

# Annual Report:

Principal Activities March 2017 – April 2018

Gina Green, PhD, BCBA–D

CEO

*Association of*



*Professional  
Behavior Analysts*

*[www.apbahome.net](http://www.apbahome.net)*

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# Topics

- ▶ About APBA
- ▶ Strategic plan
- ▶ Activities to fulfill the mission – March 2017 to date
  - Outreach and education
    - White papers, position statements, practice guidelines
  - Public policy advocacy
  - Organizational structure and operations

# About APBA

- ▶ Nonprofit 501(c)(6) professional organization
- ▶ Mission: promote and advance the science-based practice of behavior analysis
- ▶ Memberships for professionals in behavior analysis and other fields, consumers, students, Registered Behavior Technicians
- ▶ Affiliates -- behavior analysis organizations, other scholarly/scientific organizations that partner with APBA
- ▶ **9th annual convention: April 11 – 13, Atlanta**
- ▶ See [www.apbahome.net](http://www.apbahome.net)

# About APBA

## ▶ Board of Directors

- Volunteers; nominated and elected by BACB–certified members or nominated by Affiliates and appointed by current Board
  - Jane Barbin, Behavioral Directions, LLC
  - Lynn Bowman, Kennedy Krieger Institute
  - Bryan Davey, Touchstone Health Service (President)
  - Charna Mintz, Imagine Behavioral and Developmental Services (President Elect)
  - Allyson Moore, Private Consultant
  - Debbi Napolitano, Hillside Family of Services (Secretary)
  - Callie Plattner, Access Family Services
  - Jonathan Pool, CPA (Treasurer; non–voting)
  - Hank Roane, SUNY Upstate Medical University
  - Clint Trusty, Trusty Behavioral Services
  - Maria Valdovinos, Drake University
  - Nic Weatherly, Florida Institute of Technology (Past President)
  - Patricia Wright, Rethink



# About APBA

## ▶ Staff:

- Gina Green, Chief Executive Officer
- Purchased services:
  - Tech support, Your Membership: k2 Information Services
  - Tech support and design: Cuneo Creative
  - Accounting: Jonathan Pool, CPA
  - Legal: Webster, Chamberlain, & Bean

# About APBA

## ▶ Committees

### ◦ Standing

- Executive (Board officers and CEO)
- Membership
- Fundraising
- Marketing
- Awards
- Nominating
- Advisory Board
- CEO Compensation

### ◦ Ad Hoc (current)

- Autism Assessment Guidelines Project
- Convention
- Hiring



# Strategic Plan 2017 summary

## Our Mission

**APBA promotes and advances the science-based practice of behavior analysis by advocating for public policies and informing, supporting, and protecting practitioners and consumers.**

## Our Goals

1. Members and consumers are well informed about the professional practice of behavior analysis
2. Public policies are in place to support and advance the professional practice of behavior analysis
3. Organizational structure, staff, and expertise are sufficient to support and manage growth
4. Board and committee operations are efficient and effective
5. The organization has sufficient resources to carry out its mission

## Our Vision

**APBA will be the leading source of information and guidance on the science-based practice of behavior analysis worldwide.**

## Our Core Values

Members of APBA:

- Act in accordance with the highest standards of our profession.
- Put the interests of consumers and the profession above self-interests.
- Use and advocate for services based on the best available scientific evidence.
- Participate actively in the larger profession.
- Collaborate with practitioners and scientists in related fields.

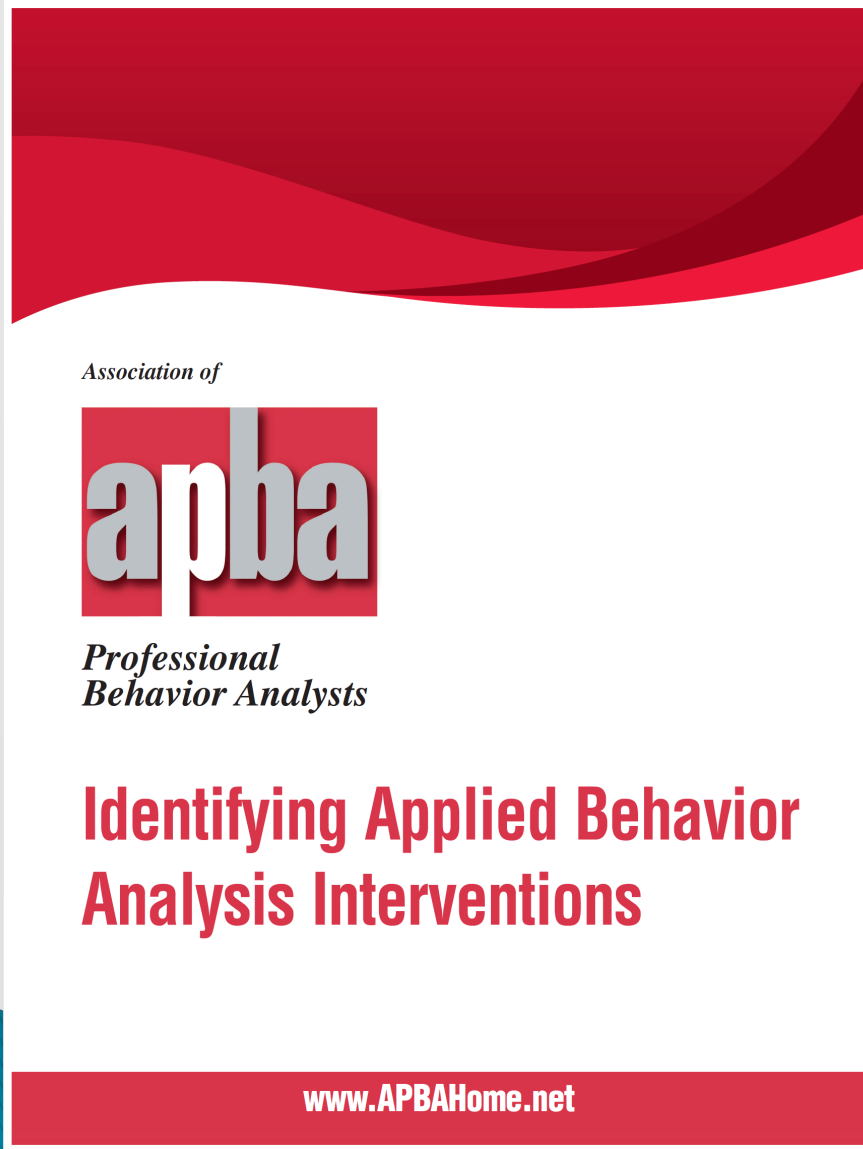
# Fulfilling the mission: Outreach and education

- ▶ 2018 annual convention – St. Louis
- ▶ Presentations at other conferences
  - Autism Speaks Autism Law Summit
  - ABAI
  - ABAI Paris
  - APA
  - California ABA
  - Connecticut ABA
  - Lonestar ABA
  - North Carolina ABA

# Outreach and education

- ▶ Website
  - Public sections – About Behavior Analysis, Practice Guidelines, Laws & Regulations
  - Members Only – resources on professional credentialing, antitrust guidelines, health insurance coverage, contracts, reports of surveys, bibliographies, etc.
    - Membership Committee is developing others
- ▶ Blast emails
- ▶ Scores of posts on multiple social media sites, some listservs
- ▶ Hundreds of communications with behavior analysts, consumers, attorneys, policymakers, regulators, media, others

# White paper



- ▶ Designed to serve as a resource on the science and practice of behavior analysis for the general public
- ▶ Finalized May 2017
- ▶ Available to anyone at [www.apbahome.net](http://www.apbahome.net), Practice Guidelines

# APBA practice guidelines, position statements

- ▶ Assessing clients with autism spectrum disorders for ABA treatment planning and progress reporting
  - Secured agreement to collaborate with Council of Autism Service Providers (CASP)
  - Using APBA protocol for developing evidence-based practice guidelines (adapted from Institute of Medicine)
  - Will recruit Guidelines Development Group this spring
- ▶ Medical necessity of ABA interventions for people with autism spectrum disorders
  - Being polished for Board review
- ▶ Using social media
  - Under development



# Contributions to other practice guidelines

- ▶ New York State Department of Health Bureau of Early Intervention Clinical Practice Guideline on ASD in Young Children
- ▶ Ontario Association for Behaviour Analysis Evidence-Based Practices for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Recommendations for Caregivers, Practitioners, and Policy Makers

# Fulfilling the mission: Public policy advocacy

- APBA collaborates with behavior analysts, consumers, and policymakers; BACB (where applicable); advocacy organizations
- Provides
  - Consultation and information via meetings, phone and video conferences, webinars, email, posts on social media
  - Model language for legislation and rules/regulations
  - Analyses of proposed legislation and rules/regs
  - Tips about likely pitfalls and opposition and how to avoid or counter them
  - Testimony and/or help in preparing testimony
  - Supporting resources (talking points, research summaries, etc.)
  - Letters of support
  - Written comments to legislators, regulators
  - Cheerleading

# Licensure and other regulation of ABA practitioners

- ▶ Provided input and information via emails, webinars, phone or video conferences, testimony, and/or letters to behavior analysis organizations and others in
  - 24 U.S. states (AR, AZ, CO, CT, HI, KY, IL, IN, IA, LA, MA, MI, MN, MT, NE, NV, NJ, NM, NC, NY, SD, TX, WA, WI)
  - Ontario and Saskatchewan, Canada
  - Israel
- ▶ In process of updating model act for licensing behavior analysts

# Health insurance coverage of ABA services

## ▶ Medicaid

- Disseminated model language for State Plan Amendments (SPAs) or rules re: EPSDT coverage of ABA services for beneficiaries with autism to multiple states
- Provided input on proposed Medicaid SPAs or rules in 12 states (AK, AR, MN, NV, NC, NY, OH, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV)
- Coverage by private or public health plans
  - Provided input on bills or proposed rules in AL, SD, Ontario, Saskatchewan

# Health insurance coverage of ABA services

- ▶ TRICARE Autism Care Demonstration
  - Participated in provider conference calls
  - Collaborated with Behavior Analysis Advocacy Network on various documents and webinar for providers on use of standardized assessments
  - Provided comments on reports and policies to military family advocate
  - Arranged for Defense Health Agency personnel to give workshop on billing and documentation requirements at this convention

# CPT Codes Project

- ▶ ABA Services Work Group formed in 2015 to develop proposal to modify the Category III codes for adaptive behavior services, convert them to Category I
- ▶ **Steering Committee:** Rep + alternate from



- Gina Green      Travis Thompson      Jim Carr      Mike Wasmer
- Bryan Davey      Wayne Fisher      Melissa Nosik      Lorri Unumb
- **CPT consultants:**
  - Ben Shain, MD, AACAP (thru February 2017)
  - Jenna Minton, Esq., Minton Healthcare Strategies
- ▶ **Work Group:** providers, advocates, health plan reps

For American Medical Association CPT Editorial Panel to approve codes as Category I, *all* of the following criteria must be met:

- ▶ Procedure or service
  - performed by many physicians or other qualified health care professionals
  - performed with frequency consistent with intended clinical use
  - consistent with current medical practice
  - **clinical efficacy documented in literature that meets requirements in CPT code change application**



# ABA Services Work Group

- ▶ Compiled informal input on Category III codes from hundreds of providers and payers
- ▶ Conducted survey of providers on usage of Category III CPT and other codes for ABA services
- ▶ Sought input from CPT Editorial Panel staff, professional societies identified by AMA as “stakeholders”

# ABA Services Work Group

- ▶ Submitted Code Change Proposal to CPT Editorial Panel October 2016. Some Steering Committee members defended it at Panel's February 2017 meeting. Contents:
  - Revised code set
  - Rationale for proposed revisions
  - Vignettes and descriptions of work
  - Evidence review
  - Policy statements, guidelines from professional societies and payers
  - Descriptions of providers

# CPT Editorial Panel decision

- ▶ **8 modified codes approved as Category I (97X51 – 97X58)**
  - *Signifies that the services have proved efficacious and are widely accepted in the medical community*
- ▶ **2 modified codes to remain Category III (0362T, 0373T) for now**
- ▶ **All other Category III codes go away**
- ▶ **Effective January 1, 2019**

**LET'S JUST SAY**



**IT'S KIND OF A BIG DEAL!**

# CPT Codes Project

- ▶ New codes will probably be published August 2018
- ▶ Until then, AMA rules strictly prohibit our Steering Committee from disclosing specifics and any lobbying of the Steering Committee or other entities involved.
- ▶ For more information:
  - Attend tutorial by Jenna Minton – Saturday, 10:00 am, Park View
  - Watch for emails from APBA about
    - Publication and valuation of the new codes
    - Availability of educational materials for providers and payers
    - Other developments

# CPT Codes Project: Other Steering Committee activities

- ▶ Responded to medically unlikely edits (MUEs) issued by Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that limited daily units for some Category III CPT codes for adaptive behavior services
  - Surveyed sample of providers on typical hours of service per client per day
  - Successfully advocated with CMS for increases in the MUEs
  - Provided that information to our members via email
- ▶ Wrote Defense Health Agency to request that TRICARE authorize providers to use Category III CPT codes for severe problem behavior services (“exposure behavior assessment and treatment”)
  - Request was denied



# Fulfilling the mission: Organizational structure and operations

- ▶ Launched new website on Your Membership association management platform – Oct.
- ▶ Will add enhanced Career Center soon

Association of  
**apba**  
Professional  
Behavior Analysts

Delivering *Expertise*  
Supporting *Excellence*

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About Membership Events Donate Laws & Regulations Practice Guidelines Members Only

**2018 APBA Convention**  
**April 19 - 21**  
**St. Louis, MO**

apba  
Registration Now Open! >>

JOIN NOW

SUSTAINING MEMBERS

AFFILIATES

ABOUT BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

CAREER CENTER

SOCIAL MEDIA

Like Share Follow



# Organizational structure and operations

- ▶ Obtained office space in San Diego
- ▶ Obtained GoToMeeting/ GoToWebinar
- ▶ Adopting Office 365 for internal management
- ▶ Stepped up fundraising efforts (thanks to Fundraising Committee)
- ▶ Increased social media presence (thanks to Marketing Committee)
- ▶ Board will discuss hiring priorities during April 22 meeting

*Thanks for your support!*

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