



Autism Partnership

Treatment That Changes Lives: Evolution Of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)

London | 8 June, 2019

Queen Mary University of London, 327 Mile End Road, London

Leeds | 10 June, 2019

LPark Plaza Leeds, Boar Lane, City Square, Leeds



Dr. Lorri Unumb

Vice President, State Government Affairs, Autism Speaks

Dr. Lorri Unumb is a lawyer, professor, mother of three boys, and a renowned autism advocate. A former litigator with the U.S. Department of Justice, Dr. Unumb started in autism advocacy as a volunteer, writing ground-breaking legislation for South Carolina (“Ryan’s Law”) that served as the catalyst for the national autism insurance movement. In recognition of Ryan’s Law, Dr. Unumb received the Autism Society of America 2008 “Parents of the Year” award. She was then recruited to work for the New York-based nonprofit Autism Speaks and has testified 100+ times on health insurance issues throughout the USA and beyond.

In 2010, Dr. Unumb founded the Autism Academy of South Carolina, a non-profit treatment center for children with autism. She and her husband also wrote the first-ever comprehensive textbook on autism legal issues, “Autism and the Law.” Additionally, Dr. Unumb is in her 12th year of conducting the annual “Autism Law Summit,” a national gathering of parents and professionals who advocate for better autism laws and policies.

Dr. Unumb’s work has been profiled on CNN, on NPR, and in Town&Country magazine, from whom she received one of three 2009 “Women Who Make a Difference” awards. She is profiled in the American Academy of Pediatrics book “Autism Spectrum Disorders: What Every Parent Needs to Know.”



Topic:

Changing the World of ASD: Perspectives from a Mum & Funding Guru

The New York Times once wrote that “no disability claims more parental time and energy than autism.” Families dealing with autism face many hardships, not the least of which is financial hardship. One reason for the financial hardship has been the failure of health insurance to cover treatments for, and sometimes even diagnosis of, autism. As recently as the turn of the millennium, it was widely accepted that health insurance did not cover even the standard treatments for autism.

Sadly, few individuals with autism reach their potential because, in the absence of consistent funding, most do not have access to treatment that is appropriate in quality and quantity. Appropriate care is both difficult to find and difficult to afford. A United States government agency wrote that the “delivery and organization of care for ASD is very fragmented, with pieces scattered about in the primary care, school, and specialty clinical settings. It is left to the families and caregivers of patients with ASD to find and assemble these pieces.”

In this address, autism mother and attorney Lorri Unumb will share her personal parental experience with her son’s autism diagnosis and how it led her into full-time advocacy on behalf of individuals with autism, including assistance in the passage of more than 40 autism insurance laws across the United States.



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Dr. Gregory Hanley

*Professor & Director of the Behaviour Analysis Doctoral Program,
Western New England University*

Dr. Hanley has been applying the principles of learning to improve socially important behaviours of children and adults with and without disabilities for over 25 years. He worked and trained at the Spurwink School, the Groden Center, and the Kennedy Krieger Institute, was degreed at the University of Florida, was tenured at the University of Kansas, and is currently a Professor of Psychology and Director of the Behaviour Analysis Doctoral Program at Western New England University and an Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Dr. Hanley has published over 100 articles in peer-reviewed journals in areas such as the assessment, treatment, and prevention of problem behaviour and evidence-based values. Dr. Hanley is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (Division 25), a past Associate Editor of *The Behaviour Analyst*, past Editor of *Behaviour Analysis in Practice*, and current Editor of the *Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis*.



Topic:

Producing Meaningful Improvements in Problem Behaviour of Persons with Autism

Problem behaviours like meltdowns, self-injury, aggression, or intractable stereotypy will often require address at some point in the life span of a person diagnosed with autism. There is strong evidence supporting behavioural intervention to address these problem behaviours, with better outcomes evident when

- (a) Personalised reinforcing contexts are designed from a practical functional assessment process,
- (b) Skills relevant to the core deficits associated with autism are developed in the treatment, and
- (c) The treatment explicitly prepares the person with autism for life's inevitable ambiguities, disappointments, and opportunities.

In this presentation, the practical functional assessment process that informs these sorts of treatments will first be described. The enhanced choice model that affords the person with autism control over the therapeutic process will then be reviewed.



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Dr. Justin Leaf

Director of Research, Autism Partnership Foundation

Dr. Justin Leaf, Ph.D., is the Director of Research and Training for Autism Partnership Foundation. Dr. Leaf received his doctorate degree in Behavioural Psychology from the Department of Applied Behavioural Science at the University of Kansas. Currently, he leads the research team at Autism Partnership Foundation, which conducts research nationally and internationally. His research interests include examining methods to improve social behaviours for children and adolescents with autism and developing friendships, comparing different teaching methodologies, evaluating parameters of reinforcement, and evaluating long term outcomes for individuals diagnosed with autism.

Dr. Leaf has over 60 publications in either peer-reviewed journals, books, or book chapters and has presented at both national and international professional conferences and invited events. He is an Associate Editor for Review Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders. He also serves or has served on the editorial board for the Journal of Applied Behaviour Analysis, Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, and the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders.



Topic:

Implementing Effective Social Skill Groups for Individuals Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder

In this talk the presenter will define what is social behaviour, the deficits in social behaviour that individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) often display, and why it is important to teach social skills to individuals diagnosed with ASD. The presenter will spend most of the talk on how to set up and implement effective behaviourally based social skills group for children diagnosed with autism. The presenter will also describe what the results are when social skill groups are successfully implemented. The presenter will show numerous video examples of effective social skills groups. The presenter will provide recommendations that audience members can use when implementing or observing social skill groups.



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Mr. Toby Mountjoy

Director, Autism Partnership

Mr. Toby Mountjoy is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst and holds a Master of Science in Applied Behaviour Analysis. With over 20 years of experience working with individuals with ASD, he has been extensively trained by Dr. Ronald Leaf, Dr. Mitchell Taubman and Dr. John McEachin. Besides overseeing the Autism Partnership operation in Hong Kong, Korea, Philippines and Singapore with over 200 staff, including psychologists, consultants and therapists, he has also provided consultations to school districts, agencies, and families worldwide. Mr. Mountjoy has also contributed chapters to publications such as "Sense & Nonsense" and "It's Time for School". In 2007, he founded the charitable Autism Partnership Foundation and Aoi Pui School to offer more services for children with Autism.



Topic:

Demonstrating the Amazing Success of Children with ASD

Mr. Toby Mountjoy will present the therapy journey of a number of different children, showing their first days, the challenges along the way and their progress over a number of years. This is an exciting opportunity to see the changes children got through in an ABA intervention program.



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Dr. John McEachin

Co-founder & Director, Autism Partnership

Dr. John McEachin is a licensed psychologist who has been providing behavioural intervention to children with autism as well as adolescents and adults with a wide range of developmental disabilities for more than forty years. He received his graduate training under Professor Ivar Lovaas at UCLA on the Young Autism Project. During his 11 years at UCLA, Dr. McEachin served in various roles including Clinic Supervisor, Research and Teaching Assistant, and Acting Director. His research has included the long-term follow-up study of young autistic children who received intensive behavioural treatment, which was published in 1993. In 1994 he joined with Ronald Leaf in forming Autism Partnership, which they co-direct. In 1999 they published *A Work in Progress*, a widely used behavioural treatment manual and curriculum for children with autism. Dr. McEachin has lectured throughout the world and co-authored numerous books and research articles. He consults regularly to families, agencies, and school districts, assisting in the development of treatment programs and providing training to parents, group home staff, and classroom personnel.



Topic:

To Stim or not to Stim? Guiding Children with ASD to Make Healthy Choices

One of the most important research findings from the past several decades is that individuals with autism are enormously capable, but they require specialised teaching in order to learn. Some approaches have focused mainly on making accommodations such as reducing sensory stimulation, establishing routines, providing visual supports, and promoting peer tolerance of atypical behaviour. The most effective approaches focus on developing skills in children with autism so that they become more competent, possess coping skills, understand how others think, and why others behave the way they do. This allows the person with autism to more effectively achieve what is important to him or her and can lead to the discovery of new sources of joy in daily life.



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Dr. Ronald Leaf

Co-founder & Director, Autism Partnership

Dr. Ronald Leaf is a licensed psychologist who has over 40 years of experience in the field of autism. Dr. Leaf began his career working with Professor Ivar Lovaas, while receiving his undergraduate degree at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Subsequently, he received his doctorate under the direction of Prof. Lovaas. During his years at UCLA, he served as Clinic Supervisor, Research Psychologist, Lecturer and Interim Director of the Young Autism Project. He was extensively involved in several research investigations, contributed to “The Me Book”, and is a co-author of “The Me Book” Videotapes, a series of instructional tapes for teaching autistic children.

Dr. Leaf has consulted to families, schools, day programs and residential facilities on a national and international basis. Dr. Leaf is the Director of Autism Partnership, a worldwide Applied Behaviour Analysis service provider for children with autism and their families. Dr. Leaf is co-author of “A Work In Progress”, “Time for School”, “It Has to Be Said”, “Crafting Connections” and “A Work In Progress Companion Series”.



Topic:

Evolution of ABA

Years of research and clinical applications have produced a proliferation of behaviourally based intervention programs for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Though all are under the umbrellas of ABA, often originating from the same seminal efforts, divergent directions in philosophy, conceptualisation and application have often been followed between and within these various types of ABA programs. The sometimes subtle and sometimes substantial disparities that may be found between some Applied Behaviour Analysis approaches to treating persons with ASD. Drawing from over 40 years of research and clinical application of Applied Behaviour Analysis, Dr. Leaf will share the strategies that Autism Partnership has developed over decades and that have helped children reach their potential.