

Cutting-Edge Autism Science in Spotlight at Global Conference

*Researchers Developing Interventions to Improve Quality of Life
for People of All Ages with Autism*

Portage, MI, January 18, 2017—The latest developments in autism research and treatment will be in the spotlight at the [11th Annual Autism Conference](#) hosted by the [Association for Behavior Analysis International](#) in San Juan, Puerto Rico, January 31 to February 2, 2017.

The conference is expected to attract 750 scientists, educators, researchers, students, and autism specialists from approximately 15 countries. They will explore the current state of and future trends in behavioral assessment and intervention across the lifespan for people with autism.

The conference will be held at the Sheraton Puerto Rico Hotel & Casino, San Juan, Puerto Rico. A limited number of press passes are available to qualified journalists who wish to cover the conference. ABAI is also arranging telephone interviews upon request prior to and following the meeting and in-person interviews during the conference.

Notable research to be featured at the conference includes:

- **Sex education for teenagers on the autism spectrum.** The tendency to dismiss sex education as unnecessary or confusing to people with autism can lead to big problems down the road. Sex education provides tools for individuals with autism to understand appropriate behaviors and enables them be safe from exploitation. Dr. Bobby Newman, a board certified behavior analyst and psychologist, will explain how curricula designed to teach children with autism about sex can be blended with behavior analysis to confirm whether appropriate skills are being learned.
- **Promoting complex social play in children with autism.** Techniques that have typically been used to teach children with autism to complete tasks on their own can be adapted to foster interaction and play among children. Dr. Thomas Higbee of Utah State University will present three studies that show how established behavior analysis techniques are being applied to bring about new patterns of social behavior.
- **A better approach to measuring outcomes.** Few of us would want to be admitted to a hospital where 85% of the doctors made a judgment error. Yet a recent study revealed an 85% error rate in graph construction for 4,313 graphs across 11 behavior journals. Behavior analysis is data-driven, and objectivity is essential to analyzing trends accurately. Dr. Rick Kubina, a professor of special education at Penn State University, will share data and discuss how foundational assessment procedures involving line graphs can improve with standard ratio charts.

REGISTRATION AND NOTES

Complimentary media registration: Contact Debra Cope at debra@cope-pr.com or 202-468-3814. Visit <https://www.abainternational.org/events/autism-2017.aspx> for meeting updates.

ABOUT ABAI

The Association for Behavior Analysis International ABAI is a nonprofit membership organization with the mission to contribute to the well-being of society by developing, enhancing, and supporting the growth and vitality of the science of behavior analysis through research, education, and practice. Headquartered in Portage, Michigan, the ABAI conducts events that promote dissemination of the science and provide continuing education opportunities for practitioners; publishes research and news; and fosters communities of interest, including chapters and special interest groups.

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