



Behavioral Connections

ABA *Outside the Box*

A Case Study: Effect of hours of ABA programming across negative behaviors and skill acquisition

By: Ashley Souza & Kaitlyn DeCosta

Introduction

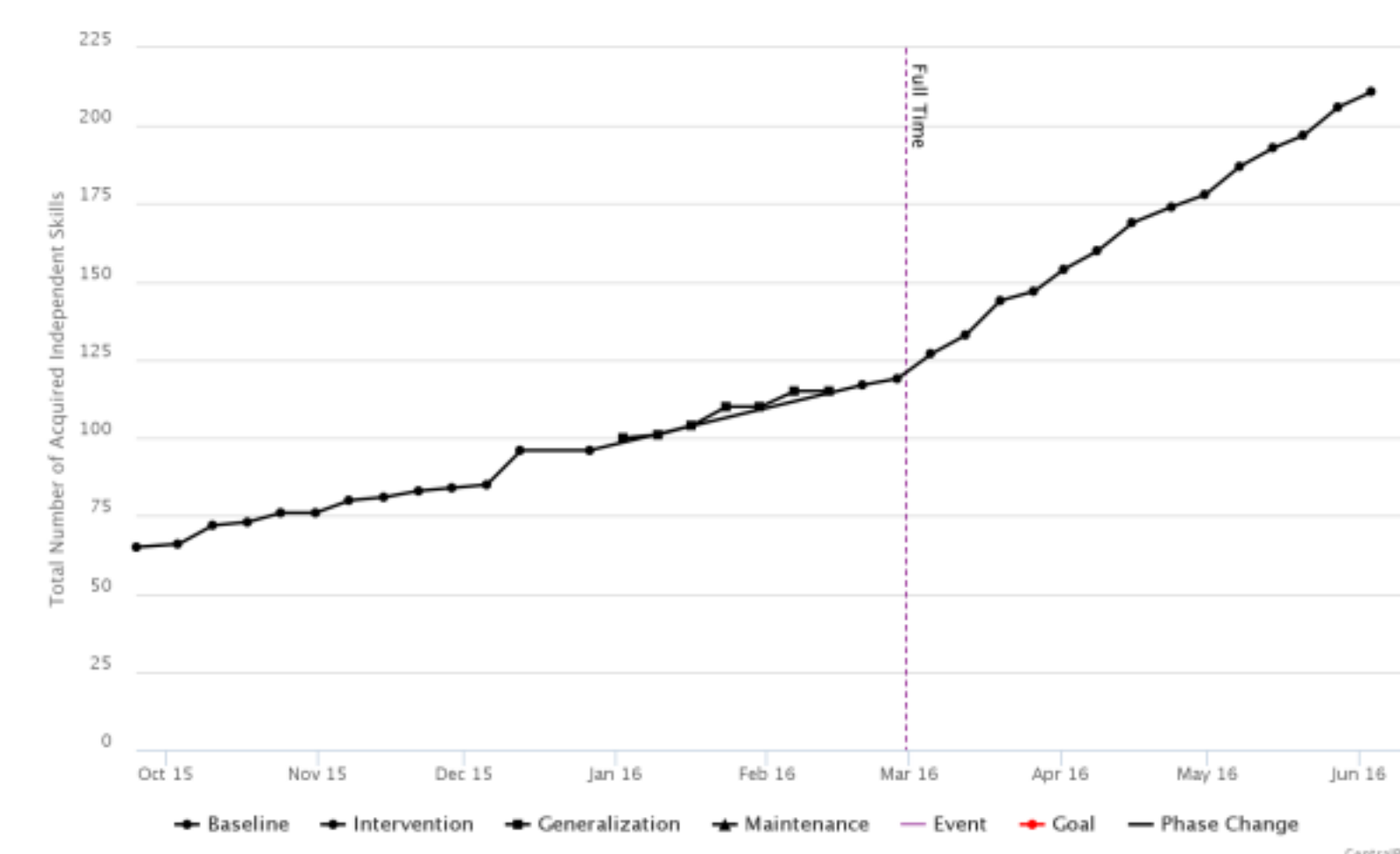
- According to Granpeesheh, Tarbox, and Dixon (2009) a group who received low intensity ABA at 10 hours per week resulted in significantly smaller gains than the high intensity group at 40 hours per week.
- We often see medical doctors make recommendations for the number of ABA services based on diagnosis and not the individual. As behavior analysis professionals we would like to keep the need for services based on the individual and not the diagnosis.
- The purpose of this case study is to analyze the correlation between the hours of intervention with the frequency of behaviors both negative and positive.
- The dependent variable of this case study is the frequency of behavior whether negative (aggression, self-injury) or positive (verbal operant skill acquisition).
- The independent variable is the increase of ABA intervention hours.

Method

- The participant is a 10 year old female who is moderate-severely autistic. Through August 7, 2015 to February 29, 2016 the participant received 6 hours a week of intervention. On February 29, 2016, the participant started receiving services 30 hours per week.
- Services took place at Behavioral Connections clinic Bridgewater, MA. The participant received one on one services.
- The VB-MAPP was used as a tool to measure verbal operant skill acquisition and the measures are Tact (identifying an object), Echoic (repeating what is heard), Intraverbal (answering questions), Visual Perceptual & Match to Sample (visual discrimination tasks and matching-to-sample tasks), Motor Imitation (copying motor imitations), & Listener/Responding (following instructions).
- Negative aggressions and self-injury are also measured.
- The programs that are used are intensive teaching, mand training, and interruption/transition.

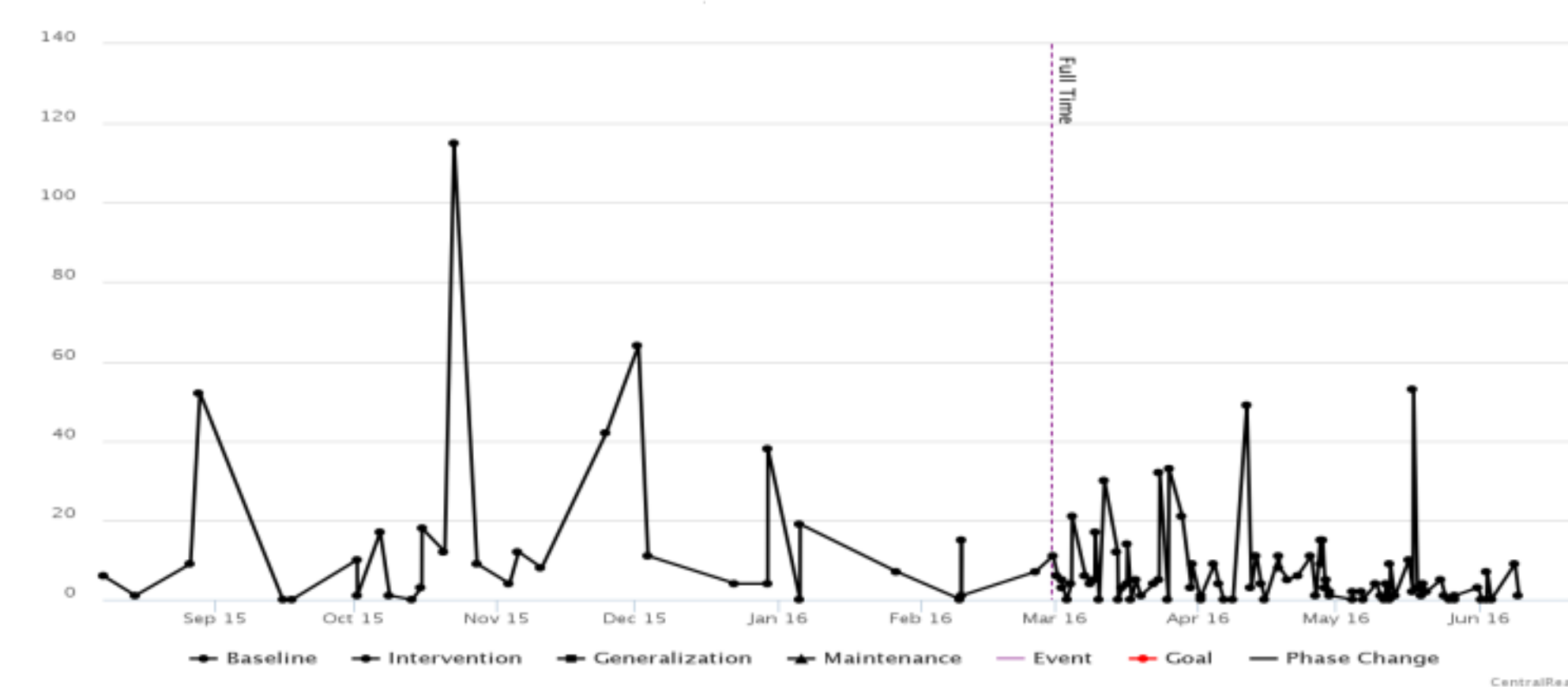
Results

Graphs: Total Number of Skills Acquired

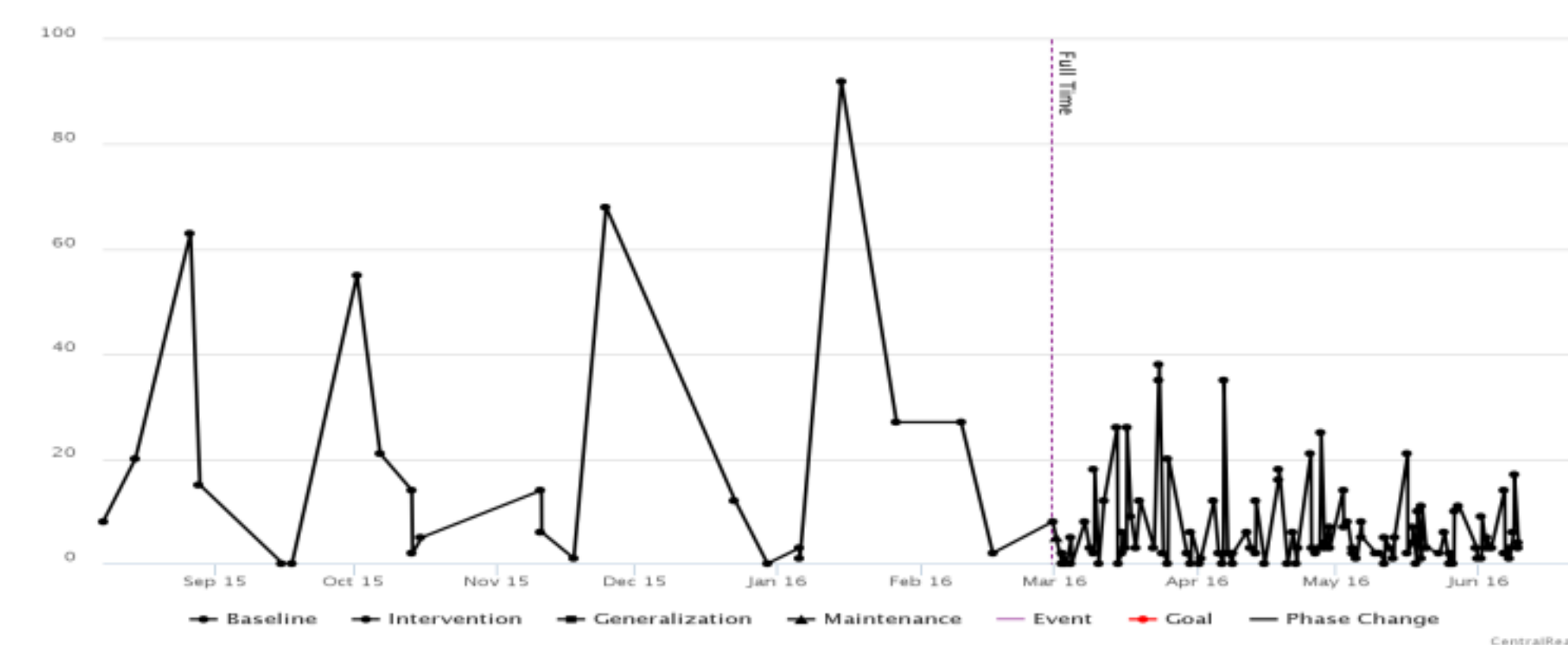


Operant	Skills met per month (6 hours)	Skills met per month (30 hours)	% Increase
Total	11	23	109%
Tact	1	2	100%
MI	5	5	0%
VP	2	10	400%
LR	3	4	33%
IV	1	8	700%
Echoic	2	5	150%

Frequency of Aggressions



Frequency of Self-Injurious Behaviors



Discussion

- The results indicate that the participant had significantly lower aggressions and self injurious behaviors. Also, the participant had a significant increase in her total number of skills acquired. Therefore, for this particular participant, the independent and dependent variable are correlated.
- An implication of this case study is that it only involves one participant. Future research should look at whether the increase of hours for ABA services is beneficial across a number of participants.