

Excellent Opportunity for Psych/HealthSci Students!

Work as a **Caregiver/Therapist** for a **Young Man** with **Autism**

full training provided!



Discover an opportunity that will enable you to:

- practically apply what you learn in your university psychology studies;
- learn about Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Verbal Behaviour (developed by B.F. Skinner);
- learn how to collect and analyze data;
- be trained by experts who are leaders in their field;
- get great experience for your resume;
- earn some extra money; and
- make a huge difference in a person's life!

A Win-Win Situation

This position is on a high-quality team serving the needs of a young man who is on the autism spectrum. The program, which has been running successfully for over two decades, is based on the principles of ABA and Verbal Behaviour. It has been a win-win situation for everyone...

- Michael, now in his mid-twenties, has benefited tremendously and continues to make impressive gains;
- All therapists who have worked on this team over the years have gained valuable exposure to this lucrative

career. In fact, the vast majority are now working part- or full-time in the field of ABA or are aspiring to make this their chosen profession.

What is ABA?

ABA is the science of human behaviour. Over the past 50+ years, thousands of published, peer-reviewed research studies have not only documented its effectiveness, but have also proven that it is the *only* treatment that can be validated by rigorous scientific research. It used to be thought that people with autism simply could not learn. Innovative research, however, has proven that while individuals with autism do not learn like their typically developing peers, they can learn given appropriate instruction in a very structured environment, one where conditions are optimized for acquiring the same skills that typical children learn "naturally." This teaching, based on the principles of ABA, breaks down tasks into smaller, more manageable steps. Each newly achieved or "mastered" task then serves as a building block for the teaching of future skills. "Errorless" teaching techniques ensure that the overall teaching environment remains positive and motivating.

What is Verbal Behaviour?

The Verbal Behaviour Curriculum is based on B.F. Skinner's book *Verbal Behavior* (1957) which recognizes that language is a behaviour which is influenced primarily through reinforcement and on establishing and maintaining the motivation to learn. Emphasis is on teaching the function of language. Verbal Behavior applies the principles of ABA to the teaching of language.

Discover a Potential Future Career

ABA therapists are in demand. The prevalence of autism is on the rise. One in 59 children today are being diagnosed with autism. The training you will receive in this position is of great value as currently, there is a huge demand for trained individuals to help this vulnerable population.

The field of Behaviour Analysis is now a regulated profession. For those interested in pursuing a career in ABA, there is in existence a regulatory board akin to, for example, the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario or the College of Nurses of Ontario called the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. To learn more about accreditation with this organization, go to www.bacb.com.

Opportunities for Growth

Even within this team, there are opportunities for growth. Many people who started off on the team as Junior Therapists, typically having only a psychology background, have worked their way up to Intermediate and then Senior Therapist positions. Some have then gone on to acquire the title and responsibilities associated with being "Lead Therapist". Many are in the process of becoming tomorrow's ABA consultants.

Furthermore, the parent managing this program is extremely well connected in the world of ABA across Canada and throughout the United States as an advocate for people of all ages with

autism. It has been and continues to be her pleasure to help further the interests and careers of her team members who are aspiring to become further educated and gain more experience within this growing field.

The Position

After being fully trained, you will work one-on-one with Michael and his team to further develop his abilities in many domains including communication, play, socialization, leisure skills, self-help, sports, music, arts and crafts, community integration and fine and gross motor skills. You will also learn to manage inappropriate behaviours and shape them into more positive and safer ones. Michael loves outings so you will also learn how to support Michael on visits to many different places he enjoys including African Lion Safari, Brantford Zoo, the library, water pads, parks, the YMCA, the beach, and the list goes on.

Due to the investment of time and education that is made with our newly trained staff, and the bond that develops between Michael and his workers, it is requested that people make a **minimum commitment to this position of at least two years** (and ideally more when possible). **Please consider this carefully.** This is not a typical job where two weeks' notice will suffice... a person's well-being is at stake so it is asked that this matter be taken very seriously.

About Our Team Members

People who work on this team are enthusiastic and love kids. Most of them have a background in psychology. They are bright and energetic and full of innovative and creative ideas on how to apply the ABA and VB principles they learn on the job to a variety of different

situations and environments, understanding that learning can take place anywhere from a visit to the zoo to a trip to the grocery store. They are dedicated team players who take their jobs seriously but also have a great time in a comfortable and relaxed work environment.

About Michael & His Family

Michael is a young man who suffers not only from severe autism, but also from two comorbid diagnoses of anxiety and OCD. While he is very challenged from a communication point of view, he has made and continues to make good progress with respect to language development, learning and understanding more and more all the time. His greatest challenges are with self-injurious behaviour which in the late Fall of 2019 led to him having to be admitted to hospital. On a more positive note, Michael enjoys outings, swimming, and watching his favourite videos on AppleTV and his electronic devices. He loves animals and relaxing in his massage chair.

Michael currently lives in a hospital because his government has let him down and not kept promises it made directly to his parents that it would continue to meet his ongoing and complex needs. His status at the hospital is "Alternative Level of Care (ALC)" meaning that while he no longer requires hospital care, he cannot be discharged because he has nowhere else to live right now. He has been on a government waiting list for 24-7 care for over 7 years now.

Presently, the Ontario Government is spending approximately \$800,000 unnecessarily keeping Michael hospitalized instead of paying hundreds of thousands of dollars less to enable him to live in an appropriately supported place that he could call home and could provide the round-the-clock specialized care that he requires to keep him safe and happy. Fortunately, Michael does go home to his family home often and when he is in the hospital, his team of dedicated workers do an awesome job keeping him as content as possible.

Michael's family and in particular, his mom, Brenda, has been an ardent

advocate for Michael and others across the Province who are on the Autism Spectrum. She was a plaintiff 15 years ago in a precedent-setting lawsuit that was instrumental in making ABA accessible to individuals of all ages in Ontario. Sadly, she finds herself once again having to take legal action against the province for its failure to keep its promises to support her high-needs son.

The Hours & Location

You will be required to work for approximately two to three regularly scheduled shifts per week running Monday through Sunday throughout the year in addition to attending a regularly scheduled team clinic meeting on alternating weeks. Typical shifts run from 9 am to 1 pm, 1 pm to 5 pm and 5 pm to 9 pm. There are two primary locations for this position: 1) Michael's home in Ancaster, Ontario 2) The Acute Mental Health Ward At St. Joseph's Hospital, Charlton Campus. Both locations are approximately a ten-minute drive from McMaster and are easily accessible by public transit for those who do not have cars. One of Michael's workers' responsibilities is accompanying Michael between the two locations.

To learn more about more about the Deskin Family's advocacy efforts, visit:

www.FordvsAutism.ca

The Next Step:

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED

in taking on this challenging yet very rewarding position that will truly make a difference in a person's life, please email your **resume**, accompanied by a **cover letter**, to Brenda Deskin:
brenda@deskin.ca

