

## **Guest address: Behaviour Analysis in Aotearoa**

Dr Angela Arnold-Saritepe, BCBA-D, MNZPsS

The misconceptions that surround applied behaviour analysis (ABA) in Aotearoa are pervasive and likely stem from the early years where unqualified and unskilled practitioners marketed services under the umbrella of ABA. This is not dissimilar to the early years of psychology and other health related services yet it still plagues ABA in Aotearoa today. The pool of Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBAs) in Aotearoa is small but growing rapidly and most are also registered as psychologists. You can find these 'behavioural psychologists' working across health, education and disability sectors with the most vulnerable populations (e.g., intellectual disability, autism and other developmental disorders, brain injury, dementia, ADHD, conduct disorders, other childhood disorders, addiction, mental unwellness, and those at risk of abuse and neglect).

This presentation aims to dispel the myths around behaviour analysis by outlining what it is, and what behaviour analysts do on a day to day basis, so we can establish a clear path forward for behavioural psychology in Aotearoa. There exists huge overlap between ABA and many areas of psychology, particularly educational, health and clinical psychology. You will find BCBA's working with; children with challenging behaviour in school, children dependent on tube feeding, children and adults with traumatic brain injury, children and adults with developmental disabilities, adolescents with drug and alcohol issues, and adults with dementia. You will also find behaviour analysts working with populations thought to be in the realm of the clinical psychologist where many third-generation behaviour therapies are used e.g., dialectical behaviour therapy for the treatment of borderline personality disorder and other severe problems, behavioural activation therapy for the treatment of depression and acceptance and commitment therapy for the treatment of depression, anxiety, and a variety of other quality of life concerns.



**Dr Angela Arnold-Saritepe** is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst with nearly 30 years' experience working with children and young people in the disability and health sectors in New Zealand, Canada and the United States. Angela has worked in the Applied Behaviour Analysis Programme, School of Psychology, University of Auckland since 2005. She also consults with families, schools and other organisations to support children and young people with developmental disabilities. Angela has particular interests working with young people and their families to address challenging behaviour and promoting awareness of behaviour analysis in Aotearoa.