisor to [Trumpet Behavioral Health](#) (2012-2016). LeBlanc studied at Louisiana University for her Psychology undergraduate (1987-1990), Masters and Doctorate degree in Clinical Psychology (1991-1996). Le Blanc has held professor positions at Western Michigan and Auburn University. She has authored over 100 research papers, covering topics which include Autism, technology-based behavioural interventions, systems development in human services and behavioural gerontology. Le Blanc is also an Associate Editor for 'Behavior Analysis in Practice' and previously was an Associate Editor for the 'Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis'. Thanks to her wonderful contributions to the field, Linda LeBlanc was awarded the 'American Psychological Association Nathan H. Azrin Award for Distinguished Contribution in Applied Behavior Analysis'.

EVENTS

UK Society for Behaviour Analysis (UK-SBA) have announced the next event in their speakers series. Prof. Greg Hanley will be in London on the 10th and 11th May. For more information and to book your place, please visit the [website](#).

Beyond Autism are holding a workshop 'Introduction to ABA' workshop, across 4 days in June for £250. Please book through the [website](#).

The SF-DDARIN and the Centre for Behavior Solutions (CBS) Ltd are hosting a workshop in Coventry on Tuesday 26th June, titled 'Behavioural well-being in special schools: How to reduce behaviour that challenges and improve everyone's well-being. To find out more or book a place email Diana Smith at diana.smith@warwick.ac.uk

You can study in the comfort of your home with Florida Institute of Technology (FIT). They have a wide range of [courses](#) (costs vary) to help you develop your understanding of the principles of Behaviour Analysis. Continuing Education (CE) Units available on many courses. Child Autism UK have several workshops available for the Initial Tutor Training course (2 day workshop), Behaviour Management Strategies course (1 day), Lead Tutor Training (1 day), School Shadowing course and Social Skills and Playdates course (1 day) in Manchester and Bracknell. Visit the [website](#) for more info.

PRODUCTS

This month's [wish list](#) contains books authored by B. F. Skinner. It is definitely a great idea to read some of Skinner's work if you want to deepen your understanding for Behaviour Analysis.

Next month we're looking at *teaching Echoics*, so be sure to subscribe so you receive the next exciting edition.

Please contact me via email with feedback or to subscribe (simply include '[SUBSCRIBE](#)' in the subject or message) to busyanalyticalbee@gmail.com and please check out the [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Pinterest Page](#), and [website/blog](#).-