

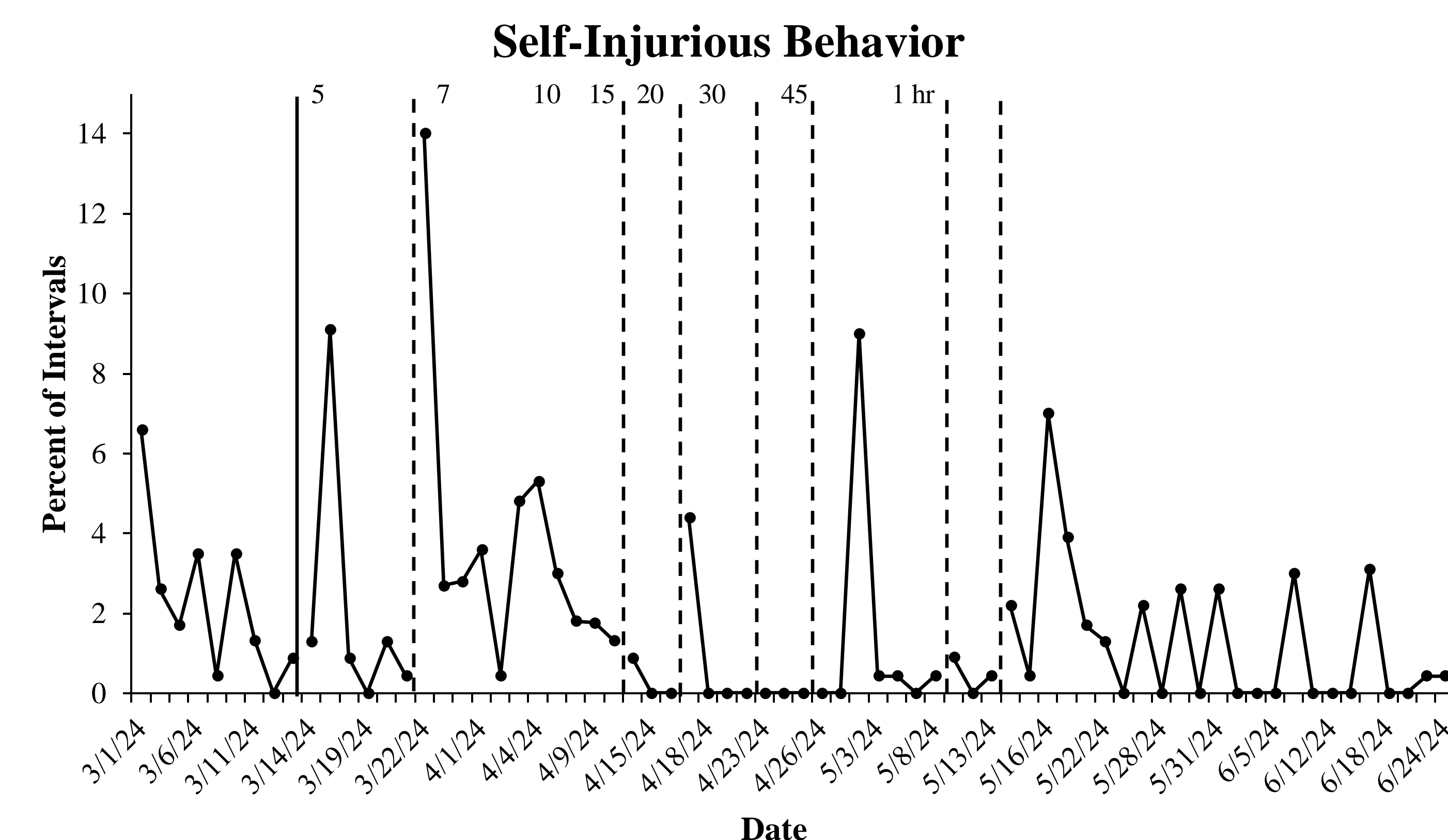
## Client Information/Target Behaviors:

- 14-year-old male diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder
- Receives 20 hours of ABA therapy at FSU ECAP
- Has received ABA therapy for seven years
- Utilizes modified ASL to communicate with 1–2-word phrases
- Engages in high magnitude maladaptive behaviors

- **Aggression:** Any instance (or attempt) of Colton hitting, kicking, scratching, slapping, grabbing forcefully, pinching, or biting another person.
- **Aggression Towards Objects (ATO):** Any instance (or attempt) of Colton hitting, kicking, scratching, slapping, grabbing forcefully, biting or throwing an object in the absence of a positive affect
- **Self-Injurious Behavior (SIB):** Any instance (or attempt) in which Colton engages in aggression behaviors toward himself (such as finger, hand, or shoulder-bites) or self-induced vomiting (placing fingers/hand/object in the back of mouth/down throat in an attempt to gag himself)

## Rationale

- Change in topographies and severity of maladaptive behaviors
- Previous BIP as most frequent antecedent
- This BIP utilized a break component after he completes the current demand. Additionally, prompting him to, “ask for a break,” constitutes a demand.
- Decrease duration of maladaptive episodes
- Previous success with the “First, Then” contingencies
- Beads are Colton’s highest preferred tangible
- Clinicians hypothesize these behaviors are maintained by escape from demands given that the highest frequency of preceding events include the BIP, transitions, on break following demands, and immediately post-demand before the requested item or activity was delivered.



## Limitations

- The “nice hands” contingency does not begin until Colton has transitioned into the clinic
- It does not account for maladaptive behaviors during transitions into session

## Results

- While the clinical team has not seen behaviors consistently at levels of zero, criteria for mastery is less than 3% of intervals during a 230-interval session.
- Colton must engage in these target behaviors for less than 6 minutes compared to previous 35–40-minute behavior bursts
- Clinicians observe bursts of behavior following a shift in the DRO criteria. This may be due to Colton adapting to the contingency.
- Restricting highly preferred items and delivering them on a fixed differential reinforcement of other behaviors (DRO) schedule decreases frequency and magnitude of maladaptive behavior

## Intervention

- **Visual Schedule:** Colton will receive a token to place on his daily schedule for every hour that passes to indicate Colton completing portions of session regardless of maladaptive behaviors. This may serve to reduce the establishing operation for Colton to request his backpack, going home, or to leave (Smith et al., 1995).
- **DRO:**  
Clinicians will prompt Colton to use his break sign and provide a 5-minute break
  - Prior to each time interval, clinicians stated: “First, we will have nice hands, then we will get our beads”
  - Clinicians will withhold Colton’s beads for the targeted work time and give them back contingent on the absence of maladaptive behaviors. Clinicians will state “Good job having nice hands, Let’s take a break” and deliver the beads.
  - If Colton engages in maladaptive behaviors, he will still be provided access to the 5-minute break, however he will not have access to the beads.

## References

Hanley, G.P., Jin, C.S., Vanselow, N.R. & Hanratty, L.A. (2014). Producing meaningful improvements in problem behavior of children with autism via synthesized analyses and treatments. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 47, 16-36.

Roberts, M.L., Mace, F.C. & Daggett, J.A. (1995). Preliminary comparison of two negative reinforcement schedules to reduce self-injury. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 579-580.

Smith, R.G., Iwata, B.A., Goh, H.L. & Shore, B.A. (1995). Analysis of establishing operations for self-injury maintained by escape. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 515-535.



