



# AUTISTIC'S GUIDE TO CONFERENCE

## Why should an autistic attend the conference?

The Minnesota Autism 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 17, 12:30-4:30 p.m. Foundational Conference Workshop

### Conference Keynote Presentations

- ☐ Thursday, April 18, 8-9:30 a.m.  
You're Going to Love This Kid presented by Dr. Paula Kluth
- ☐ Thursday, April 18, 1:15-2:45 p.m.  
The Future of Autistic Self-Advocacy presented by Dr. Devon Price
- ☐ Friday, April 19, 8-9:30 a.m.  
Beyond Words: Exploring Autistic Multimodal Communication presented by Joyner Emerick

### Conference Breakout Sessions

#### Thursday, April 18

##### 10-11 a.m.

- ☐ Accessibility At Work – Disability Justice in the Workplace presented by Megan Perera

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

- ☐ Social Security Disability: What You Need to Know presented by Tanya Heitzinger and Sarah Dicks
- ☐ Trauma in Autistic Adults presented by Beth Pitchford, Barb Luskin, and Sara Lahti

## Conference Breakout Sessions (cont.)

**Thursday, April 18**

**3:15-4:15 p.m.**

- ☐ Leadership: Leading Without Conforming presented by Jillian Nelson
- ☐ What's Behind the Mask: An Exploration of Masking, Burnout, and the Autistic Experience presented by Santanna Ficken and Sophie Tomskey

**Friday, April 19**

**10-11 a.m.**

- ☐ The Art of Coregulation: Strategies to Regulate Emotions from Neurodivergent Perspectives presented by Tiffany Schroeer, Chelsey Hendrickx, and Revel Weber
- ☐ Setting and Keeping Boundaries presented by Sara Lahti
- ☐ Accessible Healthcare presented by Dr. Rebecca Vaurio

**11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

- ☐ Empowerment and Belonging for Adult Women with Late Diagnoses presented by Laura Adrian
- ☐ Bridging Silos presented by Sara Swan
- ☐ Autistic Mental Health: Preventing and Responding to Crisis presented by Amelia Maciejewski

**1:30-2:30 p.m.**

- ☐ Takeaways from the 2023 International ADHD Conference: RSD, Hormones, and More presented by Beth Pitchford
- ☐ Beyond To-Do Lists: Executive Function from an Affirming Perspective presented by Elizabeth Duffy and Santanna Ficken

**2:45-3:45 p.m.**

- ☐ Helping Autistic Minnesotans Make Friends: Lessons Learned from Hosting Events presented by Mitchell Schaps
- ☐ Research on Autism, Driven by Autistic Researchers (RADAR) presented by Isabelle Morris, Freya Roherty, and Jessica Sykes
- ☐ Sleep Well: Tips and Tricks for Effortless Sleep presented by Jeremy Goldberg

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### 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, we have dozens of free resources available on our website under the "Resources" header. Check out the education section of the website for our Adult Coffee Club and upcoming AuSM workshops. Many of these sessions are geared directly to autistic adults. We're also looking forward to our seventh annual Autistic Community Summit this October, a full day of speakers, round tables, and information. This is an event by autistics, for autistics. To stay in the know, make sure you visit [www.ausm.org](http://www.ausm.org) to sign up for our twice monthly e-newsletter, AuSM Connections. You can find the sign up at the bottom of any page on AuSM's website.