



Autistic's Guide to Conference

Why should an autistic attend the conference?

The conference presents a great opportunity to meet your peers, learn more about services that can improve your life, trade strategies with other self-advocates, and even help expand people's conceptions of what autism can look like. You'll learn from autistic presenters, find resources and services, and connect with your community. You'll also find great fidgets and tailored books at the AuSM Shop.

What to see, do, and expect at the conference

This guide was created to help individuals on the spectrum navigate the Minnesota autism conference. Each day at the conference will be a little different, but you generally can expect to enter the hotel, check in at the registration table, and have some time to explore before sessions begin. If you prefer, you can simply find your seat for the opening keynote speech. Refreshments are available each day. The AuSM Shop and exhibit tables providing information about resources will be open throughout the conference. After that, you'll have the option to choose which sessions you attend. On Thursday and Friday, lunch will be served buffet style. Once you've gotten your food, you can select a seat in the ballroom or choose to eat elsewhere. After lunch, we hold more breakout sessions. If you ever have questions, stop by AuSM Headquarters to ask.

Accessibility

To make the event more accessible, AuSM offers a discounted rate to individuals with autism. We also have scholarships available. You can apply for a scholarship through the registration form. To learn about the accommodations that AuSM offers at the conference, click here. We will also provide a social narrative, available on our website, as we get closer to the event.

Wednesday, April 26, 12:30-4:30 p.m. Foundational Conference Workshop

Conference Keynote Presentations

- Thursday, April 27, 8-9:30 a.m.
Understanding Emotions and Strategies to Develop Self-Regulation, presented by Kari Zweber Palmer (Social Thinking)
- Thursday, April 27, 1:15-2:45 p.m.
A New Vision for Supporting Autistic and Neurodivergent Students, presented by Dr. Mona Delahooke
- Friday, April 28, 8-9:30 a.m.
The Past, Present, and Future of Autism Politics, presented by Eric Garcia

Conference Breakout Sessions

Thursday, April 27

10-11 a.m.

- Strategies for Choosing the Right Goals and Following Through, presented by James Rechs
- Building Inclusion: A Movement Towards Communities as Purposeful Natural Supports, presented by Sonya Emerick and Paula Luxenberg
- Creating Accessible Events From the Ground Up, Presented by Zephyr James

Conference Breakout Sessions (cont.)

Thursday, April 27

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

- Neurodiversity in the Workplace: The Power of Unlocking Different Talents and Perspectives, presented by Aja Wolfe

3-4 p.m.

- Trauma, Special Needs and Interventions, presented by Tamera Pulver
- Centering the Margins: Intersectionality, Power and Radical Solidarity, presented by Ashley Oolman

Friday, April 28

10-11 a.m.

- Regulation Stations, presented by Elizabeth Duffy and Michelle Pettit
- What is Disability Justice and Why Does It Matter?, presented by Jules Edwards, Brittanie Hernandez-Wilson, and Jillian Nelson

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

- Make it Make Sense: Practical Coping Techniques for Trauma, presented by Sara Lahti
- Developing Self-Regulation with Biofeedback and Self-Hypnosis presented by Dr. Andy Barnes

1:15-2:15 p.m.

- MNprov Recess – Stretch Your Legs and Stretch Your Brain, presented by Michael Bruckmueller and Kelly Kautz
- Updates to the DSM: How the DSM 5 TR Expands Recognition of Autism Characteristics in AFAB and Racially Diverse Individuals, presented by Beth Pitchford

2:30-3:30 p.m.

- When the Frontal Lobe Does Not Cooperate, presented by Sara Swan
- Don't Sleep on Sleep – Practical Sensory Approaches to Support Rest presented by Meagan Flom

Virtual Sessions

- Intersections of Self: Autistic and LGBTQIA+ presented by Lydia Rhoads
- Neurodivergence, Sex, and Sensory Processing presented by Sarah Hernandez

What's Next

AuSM has more than just education, and we want to support you with resources throughout the year. That's why we have three support groups for adults on the spectrum, including Adults with ASD, Women with ASD, and LGBTQIA. To stay connected with AuSM, sign up for our twice monthly e-newsletter, AuSM Connections. You can find the sign up on our website at the bottom of any page. Additionally, you can find resources about everything from healthy relationships to sensory needs as part of our AuSM Celebrates Interdependence campaign, located on our website in the education section. Check out the education section of the website for our Adult Coffee Club and AuSM Skillshops, two hour mini-workshops on important community topics. Many of these sessions are geared directly to autistic adults. We're also looking forward to our sixth annual Autistic Community Summit this October, a full day of speakers, round tables, and information. This is an event by autistics, for autistics.