The more you understand her world, the more possibilities you see.
Welcome to Stronger Together in 2020, our collaborative virtual autism conference!

While the pandemic is preventing us from gathering in person like we typically do this time of the year, we are proud to bring our communities together online in this new, creative format. This virtual conference is a shining example of the value of collaboration and partnership – proof that we truly are stronger together.

Our strength is powered by the communities we serve – parents, caregivers, educators, support professionals, individuals on the autism spectrum – you inspire our mission of enhancing the lives of those with autism.

We see you during this time of uncertainty, dealing with changing schedules, canceled events and activities, disrupted routines, and unpredictable days. We know that life in flux is especially hard on the autism community. We feel it, too.

As with our live conferences, we encourage you to see this virtual conference as a dependable, invaluable place for you to learn and gather resources that fit your unique needs. Maybe you’re looking for autistic speaker perspectives; or tools for supporting students; or you are new to autism, hoping to absorb as much information as you can; or perhaps you’ve been on the autism journey for a long time and seek new strategies and cutting-edge ideas. Whatever your needs may be, we’re confident you will find support in the more than 50 educational sessions offered in Stronger Together in 2020.

Not only are we proud of the conference content, and the quick transition of two large, live events to this new virtual format, but we are incredibly grateful to our community partners for continuing their support. Thank you to our presenters who contributed time, expertise, and flexibility as we transitioned to an online event. Thank you to our exhibitors, program advertisers, and sponsors – including Executive level sponsors, Accra, MN LEND, and the WI Department of Public Instruction – whose generous support makes this event possible.

And thank you to all of you for joining us. Please enjoy the keynote presentations, breakout sessions, and the Minnesota and Wisconsin exhibit halls. If you are joining us from outside of Minnesota and Wisconsin, we welcome you to explore this collaborative content. While we hope to get to know you, we also encourage you to get to know your local Autism Society affiliate.

We encourage all of our participants to take in this virtual event in a way that best fits your needs and schedule. Pre-conference workshop content will be available through June 1, and keynote presentations, breakout sessions, and exhibit hall content will be available through Nov. 1. Watch sessions at your leisure, rewatch your favorites, and gather exhibitor resources that support your autism journey.

Thank you again for joining us for Stronger Together in 2020. We are so glad you’re here!
Stronger Together in 2020 LIVE Schedule at a Glance

Pre-Conference • April 30, 2020 and On-Demand

Full Day Virtual Workshop • PART I – 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and PART II – 1:30-4:30 p.m.
Kelly Mahler, MS, OTR/L

Keynote Presentations • May 1, 2020 and On-Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Judy Endow, LCSW</td>
<td>Autistically Thriving</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Loui Lord Nelson, PhD</td>
<td>What Do You See? We Learn Through Universal Design for Learning</td>
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Keynote Presentations • May 2, 2020 and On-Demand

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Kari Dunn Buron</td>
<td>Self-Regulation: 25 Years of Trying New Pieces of String</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15-2:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Haley Moss</td>
<td>Assembly Required</td>
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LIVE Breakout Sessions (On-Demand after May 2)

**Sessions – LIVE • May 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:45-11:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction: A Tool To Help Reduce Stress In Parents of Children with ASD (MN LEND)</td>
<td>Promoting Health, Wellness, and Quality of Life</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Best Practices for Online Learning</td>
<td>Addressing Complex Behaviors Associated with Autism</td>
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<td>Community Inclusion: The AuSM Paradigm</td>
<td>Accommodations, Interviewing, and Work Culture: Tips for Navigating the Neurotypical Work World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45-2:45 p.m.</td>
<td>LIVE Breakout 1</td>
<td>LIVE Breakout 2</td>
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**Sessions – LIVE • May 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 3</th>
<th>Session 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-4 p.m.</td>
<td>Understanding and Applying the Neurodiversity Paradigm to Provide Respectful Supports for ALL</td>
<td>See It, Show It: Reading Comprehension Based on Autistic Neurology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video Modeling and High Tech Supports</td>
<td>Bullying Prevention, Intervention, and Tools for Parents, Educators, Professionals, Individuals with Autism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supports for Minimally Verbal Individuals with ASD (MN LEND)</td>
<td>How to Use the Technology Tools in Your Toolbox for Distance Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:15-5:15 p.m.</td>
<td>LIVE Breakout 3</td>
<td>LIVE Breakout 4</td>
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**Sessions – LIVE • May 2**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session 5</th>
<th>Session 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:45-11:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Empower Students: Teaching Students About Their Brain</td>
<td>Introduction to Autistic Culture</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Behind the Mask: Aiding and Understanding Girls and Women with ASD</td>
<td>Helping Coordinate Your Wishes for Their Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooking Up Awesome Science At Home</td>
<td>Accommodations and Modifications: Equity for Each and Every</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-1 p.m.</td>
<td>LIVE Breakout 5</td>
<td>LIVE Breakout 6</td>
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After Hours Lounge Chat: “Flappy Hour”
Accessible during the live virtual conference.
Stronger Together in 2020 On-Demand Sessions

Accessibility Track

- Overcoming Obstacles: Accessing Services in Multicultural Communities
- Cultural Journeys: How to Engage and Best Support East-African Families Who Have Children with ASD
- Trauma-Informed Classrooms: Using the Polyvagal Theory to Modify Our Approaches
- Using Person-Centered Design to Improve Equity and Outcomes in Schools
- Redefining Advocacy: From Preparing to Battle to Coming Together as a Team
- Enhancing Therapeutic Relationships

Neurodiversity Track

- Grieving as a Person With ASD
- “Neuro-Majority” Mistakes
- The Edge of the Spectrum: Autistic Traits Without a Diagnosis
- Navigating the World of Sensory Supports
- The Hidden Relationship Between Executive Function and Emotion Regulation
- Presuming Competence in Individuals with Complex Support Needs

Services and Supports Track

- Overview of Guardianship Options and Supported Decision Making
- Social Security Disability Benefits 101
- Navigating Minnesota’s Systems of Supports for People with ASD
- How to Pay For It? Funding Options for Autism Services and Supports
- Disability Policy and Advocacy: Current Climate and Election Preview
- Autism Prevalence in Minnesota (MN LEND)

Strategies Track

- Engineering Social Skills While Social Distancing
- Sexuality for All Abilities: Best Practices in Teaching Sexuality Education for People with Autism
- Ten Tips For Teaching Young Children with Autism
- Panic Attack Toolbox
- Tales from the Toybox: Learning through Evidence-Based Play
- Using Song Lyrics to Teach Meaningful Lessons: Distance Learning Edition
- Strategies for Preventing Explosive “Behaviors”
- Autism 101

Sessions Tailored for COVID-19 Pandemic Support

- How to Use the Technology Tools in Your Toolbox for Distance Learning (LIVE, Breakout Session 4)
- The Hidden Relationship Between Executive Function and Emotion Regulation (ON-DEMAND, Neurodiversity Track)
- Best Practices for Online Learning (LIVE, Breakout Session 1)
- Using Song Lyrics to Teach Meaningful Lessons: Distance Learning Edition (ON-DEMAND, Strategies Track)
- Engineering Social Skills While Social Distancing (ON-DEMAND, Strategies Track)
- Cooking Up Awesome Science At Home (LIVE, Breakout Session 6)
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Navigating the Virtual Lobby

Once you login to the virtual conference, you will be directed to the lobby, the main landing page for the Stronger Together in 2020 virtual autism conference. The lobby contains links to the event’s virtual areas you can explore.

View Agenda Button
Click on this button to access a schedule for the keynote presentations, live-stream sessions, and on-demand sessions. Refer to this as needed to plan your attendance at sessions that are of greatest interest to you.

Visit the Help Desk Button
If you are not sure where you need to click to participate in any part of the virtual autism conference, you can click on this link for help from staff at WorkCast, the virtual conference event platform.

Sessions Banner
This is the space where all keynote speaker presentations and breakout sessions, live and on-demand, will be available. Each live-stream session will be moderated by staff from the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin and the Autism Society of Minnesota.

MN and WI Expo Hall Banners
There are two different Expo Halls you can explore: the Minnesota Expo Hall and the Wisconsin Expo Hall. Each Expo Hall will have information from a variety of vendors and service providers. The Autism Societies also will host a scavenger hunt in each hall. Visit the “Resources” tab in each exhibitor’s virtual booth for a chance to win a $50 Amazon gift card! More details are available in the Virtual Bag.

Lounge Banner
In this link, “After Hours Lounge Chat” discussions will take place on Friday and Saturday following the live-stream conference sessions. Chat discussions are open to all participants. Chat participants are asked to keep neurodiversity acceptance at the forefront of all conversations to allow for a safe, supportive environment for all participants.

Virtual Bag
Access the complete conference program guide, session checklist, virtual conference social narrative, details about the exhibit scavenger hunt, and resource materials provided by some of the virtual Expo Hall exhibitors. Review and/or print these materials as you wish.

Certificate
Access a printable Certificate of Attendance. Educators are encouraged to keep the certificate to submit to their respective CEU boards. The following boards have approved CEU credits for the virtual autism conference: MN Board of Psychology, MN Board of Social Work, MN Board of Marriage and Family Therapy, and MN Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy. Certificates of Attendance will be available after May 2, 2020. The Interoception pre-conference workshop has its own Certificate of Attendance than can be accessed in the Resources tab available on the pre-conference session screen.

Virtual Autism Conference Hashtag: #StrongerTogether2020
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Thursday, April 30 Pre-Conference Workshop

9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. LIVE (On-Demand May 5-May 30, 2020)


**Presenter: Kelly Mahler, MS, OTR/L**

9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Lunch Break 12:30-1:30 p.m.
1:30-4:30 p.m.

Enhance the effectiveness of your current strategies and supports using the latest evidence-based research on interoception. This course will help you gain an understanding of this important sense and use this information when supporting areas such as self-regulation, language development, positive behavior, and social participation. Evidence-based strategies to assess and improve interoception will be the focus of this course. Highlights from *The Interoception Curriculum*, a step-by-step framework for improving interoception also will be included. Learn how to adapt strategies to effectively meet a variety of needs and improve outcomes. The strategies presented in this course are effective for use in many different settings including home, schools, community, and clinic.

Kelly Mahler earned an MS in Occupational Therapy as well as a Post-Professional Pediatric Certificate from Misericordia University, Dallas, Pa. She is currently a doctoral student at Misericordia University. Mahler has been an occupational therapist for 17 years, serving school-aged children and adults. She is an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Occupational Therapy at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pa. She is actively involved in several research projects pertaining to interoception. Mahler is an international speaker and presents frequently on topics related to the seven books she has authored.

**NOTE:** The Interoception pre-conference workshop has its own Certificate of Attendance than can be accessed in the Resources section available in her pre-conference session.

Friday, May 1 Morning Keynote Presentation

9-10:30 a.m. LIVE (On-Demand May 5-Nov. 1, 2020)

**Autistically Thriving**

**Presenter: Judy Endow, LCSW**

Based on her newest book, *Autistically Thriving: Reading Comprehension, Conversational Engagement and Living a Self-Determined Life Based on Autistic Neurology*, Endow will talk about a shift in how autistic support is thought about and implemented. Rather than supporting deficits (as is typical in the field of autism), Endow will cover who autistic people are and how they comfortably function, going over key elements of taking in, processing, storing, and retrieving information along with autistic thinking style. She will share numerous examples so autistic individuals, parents, educators, and therapy providers will come to understand that when autistics are honored for who they are and supported for who they want to be in this world, they can truly thrive! (Note: identity-first language used intentionally as it is the preference of most autistics.)

Judy Endow, author and international speaker on a variety of autism-related topics, has written numerous articles and books, including award winners: *Learning the Hidden Curriculum: The Odyssey of One Autistic Adult and Paper Words and Discovering and Living with My Autism*. As a person who lived some of her early years in an institution, Endow has emerged as a leader in the autism community. A resource specialist and a clinician at Common Threads Family Resource Center in McFarland, Wis., she received the Autism Society of America’s Cathy Pratt Professional of the Year Award — the first autistic person to receive this prestigious national award. Endow has served on the boards of both the Autism Society of America, Wisconsin Chapter and the Autism National Committee; was featured in the *New York Times’* Patient Voices; and was honored by *The Art of Autism* as one of the most influential bloggers on the web. Endow has made more than 400 presentations all over the world.
Friday, May 1 Breakout Sessions

1. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction: A Tool To Help Reduce Stress In Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
   Presented by: Beth Dierker, PhD; Adam Langenfeld; Jennifer Reiter; Kate Biederman, OTR/L, NBC-HWC

   Learn about evidence supporting the use of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) techniques for managing stress and improving overall health among parents of children with special needs. Gain a greater understanding of MBSR and how it can be integrated into the daily lives of parents and caregivers, educators, and healthcare practitioners.

   Beth Dierker, the Executive Director of Communities Engaging Autism (CEA), is a parent of two children, one of whom has autism. While navigating her child’s ASD diagnosis and supports, Dierker did community-engaged research in youth and community development.

   Adam Langenfeld is a first-year fellow in Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) at the University of Minnesota. As a MN LEND and DBP Fellow, Langenfeld is interested in developing interventions to optimize the well-being of children with neurodevelopmental disorders.

   Jennifer LeGrand Reiter, a Minnesota native, graduate of the College of St. Benedict, and MN LEND Fellow, has worked with the Ordway, Guthrie Theater, and Walker Art Center. Her daughter’s ASD diagnosis shifted her focus to creating opportunities for inclusion for people with disabilities via arts and education.

   Kate Biederman is a certified health coach and pediatric occupational therapist. Biederman serves as Clinical Supervisor of Occupational Therapy at St. David’s Center where she has worked for more than 22 years in a variety of roles. She currently facilitates a MBSR course for parents of kids with special needs.

2. Best Practices for Online Learning • Presented by: Zachary Walker, PhD

   Learn simple strategies that make a big difference in managing our own lives as online educators and how to effectively help students.

   Zachary Walker is an author and thought leader in international education and mobile technology. He laughs with and thoughtfully provokes audiences around the world.

3. Community Inclusion: The AuSM Paradigm • Presented by: Robyn DeCourcy, Mike Pucci

   Equitable access to community-based social and recreational opportunities is an integral component of positive long-term health outcomes. However, many public spaces pose physical, environmental, and social barriers for neurodiverse individuals. Learn how AuSM actively addresses such obstacles in collaboration with our community partners via our “Community Inclusion” paradigm, and promotes the implementation of evidence-based practices within community-based settings. When everyone is included, we ALL benefit.

   Robyn DeCourcy, an AuSM Education Specialist, has been working with individuals with autism for more than 12 years, specializing in early intervention as well as community accessibility. She serves on numerous accessibility teams for organizations.

   Mike Pucci, an AuSM Education Specialist, contributes to the development and delivery of specialized trainings for businesses, educators, families, and more. In addition to trainings, Pucci also coordinates and oversees social skills programming for youth and adults with autism.

Friday, May 1 Lunch Keynote Presentation

What Do You See? Lessons We Learn Through Universal Design for Learning

Presenter: Loui Lord Nelson, PhD

12-1:30 p.m.

When you envision instruction, what does it look like? How does that instruction shift when you think specifically about autism? Why? Using stories from the field, research, and her own experiences, along with guided discussions, Dr. Nelson will share how the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework encourages us to view teaching and learning through the lens of neurodiversity and how that impacts design and possibility.

Loui Lord Nelson is an internationally recognized leader in UDL implementation. A former special education teacher, she held the first known UDL Coordinator position for a school district, has taught online courses about UDL; completed her UDL post-doctoral fellowship at CAST (the creators of UDL); is a member of the CAST Cadre; and is part of the UDL-Implementation and Research Network (IRN) leadership council. She has worked with educators across the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia; has published books; and hosts a popular podcast.
1. Promoting Health, Wellness, and Quality of Life • Presented by: Carley Matsumoto; Lindsey Ryan; Camille Loughlin

Among individuals with ASD, social isolation and mental/physical health conditions can compromise an individual’s ability to sustain an independent life. In practice, these challenges affect individuals with ASD in highly variable ways. Learn about practices that ensure the individual served drives the decisions made around their health and social well-being while obtaining practical insights around techniques that both promote quality of life and offer individualized plans to improve in these areas. Learn about data collection methods and how the results both promote accountability and inform decisions made at the individual and program levels.

Carley Matsumoto is currently the Evaluation Program Manager at Minnesota Independence College and Community (MICC), and she is responsible for tracking and reporting on program outcomes. Matsumoto works with MICC’s research partners, such as the University of Minnesota and Wilder Research, to examine the impact of MICC’s work in a broader context.

Lindsey Ryan is the Wellness Program Manager at MICC where she supports health, wellness, and nutrition by implementing programming for the community program.

Camille Loughlin has worked with the autism population for more than 10 years in roles as an Employment Consultant and most recently a Social Engagement Program Manager at MICC where she works with participants to increase their involvement in the community.

2. Addressing Complex Behaviors Associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Presented by: L. Lynn Stansberry Brusnahan, PhD; Erin Farrell; James Williams

Obtain simple strategies to address complex behaviors in areas such as eating, sleeping, toileting, hygiene, sexuality, and safety. Learn strategies to prevent challenging behaviors; teach behaviors; increase pro-social behaviors; and maintain and generalize skills already learned. Strategies to be highlighted include: antecedent-based intervention, task analysis, shaping, chaining, prompting, time delay, reinforcement, differential reinforcement, extinction, and functional communication training.

L. Lynn Stansberry Brusnahan is a professor at the University of St. Thomas where she chairs the Department of Special Education and coordinates the Autism Spectrum Disorder programs. She is coauthor of Do Watch Listen Say: Social and Communication Intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorder and was the 2012 Autism Society of America Professional of the Year. Dr. Stansberry Brusnahan serves on the Council for Exceptional Children’s (CEC) Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD) board.

Erin Farrell is the Autism Spectrum Disorders Specialist for the Minnesota Department of Education. She is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and a licensed ASD teacher. In addition to her role at MDE, Farrell is an Adjunct Professor and Doctoral Student at the University of St. Thomas. Prior to her role at MDE, she was a District Behavior Specialist in schools, supporting families, teachers, and students through positive behavior supports. Farrell is dedicated in many different roles to helping families and educators navigate supports and evidence-based strategies for students with ASD.

James Williams is an adult with autism who was diagnosed at age 3. He travels the U.S. lecturing on autism and has written two autism-related books. He is also a recorderist, having recorded an album of solo recorder musical adaptations, and performs regularly at national anime conventions, where he also lectures on autism and disability awareness. He is also a member of the Steering Committee for Wisconsin’s Community of Practice on Autism Spectrum Disorders and Developmental Disabilities.

3. Accommodations, Interviewing, and Work Culture: Tips for Navigating the Neurotypical Work World

Presented by: Ann Macheledt MS, CRC; Abbie Wells-Herzog, MS, CRC, ACRE; Margie Webb, MS, CRC, ACRE

Individuals who identify as neurodiverse sometimes see the workplace as a social puzzle. The social interactions during interviews can be tedious. Lunch and break-time chit chat is tiring. Wondering if you should disclose or request accommodations can be nerve racking. Learn about challenging work-related situations and how to manage them.

Ann Macheledt has worked in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation for more than 25 years. Currently, she is a Program Specialist in Training and Development for VRS, where she assists in developing training on autism. Prior to this, she held management/leadership positions in both nonprofit and for-profit businesses and advised businesses on their retention and accommodation needs. Macheledt has expertise in the areas of ADA/ADAAA consulting and training, ergonomics, and diversity recruitment. She serves on the board of Disability:IN Minnesota and is committed to driving disability inclusion in the workplace.

Abbie Wells-Herzog has worked in the employment and disability field for more than 30 years. She developed a passion for working with people on the autism spectrum through her work as a Vocational Rehabilitation transition counselor in Dakota County schools. For the past seven years, she has served as the Autism Specialist at Vocational Rehabilitation Services, a division of DEED. Wells-Herzog has two adult daughters who have autism.

Margie Webb has 30 years of experience providing employment services to people with disabilities both in the private sector for 17 years and 13 years within VRS. She worked as a Program Director for a nonprofit Community Rehabilitation Program supervising and providing direct services in employment and independent living. As a counselor with VRS since 2006, Webb provided transition services to youth in local high schools for nine years, and then spent time focusing on helping adults with disabilities obtain community, integrated, competitive employment through the use of Person Centered practices and Customized Employment. Webb participated in the curriculum development of MN Customized Employment, and currently is training and mentoring Customized Employment throughout Minnesota.
Friday, May 1 Breakout Sessions

3-4 p.m. LIVE Breakout Sessions 3 (On-Demand May 5-Nov. 1, 2020)

1. Understanding and Applying the Neurodiversity Paradigm to Provide Respectful Supports for ALL
   Presented by: Allie Tasche; Katy Hayes, MS

   During this session, a teacher’s journey toward inclusion illustrates lessons learned from the #actuallyautistic community. By letting go of what we thought we knew and reculturing our support of autistic students, we move from compliance to compassion, improving outcomes for all. Gain an improved understanding of the neurodiversity paradigm, and discover the importance of pairing evidence-based strategies with perspectives of autistic advocates when designing person-centered supports. Video clips, visuals, case-studies, and quotes will be used to synthesize and illuminate concepts, with a focus on respectful support of learner variability, behavior, communication, social interaction, and sensory differences.

   Allie Tasche is an educator from Wisconsin. She has a BS in cross-categorical special education with certification in Autism Spectrum Disorders. Tasche has worked in education as a program support teacher, autism instructional coach, and a learning strategist. Tasche is experienced in leveraging UDL to design supports that allow neurodiverse students to thrive, and Tasche has lectured and provided professional development about autism, visual supports; UDL; sensory supports; co-planning/co-teaching; and peer-mediated literacy practices in regional districts; at Carroll University and UW-Madison, and nationally at the CAST Symposium: UDL for Social Justice in Boston, Mass, and OCALICON 2018 in Columbus, Ohio.

   Katy Hayes is a low incidence/autism coach from Oconomowoc, Wis. She has a BS in elementary and special education and an MS in reading. Hayes currently collaborates with teachers to increase student outcomes and expand inclusive practices at Oconomowoc High School. She has presented at OCALICON 2018 and the CAST UDL 4 Justice Symposium in 2017. She is a member of her district’s Autism, Building Leadership, PBIS, Literacy Leaders, and CPI teams.

2. Video Modeling and High Tech Supports ● Presented by: Sharon Hammer, MS, LPC; Lisa Ladson

   Many different teaching methods can be used to support individuals with autism. Video modeling is an evidenced-based practice, useful for school, home, work, and community settings. It works for people of all ages and access levels. Learn about the benefits of using supports that match autistic neurology and obtain an understanding of the characteristics that maximize the effectiveness of video models and high tech supports.

   Sharon Hammer is an Educational and Behavioral Consultant and a Licensed Professional Counselor. She has more than 20-years of experience working with children and individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. She is a partner at Imagine a Child’s Capacity, where she provides training and consultation to schools, community members, and parents. Hammer has co-authored two books and DVDs about using technology to support individuals with autism, entitled Lights! Camera! Autism! With Star Cinema, she co-created the first “sensory-friendly” movie going experience in the state of Wisconsin. Sharon is committed to increasing awareness and possibilities throughout the community for individuals on the spectrum.

   Lisa Ladson is an Educational and Behavioral Consultant, working as an independent contractor for Imagine a Child’s Capacity in Madison, Wis. She is a former special educator who has served as a classroom teacher, certified resource teacher, and behavior specialist, assisting individuals with disabilities for more than 25 years.

3. Supports for Minimally Verbal Individuals with ASD ● Presented by: Stacey Brandjord, MA, CCC-SLP; Amy Esler, PhD, LP; Madison Blair; Charles Davis, BS; Rebekah Hudock, PhD, LP, NCSP; Whitney Terrill, BA; Kourtney Kromminga, BA

   The minimally verbal end of the autism spectrum is traditionally underserved clinically and understudied in research. Obtaining supports for individuals with limited communication strategies during the transition to adulthood is particularly challenging. Learn about communication needs, specifically how families are accessing augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), and the effectiveness of those services, including the Transitioning Together program.

   Stacey Brandjord is a PhD student in the school psychology program at the University of Minnesota. She previously worked as a school speech-language pathologist before returning to school. Her research interests focus on service identification and use for individuals with autism as well as students with co-occurring language and behavior disorders within the educational setting. Brandjord has a specific interest in service use and interventions for individuals with autism who are minimally verbal as this is an often-overlooked population within autism.

   Amy Esler is a licensed psychologist specializing in autism and related conditions and an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota. Her clinical work and research emphasize the development of individuals with minimally verbal autism across the lifespan, including the development of interventions and assessment measures to improve functional communication skills and quality of life.

   Madison Blair grew up in Wisconsin and always has been passionate about working with children. While working on her undergraduate degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, she discovered that her true passion is working with children with autism. She is excited to become a licensed Speech Language Therapist and begin changing the lives of others by providing people with the ability to communicate.
1. See It, Show It: Reading Comprehension Based on Autistic Neurology • Presented by: Rachel Wright Jones, PhD

The ability to comprehend what is read makes reading a meaningful life skill. One must first learn to read in order to decipher meaning from print, but at the same time, one must understand what is read in order to be motivated to learn to read. While reading instruction has a longstanding history, teaching reading comprehension explicitly remains a fairly young science. Explicit reading comprehension instruction for students with autism is almost entirely absent in research publications. Gain easy strategies to help promote reading comprehension for learners on the spectrum.

Rachel Wright Jones is the Director of the Common Threads School Program in McFarland, Wis., and has more than 15 years of experience serving individuals with autism across the country. Wright Jones's areas of interest and research involve the use of emerging technologies as supports to promote independence in daily routines, improving situational outcomes in employment settings, and increasing the overall quality of life for students and individuals with autism and intellectual disability as they transition to adulthood. She is among the leading experts in Augmented Reality in Special Education and has published and presented her work on both the national and international circuits.

2. Bullying Prevention, Intervention, and Tools for Parents, Educators, Professionals, and Individuals with Autism
Presented by: Susan Einspar MEd, JD; Danna Mirviss

More than one in every five students experiences bullying at school, and students with disabilities are bullied two to three times more often than their peers. Chances are this could be happening to someone you know and care about. Parents, educators, professionals, and individuals with autism, learn what you can do to address and prevent bullying. Topics will include the dynamics of bullying, including its definition, common views, roles and its impact; classroom and individual tools and strategies; the unique protections for children with disabilities; and addressing bullying through the IEP or 504 process.

Susan Einspar currently is a Senior Advocate for PACER Center in Minneapolis, providing special education advocacy services for students on IEPs and 504 Plans or simply struggling in school. She also provides in-service training seminars for parents, school professionals, and state PTIs (Parent Information and Training Centers) on bullying prevention and legal obligations for schools to prevent and respond to bullying behavior. She has worked at PACER for nine years.

Danna Mirviss is an associate with PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. She has been involved with PACER Center since 2000, responding to inquiries and providing support and resources to students, parents, and educators about bullying prevention. Mirviss also provides community outreach services.

3. How to Use the Technology Tools in Your Toolbox for Distance Learning • Presented by: Don McMahon, PhD

Obtain instruction on the practical application of using technology tools for distance learning, including how to use the tools in developing lesson plans and implementing lesson plans through distance learning.

Don McMahon coordinates the Assistive Technology Research and Development Lab at Washington State University where he focuses on Universal Design for Learning, assistive technology, augmented reality, virtual reality, wearable devices, mobile devices, mobile learning, and instructional technology. Dr. McMahon is the co-founder of the WSU ROAR postsecondary education program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He is a national presenter providing professional development sessions for both general educators and special educators on using mobile devices in education. His work has been featured in podcasts, television, print, and presentations.
Friday, May 1 After Hours Lounge Chat

5:30-6:30 p.m. Community Conversation LIVE ONLY

Join us in the online lounge for a virtual conversation to discuss ideas and thoughts on conference topics or to connect with other members of the autism community. This lounge time will be hosted by Jillian Nelson, Autism Society of Minnesota Community Resource and Policy Advocate, and an AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services therapist. They will be available to answer questions, discuss resources, and keep the chat conversation flowing. We ask that participants keep neurodiversity acceptance at the forefront of all conversations to allow for a safe, supportive environment for all participants.

After Hours Lounge Chats will be accessible during the live virtual autism conference only.

Saturday, May 2 Morning Keynote Presentation

9-10:30 a.m. LIVE (On-Demand May 5-Nov. 1, 2020)

Self-Regulation: 25 Years of Trying New Pieces of String

Presenter: Kari Dunn Buron

Sponsored by Lifeworks Services, Inc.

Over the past 25 years, our response to challenging behaviors in the school environment has evolved to include the recognition of what it means to be able to self-regulate one’s own emotions; to regulate one’s responses to the sensory environment; and to navigate one’s way through difficult social situations. We have moved from a culture of control to one of self-empowerment. From a culture of “normalizing” to one that appreciates neurodiversity. Learn about the quest to understand the nature of self-regulation, research to support this change in school culture, and ideas to make it happen.

Kari Dunn Buron taught in the K-12 MN public school system with students on the autism spectrum for more than 30 years, is a past president of AuSM, was a founding member of the Minnesota Autism Project, and developed an ASD Certificate program for educators at Hamline University. In 2003, Dunn Buron received a self-designed fellowship that allowed her to spend a year interviewing and working internationally with a number of scientists and researchers in the areas of neuroscience, social cognition, education, and autism with a focus on challenging behaviors. Dunn Buron is the co-author of *The Incredible 5-Point Scale* (Revised Edition) and *Social Behavior and Self-Management*. She is the author of *When My Worries Get Too Big* (Revised Edition); *A 5 Could Make Me Lose Control*; and *A 5 is Against the Law!*. She is the co-editor of a textbook, *Learners on the Autism Spectrum: Preparing Highly Qualified Educators*, and a curriculum for teachers called *Social Times Curriculum*. She currently is re-launching her early chapter book, *Adalyn’s Clare*.

10:45-11:45 a.m. LIVE Breakout Sessions 5 (On-Demand May 5-Nov. 1, 2020)

1. Empower Students: Teaching Students About Their Brains • Presented by: Katie Berg, MA, Ed

    Learn the importance of teaching basic brain function to students with neurodiverse needs. Information about the amygdala hijack, the paths our brains get stuck in, and our sensory processing systems will be shared. Obtain strategies to create lessons on how the brain works.

    Katie Berg has been educating students for the past 20 years. She has worked in the private sector, the public education system, and now statewide through an IDEA Discretionary Grant. From her experiences providing therapy, classroom teaching, district training, and statewide work, Berg has engaged learners in a range of subjects related to students with neurodiverse needs. She spent many years focused on working with students with autism and students experiencing mental health differences. Social and emotional learning skills have been her focus in helping students and educators problem solve challenging behaviors.
10:45-11:45 a.m. LIVE Breakout Sessions 5 Cont. (On-Demand May 5-Nov. 1, 2020)

2. Behind the Mask: Aiding and Understanding Girls and Women with ASD
   Presented by: Emily Lindberg, LPC-IT, NCC; Stacy Stefaniak-Luther, PsyD, LPC

Across time, Autism Spectrum Disorder has been more frequently diagnosed in boys than in girls. Why is this? Current research has begun to explore sex-related differences in the presentation and diagnosis of autism. Explore the literature and how differences may impact females, as well as what caregivers can do to best work with their family member.

Emily Lindberg is a Nationally Certified Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor in Training at Behavioral Health Clinic of Wausau and Plover. She serves children and adolescents with autism. She currently is expanding her knowledge on the assessment and diagnosis of autism and works directly with educators, medical professionals, occupational therapists, and mental health professionals to provide rounded care. Lindberg co-leads social skills groups for children and adolescents with autism and other disorders.

Stacy Stefaniak-Luther, a licensed professional counselor, is a post-doctoral resident at the Behavioral Health Clinic of Wausau and Plover. With more than 15 years of experience, Luther specializes in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of autism for individuals of all ages with varied sensory needs and intellectual abilities. She works directly with various care providers serving individuals with autism and leads social skills groups for people of all ages with autism and other diagnoses that cause social difficulties.

3. Cooking Up Awesome Science At Home • Presented by: Jonte Taylor, PhD

Learn how to create food-based science activities that can be done at home with simple and easy materials or ingredients. Science lessons will be connected to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and research-based practices in autism.

Jonte Taylor is an Associate Professor of Special Education in the Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education in the College of Education at Penn State University. He taught for approximately 10 years with a variety of populations from PreK to adult in settings ranging from inclusive classrooms to residential treatment facilities. His research interests include: science education for students with disabilities, evaluating innovative classroom practices, and bullying issues for students with autism; learning disabilities; and emotional/behavioral disorders.

Saturday, May 2 Breakout Sessions

12-1 p.m. LIVE Breakout Sessions 6 (On-Demand May 5-Nov. 1, 2020)

1. Introduction to Autistic Culture • Presented by: Jules Edwards

One of the most important sources of support and information for autistics is often overlooked: other autistics. Minnesota is home to an emerging autistic community that provides a rich culture full of shared values, a strong sense of justice, and loud hands. Learn the ways that our diverse autistic community can provide necessary supports including perspective, pride, friendship, and the wisdom gained from living life as an autistic. Learn what it means to be autistic, how we can demonstrate acceptance of the autistic people in our lives, and how we can create true inclusion in our communities by recognizing and celebrating autistic culture.

Jules Edwards is an autistic activist and parent of autistic children. Her advocacy includes founding the MN Autistics and Allies social media group; volunteer work in the areas of disability services, alternative education, and family services; political advocacy with a focus on child safety and disability rights; and grassroots work focused on intersectional disability rights.

2. Helping Coordinate Your Wishes for Their Future • Presented by: Bob Johnston

What will happen to your child when you are no longer around to care for them? How does the ABLE Act of 2014 impact their life? Learn about planning for the financial future of your child with special needs. Obtain information on estate planning, guardianship, wills and trusts, and letters of intent. Johnston will draw from personal experiences as both parent and patient.

Bob Johnston is the father of a son diagnosed with ASD. He is also the survivor of a 1975 car accident that resulted in 22 orthopedic reconstruction surgeries over a 43-year time-period. Consequently, he understands disability as a patient and a parent. He is an Agency Special Care Planning Specialist for MassMutual Midwest and founder of Special Needs Planning, LLC. Additionally, he is a past president of the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin, a member of the Academy of Special Needs Planners, and a representative with the Governor’s Council on Autism. Johnston is committed to helping families through the maze of legal and financial complexities that surround planning for the financial future of people with special needs.

3. Accommodations and Modifications: Equity for Each and Every • Presented by: Samantha Jung

In today’s classrooms, teachers work with students who have a wide variety of experiences, knowledge, learning styles, skill sets, work ethic, needs, and motivation. A “one size fits all” approach is no longer an efficient way to teach, but it also is unrealistic to require teachers to rewrite their lesson plans for each different learner’s profile. Educators and professionals, obtain the education and tools to define, implement, and evaluate accommodations for students in all educational settings.

Samantha Jung is a Special Education Coordinator with the Wayzata School District. She has worked as a professional special educator for nine years, but has lived in the world of autism for 29 years with a sibling who is on the spectrum. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Special Education from Winona State University in 2011 and went on to complete her master’s degree in 2015 from Hamline University.
Assembly Required

Presenter: Haley Moss

Sponsored by Minnesota Independence College & Community

Autism does not come with an instruction manual, but it does come with lots of magical parts and important tools to use to build the best life possible. Assembly Required is the story of Haley Moss, an autistic attorney who has gone from a nonverbal child diagnosed with autism at age 3, to an author, artist, attorney, and autism advocate. Explore Moss’s journey, the assembly of her village, finding her written and spoken voice, looking to the future full of hope, inspiration, and excitement as she writes the next, ongoing chapter in her life as a lawyer. Moss also will look at neurodiversity, acceptance, and perspectives of how society views autism and related disabilities.

Haley Moss, diagnosed with autism at age 3, graduated with her Juris Doctor from the University of Miami School of Law in 2018. She is a renowned visual pop artist and the author of Middle School: The Stuff Nobody Tells You About and A Freshman Survival Guide for College Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: The Stuff Nobody Tells You About. She also was the illustrator of and a contributor for the Autism Women’s Network anthology What Every Autistic Girl Wishes Her Parents Knew. Her writing has been featured in HuffPost, Teen Vogue, Elite Daily, The Mighty, and other websites and publications.

Saturday, May 2 After Hours Lounge Chat

3-4:30 p.m. “Flappy Hour” LIVE ONLY

Join our special guest, keynote speaker Haley Moss, and Autism Society of Minnesota Community Resource and Policy Advocate, Jillian Nelson, for a neurodiverse community-building social gathering. Connect with other autistic people and discuss the conference, your personal experiences, and more. This special chat offers a place to come together and focus on connecting with other members of our diverse and spectacular community. We ask that participants keep neurodiversity acceptance at the forefront of all conversations to allow for a safe, supportive environment for all participants.

After Hours Lounge Chats will be accessible during the live virtual autism conference only.

Thank you for participating with us!

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**Sensory-friendly Saturdays**

This monthly series at the Bell Museum provides a welcoming and accessible environment for individuals, families, and children who have sensory sensitivities. Experience exhibits, the Touch & See Lab, and a brief planetarium show—all with lowered lighting, quieter sounds, and fewer visitors.

**Sensory friendly resources**

Visitors are welcome to check out additional resources like the quiet spaces, visual timers, weighted lap pads, and hearing protection if it helps make the visit more enjoyable, and a social narrative is available for download to prepare for your visit.

bellmuseum.umn.edu/sensory

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For more information contact: Shelly Lopez at 612-726-5239 or Shelly.Lopez@mspmac.org
1. Overcoming Obstacles: Accessing Services in Multicultural Communities
   Presented by: Fatima Molas, Delia Samuel, Rufo Jiru, Jules Edwards, Maren Christenson Hofer

Accessing services for the autistic community can be challenging under the very best of circumstances, but when we add in differences of language, culture, immigration status, and power dynamics into the mix, the obstacles can seem almost insurmountable. Hear from a culturally diverse panel of parents of autistic children about what is working for their families, what is not, and discuss how to move forward on the path to successful community engagement that includes all families.

Fatima Molas is the chairperson and co-founder of the Multicultural Autism Action Network, leads a support group for families of autistic children in the Somali community, and is the mother of an autistic child.

Delia Samuel is a board member of the Multicultural Autism Action Network and the author of a book entitled Against the Odds: Inspiration for Parenting Children with Special Needs. She is also the founder of an organization supporting autistic children and their families in her home country of St. Lucia.

Rufo Jiru is a Research Associate and Developmental Chemist at R&D Systems in Minneapolis. She is also an outspoken advocate for women and children in the Oromo community, and is the founder of Anole Sisters, a nonprofit organization supporting Oromo women.

Jules Edwards is the autistic mom of three autistic children. She is co-founder of MN Autistics and Allies, an autistic-led social media group, a member of the MN Autism Council, and a board member for Minnesota Disability Support Alternatives. She is a passionate advocate for issues of disability justice, and her family members are enrolled members of the Fon du Lac band of Chippewa (Ojibwe).

Maren Christenson Hofer is the mother of an amazing autistic child. She is also a board member of the Multicultural Autism Action Network and coordinates Minneapolis Autism Parent Support, a group for parents of autistic children. She serves on the MN State Autism Council, the Governor's Interagency Coordinating Committee for Early Intervention, the Minnesota Restrictive Procedures Workgroup, the Leadership Team for the State Comprehensive System of Personnel Development for Early Childhood Education, and is currently partnering with the Autism Society of Minnesota and the Somali American Parent Association on a project to improve outcomes for multicultural families of autistic children.

2. Cultural Journeys: How to Engage and Best Support East-African Families Who Have Children with ASD
   Presented by: Leanna Kraemer, LMFT; Hamdi Ahmed; Aida Ibrahim

Obtain a brief history and background about Somali and East African immigrants in the Twin Cities area, which will include a short video of a family’s story. Learn about the obstacles and challenges East African families may face during the assessment process, the diagnosis, and finally the recommendation or referral process for appropriate services. Gain knowledge in effective strategies and tools during each step for best supporting and engaging families during this often stressful and confusing time while keeping a culturally sensitive perspective.

Leanna Kraemer is a licensed marriage and family therapist. She received her master’s in marriage and family therapy from St. Mary’s University in 2015. She began her work with children and families at St. David’s Center as an intern in their autism day treatment program, then as a mental health practitioner, and finally transitioned to the St. David’s East African Day Treatment program as a mental health professional to continue to support the growth of the program and is currently the program supervisor.

Hamdi Ahmed received her BA in psychology from the University of Minnesota. She is currently a second year master’s of social work student, with a concentration in clinical mental health, at the University of Minnesota. Ahmed is also a MN LEND Fellow. She previously worked at St. David’s Center as a Mental Health Practitioner in the East African Autism Day Treatment program, is passionate about the field of neurodevelopmental disabilities, and enjoys working with children with autism and their families.

Aida Ibrahim is a mental health practitioner and outreach specialist at St. David’s Center. She has a master’s degree in clinical counseling and has worked closely with families to provide family therapy and support to better meet the unique needs of their child with autism while remaining culturally sensitive. She also provides individual skill work for children with ASD and community wide psychoeducation about autism within the Somali community.

3. Trauma-Informed Classrooms: Using the Polyvagal Theory to Modify Our Approaches
   Presented by: Thomas Szewczyk

Gain a new understanding of how to view behaviors of students who have experienced trauma. Learn about a regulation curriculum for the classroom and how to intertwine that curriculum with the ideas of the Polyvagal Theory. Dive into Polyvagal Theory and how we should change our approach depending on the student’s stage.

Tom Szewczyk was born in Connecticut and moved to Minnesota in 2009. He currently lives in Bloomington, Minn., with his wife Kristi and two boys, Finley and Felix. For 17 years he has held a number of roles working with children with trauma: residential children service worker, assistant recreation therapist, paraprofessional, special education teacher, and now as an administrator.
4. Using Person-Centered Design to Improve Equity and Outcomes in Schools  
Presented by: Cindy Hillyer BSN, RN, LSN; Mariam Warsame, BA

Receive an overview of the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) ASD Families Connected Initiative, a project that focuses on person-centered program design and equity in identification and treatment of autism, addressing professional approaches to enhance equity and outcomes in health, and education and family supports for children with ASD and their families. ASD Families Connected aims to build equity in service delivery through family input, data analysis, and continuous improvement to create new services and cross-system coordination that support families from diverse backgrounds in timely access to resources and supports. In partnership with MN LEND and families, Minneapolis Public Schools has designed a series of projects over four years to improve internal processes and external collaboration, making it easier for families to get what they need for their children and improving population outcomes.

Cindy Hillyer is the director of MPS Early Childhood Education, where she designs and leads strategies in the public and nonprofit sectors to advance health and education outcomes through cross-sector collaboration and an equity lens. She graduated with distinction from the UMN School of Nursing and is an MPA candidate at Hamline University. Her community contributions include serving on boards, using her expertise to influence systems redesign so that our public and private systems will serve all groups in our communities well.

Mariam Warsame is a sub-teacher with the MPS Early Childhood Screening Program and a MN LEND Fellow. Her work includes identifying developmental delays in children with an early preventative stance, promoting kindergarten readiness, and using person-centered strategies to support families in accessing needed resources and supports. Originally from Somalia, she graduated from the University of Minnesota with a BA in Biology, Society, and Environment.

5. Redefining Advocacy: From Preparing to Battle to Coming Together as a Team  
Presented by: Wendy Andersen, MS

Challenge what being an advocate looks like for parents and school personnel. The key is knowing how to build the bridge between the two parties to come together and do what’s best for the child. Being an advocate should be fun, energizing, and the ultimate demonstration of teamwork. Learn simple and effective ways to move from being ready to battle to working together as a unified team with the same goal. You aren’t meant to do this alone, and redefining what being an advocate means for you and your situation is key to building a strong foundation.

Wendy Andersen is an accomplished author, speaker, IEP coach, teacher, and advocate, as well as a wife and mother. She is passionate about spreading her message and encouraging families to redefine normal. Having three children of her own and one with special needs, Andersen has been on both sides of the table as a parent and teacher. She brings a unique perspective which allows her to help bridge the gap between schools and families so the team can come together to discover what is in the child’s best interest.

6. Enhancing Therapeutic Relationships  
Presented by: Tiffany Tully

Many autistics and their family members end up in therapy at some point. However, the experience of therapy differs greatly depending on how well the client and therapist build a relationship and shared goals. Learn ways to enhance the quality of the therapy experience and to build a better bond and connection between families and support staff. Topics addressed will include: what therapists can do to better support the whole family as well as the client; what families and clients can do to get practical and useful help; how the disabled individual can advocate for themselves in appointments; how therapists can connect with their disabled clients; and tools that therapists can teach to help their clients and families in practical settings.

Tiffany Tully is an autistic mom with a BA in Applied Behavior Analysis with a focus on early childhood education and intervention. Tully decided against pursuing ABA as her career and went on to teach in the classroom. She now stays home to support her family. Tully currently focuses on educating providers, educators, and parents on culturally sensitive autism interventions. She is an autism advocate who is passionate in enhancing autistic lives as well as an outspoken proponent for acceptance. Alongside her husband, they are raising two beautiful neurodivergent children.
NEURODIVERSITY TRACK

1. Grieving As a Person with ASD • Presented by: Br. Anselm Philip King-Lowe OSB; Barb Luskin, PhD, LP

   Every person experiences grief after losing someone they love, a job, and when a close relationship ends. People on the autistic spectrum experience grief on multiple levels. The experience of emotions while grieving is often tangled for the autistic person. Figuring out which emotion to deal with first is more complicated than the loss itself. Learn about what grieving emotions are legitimate and need attention. Talk about important ways an autistic person can take care of themselves while grieving.

   **Brother Anselm Philip King-Lowe** was diagnosed with autism in 2011. He is a Benedictine Anchorite Monk and is married to his husband, Jason. He offers Spiritual and Grief Companionship through a web-based ministry.

   **Barb Luskin**, an AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services therapist, is a licensed psychologist who has worked closely with children and adults with ASD for more than 30 years in professional and home settings. She specializes in providing both assessments and counseling to individuals with ASD and those who support them.

2. “Neuro-Majority” Mistakes • Presented by: Lisa Hoeme, MS, LPC

   Often, much time and effort are spent finding ways to change the autistic individuals’ way of being. What would happen if we flipped that, and instead looked at helping those in the “neuro-majority” identify their behaviors that may not be a good fit or match for autistic neurology? With an increased awareness of these “mistakes” we make, we can adjust and modify our own thoughts and behaviors in order to have more authentic relationships, honor and respect different neurologies, and better support those with autism in our lives.

   **Lisa Hoeme** is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Educational and Behavior Consultant, and a partner at Imagine a Child’s Capacity where she provides training and consultation to schools, community agencies, and parents. She has more than 20 years of clinical experience serving individuals and families, including those with autism, Down syndrome, traumatic brain injury, attention difficulties, obsessive compulsive disorder, anxiety, and depression. Hoeme uses a variety of approaches, including mindfulness, cognitive behavior therapy, collaborative problem solving, and interpersonal neurobiology. She is committed to helping those she supports to achieve personal growth and overall well-being using a positive, individualized, and person-centered approach.

3. The Edge of the Spectrum: Autistic Traits Without a Diagnosis • Presented by: Beth Pitchford, MA, LPCC

   It’s common for family members of autistic individuals to show similar traits, or be a part of the Broader Autism Phenotype (BAP). Learn what BAP is, what research exists about it, and the helpful role BAPs can take on in the autism community. Through discussion, autistics, providers, and community members can propose ways to be supportive of BAPs and learn about their needs in the community.

   **Beth Pitchford**, an AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services therapist, earned a master’s degree in psychology from the Adler Graduate School (AGS), where she focused on learning about autism and how various aspects of Adlerian psychology could compliment the standard use of cognitive behavioral therapy with people on the autism spectrum. Pitchford became passionate about working with people on the “invisible” part of the spectrum (formerly known as Asperger’s syndrome) after she realized that many people close to her are on the spectrum and have spent most of their lives wondering why they felt so different.

4. Navigating the World of Sensory Supports • Presented by: Jenna Matteson-Laabs

   We live in a world where sensory tools are more accessible and sensory supports are more common. But how do we know what to choose, and how do we know if they work? Move beyond the simple knowledge of the sensory system and explore strategies that are commonly used to improve sensory processing and participation. Discuss the different signs that may indicate strategy effectiveness, while building confidence in your ability to select appropriate sensory tools. Feel like you have more direction while you navigate the world of sensory supports.

   **Jenna Matteson-Laabs** is an occupational therapist within the Centennial School District. Her background has primarily focused on providing services to children, from birth through adolescence, within clinical and educational settings. She has 15 years of experience working with autistic individuals, including previous employment with AuSM’s Hand in Hand and Wahode Camps, and current involvement in serving on the Board of Directors for the Autism Society of Minnesota. She is passionate about helping people find success and independence in their lives, with particular interests in executive functioning, self-regulation, and behavior management.

5. The Hidden Relationship Between Executive Function and Emotion Regulation • Presented by: Olivia James

   While most resources keep executive functioning and emotion regulation distinct, the two areas of life are deeply interrelated. Each of them plays a significant role in autistic quality of life. How can we use each one to improve the other? What skills do they share? Explore the ways that prioritization, focus, and inhibition allow us to improve our executive functioning and emotion regulation, and learn skills that will help you take control of both.

   **Olivia James**, a woman on the autism spectrum, is the Marketing and Communications Specialist at AuSM. James has been a keynote speaker at the AuSM Self-Advocacy Summit and has presented at the state autism conference. As a MN LEND Fellow, she is in the process of writing and illustrating a book about executive functioning.
Imagine that you are surrounded by people, who regularly make assumptions about your intelligence based on your communicative abilities and behaviors. People regularly speak about you in front of you, and professionals rarely address you directly. Even though you are well into your 20s, you are engaged with activity options and in manner of speech better suited for a toddler. How would you feel? This is a reality for many adults with severe autism; well-meaning professionals, and sometimes parents, too often presume ignorance, instead of presuming competence. Learn from experiences and obtain basic strategies for presuming competence of adults with severe high support needs.

Sirad Shirdon is a speech-language pathologist, specializing in augmentative and alternative communication, with LiveLife Therapy Solution’s Technology for HOME program. Technology for HOME is contracted by the Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide assistive technology services for Minnesotans with disabilities in their home. Since 2018, Technology for HOME has partnered with DHS on a pilot to explore the use of communication and sensory supports as positive support strategies for adults with complex support needs living in residential facilities. Shirdon is deeply passionate about improving the service system for children and adults with autism and other disabilities.

Jean Bender is the parent of an adult with multiple disabilities, including autism, who has high support needs. She has parented David by capitalizing on his playful nature, sense of humor, and special interests, understanding that he can learn new skills and self-accommodation with patience, repetition and presuming competence. Professionally, Bender worked in early intervention services for more than 15 years as a service coordinator for families who had preschool children with disabilities. She currently serves on AuSM’s Board of Directors and is co-chair of AuSM’s Advocacy Committee.
1. Overview of Guardianship Options and Supported Decision Making • Presented by: Allycia Wolff; Jason Schellack, JD

When people turn 18-years-old, they are legally considered adults. For many individuals with disabilities, families may need to consider whether guardianship, or a less-restrictive alternative, is appropriate. Guardianship allows one person to make decisions on behalf of a disabled adult. Through supported decision-making, individuals with disabilities are able to make their own decisions, with the support of their individual networks. This session will help caregivers, parents, support providers, practitioners, and people who need help in making decisions, better understand their options. Guardianship is just one way. Learn about supported decision-making, and what level of support is appropriate for each individual person.

Allycia Wolff joined The Arc Minnesota in 2013 as an advocate. Through the years, she has worked as an advocate in the areas of housing, employment, and guardianship. She assists individuals and families in understanding their options around supported decision making and rights through the guardianship process. Wolff leads The Arc Minnesota's Future Planning work. She supports people in thinking about their futures through Person-Centered Planning and the FutureLife Options program. In 2019, Wolff developed and hosted the Focus on the Future podcast. She is passionate about helping people plan for the next steps in their life while having their goals, hopes, and dreams at center stage.

Jason Schellack is the Managing Attorney at Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC. He has been advocating for individuals with autism and their families for his entire career as an AuSM Camp Discovery counselor and direct support staff; public defender; and attorney with Autism Advocacy & Law Center. Schellack focuses his practice on estate planning, guardianship, family law, and special education law. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from Hamline University and his law degree from Mitchell Hamline School of Law.

2. Social Security Disability Benefits 101 • Presented by: Nate Gurol, JD

Is your child or young adult unable to work and support themselves due to their Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis? Many parents are unaware that their child diagnosed with ASD may be eligible for Social Security Disability benefits. Nate Gurol, a staff attorney at Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC, will walk you through the steps to apply for Social Security benefits and explain how an attorney can help with your application, the application timeline and process, and how the Social Security Administration makes a determination on a disability claim.

Nate Gurol graduated from the University of Oregon School of Law in May 2015. Since graduating from law school, he has worn many different hats, including holding positions as a Legislative Fellow for the New York State Senate and an Attorney Editor at Thomson Reuters. Nate joined Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC as a staff attorney in 2018. In that position, he has assisted numerous individuals and families with special needs in a variety of areas of law, including guardianship petitions, divorces, child support, criminal expungements, and applying for Social Security benefits.

3. Navigating Minnesota’s Systems of Supports for People with ASD

Presented by: Nicole Berning MS, BCBA; Erin Farrell; Abbie Wells-Herzog, MS, CRC, ACRE; Shawn Holmes

The focus of this interactive panel presentation is to support people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families, caregivers, providers, and advocates. Obtain a clearer understanding of Minnesota’s system of supports and services. Representatives from the Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, Employment and Economic Development, and Human Services will provide an overview of what services are available in education, health care, public health, and social services and how to best access those services. Learn how to advocate for better coordinated services.

Nicole Berning is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and works with the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), Disability Services Division as the Autism Clinical Lead for the Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI) benefit. She has a background of providing early intensive behavioral intervention services to children with ASD and related conditions, and currently provides consultation, training, and technical assistance to early intervention providers on EIDBI policies and procedures. Berning also provides outreach to parents and caregivers of children with ASD and related conditions on the services and supports available and how to access them.

Erin Farrell is the Autism Spectrum Disorders Specialist for the Minnesota Department of Education. She is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and a licensed ASD teacher. Farrell also is an Adjunct Professor and Doctoral Student at the University of St. Thomas. Prior to her role at MDE, she was a District Behavior Specialist in schools, supporting families, teachers, and students through positive behavior supports. Farrell is dedicated to helping families and educators navigate supports and evidence-based strategies for students with ASD.

Abbie Wells-Herzog has worked in the employment and disability field for more than 30 years. She developed a passion for working with people on the autism spectrum through her work as a Vocational Rehabilitation transition counselor in Dakota County schools. For the past seven years, she has served as the Autism Specialist at Vocational Rehabilitation Services, a division of DEED. Wells-Herzog has two adult daughters who have autism.

Shawn Holmes works for the MN Department of Health (MDH) as the Early Identification and Intervention Coordinator in the Children and Youth with Special Health Needs Section. She manages MN’s Follow Along Program, a statewide developmental and social-emotional screening program provided through local public health departments for children from birth to 36 months who are at risk of health or developmental issues. Holmes conducts statewide training opportunities for early childhood screening providers on the use of screening instruments, typical development resources, communicating screening results, referral procedures, and connection to local evaluation and early intervention services. She also serves as the MDH liaison for Minnesota’s early intervention system, Help Me Grow.
4. How To Pay for It? Funding Options for Autism Services and Supports • Presented by: Kimberly Hicks

People with autism may choose to access many services and supports, however, understanding how to access funding to cover these things can be confusing and frustrating. Many people go without services because of the cost. Learn about health care coverage and other funding opportunities to obtain access to services.

_**Kimberly Hicks**_ has worked in the disability services field for more than 20 years as a direct support professional, autism service provider, special education teacher, advocate, and in state policy. She is part of a diverse family in outstate Minnesota, raising three children with disabilities, including ASD. Hicks is active in her local community and passionate about providing information so all families can make informed choices to meet their children's unique needs. She had 11 years of experience when she started her family, knowing how things were supposed to work, and then experiencing first-hand how they didn’t. This ignited her passion for making change.

5. Disability Policy and Advocacy: Current Climate and Election Preview • Presented by: Jillian Nelson, Jean Bender

Receive a detailed overview of the current policy affecting the disability community and what interested parties can do in response to current legislative challenges. Obtain information pertaining to the disability community regarding upcoming elections as well as current issues.

_Jillian Nelson_ is a Community Resource and Policy Advocate at AuSM, was diagnosed with autism as a young adult. With a degree in human services and a background in self-advocacy, she has dedicated her career to helping others with autism achieve their goals, advocating for system change, and spreading a message of education and autism acceptance. In addition to her role at AuSM, Nelson currently sits on the Governor’s Council for Developmental Disabilities. She also has worked in employment services, helping others with autism secure and retain appropriate, successful employment.

_Jean Bender_ is the parent of an adult with multiple disabilities, including autism, who has high support needs. She has parented David by capitalizing on his playful nature, sense of humor, and special interests, understanding that he can learn new skills and self-accommodation with patience, repetition and presuming competence. Professionally, Bender worked in early intervention services for more than 15 years as a service coordinator for families who had preschool children with disabilities. She currently serves on AuSM’s Board of Directors and is co-chair of AuSM’s Advocacy Committee.

6. Autism Prevalence in Minnesota

_Presented by: Jennifer Hall-Lande, PhD, LP; Amy Esler, PhD, LP_—Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability in the U.S. Every two years the CDC’s Autism Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network reports on national autism prevalence rates. National autism prevalence rates reveal that 1 in 54 children are identified with autism. MN autism prevalence rates are 1 in 44 children. During this session, the MN ADDM team will share about recently updated national and Minnesota ASD prevalence rates as well as the age of initial identification of autism in U.S. and MN; research in autism identification; and strategies to better support children and families in the autism identification process.

_Jennifer Hall-Lande_ is a researcher and psychologist in the field of early Intervention at the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Hall-Lande also has an extensive background working with young children in both clinical, school, and early childhood settings. Her clinical work focuses on child development, including early identification of autism and other developmental disabilities and delays. Her research focuses on autism prevalence and early identification of developmental delays and disabilities. She is a lead researcher on the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network and “Learn the Signs. Act Early.” projects.

_Amy Esler_ is an assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics, a licensed psychologist in the Pediatric Autism Spectrum Disorder Clinic, and director of the Fragile X Clinic at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Esler specializes in diagnosis and behavioral characteristics of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). She is an internationally-recognized trainer on ASD diagnostic measures. Dr. Esler’s research interests focus on early screening and diagnosis of ASD, characterizing the behavioral symptoms of ASD across the lifespan, and studying the relationship between culture and ASD.
1. Engineering Social Skills While Social Distancing • Presented by: Patrick Garvey

One of the challenges during this time of social distancing is continuing to engage in meaningful and motivating social experiences. Technology can help rebuild those experiences and bring us back to building and playing together. Learn about different online platforms and activities that parents, educators, and providers can use to lead online social groups that focus on the shared objective of designing, building, and reflecting on a project. Online cooperative gaming will also be discussed as a method to facilitate conversation. Learn how to easily control a video chat, manage a Minecraft server, build websites, collectively edit videos online, and become a digital dungeon master.

Patrick Garvey received his bachelor's degree in elementary and theater education from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. He's currently working toward a master's degree in library information studies with an emphasis in educational technology. Garvey previously taught for the Madison Metropolitan School District, Wisconsin Youth Company, and Madison Family Theater. He enjoys teaching project-based engineering lessons that empower students with new tools to create products that can be shared with others.

2. Sexuality for All Abilities: Best Practices in Teaching Sexuality Education for People with Autism • Presented by: Leah Bauman-Smith

Review the background on sexual education for people with disabilities, and discuss potential education strategies for people with autism. Learn how to have respectful and supportive conversations around sexual health and strategies you can use with your student/child related to sexual health. Feel more comfortable talking about consent and boundaries and obtain at least one new resource you can use to learn more about sexuality education.

Leah Bauman-Smith is an educator and outreach specialist for Mad Hatter Wellness and Sexuality for All Abilities. She loves having the opportunity to teach about consent, healthy relationships, and boundaries to people of all abilities. Bauman-Smith has been a special education teacher for 13 years and taught sexuality education in special education classes for more than 10 years.

3. Ten Tips For Teaching Young Children With Autism • Presented by: Tara Tuchel, MS, CCC-SLP

Early childhood special education teachers, speech/language pathologists, preschool teachers, childcare providers, and parents of autistic children, obtain tips, resources, and strategies for structuring play and interactions through pictures, examples, and videos. Learn about visual supports and increasing effective communication and self-regulation.

Tara Tuchel is a speech/language pathologist who has specialized in autism for 20 years. She started her career at the elementary level and now is enjoying the early childhood level at Stillwater Area Public Schools. Tuchel has a published children's book about autism titled My Best Friend Will and is an adjunct faculty member for the ASD licensure program at Hamline University. In 2015 and 2016, Tuchel traveled to Dimitrov, Russia to work side by side with educators and parents to teach them how to work with children with autism.

4. Panic Attack Toolbox • Presented by: Savannah Bloechl

Many people on and off the autism spectrum are affected by panic attacks. Being prepared to manage the symptoms or prevent one from happening can be critical for self-care and may help alleviate anxiety caused by the unknown. Learn how to create a personalized panic attack toolbox for yourself, or for/with, your child, client, spouse, sibling, or student. Learn what a panic attack is, the difference between a panic and an autonomic meltdown, identifying triggers, and how to effectively manage the symptoms of one.

Savannah Bloechl is an aspiring public speaker, advocate for neurodiversity and autism acceptance, and is a medical assistant in training. She hopes to continue her education and become a clinical pathologist or laboratory scientist. In her spare time, she’s also a freelance artist who dabbles in various forms of art, including digital art, polymer clay items, and aromatherapy bracelets. Bloechl also loves to listen to the experiences of diverse groups of people so she can better understand the world around her and learn how to effectively help people in need.

5. Tales from the Toybox: Learning Through Evidenced-Based Play • Presented by: Laura Nagel, MS, OTR/L; Liz Hedrich, MS, CCC-SLP

Play is a powerful vehicle through which children learn and explore many skills. This session will focus on lessons learned from 23 years of experience providing play-based therapy interventions to children with ASD. Come unpack our toybox to learn about our favorite games, books, and activities to target goal areas. Gain an understanding of the research behind play-based learning and dive right into exploring activities hands-on while developing your activity analysis skills. Come for the knowledge, stay for the FUN!

Laura Nagel is an occupational therapist at CI Pediatric Therapy Centers. She has more than 14 years of experience working with children on the autism spectrum, starting her career as an ABA therapist before becoming an OT. Nagel is a graduate of UW-Madison's undergraduate rehabilitation psychology program and master's level occupational therapy program. Her experience includes emphasis on self-regulation, sexuality education, transition to adulthood, executive functioning, and functional application of client interests to address goal areas.

Liz Hedrich is a speech-language pathologist and the Director of Therapy at CI Pediatric Therapy Centers. She has more than nine years of experience working with children on the autism spectrum, starting her career as an ABA therapist before becoming an SLP. Hedrich completed both her bachelor's degree and master's degree at UW-Madison. Her clinical passions include early language development, social communication, AAC, and creating meaningful and functional communication outcomes for her clients.
On Demand Breakout Sessions (May 1-Nov. 1, 2020)

6. Using Song Lyrics to Teach Meaningful Lessons: Distance Learning Edition • Presented by: Ben Riden, PhD; Jonte C. Taylor, PhD

Learn strategies to engage students with song lyrics to teach meaningful lessons, particularly as support during distance learning.

Ben Riden is an Assistant Professor and Special Education Coordinator at the University of Minnesota Duluth. He received his PhD in Special Education from Penn State University and his MEd in Mild and Moderate Special Education from the University of Utah.

Jonte Taylor is an Associate Professor of Special Education in the Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education in the College of Education at Penn State University. His research interests include: science education for students with disabilities, evaluating innovative classroom practices, and bullying issues for students with autism; learning disabilities; and emotional/behavioral disorders.

7. Strategies for Preventing Explosive “Behaviors” • Presented by: Mandy Reinke

Fill your toolbox with ready-to-implement strategies to help prevent explosive “behaviors.” Learn classroom and home strategies to meet the needs of your students or children. Learn why understanding the function of a behavior is important to determine which strategies will best fit needs.

Mandy Reinke has worked in the field of autism as both a special educator and autism consultant for the past 21 years. She provides program support for various school districts, families, and employers across the state. She also works for the Hortonville Area School District as their program support for students with ASD as well as an Allies in Mental Health Education coach for CESA 7. Reinke provides trainings, consultation services, and coaching on a wide variety of topics related to Autism Spectrum Disorders across Wisconsin.

8. Autism 101 • Presented by: Sharon Hammer, MS, LPC; Lisa Ladson

This introductory workshop will focus on providing a deeper understanding of autism and how people with autism experience the world. Learn common characteristics of autism and strategies for effectively supporting people on the spectrum and obtain autism-related resources. Receive a greater understanding of how autism may impact how a person learns, interacts with others, and develops relationships.

Sharon Hammer is an Educational and Behavioral Consultant and a Licensed Professional Counselor. With more than 20 years of experience working with individuals with autism and their families, she is a partner at Imagine a Child’s Capacity, where she provides training and consultation to schools, community members, and parents.

Lisa Ladson is an Educational and Behavioral Consultant, working as an independent contractor for Imagine a Child’s Capacity. She has been working with individuals with disabilities for more than 25 years.

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AuSM’s COVID-19 Support Resources

As we work through these unprecedented days altered by the Coronavirus pandemic, AuSM is here for you.

You may be feeling anxious over changes in routines, unsure about how to handle social isolation and distancing, and nervous about copious and often conflicting information available through the news and social media. You are not alone.

AuSM is creating and collecting support resources to help guide you through the pandemic. If you have specific support needs, we also encourage you to reach out to us. AuSM’s Information and Resources specialists are available to support you via phone 651.647.1083 and e-mail info@ausm.org.

AuSM Membership

Whether you are a family with a child who is newly diagnosed, an adult on the spectrum, an educator who serves individuals with autism, or a business that wants to learn how to better serve customers with autism, AuSM provides you with resources and services you need to help you accomplish your goals. Your AuSM membership also guides your path into the autism community, helping you find the most comfortable way to participate and grow.

Visit www.ausm.org or call 651.647.1083 to become an AuSM Member today!

AuSM Counseling and Consulting Services

Autism Society of Minnesota therapists have committed their careers to helping individuals with autism spectrum disorder understand their diagnosis. They provide strategies to support each person’s unique autism experience, addressing both the challenges and gifts it can bring. AuSM therapists help individuals from youth through adulthood as they grow at their own pace in a safe, compassionate, and respectful environment.

Help During the Pandemic

AuSM’s Counseling and Consulting Services team currently is accepting new clients for individual therapy via telehealth. Immediate openings are available for clients with the following insurances: Medical Assistance Plans including Hennepin Health, Ucare, Medica Choice Care, Blue Plus, and HealthPartners Care; also Blue Cross Blue Shield, Health Partners, Medicare, Ucare Individual and Family plans, and Preferred One.

Please contact our office at 651.647.1083 ext. 13 or e-mail autismcounseling@ausm.org with questions about family therapy, case consultation, other services, and insurances not listed.

Consulting Services, Support Groups, and Social Coaching

AuSM’s Counseling and Consulting Services team is available to assist therapists, group home staff, community organizations, employers, day training and habilitation groups, and other professionals who work with individuals with autism with general training or strategies related to a specific issue or topic.

AuSM offers free monthly support groups to meet the needs of caregivers, children, family members, and individuals. In addition, AuSM offers social coaching for individuals who want to build specific skills. Visit www.ausm.org for more information.
AN AuSM EVENING
with
Temple Grandin

Join AuSM for an evening with this world-renowned autism community icon.

Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2020

Registration will be open soon on www.ausm.org.

Photo by Rosalie Winard
**Autism Society of Minnesota**
The mission of the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) is to enhance the lives of individuals and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. AuSM serves Minnesotans, throughout their lives, with a fundamental commitment to advocacy, education, support, collaboration, and community building.

www.ausm.org

**Academy of Whole Learning**
Academy of Whole Learning in Minnetonka, MN is a K-12 school for students with autism spectrum disorder and individual learning needs. With class sizes of 7 to 9 students and a 4:1 student/teacher ratio, we provide a personalized learning path integrating social, academic, and life skills. Students thrive in our unique learning environment, designed to meet each child’s sensory needs. We are more than a school; we focus on the whole child, including on-site therapy, extra-curricular social activities, summer programming, and life skills training.

www.aowl.org

**Accra*®**
As a non-profit organization since 1992, Accra has provided services to individuals with disabilities of all ages as well as older adults. The services provided support the independence of the individual and offer the highest quality care when needed, whether it is a self-directed program of Personal Care Assistance or Consumer-Directed Community Supports; home health care with the personalized attention of a skilled nurse or home health aide; as well as providing customized living services in assisted living facilities. We offer these services throughout Minnesota in all 87 counties.

www.accracare.org

**Anderson Center for Autism**
Anderson Center for Autism’s mission is to optimize quality of life for individuals with autism. Located in the Hudson Valley Region, two hours north of New York City, ACA provides residential and educational programs to students ages 5-21 with autism. Based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), our treatment approach focuses on techniques and interventions that use positive reinforcement to teach our individuals the skills they need to strive for independence and reach their full potential. Our professional team administers ABA programs that comprehensively address each individual’s educational, emotional, and social needs in a proactive, positive manner.

www.andersoncenterforautism.org

**The Arc Minnesota**
The Arc Minnesota provides information and assistance to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families statewide.

www.arcminnesota.org

**Autism Advocacy & Law Center, LLC*®**
Autism Advocacy & Law Center is a law firm dedicated to assisting families and individuals affected by special needs. We are uniquely qualified to assist in the areas of estate planning, special needs trusts, guardianship, special education law, family law, and criminal defense.

www.autismlawcenter.com

**Best Care*®**
Personal care services are not one-size-fits-all. There are varying levels of care, and a variety of funding sources available to cover expenses. In addition, there’s a flurry of mandatory paperwork, timekeeping records, and legal requirements to keep track of. All these details quickly can become overwhelming and it can be hard to feel confident that you are making the right choices. Whether you are looking for care for yourself or for a loved one, having a trusted ally present to advocate on your behalf every step of the way is key to receiving the best possible in-home care experience. Best Care is here to help.

www.bestcaremn.com

**Bethesda Lutheran Communities**
For over 115 years, Bethesda has provided vital support, resources, and encouragement to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in a way that is true to our Christian mission. We are dedicated to helping those we support become active members of their community so that they can live their best life possible. Our community-based residential support services are individualized to meet the desires of each person and include shared living options as well as small group homes. No matter the setting, we strive to foster independence and employer choice in the everyday activities and decisions of the people we support.

www.bethesdalc.org

**ConnectHuman**
At ConnectHuman, our mission is to create meaningful connections that empower people to improve their well-being and performance. Connection Zoo®, our first product, is a play-based social and emotional learning toolkit that includes animal cards along with other learning tools. Animal images and fun facts create associations between the animals and the social and emotional experience. As kids get to know their animals, they develop a vocabulary to talk about and manage big emotions, stress, and anxiety, and ask for help. With regular use, conversation about feelings is normalized, and kids develop self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship skills.

www.connectionzoo.com

**FiND Network**
The FiND Network connects you to research, resources, and events related to neurodevelopment. Anyone can join, including individuals with and without a diagnosis, as well as family members, educators, and professionals. FiND your connection to research! To sign up, complete a short, confidential online survey at http://find.umn.edu. For more information or help signing up contact us at: canlab@umn.edu or 612.625.8448. We welcome anyone with an autism diagnosis and their families to join the SPARK study. We want to speed up research and advance the understanding of autism. It’s simple. It’s free. It can be done completely from your home.

www.sparkforautism.org/uminnesota

**GT Independence**
GT Independence provides Financial Management Services in Minnesota for Consumer Directed Community Supports (CDCS) and Consumer Support Grant (CSG). GT Independence is a statewide provider of FMS for all waivers, including: BI, CAC, CADI, DD, and EW/AC. We strive to offer the best technology and customer service to fellow Minnesotans.
GT Independence is a national leader in technology serving self-directed programs. We offer a secure personal portal account for accessing reports and documents, a state-of-the-art Caregiver App, and other great tools. GT Independence makes starting self-direction fast and easy with our in-home eEnrollment process. Contact our State Director at 651.247.7107. www.gtindependence.com

Lifeworks Services, Inc
Since 1965, Lifeworks Services, Inc. has been a champion for inclusion. Lifeworks was founded by families who recognized the importance of advocacy and removing barriers for people with disabilities to be part of the community. As an industry leader, Lifeworks continues our commitment to self-determined support, careers with competitive wages, and developing innovative opportunities that enhance everyday lives.
www.lifeworks.org

Lions United Fitness Center*
At Lions United, Coach Andy centers his focus around individuals with Down syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and other physical and intellectual disabilities. Lions United is the one place where our athletes can come and be themselves, grow, socialize, learn, and ROAR! Outside of Lions United, these brave athletes may be wearing many different labels because of the way they walk, talk, and act, but at Lions United, each and every person who comes through the door is treated like a professional athlete. Coach Andy’s philosophy is that life inside of a gym can dramatically improve life outside of a gym. Motivation, encouragement, leadership, courage, following directions, sportsmanship, gratitude, and confidence are just a few traits that Coach Andy passes on to his Lions.
www.lionsunitedfitness.com

Minnesota Department of Human Services - Disability Services Division
The Minnesota Department of Human Services provides Minnesotans with a variety of services intended to help people live as independently as possible. There are a variety of services and supports that may be available to people with ASD and their families and friends. To find resources and information about a wide array of autism supports and services, visit the MN Autism Portal.
https://mn.gov/autism

Minnesota Independence College & Community*
Minnesota Independence College and Community (MICC) is a nonprofit organization serving young adults with autism and learning differences, located in Richfield, Minn. Since our founding in 1996, our unique campus allows our participants to truly engage in an experiential learning and apartment-living environment. Our programs are focused on delivering curriculum and services in the areas of independent living skills, social and emotional learning, career skills and employment, and healthy living. We believe our participants can fulfill their potential and live an independent, vibrant life. We offer four distinct programs starting with our two-week Summer Program, leading to our three-year College and Careers Programs, and finally, with our life-long Community Program.
www.miccommunity.org

MN LEND
MN LEND’s mission is to train the next generation of informed interdisciplinary leaders in neurodevelopmental and related disabilities. Fellowship applications open Mid-October 2020 and close Mid-February 2021. People from underserved and under-represented communities are strongly encouraged to apply www.lend.umn.edu

Partners In Community Supports
PICs – Partners in Community Supports is a Financial Management Services (FMS) company that offers self-directed financial and technical support for individuals and families who choose to design their own support structures and remain in their own homes and communities. Self-directed and transitional services share some similarities, but key differences may make one a better choice for you and your family. Our customer-service focus means that you spend less time worrying with financial aspects of self-directed care and more time caring for your loved one. PICs is ready to support you as a Financial Management Services (FMS) provider.
www.picsmn.org

Plymouth Psych Group
Plymouth Psych Group is a mental health clinic offering a variety of services for all ages. Specific to the autism community we offer an ASD Intensive Outpatient Program for teens struggling with social skills and emotional regulation, as well as a Chill Skills Game Club, Thrive Independent Living Skills for young adults, and an ASD Parent Support Group.
www.plymouthpsychgroup.com

Project Lifesaver Minnesota Support Center
Project Lifesaver Minnesota Support Center (PLMSC) is a local nonprofit organization whose role is to promote and facilitate access to the Project Lifesaver Program. Project Lifesaver is a system to quickly find vulnerable individuals with cognitive issues that may lead them to become separated from their caregivers. Some of those with autism and other cognitive conditions can be candidates for Project Lifesaver. Since the program was established 21 years ago, there have been over 3,600 searches, all of which were successful with an average search time of 30 minutes.
www.plmsnc.org

REM Minnesota
REM Minnesota is a statewide provider of community supportive living residences located in over 50 counties! From Duluth, West to Moorhead, down to Marshall, and East to Rochester and Austin, individuals living with disabilities are receiving professional and caring services through REM Minnesota. REM Minnesota believes that all people deserve the opportunity to live as independently as possible in their communities.
www.remminnesota.com

Schromen Law Center, LLC
Schromen Law, LLC provides legal services in the areas of estate planning; elder law; probate; and estate and trust administration, including supplemental needs trust, special needs trusts, and planning for guardianship. Schromen Law, LLC represents families with children with autism, as well as individuals on the spectrum.
www.schromenlaw.com
Skills Autism Therapy & Parent Enrichment
Skills Autism Therapy & Parent Enrichment’s (Skills-ATPE) vision was founded by an autism mother who partnered with a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and an attorney. Our ultimate goal is to provide behavior intervention that is person-centered, family driven, and culturally responsive. We coordinate with our clients’ other services, such as county, education, speech and occupational therapy, as well as other community resources the child and family are accessing. We wholeheartedly believe that families are our best and greatest assets. Parents/families are equal partners in every aspect of their child’s treatment and services. We consider and include the families’ cultural backgrounds as well as the challenges and concerns surrounding implementation of the individual treatment plan (ITP).
www.skills-atpe.com

Talk To Me Technologies
Talk To Me Technologies specializes in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). Through our exclusive line of speech-generating devices, we bring speech to life. Our all-inclusive service and support make it easier and faster to choose, fund, and learn how to use a speech-generating device so our clients can focus on communication.
www.talktometechnologies.com

Therapy OPS
Owners Rachel and Chris opened Therapy OPS in 2014 because they have a passion for helping children, their families, and the community. TOPS provides occupational, physical, and speech therapy for children and adults with disabilities in support of the greater Twin Cities area. Our staff prides themselves on teamwork and creative activities through play to unlock each child’s potential. Together, we offer a small, family-focused environment where children exceed expectations while having fun. We empower families for success!
www.therapyops.com

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What does the Autism Society mean to you?
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assew.org
414-988-1260
info@assew.org

South Central Wisconsin
autismsouthcentral.org
608-630-9147
info@autismsouthcentral.org

Greater Wisconsin
autismgreaterwi.org | 920-558-4602 | info@autismgreaterwi.org

Central Wisconsin
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Northeast WI
administrator@asnew.org

West Central Region
westcentral@autismgreaterwi.org

South Central Wisconsin
autismsouthcentral.org
608-630-9147
info@autismsouthcentral.org

Southeastern Wisconsin
assew.org
414-988-1260
info@assew.org
Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin
The mission of the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin is to improve the lives of all affected by autism. The Autism Society envisions individuals and families living with autism are able to maximize their quality of life, are treated with the highest level of dignity, and live in a society in which their talents and skills are appreciated and valued.
www.autismgreaterwi.org

Autism Society Affiliates in Wisconsin
Autism Society affiliates are your best source of information and support. An affiliate is a place where dedicated parents and professionals provide information and services specific to a local area. Parents can find resources for recently diagnosed children, and families can find comfort and companionship managing the years of growth and change. Together our affiliate network supports the entire state of Wisconsin.
www.autismgreaterwi.org
www.assew.org
www.autismsouthcentral.org

Anderson Center for Autism
Anderson Center for Autism’s mission is to optimize quality of life for individuals with autism. Located in the Hudson Valley Region, two hours north of New York City, ACA provides residential and educational programs to students ages 5-21 with autism. Based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), our treatment approach focuses on techniques and interventions that use positive reinforcement to teach our individuals the skills they need to strive for independence and reach their full potential. Our professional team administers ABA programs that comprehensively address each individual’s educational, emotional, and social needs in a proactive, positive manner.
www.andersoncenterforautism.org

Aspire Therapy & Development Services
We are a team of licensed speech, occupational, and physical therapists that is passionate about helping children to achieve their goals and to become the best that they can be. Aspire creates individualized plans and matches experienced therapists to uniquely meet the needs of each child. Our team of experienced clinicians provides services in a variety of settings including our clinics, private schools, daycares, preschools, or other agreed upon locations. We work with you to determine what location is best to meet the needs of your child. We highly value our relationships with our families and others in the community, and we prioritize working together to create the best possible outcomes for the children and families we serve.
www.aspirewisconsin.com

Bethesda Lutheran Communities
Bethesda College of Applied Learning is a unique and exciting two-year postsecondary certificate program designed to meet the higher education goals of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Located on the campus of Concordia University Wisconsin, students enrolled in Bethesda College live on campus in integrated residence halls and learn from a curriculum that centers on formal instruction in four areas: personal development; career preparation; adult living skills; and campus/community life.
www.bethesdalc.org/college

CI Pediatric Centers
CI is a pediatric therapy center with locations throughout Wisconsin. CI Pediatric Therapy Centers offer a wide range of programming and services including skilled therapy services of occupational, speech-language, recreational, and physical therapy, groups, and free birth to three programming such as story times, playgroups, and developmental screeners.
www.ctherapies.com

FiND Network
The FiND Network connects you to research, resources, and events related to neurodevelopment. Anyone can join, including individuals with and without a diagnosis, as well as family members, educators, and professionals. FiND your connection to research! To sign up, complete a short, confidential online survey at http://find.umn.edu. For more information or help signing up contact us: canlab@umn.edu or 612.625.8448. We welcome anyone with an autism diagnosis and their families to join the SPARK study. We want to speed up research and advance the understanding of autism. It’s simple. It’s free. It can be done completely from your home.
www.sparkforautism.org/uminnesota

Fox Valley Autism Treatment Program
We provide one-on-one in home and community-based treatment for children to young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. We tailor our treatment plans to each individual client and his or her specific needs. We understand that each child is unique with his or her own set of strengths and we use those strengths to help them live their best life! We use evidenced-based treatment procedures in all aspects of our therapy plan. We are here to help you navigate to determine the best path for your family.
www.foxvalleyautism.com

Genesee Lake School
Genesee Lake School is a nationally recognized school dedicated to improving the lives of children, adolescents, and young adults with developmental disabilities, mental health disorders, neurological disorders, and emotional disturbances. We follow an individualized, person-centered, and integrated team approach, emphasizing positive behavioral support, therapeutic relationships, and developmentally appropriate practices. Our goal at Genesee Lake School is to provide an innovative and enriching environment for our students to learn and experience all that life can offer.
www.geneselakeschool.com

GT Independence
GT Independence enables individuals with long-term care needs or disabilities to easily hire and employ caregivers legally by handling all required employer and employee paperwork, time tracking, payroll, tax filings, and insurance concerns as a fiscal intermediary. Using the services of a fiscal intermediary can help you receive a higher level of care by making it possible to stay in your own home and receive care from caregivers that you choose, including family members.
www.gtindependence.com

Guardianship Support Center
We provide information and resources for families and youth transitioning into adulthood on guardianship and alternatives to guardianship.
www.gwaaar.org/gsc
Healthy Relationships Curriculum
The Healthy Relationships Curriculum was developed for schools and organizations that serve school students and older individuals with various special needs. Created by special education teachers and therapists, this extensive, one-of-a-kind program covers everything from hygiene and health education to relationships and social media. This comprehensive enhancement to the classroom and any distant learning scenarios includes over 39 lessons, 65 videos, an online resource library, and the myHRC Portal. www.healthyrelationshipscurriculum.org

Innovative Counseling Inc.
Innovative Counseling Inc. is a community Mental Health Clinic, serving a wide variety of clients for a multitude of reasons. Innovative has been serving the greater Green Bay area and surrounding communities since 2001. www.innovativecounseling.com

James Williams, Author and Presenter with Autism
Promotion of my self-advocacy work comprised of sharing info about my autism advocacy and events I attend, selling autism-related books, self-created music CDs, and autism-related clothing. www.jamesmw.com

Jesse Horn
Jesse’s story will lead families facing autism to hope. Those with autism are capable of discovering fulfilling passions and defining for themselves what it is to live with autism. Jesse has gone on to earn international titles in Sport Stacking with Team USA, is a motivational speaker and ambassador, and has guest-starred on CBS’s The Doctors. One of Jesse’s life goals is to continue his pursuit of public speaking and reach as many people as possible with his hope-filled message. Jesse has already given countless presentations, and he’d LOVE to come visit your school or do an online presentation. www.jesselhorn.com

Minnesota Independence College & Community
Minnesota Independence College and Community (MICC) is a nonprofit organization serving young adults with autism and learning differences, located in Richfield, Minn. Since our founding in 1996, our unique campus allows our participants to truly engage in an experiential learning and apartment-living environment. Our programs are focused on delivering curriculum and services in the areas of independent living skills, social and emotional learning, career skills and employment, and healthy living. We believe our participants can fulfill their potential and live an independent, vibrant life. We offer four distinct programs starting with our two-week Summer Program, leading to our three-year College and Careers Programs, and finally, with our life-long Community Program. www.miccommunity.org

On Your Marq—Marquette University
On Your Marq (OYM) is a college success program designed to assist students on the autism spectrum in navigating the college landscape at Marquette University. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach, we work together to build the support team students need to thrive at Marquette. Everyone on the student’s team receives training on the best practices for working with people on the autism spectrum. www.marquette.edu/disability-services/on-your-marq/

Shepherds College
Shepherds College (SC) is a fully accredited, post-secondary program for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. www.shepherdscollege.edu

Southern Regional Center for Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs
Support for families of children and youth with special health care needs. www.cychn.waisman.wisc.edu

Special Needs Planning, LLC
Special Needs Planning can help you shepherd your family through the maze of legal and financial complexities that can be associated with planning for the financial future of children, or other dependents, with special needs. Call today for your complimentary consultation: 262.955.6636. www.snp-llc.com

Talk To Me Technologies
Talk To Me Technologies specializes in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). Through our exclusive line of speech-generating devices, we bring speech to life. Our all-inclusive service and support makes it easier and faster to choose, fund, and learn how to use a speech-generating device so our clients can focus on communication. www.talktometechnologies.com

Tarryl’s Teaching Tools
Visual supports for community and home that inspire focus and independence. Our patent-approved activity bags keep laminated cards organized for various activities including school and work. www.tarrylsteachingtools.com

TMG
TMG has been a leader in quality community-based long-term services and supports (LTSS) for more than 30 years. TMG is the first certified IRIS Consultant Agency (ICA) for Wisconsin’s IRIS program, the largest self-directed long-term care program of its kind in the United States. Our vast knowledge and experience with self-directed community-based supports and services – from rural, small-town Wisconsin to the state’s largest cities – allows us to become true partners with the people we serve. We first help people in the program identify their individual strengths and gain an understanding of all they and their communities have to offer. TMG provides individuals in IRIS the opportunity to maximize their personal resources, service dollars, and community supports, resulting in a full life with valued roles in their communities. www.tmgwisconsin.com

Total Spectrum
We offer programs developed to help children learn to communicate, develop friendships, and lead healthy, happy, and productive lives. www.totalspectrumcare.com
Treffert Center, a service of Agnesian Healthcare, a member of SSM Health

The Treffert Center invites individuals, families, and communities worldwide to explore the potential of the human mind, focusing on strengths rather than limitations. We seek to preserve, make available, and expand the legacy of Darold Treffert, MD, an internationally respected researcher in autism, hyperlexia, savant syndrome, and related conditions. The center offers state-of-the-art comprehensive, multidisciplinary diagnosis and treatment of autism, behavior, and communication disorders in children and adults. Treatment includes in-home, center-based, and community-based programs.

www.agnesian.com/services/treffert-center

WI FACETS

WI FACETS is a nonprofit organization covering the state of Wisconsin that focuses on special education and advocacy skills. Our mission is to provide and broaden opportunities that enhance the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities and their families, with emphasis on support for underserved families in the community.

www.wifacets.org

Wispact

Wispact Inc. is a private nonprofit that administers pooled and community Special Needs Trusts for people with disabilities. Our mission is to improve the lives of people of all ages with disabilities across Wisconsin through the management of special needs trusts to provide more choice, more opportunities, and a better quality of life. Wispact provides many on-going services such as approving and forwarding the Requests For Distribution for payment and ensuring funds spent meet public benefits rules. The Wispact team includes beneficiary specialists, attorneys, and others who have worked in the human service industries.

www.wispact.org

WSEMS–Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System

The Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System helps parents and schools work together to resolve disputes about special education. Wisconsin families of children with special needs and school districts, together or individually, can request a mediation, a facilitated IEP meeting, or a facilitator for a resolution meeting from the WSEMS. We offer a list of trained, impartial mediators and facilitators. The WSEMS services are free and voluntary. Mediation is private and confidential. Requests for mediations are processed by Gia Pionek, a neutral dispute resolution professional.

www.wsems.us/

YVAS Inspiration

At our shops, we sell aromatherapy bracelets and digital art prints. You can put everything from essential oil to perfume or nothing at all on the black lava beads of our bracelets. And your room is not complete without a digitally created conversation piece! To purchase a bracelet bundle with an oil of your choice, visit our ClickFunnel shop at https://yasinspiration.clickfunnels.com/aromatherapy-store38199684?fbclid=IwAR3iPgHVNIAYQVJNdmLo_LIILDQrOXVzOPkbsHmwikOkgAc_c_bFU and fill out the online order form. To purchase a single bracelet or to order a digital art print, visit our Facebook shop to browse and purchase a piece of art that speaks to you!

www.facebook.com/pg/yvasart/shop/

Plan to join us next year!
Tee-Time for Autism

July 30, 2020

SentryWorld Golf Course, Stevens Point WI

Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin
FALL CONFERENCE

"Don’t We Already Do Inclusion?"
5 Ways to Create Better Schools for All

Paula Kluth

OCTOBER 15, 2020
Green Bay, WI
autismgreaterwi.org/conferences
Fox Valley Autism Treatment Program

ABOUT US
If your child has been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, or if you want your child to be evaluated for autism, we are here to help you. We have been serving Northeast Wisconsin since 1998 with individualized, high quality, proven effective autism treatment.

OUR MISSION
Our highly trained staff provide 100% customized, in home autism treatment. We are completely focused on our clients, providing trusted services to families and compassionate, positive, results - driven ABA treatment to the children in our community.

CONTACT US
920-205-0475 / Fax 920-486-6240
www.foxvalleyautism.com

We Serve:
Appleton
Fox Cities
Green Bay
Oshkosh
Neenah
Fond du Lac

We accept most Major Insurances and Medicaid
The mission of the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) is to enhance the lives of individuals and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder. AuSM serves Minnesotans, throughout their lives, with a fundamental commitment to advocacy, education, support, collaboration, and community building.

The Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin envisions individuals and families living with autism are able to maximize their quality of life, are treated with the highest level of dignity, and live in a society in which their talents and skills are appreciated and valued.

The Autism Society envisions the lives of all affected by autism, including individuals and families living with autism, to improve. The mission of the Autism Society is to improve their lives, with a fundamental commitment to advocacy, education, support, collaboration, and community building.

www.ausm.org

2380 Wycliff St. #102
St. Paul, MN 55114
651.647.1083 • info@ausm.org

www.autismgreaterwi.org

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www.autismwisconsin.org

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