

# Audrey Gifford, BCBA, LABA

## Curriculum Vitae

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### Education

- Currently enrolled as a doctoral student in ABA at the Cambridge Institute for Behavioral Studies at Endicott College, Beverly, Massachusetts
- Master of Education degree, Special Education, Severely Handicapped (Behavioral Emphasis), University of the Pacific Graduate School, September 1988- May 1992
- Postgraduate training. One year full-time intensive on the job training in discrete trial, functional analysis and autism programming, from Strategic Teaching and Reinforcement Systems. One week workshop by Drs. Jim Partington and Mark Sundberg (ABLIS). Two years part time intensive training in discrete trial, generalization, autism programming and behavioral teaching methodologies including workshops on PECS and other procedures from Applied Behavior Consultants, Inc.
- B.M.Ed., Conservatory of Music, University of the Pacific August 1979 – May 1982

### Credentials

- Board Certified Behavior Analyst (current - also qualified to provide field work supervision to BCBA candidates)
- Connecticut Special Education Credential (current)
- California Specialist Clear Credential, Special Education, Severely Handicapped (current)
- California State Multiple Subject Teaching Credential (current)

### Licenses

- Massachusetts Licensed Applied Behavior Analyst
- New York Applied Behavior Analyst License application pending

### Honors & Awards

- UOP Outstanding Credential Candidate, 1992 (Special Education)

### Professional Affiliations

- Applied Behavior Analysts International

### Professional Experience

- June 2016-present: Owner, Senior Clinical Program Director, Optimized Autism Interventions, LLC. Assessment, design, and supervision of individually tailored ABA programs for children in the Tolland and Hartford counties, training new behavior technician staff to sit for the RBT exam as prescribed by the BACB.
- October 2011-May 2016: Board Certified Behavior Analyst (Trainer II), CREC (Capitol Region Education Council). Provide consultation and behavioral programming for children in the public schools with special needs, including intensive early intervention students in the ABA (applied behavior analysis ) Discrete Trial Program

(DTI) at Birch Grove School in Tolland, CT. Provide individualized DTI programs for language and social skills development for children who need discrete trial instruction in all grades. Provide individualized systematic reinforcement data systems to increase independence and social interaction with typically developing peers in inclusive settings. Provide ongoing training and coaching daily to staff as they work with children in DTI and providing systematic data-based inclusion support. Provide Functional Behavior Analyses (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans based on the findings of the FBAs, and oversee and coach staff in the implementation of these while they are with the students. Observe children in DTI and/or inclusion daily, collect probe data on skills targeted for increased independence in inclusion, review daily data for both DTI and inclusion skills and add, retire, and amend DTI and inclusion reinforcement programs based on the daily data. Probe data is used to guide programming decisions, to present at PPTs, and helps determine readiness for faded levels of support in inclusion. Behavior data were also reviewed regularly and behavior plans are amended in light of those reviews as needed. Provide suggested IEP objectives for behavioral teaching systems in inclusion as well as DTI settings for children in grades pre-K – 2. Provide formal staff training in DTI, basic behavioral principles, and procedures in increasing independence in inclusion. Shorter formal trainings are also provided on various topics, including: reinforcement, prompting, fading, shaping, recognizing behavioral contingencies for students and adults on the educational team, how to modify class work to meet the needs of students with severe handicaps, systematic discrimination procedures within DTI, basic functional analysis, and advanced topics in inclusion support systems. Coordinate with staff to administer standardized assessments such as the ASIEP, ABLLS, and VB-MAPPS. Collaborate with staff in developing self-monitoring systems and systematic social skills group lessons.

- July 2010-September 2011: Moved family to Connecticut from California after business closed with intention of retiring before re-entering the field in October 2011.
- June 1998 – July 2010: Founder & CEO, Senior Clinical Program Director, Bridges Behavioral Language Systems, Inc. Bridges was a non public agency recognized by the California State Department of Education and vendorized through the State of California Regional Center System to provide intensive services to young children with autism spectrum disorders. Bridges served approximately 200 children over the course of 12 years. Bridges was contracted with 11 local school districts as well as the California State Regional Center System.
- January 2009-July 2009: Adjunct Professor, National University, Sacramento. Taught ABA 601, 602, and 603 to graduate students in BCBA preparation program.
- August 1995– June 1998: Autism Program Teacher – ABA pilot program, San Joaquin County Schools, McFall School, Manteca, California
- August 1993–June 1995: Teacher (General and Gifted education) Carden School, Stockton, California
- August 1990–June 1992: Classroom Teacher: behavioral program for Severely Emotionally Disturbed delinquents - Stanislaus Academy, Turlock, California
- July 1989–July 1990: Behavior Intervention Specialist, Valley Mountain Regional Center, Stockton, California
- 1988–1989: Graduate fieldwork, University of the Pacific, Severely Handicapped programs at McFall School, Manteca, California & Kennedy School, Modesto, California

## Skills

- Assessment & Program Development — Designed comprehensive assessment instruments that led to discrete trial task analyses for language and functional skills programming, while identifying behavioral excesses and deficits. Produced data driven DTI programs effectively implemented by paraprofessionals.
- Language Programming — Extensive experience with Skinnerian language functions and programming, proven abilities in establishing vocal language in previously mute children; excellent skills in language discrimination procedures. Experienced with successful implementation of standard and modified PECS systems from mands to tacts.

- Generalization Procedures — Skilled at implementing systematic generalization procedures for all levels of discrete trial programs through transition to independence in regular education placements. Completed specialized training in generalization procedures.
- Staff Training — Skilled at developing staff competencies, including theoretical behavioral principles and procedures in discrimination, functional skill training, task analyses, PECS, errorless learning techniques, differential reinforcement of successive approximations, manding, establishing instructional control, becoming a conditioned reinforcer, intraverbal training, academics, generalization, dealing with aggression, self-stimulatory behaviors, SIB, chaining, discrimination problems, satiation, and other common problems associated with slowed acquisition rates.
- Interagency Coordination — Collaborated with district staff, including administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers and case managers, specialist teachers, speech pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, and paraprofessional staff. Extensive experience coordinating and implementing recommendations from parents, teachers, and other professionals into student programs. Coordinated programming with regular and special education facilities for peer interaction, and coordinated with school districts and Alta California Regional Center under a collaborative funding model for in-home programs. Provided services at public and private general education school sites, both for inclusion and intensive discrete trial/functional skills training as appropriate for each child.
- Functional Behavior Analyses — Skilled at comprehensive functional analyses of problem behaviors and the design of effective intervention strategies. Extensive experience in training parents, teachers, and front line staff in efficient and effective data collection and intervention implementation procedures.
- Developed structured peer play programs for teaching natural independent interactions with typically developing peers, as well as developed and implemented programs to teach community based social interactions for children with autism spectrum disorders.
- Developed structured programs for integrating children with autism spectrum disorders into general education classrooms, including programs that allowed the children to develop the necessary skills to function independently in general education classrooms at grade level with no additional assistance from one on one paraprofessionals.
- Created training and assessment materials for use with specific students. Currently the inclusion support systematic data based support system being used in Tolland is also being implemented successfully in Windsor and piloted in East Lyme public schools in Connecticut. The Bridges criterion based language and functional skills assessment instruments as well as the tutor training materials and workshop post-test criteria were requested for use by the autism consultants in the Stanislaus County Department of Education.
- Assessed student skills and developed programs based on those assessments for community based instruction in functional skills.
- Provided mentoring and fieldwork supervision to several staff members as they continued their educations and were eventually qualified as BCBA's.

## Presentations and Publications

- Parenting an Autistic Child, guest lecturer at the University of the Pacific Graduate School; Spring 1994
- Behavior and Language - Teaching Strategies for Autistic Children, National University, Stockton, CA, Spring 1995
- Language Programming for Children with Autism, lecture, Delta College, Stockton, CA, June 1997
- Integrating Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders into Regular Education Placements: Workshop, Elk Grove USD, October 2000
- Systematic Discrimination Procedures, Workshop, Bridges Behavioral Language Systems, January 2001

- Building Social Skills with Typical Peers for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, lecture, Families for Effective Autism Treatment, University of California - Davis Medical Center, Sacramento, March 2001
- Training Paraprofessionals – Effective Consulting Strategies, Workshop, Bridges Behavioral Language Systems, 2002
- Some Considerations When Choosing an ABA Program FEAT presentation, UC Davis MIND Institute, 2003
- Visual Aids Elicit Vocal Language in an Autistic Child with Oral Motor Apraxia: A Case Study with Tara Mills, Stacy Waite-Ocampo, BCBA, poster, Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, San Francisco, CA, 2004
- Relative Acquisition Rates for Children with Autism/PDD Across Novel Auditory, Visual, and Combining Tasks with Tara Mills, research paper, International Conference of Applied Behavior Analysts, Boston, Massachusetts, May 2004
- Supporting Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in General Education Classrooms, training manual, Bridges Behavioral Language Systems, July 2006
- Behavioral Therapist Training Manual, training manual, Bridges Behavioral Language Systems, October 2006
- Chapters: **Diamond in the Rough**, **Maggie Mae**, and **Good Golly Miss Molly** in Triumphs in Early Autism Treatment, ed. Ennio Cipani, PhD. Springer Publications, New York, 2008
- Above chapters were also reprinted in Children with Autism: Stories of Triumph and Hope, ed. Ennio Cipani, Ph. D. Demos Health Publications, New York, 2010
- Systematic Data-based Reinforcement Systems for Increasing Independence in Inclusion Pilot research. CREC River Street School presentation for BCBA CEUs. April 2012
- Systematic Discrimination Teaching using First Trial Data Systems in DTI for children with ASD CREC River Street School presentation for BCBA CEUs. May 2013
- Redirection vs. Prompting Back to Task for Self-Stimulatory Behaviors Pilot research. CREC River Street School presentation for BCBA CEUs. September 2014

## Conferences Attended

- January 1990: Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, Berkeley, California
  - January 1997: Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, Berkeley, California
  - June 1998: TEACH Diagnostic Conference, Stockton, California
  - January 1999: Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, San Francisco, California
  - February 2002: Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, San Francisco, California
  - February 2004: Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, San Francisco, California (presenter)
  - May 2004: International Conference of Applied Behavior Analysts, Boston, Massachusetts (presenter)
  - February 2005: Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, Los Angeles, California
  - February 2007: Northern California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, San Francisco, California
  - February 2008: California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, Los Angeles, California
  - May 2009: International Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, Phoenix, Arizona
  - February 2010: California Association of Applied Behavior Analysts, Los Angeles, California
  - September 2011 Connecticut ABA Convention, St. Joseph's College, Hartford, Connecticut
  - March 2012 Connecticut ABA Convention, St. Joseph's College, Hartford, Connecticut
  - May 2015 MassABA, Best Western Hotel, Marlborough, Massachusetts
  - November 2015 CT ABA, St Joseph's College, Hartford, Connecticut
  - April 2016 Autism Conference, Endicott College, Beverley, Massachusetts
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