



Autism Society of North Carolina 2019 Conference Strategies for a Lifetime

Agenda

Friday, March 22, 2019

8:45 **Welcome and Announcements** (*University Ballroom*)

9:05 **Anxiety and Sleep: Addressing Life's Challenges (part 1)**, presented by Patrick Friman, PhD, ABPP, Boys Town (*University Ballroom*)

10:35 Break

10:55 **Anxiety and Sleep: Addressing Life's Challenges (part 2)** (*University Ballroom*)

12:25 Lunch

1:25 **Best Practices in the Real World (part 1)**, presented by David Mandell, ScD, Director, Center for Mental Health Policy and Services, University of Pennsylvania (*University Ballroom*)

2:55 Break

3:15 **Best Practices in the Real World (part 2)** (*University Ballroom*)

4:45 Adjourn

Saturday, March 23, 2019

8:45 **Welcome and Announcements** (*University Ballroom*)

9:05 **From Genes to Biology: What We Know and Why It Matters**, presented by John Spiro, PhD, Deputy Scientific Director, Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative (*University Ballroom*)

10:35 Break

10:55 **Concurrent workshops:**

- **Adulthood: Resources and Opportunities**, presented by Chris Egan, Senior Director of Employment Services, NC DHHS (*University Ballroom*)
- **Let's Play! Getting Kids with Autism Engaged**, presented by Alana Ianello, MAT, BCBA, and Victoria Martin, BCBA (*Glenwaters Room*)

12:25 Lunch

1:25 **Concurrent workshops:**

- **Gut Issues and Autism**, presented by Laura Politte, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor in Psychiatry and Pediatrics, Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities (*location TBA*)

Relationships and Resilience: The Importance of Self-Care, *Panel discussion with autism moms Kristin Deas and Judy Smithmyer; moderated by Eb Roberts, Director of Human Resources, Autism Society of NC (location TBA)*

2:55 Break

3:15 **Assistive Technology: It Doesn't Have to be Expensive or Complicated**, *Panel presentation by autism self-advocates Mary Janca, Daniel Landry, and autism mom Amy Perry (University Ballroom)*

4:45 Adjourn

Session Information –

Anxiety and Sleep, Patrick Friman, PhD, ABPP

Target audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

Overview and learning objectives: Two of the top concerns within the autism community are anxiety and sleep issues. This session will explain anxiety and signs to look for in individuals with autism, clinical characteristics and diagnosis, and the prevalence of anxiety disorders. The talk will also examine issues that impact caregivers and providers, as well as offer medical and behavioral strategies that can help those with anxiety. The session will also examine sleep and sleep problems. How is sleep an issue of skill deficit? What are sleep stages, phases, disturbances? What are the side effects of sleep deprivation, prevalence, and how to manage it?

When Training and Coaching Aren't Enough: Changing Practice and Outcomes in Low-Resource Public Schools, David Mandell, ScD

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

Overview and learning objectives: What are the factors involved in effective programming for individuals with autism? What is important to understand and monitor when making changes to existing programs and evaluating progress and results? Dr. Mandell will explain issues related to implement evidence-based practices in school, community, home settings. Attendees will learn what attributes comprise effective learning programs, issues involved with implementation, and usage over time. Research on settings with best practices and others as well as the environmental factors that promote success will be examined. The presentation will also explain how policy, organizational culture and the climate and organization of programming across environments all contribute to successful outcomes for learners with autism.

From Genes to Biology: What We Know and Why It Matters, John Spiro, PhD

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

The understanding of genetics can provide an answer to the question “Why does my child have autism?” This presentation will explain genes involved with autism spectrum disorder, how genetics is changing

the way autism is defined and considered and how genetics can identify environmental risk factors. The role of genetics in providing new and transformative therapies will be explained. Finally, current research, including sites in North Carolina, and opportunities for the community to contribute will be reviewed.

Adulthood: Resources and Opportunities, Chris Egan

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

What resources and supports are available for adults and those transitioning to adulthood? How should families and individuals prepare for and navigate waivers, vocational rehabilitation, employment, and supported living? These and other questions will be addressed in this informative discussion. The session will begin with an overview of the service system and issues to consider when planning for transition. While not all questions about adulthood have answers, an additional goal of the session is to connect attendees with information from state resource programs, understand the process for accessing the system, and effective advocacy.

Let's Play! Getting Kids with Autism Engaged, Alana Ianello, MAT, BCBA and Victoria Martin, BCBA

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

Interactive play is an important skill, and the presenters will provide practical strategies for parents, teachers, and caregivers to teach play skills and shared attention. Attendees will learn: Why is play important? What is the interaction between play and social interaction? What are strategies that can be used to build play skills? Additional objectives are to teach: core features of autism that inhibit social, communication, and play skills; describe the importance of play in facilitating social engagement and communication; and identify strategies that professionals and caregivers can use to promote social engagement and communication.

Gut Issues in Autism, Laura Politte, MD

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

Stomach and digestive issues not only affect health but can also contribute to behavioral challenges. Objectives for this presentation include: Discuss how changes in behavior can signal a medical problem; Review approach to medical evaluation in individuals with ASD; Identify common co-occurring medical problems in ASD; and Discuss management options for common medical problems Attendees will also leave with information about how to better communicate with health-care providers.

Relationships and Resilience, Eb Roberts, LPC, BC-TMH, JD, Judy Smithmyer, and Kristin Deas

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

Managing stress is hard. But if it is not managed, it can cause health issues and affect relationships with families, co-workers, and friends. Learning objectives include: Define stress and stressors; Exploration of Stress Management Techniques; Define Resilience; Examine the Role of Resilience as a Form of Self-Care; and Learn How to be More Resilient. Panelists will share their experiences across the lifespan and their strategies to take time for self-care, family care, and supporting other members of the community.

Assistive Technology: It Doesn't Have to be Expensive or Complicated, Amy Perry, Mary Janca, MS, and Daniel Landry

Target Audience: Parents and caregivers, professionals, psychologists and other therapists

What is assistive technology? How do smart phones, tablets, laptops and other advances provide opportunities for individuals with autism and caregivers? What strategies work with children in a classroom? How can adults learn social skills, social norms, and create more independent lives through technology? How can parents of less and nonverbal children with autism use systems and technology to communicate with and provide a voice to their child? The panel will demonstrate how devices that are part of our everyday lives provide opportunities to help us better organize and understand our world.

Speaker Bios:

Patrick Friman, PhD, ABPP

Dr. Friman is Director of Clinical Services at Boys Town and Vice President of Outpatient Behavioral Health Services and Clinical Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Nebraska School of Medicine. He has more than 30 years of experience as a licensed psychologist and has been the principal investigator and published numerous research articles. Dr. Friman also is a past president of the Association for Behavior Analysis and is a member of the Advisory Board of the Little Star Autism Center in Indianapolis.

David Mandell, Sc.D.

Dr. Mandell will explain how to implement evidence-based practices and get buy-in at school, in the community, and at home, as well as what to do when interventions don't work. Dr. Mandell is a Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics and Director of the Center for Mental Health Policy at Penn and Associate Director of the Center for Autism Research at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He earned his Doctor of Science from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health. Dr. Mandell's research is aimed at improving the quality of care for individuals with autism in their communities. This involves examining the use of best practices across delivery methods.

John Spiro, Ph.D.

Dr. Spiro is the Deputy Scientific Director of the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative (SFARI) at the Simons Foundation. He joined the foundation in 2007 and oversees all aspects of SFARI's research initiatives. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego. Dr. Spiro will update attendees about the importance of recent discoveries in genetics and ongoing SFARI research efforts such as SPARK at UNC.

Chris Egan

Chris Egan is the Senior Director for Employment Services and leads the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Division of Services for the Blind, Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Disability Determination Services. These divisions engage in services and supports that positively impact the lives of individuals with disabilities by reducing barriers to employment, independent living and financial security. Egan graduated with a Master of Social Work from East Carolina University and began his career as a Clinical Social Worker at Dorothea Dix Hospital in 1989, focusing on transitioning adults diagnosed with severe and persistent mental health issues back to community living. Egan next worked with individuals experiencing developmental disabilities and co-occurring mental health issues in support of North Carolina's response to the Thomas S. class action lawsuit. He later joined and directed the Developmental Disabilities Training Institute at UNC-Chapel Hill. Most recently, Egan was the Executive Director of the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities. Working in partnership with a 40-member Governor-appointed council, Egan focused on systems change efforts through demonstration grants designed to elevate awareness and avenues for individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities, promoting greater choices and options for integration, inclusion and independence.

Alana Ianello, MAT, BCBA

Ms. Ianello is a clinical professional with the Autism Society of North Carolina who holds a Masters of Arts in Teaching with a concentration in Special Education from UNC Charlotte. She gained her passion for autism when she began working with children in college in 2003. After graduation, Ms. Ianello taught in a self-contained classroom for students with autism for five years in the Charlotte Mecklenburg school district and in 2012, moved to the district's central office on the autism team. She is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and provides LifeLong Interventions in the Charlotte area.

Victoria Martin, BCBA

Victoria has been working with individuals of all ages with developmental and mental health needs since 2010 across inpatient, outpatient, classroom, in-home, and clinic- and community-based settings. Victoria earned a Master of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Youth & Nonprofit Leadership from Murray State University in 2012 and went on to earn a Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology with a concentration in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) from UNC Wilmington in 2016. Her graduate research focused on preference and assessment methods. Victoria completed an internship at Central Regional State Psychiatric Hospital in 2016, providing ABA services to individuals across the lifespan. Following internship, Victoria enjoyed providing ABA services to children in-home and within the community for three years. Recently, Victoria has joined a behavioral healthcare company and is eager to affect change and advocacy efforts for individuals with ASD at the policy level.

Laura Politte, MD

Dr. Politte is an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities. She received her bachelor's and medical degrees from UNC Chapel Hill and then completed residencies at Massachusetts General Hospital and McLean Hospital. Dr. Politte also worked at the Lurie Center for Autism, where she was a clinician and co-investigator for several clinical trials. Current research interests include psychopharm clinical trials and new drug options for Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Eb Roberts, JD, SPHR, LPC

Ms. Roberts is Director of Human Resources at the Autism Society of North Carolina. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and Board Certified Tele-Mental Health practitioner with over 20 years of clinical experience in treating individuals and couples. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from the College of Charleston in 1994, her Master's Degree in Counseling from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 1998, and her Juris Doctorate from Georgia State University in 2007. She has worked with professionals managing depression, substance use/abuse, anxiety, life-work balance stressors, eating disorders, and sexual matters. She has special interest and expertise in treating these issues as well as Autism Spectrum Disorder, couples work, pre-divorce counseling, and career/employment counseling. Prior to joining ASNC, she spent 20 years in the for-profit sector, working primarily in behavioral health hospital administration and counseling, and engaged in the practice of law.

Kristin Deas

Kristin is the mother of a son with autism. She is currently a Facilitator for Charter Communications and formerly provided support for work-life training and consultation at Workplace Options. She is the owner of Spectrum Navigation Services, a Special Needs organization offering special education advocacy and resource support for autistic students in the Triangle area.

Judy Smithmyer

Judy is Autism Resource Specialist Coordinator at the Autism Society of North Carolina. She has been with the Society for 20 years working out of the Greensboro area. Prior to working for ASNC she was a LPN. She is mother to Adele, a woman on the autism spectrum, and wife of 38 years to Steve Smithmyer. Judy has presented to parents, educators, health care providers and other professionals during her career. Recognizing the need for more information tailored to families who receive a diagnosis when their child is older, she worked with her fellow Autism Resource Specialist to create a new "After the Diagnosis" workshop focused on their needs.

Amy Perry

Ms. Perry, the mother of three daughters, has a young adult with autism who is nonverbal and uses her iPad to communicate. Amy is an Autism Resource Specialist based in Cumberland County, and she conducts workshops for parents and professionals across the state of North Carolina.

Mary Janca

Mary is an autism self-advocate from Greensboro. She is a licensed North Carolina teacher and TEACCH trained. Her undergraduate degree and background is in acting and video production and she earned her Master's in Special Education with a focus on Emotional and Behavioral Disorders from North Carolina Central University. She teaches students with autism spectrum disorder at the Lionheart Academy in Greensboro. Mary has authored several guest blog posts for the Autism Society of North Carolina.

Daniel "Danny" Landry

Danny is an adult with Asperger's Syndrome living in Madison County. He moved to North Carolina from Florida and currently works for the Autism Society of North Carolina as an autism support professional. In that role he works with clients to increase their independence by improving their social, work, and life skills. He is a graduate of Partners in Policymaking. He is also the founder, executive director, lead

organizer, and teen group leader of Autistics United, a nonprofit group celebrating diversity in the Asheville Community.