

For Students Seeking Experience in Early Intensive Behaviour Intervention (EIBI) Services

Programme Staff of The University of Auckland Applied Behaviour Analysis Programme

July 2011

Early Intensive Behaviour Intervention (EIBI) has developed from Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) research over the last five decades and has been rated as an empirically-supported efficacious comprehensive behavioural treatment for young children with autism (e.g., National Autism Center, 2009¹; New Zealand Ministries of Education and Health, 2010²). Therefore we support and encourage its use provided that the treatment is conducted with sufficient expertise, fidelity, and with adherence to the relevant codes of conduct and ethics. EIBI is definitely not a cook-book approach, but requires extensive education, training and supervision for effective application for children and their families. Appropriate standards for EIBI programmes have been defined by the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABA) Autism Special Interest Group (2007)³. We agree with these recommendations.

With respect to services offering support and intervention programmes for families with young children with autism, we consider that directors of EIBI programmes should have obtained a master's degree specializing in ABA, followed by achievement of the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) credential⁴, and a significant period of experience supervised by behaviour analysts who are expert in EIBI. Furthermore, we consider that directors of EIBI programmes should be registered with the New Zealand Psychologists Board. This offers protection to consumers (e.g., children, families, employers, employees) in that Psychologists, as healthcare providers, are bound by the provisions of the Health Practitioner Competence Assurance Act 2003, which requires that psychologists adhere to the Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa New Zealand⁵ and to the Health and Disabilities

¹ Available from <http://www.nationalautismcenter.org/affiliates/reports.php>

² "Early intensive behavioural intervention (EIBI) should be considered as a treatment of value for young children with ASD to improve outcomes such as cognitive ability, language skills, and adaptive behaviour" (May 2010, p.12, [http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/7561/\\$File/asd-guideline-supplementary-paper.pdf](http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/pagesmh/7561/$File/asd-guideline-supplementary-paper.pdf)).

³ http://www.abainternational.org/Special_Interests/AutGuidelines.pdf.

⁴ www.BACB.com

⁵ <http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz/>

Commissioner's Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights⁶. Registration requires Psychologists to provide ongoing evidence of competence and there is a robust mechanism for dealing with any complaints about competence or conduct.

With respect to students seeking experience in working with children and their families in a behaviour analytic way, we agree that working in well-run (professionally directed and closely supervised) EIBI programmes provides an excellent introduction. However, we cannot recommend our students or graduates work in EIBI programmes that do not adhere to the standards outlined above.

If interested in pursuing such work, we suggest that students who are interested in obtaining such experience first talk with our ABA staff members.

Oliver Mudford, PhD, BCBA-D, Registered Psychologist
Angela Arnold-Saritepe, PhD, BCBA-D, MNZPsS, Registered Psychologist
Katrina Phillips, MSc, PGDipAppPsych, BCBA, Registered Psychologist
Rebecca Sharp, MSc, PGDipAppPsych, BCBA, Registered Psychologist

Doc is "aba & eibi. docx

⁶ <http://www.hdc.org.nz/the-act--code/the-code-of-rights>