

2022 Wisconsin Autism Conference

April 29 - 30, 2022
Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells



Virtual Bonus Content Sessions

1. What Do I Tell My Very Young Sibling Child?

Harriet Redman

Parents often wonder how autism might impact the other children (siblings) in the family, especially those ages 3-5. What do you tell a young child? When? What strategies help in parenting both a child with a disability and their neurotypical sibling(s)? This workshop will address concerns of parents of very young children and provide them insights about the sibling's roles, emotions, needs, and behaviors. Each family attending will get a Sibsack designed to help parents communicate and develop strategies to enhance relationships within their family.

2. Let's Be Honest: Autistics Can and Do Have Sex

Stacy Stefaniak Luther, PsyD, LPC

The idea of Autistics being sexual is difficult for many parents, professionals, and other neurotypicals. Sexual education is lacking, society is embarrassed to discuss sex and often infantilizes Autistics, and sexual relationships and sexual health are complicated. This presentation is designed for Autistics, parents, teachers, and service providers and

includes information on what Autistics need to know about healthy sex: from consent to hygiene to masturbation and orgasm with inclusive information for LGBTQ+ individuals. Sexual language is used during this presentation, and it is best for adults and those transitioning into adulthood.

3. Regulating Together- Autism, Trauma, and the Family

Jen Bluske, OTR & Jenna Mao, LPC, BC-DMT

Daily life can sometimes feel too much, too fast, or not enough- leading to trauma responses and lack of a “felt sense of safety” for autistic children and their families. When any person in the family experiences a disruption of safety and regulation it can impact that felt sense of safety for the entire family unit in a dynamic way. But there is hope! Trusted family relationships can also be key in creating safety and regulation. You will walk away with strategies and understanding for how your family can learn to regulate and thrive together!

4. Behavior Impedes Learning? I’ve Checked Yes, Now What!

Katie Berg, MA Ed

Participants will deepen their understanding of the question “Does the student’s behavior impede their learning or that of others?” We will explore the information gained or needed from a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and how to discuss matching interventions. Participants will be exposed to strategies for discussion and methods to move forward in supporting students with challenging behavior output.

5. How to Hire, Train, and Retain Respite Providers

Val Madsen, M.S., CTRS

Family caregivers are often responsible to find their own respite care providers and don’t know where to start. Learn about places to look for a respite worker, the interview process, and how to train a respite provider so that they can successfully work with the care recipient. We will also discuss tips for keeping your providers. You will receive some worksheets to help you with this process.

6. Prioritizing Core Communication Across Grade Levels

Sarah Singleton & Holly Smith

This session will provide information related to Lakeland School's Core Vocabulary curriculum, designed for implementation in grades four through 12. This curriculum was designed to support the language development of both our verbal and nonverbal learners by emphasizing the teaching and use of core vocabulary. The curriculum incorporates application of core words to reading, writing, music and social contexts such as game play, and incorporates techniques such as aided language input and use of visual supports. Example lessons and methods of differentiation will be shared, as well as examples of extension activities appropriate for younger Learners.

7. Autistic Identity

Denielle E. Everson

A lack of understanding of the diversity among Autistics has caused delays that affect our lives. This session will include a discussion about how we can help reach other minority groups within the Autistic community, and learn to build our community as Autistics and advocate for the community.

8. Autism and Aging: The Research, Autistic Concerns, and Best Practice for Support **Dr. Elizabeth Scheel-Keita and Dr. Bridget Conlon-Mayfield, PhD**

As autism has become more widely understood, many adults are being diagnosed, some late in life. However, there is a large gap in our knowledge about how autism interacts with the aging processes. This presentation seeks to outline how autism manifests in adult populations, present autistic concerns about aging, and highlight the challenges faced by aging autistics across the spectrum in various settings. Using research and the voices of elder autistics, we will address their concerns and how those who work with elder populations can be inclusive and address their unique needs.

9. Be Your Own Boss: 5 Easy Ways to Direct Your Own Services

Jennifer Drganc and Lana Lambrecht, RN

Do you ever feel like your Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) or Consumer Support Grant (CSG) are too hard or overwhelming? This interactive session will teach you how to use a Support Planner and Financial Management Company to get the most out of services. Get tools to manage your own services and be your own boss. Learn ways to manage your staff, write your community support plan and manage your budget. Find out the right questions to ask to be successful in self-direction. Come prepared to have fun and learn about how to self-direct your own services using CDCS or CSG.

10. Cultural Capitalism: How Work Defines Worth

Ashley Oolman and Allie Strong-Martin

There are many dominant cultural norms in the U.S. that stop us from removing the barriers that uphold bias and maintain stigma around disability. Ableism ingrained in our culture reinforces untrue assumptions that disabled people are unable to contribute to society. Because of capitalist and cultural values of individualism and productivity which dominate the workplace, in many ways, we rank people on their ability to uphold unrealistic social and performance norms. These patterns maintain a socioeconomic system that has never really worked for everyone.

This session will lead us through a critical discussion intended to change perceptions of worth/value that we uphold in our roles as disability professionals in both subtle and overt ways. Together we will explore how cultural capitalism has impacted the way we understand human value, and in doing so will help us confront harmful social norms. Join us as we work through tangible ways we can challenge ableist and capitalist thought, and counteract problematic perceptions of disability through our work in the fields of disability employment services, disability advocacy and disability studies.

11. Do No Harm: Recognizing the Subtle Racism of Autism Assessments and Their Effects on Multicultural Families

Rufo Jiru and Maren Christenson Hofer

Do autism assessments discriminate against multicultural communities? Join us for a discussion with parents and advocates who have experienced the subtle racism of autism assessments. Learn how to recognize when assessments are not serving our multicultural communities well, what the consequences can be, and join us for a discussion on how to address these issues. You'll hear from advocates and parents in multicultural communities about their experiences with autism assessments, as well as discuss strategies to ensure that multicultural communities have full access to and are able to benefit from assessments.

12. Autism and Sleep: Help is Here

Sarah Moe

The link between sleep issues and autism is strong. In this session we will learn how autism and sleep interact to impact adults and children on the spectrum as well as their caregivers. We'll cover the anatomy and physiology of sleep and breathing, common sleep issues that impact autistic children and adults, do's and don'ts for quality sleep, plus signs, symptoms, and treatments of common sleep disorders.

13. Trauma Informed Educare

Tamera Pulver

Trauma is held in the body. We all need to be empowered by learning about the brain and how we can use our body to regulate our physiological state, especially as we face an ongoing pandemic. This presentation is a distillation of the findings from a wide range of trauma researchers and will provide practical, accessible solutions for home and school. You'll learn what trauma is and how it effects the brain, the role your autonomic nervous system plays, and the importance of educators and caregivers in supporting individuals with autism in managing trauma. Participants will walk away with research based interventions to address anxiety: in their clients and in themselves!

14. Teaching Intersectional Self-Advocacy to Students with Autism and Other Social Identities

Lynn Stansberry-Brusnahan, PhD and Emily Bedford

This presentation introduces an “intersectional self-advocacy” framework that positions educators to teach students to self-advocate for all their social identities. For education to be a means of social transformation that is equitable for all, it is important for educators to understand and infuse students’ multiple social identities into educational planning and preparation for life. Self-advocacy skills are needed for life so students can get wants, needs, and rights met. To teach intersectional self-advocacy, educators must recognize their own and their students’ multiple social identities and adopt culturally sustaining practices.