

Active since 2004, granted “charitable status” in 2009 in the cantons of Vaud and Geneva

Getting started with a therapy tailored to your child specific needs

What you need to know



«What really matters is not to live like others but to be amongst them »

D Tammet from « Born on a Blue Day»

***Proposal of better future for our children
with a behavioural, developmental and
educational approach based on effective
teaching strategies***

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Our story

OVA started in 2004 through the initiative of a group of local parents whose children were diagnosed with autism. They were faced with a significant lack of trained professionals as well as a lack of effective therapy, so they searched abroad for scientifically based interventions.

In Canada, these parents discovered ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis). Thrilled with the potential of this therapy, they decided to create a partnership with Canadian Behaviour Analysts to establish a training of local professionals in Switzerland. Thanks to these newly trained ABA professionals, home-based interventions developed rapidly along with a growing demand for our services.

In 2007, the association created a training and intervention centre in Gland, Switzerland. It does not benefit from any subsidies, only private donations and parents' financial contributions allow the centre to function. Today, the centre welcomes 12 children followed by 12 instructor therapists and 2 psychologists FSP-BCBA* as well as an administrative department.

*BCBA : Board Certified Behavior Analyst (www.bacb.com)



Our Identity

Our Goal

- Diversify services and interventions for children with autism in Switzerland : by providing evidence based therapy : individualized intensive behavioural intervention based on Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) principles.

Mission

- Offer a better future to children/adolescents with autism through an intensive evidence based approach based on their specific needs.
- Organize ongoing trainings in ABA for professionals so that they can provide effective day to day services and therapy to children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder.
- Support families with children with ASD by providing information and effective intervention strategies as well as assist in finding financial support
- Organize intervention services for children by professionals trained and who meet criteria established by the association. OVA has built a team whose work consists of structured individual sessions adapted for each child's learning needs
- Advocate for the recognition and development of early intensive intervention

Fundamentals

- The centre and the professional practice of our staff are governed by OVA's Ethical Chart and the Code of Ethics of the Behaviour Analyst Certification Board (www.bacb.com).
- Our ethical principles are based on accountability, rigor and with external audit conducted every year to match the expectations of our sponsors and partners. OVA allocates funds received according to the sponsor's wishes. Our values are based on integrity, solidarity and professionalism.

Therapy Effectiveness

The « Haute Autorité de la Santé » (HAS) published a *Recommandation de Bonne Pratique – Autisme et Autres Troubles Envahissants du Développement : Interventions Thérapeutiques Coordonnées chez l'Enfant et l'Adolescent (2012)*. The following recommendations are based on the document established by the consensus of the HAS team:

- Create a link between the child/adolescent and their parents
 - o Respect the child's and family's individuality
 - o Co- elaborate the intervention project with the parents
- Regular evaluation of the child/adolescent's development and health
- Propose an individualized treatment plan [...]
 - o Early intervention, coordinated and based on educative, behavioural and developmental approaches
 - o Based on short and long term functional objectives
 - o Attentive to promote the generalisation and transfer of acquired skills to novel situations
 - o Implemented by a trained team who is regularly supervised by qualified and experienced professionals
 - o Organised using a ratio of one adult to one child, with a weekly occurrence of a minimum of 25h/week
 - o Organised with a structured environment [...] adapted to the peculiarities of the child
- Supervise medication
- Coordinate and train various actors/participants
- Develop clinical research work

Parents are highly encouraged to look for evidence based practices.

**Recommandation de Bonne Pratique – Autisme et Autres Troubles Envahissants du Développement : Interventions Thérapeutiques Coordonnées chez l'Enfant et l'Adolescent (2012)*

Efficacy of Intensive Behavioural Intervention

In a recent meta-analysis * d'Eldevik et al. (2009), the authors demonstrate that individuals who benefited from an intensive behavioural intervention make significantly higher progress in IQ and adaptive behaviours when compared to other individuals who had no therapy or received eclectic treatments/therapies.

These results confirm results from other studies and corroborate that applied behaviour analysis is a treatment of choice of individuals with ASD.

Eldevik, S., Hastings, R. P., Hughes, J. C., Jahr, E., Eikeseth, S. and Cross, S. (2009). Meta-analysis of early intensive behavioural intervention for children with autism. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 38(3), 439-450.

- **Prospect of a better life:** Enable an individual to be more autonomous, have an enhanced quality of life, be integrated in the community and in suitable placement and therefore avoid spending their life in a psychiatric hospital which is not a suitable place for an individual with ASD.
- **Reintegration to regular school for some children:** Scientific research shows that some children who followed intensive **ABA** programs before 5 years old were reintegrated into a regular classroom. Consequently, the centre is a springboard for socialization, before a possible integration in a normal classroom and social environment.



Eldevik, S., Hastings, R. P., Hughes, J. C., Jahr, E., Eikeseth, S. and Cross, S. (2009). Meta analysis of early intensive behavioral intervention for children with autism. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 38(3), 439-450.

Interventions at the Center OVA

After an initial assessment of the child's needs and strengths the Clinical Team of BCBA's develops an IEP with precise objectives to :

- Improve socially appropriate skills and behaviours
- Develop emerging behaviours
- Decrease socially inappropriate skills and behaviours (particularly behaviours that prevent learning)

Objectives target different domains of language (develop a mean of communication to express one's needs, develop expressive and receptive language and so on), play skills, socialization, daily living skills and "tool" skills such as imitation, stay on task ...

For all the learners, learning is :

- Complex skills are broken down in easier steps for a personalized and intensive teaching
- Child's motivation is identified to create and maintain an enjoyable learning environment
- Guidance is used and faded out progressively to avoid failure
- Repetition and frequent training for skill acquisition
- Monitoring child progress and needs using systematic measurement strategies
- Parents and families are included to generalize acquired skills outside of the teaching environment and to have a great impact on the child day to day life
- Apply evidence based teaching strategies of children / adolescents with ASD

OVA Centre in Gland

Welcomes children diagnosed with ASD between the ages of and 8 years at the beginning of their services either full time (35h/per week), half-time (17.5h / per week) or part time (min 1 day/week).

A team of instructor therapists work each day with the child, supervised by a Board Certified Analyst BCBA. The BCBA ensures **ongoing, personalized and intensive program** for each child based on applied behaviour analysis.

The centre offers specialized educational materials adapted to children needs (tools and materials that parents may not have access to because of its cost or specificity.)

How the Centre Works

We welcome children with **ASD** between the ages of 2 to 8 years at the beginning of their therapy at OVA

Full time, half time or part time services (depending on availability)

9h00 - 16h00 / Monday to Friday

For each child/ado

- Individualized and personalized intervention after a comprehensive initial evaluation and the development of an individualized treatment plan (ITP or IEP)
- Individualized developmental, behavioural and educational support in French or in English.
- Very high student/instructor ratio (1/2 learners per staff member : according to the current goals in the children IEP)
- Ongoing staff training and supervision

Fees:

- Available upon request via e-mail : info@ovassociation.com

Centre Closures

- Official Vaud cantonal holidays
- Approximately 30 days per year including 3 consecutive weeks in the summer.

Parental Involvement

- Attendance to monthly parent meeting with the psychologist FSP-BCBA
- For intervention coherence : Continue teaching in home environment. Family has an **essential role to play** in follow through and **generalization** of skills.
- Participation of one or both parents at least one seminar/workshop organized by OVA is essential and highly recommended.

Parent testimony

Parent Testimony

My son, Nii Odartey, joined OVA in September, 2016. The decision and process of my husband and I having our son join OVA was a collaborative one with the kind assistance and guidance by the institution to obtain funding. It is not always that an assistive and educative institution encourages and guides parents in the most difficult times and decisions – OVA was exceptional and understanding in this regard. For that we are eternally grateful.

Within a short spate of time we have seen our son blossom into an inquisitive, excited and happy little boy with so much zeal to explore new things. OVA and its educators run a tight ship with targets and regimented processes designed to meet the needs of each child. However, the interesting part of this has been the shared responsibility in advancing what is best for our child. We are consulted on what Nii Odartey's needs are at home and in his environs, we are advised on how to teach our child new things and the daily reporting on his progress makes the transition to our home setting seamless because at each point we know what he is working on at OVA and we can replicate it at home.

Overall the best part of our son being with OVA is the sense of family. It is simply great to have an educator meet our son at the door with a smile but for us the heart warming part is to see our son smile back at this person with recognition and trust.

Well done OVA!!!

Chris & Laila

External Interventions proposed by OVA

- **At Home**

After a complete initial evaluation and the setting up of an IEP, one or two instructor therapists work with the child at home, supervised by a BCBA who ensures **ongoing, personalized and intensive program** based on behaviour analysis.

This service is for families who are on the waitlist for a placement at OVA's centre or have no other solution for services for their child/adolescent.

Home intervention cannot target all skill domains of the child/adolescent.

Solely goals defined with the family before the beginning of intervention will be targeted for home therapy

- **Parental support**

The aim of these sessions is to inform and train parents in the application of protocols and procedures based on the principles of behaviour analysis (ABA) without ongoing supervision of a BCBA supervisor.

This service is for families with no access to ABA interventions, neither at a centre nor home, but would like to get trained to apply these principles with their child daily.

Solely goals defined with the family before the beginning of coaching will be targeted for parental support. Parents are the main actors.

- **Seminars and Trainings**

For parents, professionals and caregivers of children, adolescents and adults with ASD (cf. Catalogue at ovassociation.com). Those seminars are primarily available in French.

Frequently asked questions

When to start?

- The earlier the better. In Switzerland, a formal diagnosis of autism spectrum, autism spectrum disorders is often provided much later (3 to 5 years old).
- Research shows that an early intervention can help make significant gains in communication, socialization, pre-academic skills and adaptive skills.
- **Treatment can be started without a confirmed diagnosis but it is recommended to contact as soon as possible a Diagnostic Center.**

Why OVA?

- Teaching individualized goals based on an initial IEP and frequent assessments.
- Collaboration with all the professionals working with the child (ex.: occupational therapist, speech pathologist, teachers etc...)
- Collaboration and coaching of professionals at school or at day-care.
- Family involvement in specific targets for home
- Ongoing training and supervision of our teams (onsite and outreach) by BCBA's
- Ongoing supervision of BCBA and BCaBA candidates.

When I read "behaviour", does it mean that the intervention will solely concentrate on my child's challenging behaviour?

- Therapy focuses on the emergence and acquisition of appropriate behaviours depending on the child /adolescent current needs and strengths.

To contact OVA

I want to enrol my child at OVA: what do I need to do?

- Contact the OVA Centre : info@ovassociation.com and please do provide the following details :
 - Contact details
 - Age and diagnosis of the child (if available) together with a short description of the challenges you are currently facing.
- The centre's management will put you in contact with a clinical supervisor to set up an initial meeting.
- The meeting will be invoiced **CHF 200.-/H** and reimbursed in the case where the child joins the centre. The meeting will allows us to :
 - Meet the child and observe their skills
 - Discuss parents' expectations.
 - Explain the centre's functioning and the services available
 - Visit the centre
 - Add your child's name to our waitlist



OVA is, first of all, an Association

- **Volunteer your time**
 - Organise charity, sports or cultural events that raise funds on behalf of OVA
 - Fundraise on behalf of OVA by researching and contacting companies, foundations, etc.
 - Use your personal or professional networks to advance our ideas and respond to our needs.



*Our ethical principles are based on accountability, rigor and with external audit conducted every year to match the expectations of our sponsors and partners. Association **Objectif Vaincre l'Autisme** allocates funds received according to the sponsor's wishes. Our values are based on integrity, solidarity and professionalism.*

For further information:

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