

Research & Development



The Research & Development Department plans and formulates research and development proposals. It is our responsibility to promote SBSA projects and research to potential collaborators, sponsors, partners, academic institutions and the autism community. We initiate and participate in activities promoting SBSA's research, such as conferences, workshops, trainings and meetings. We are working on identify sponsorship and grant opportunities and liaise with existing and potential donors. We also, are responsible for the overall implementation of new products/services and/or improvement of existing products/services and keeping current on competitors' products/services. Finally, it is our responsibility to make sure we serve our clients with the best practices research based interventions.

Current Research Studies in Development

1. *Effective and Cost-Efficient Video Training Protocols for Staff Using Errorless Teaching.*

The goal of this study is to identify effective employee training protocols for teaching staff to accurately implement errorless learning procedures with children with autism in an applied setting. The study utilizes the Train-to-Code (Version 2.0) computer-based adaptive expert coding system and its transfer effects on employees' ability to implement in session. Objectives of the study, participants will be able to (1) identify which training method produces greater accuracy in staff implementation of teaching procedures; (2) assess the usefulness of the video training protocol for his/her educational or applied setting; and (3) understand the benefits and outcomes of using a video training protocol versus an instructor led training for staff.

2. *Increasing creative toy play using positive reinforcement and extinction.* Our research attempts to replicate and expand the study conducted by Lalli, Zanolli, and Wohn (1994). As in the original study, we examine the effects of positive reinforcement and extinction on increasing novel toy play behavior. Objectives of the study, participants will be able to (1) engage in appropriate toy play; (2) adapt new topographies while engaging in toy play, expand behavioral repertoires; and (3) vary their responses through training and reinforcement procedures.



3. *Children's Likelihood of Engaging a Peer with Autism in Social Activities Before and After a Peer Leadership Program.* The three goals of this study are to (1) evaluate the effectiveness of the Peer Leadership Program on peers' attitudes toward children with autism; (2) to contribute to best practice



methods for peer involvement in a community mental health facility; and (3) to assess how much more likely a typically developing child is to engage a peer with autism after exposure.

- 4. *The Effect of Discrete Trial Teaching and Natural Environment Teaching on the Object Control Skills of Children with Autism.*** The goal of this study is to examine the effectiveness discrete trial teaching and natural environment teaching on object control skills of children with autism. Early childhood is a critical period relative to the development of fundamental motor skills in the life of the growing child. During this period, children are ready to begin learning basic motor skills and movement concepts (Gabbard, 2000; Gallahue, 1987). In other words, the fundamental motor skills learned at that early age become building blocks for the child to take part in movement patterns, games, and sports skills (NASPE, 2002; Payne & Isaacs, 2002).



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