



Professional Day

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Linking Assessment to Intervention: Functional Analyses and CHARGE

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Presenter Information

Hailey Ripple, M.S. recently completed her pre-doctoral internship in behavioral psychology at the Kennedy Krieger Institute at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. During her graduate career, Hailey was an active participant in the Bulldog CHARGE Syndrome Research Lab at Mississippi State University, received the Sandra Davenport CHARGE Syndrome Fellowship in 2015, and completed her dissertation on the utility of brief functional analyses in individuals with CHARGE Syndrome.

Dr. Kasee Stratton is an assistant professor in School Psychology at Mississippi State University, as well as a licensed psychologist and nationally certified school psychologist. Dr. Stratton has been involved with the CHARGE community and conducting research for 15 years and is the director of the Bulldog CHARGE Syndrome Research Lab at Mississippi State University. Dr. Stratton's clinical work has been with children and adolescents with a wide range of developmental disabilities and significant behavioral concerns. She is currently the Co-Director of the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clinic at Mississippi State University where she supervises and provides services from an applied behavior analytic perspective enhancing skills (i.e. communication, social, behavioral, adaptive skills) and minimizing problem behaviors.

Presentation Abstract

Among the multitude of medical concerns that present in CHARGE Syndrome, another common concern is engagement in problem behaviors that vary across topography and etiology (e.g., pain, anxiety, sensory concerns; Hartshorne et al., 2017). Studies examining the use of assessment procedures of problem behavior in the CHARGE population are limited, but are a necessary first step in order to inform efficient and effective treatment. This presentation will review a study that examined the utility of brief functional analyses (BFA; Northup et al., 1991), a well-documented procedure used to identify the function(s) of problem behaviors, for the first time in individuals with CHARGE Syndrome. Participants included individuals between the ages of 8 to 22 years old diagnosed with CHARGE Syndrome who presented with varying problem behaviors. Results indicated that BFA procedures were successful in identifying the function of problem behavior with four out of five participants. Participants will leave with greater understanding of the role of behavioral assessment, the need for determining the function (reason) of challenging behavior and how this maps onto intervention design and outcomes.

Learning Objectives

- Gain a general understanding of the functions of behavior.
- Understand the general procedures associated with a functional analysis and how the procedure is used to identify functions, or reasons, for engaging in problem behavior.
- Gain an understanding of how these procedures can be used to design interventions that produce meaningful and efficient reductions in problem behavior and increase in skills to follow.