



*29th Annual Minnesota Autism
Conference:
Social Narrative*

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General Information

I am attending AuSM's 29th Annual Autism Conference at the Doubletree by Hilton Minneapolis Airport. This is the same hotel as last year, but the name has changed. The conference begins Wednesday, April 17th and ends Friday, April 19th. I may attend as much or as little of the event as I choose.

Address:

2020 American Blvd. E., Bloomington, MN
55425



General Information

The conference is a busy event attended by hundreds of people. Attendees include autistic individuals, parents and caregivers, educators, other professionals, and more! It may be crowded in the hotel as I navigate the conference. I can identify spaces in the hotel where I can go if I need a break from other people. This includes the Cambridge Room, which has been designated as a Quiet Room.

General Information

I can review the conference schedule at <https://ausm.org/events/minnesota-autism-conference-2024/minnesota-autism-conference-schedule/>. I will also receive a hard copy of the Conference Program when I register at the event. I will take care to hold onto my Conference Program, as it is the best source of information about the event, and I can't get another one.

I can select which breakout sessions and/or keynote presentations I want to attend before arriving at the event. I can also decide when I'm at the conference or change my mind in the moment.

I will be sent a link that will give me access to handouts one week before the conference. I will use the password given to me in the email to get access to the handouts and conference materials. If I want a hard copy of a handout, I will need to print it off the AuSM website. If I need a printed copy as an accommodation, I can email zjames@ausm.org before the event.

Arrival and Check In

The week before the conference, I will receive a confirmation email with details about when to check in at conference.

I can enter the conference at the main entrance of the Doubletree by Hilton Minneapolis Airport.

Arrival and Check In

I will check in at the Registration Table. The Registration Table is located where the lobby entrance of the hotel ends.

When it's my turn, I will give my name to the AuSM volunteers at the registration table. Once they locate my name in their records, they will give me a bag and folder with conference information inside.

Arrival and Check In

There will be stickers available at the registration tables. I can choose to wear stickers that indicate how comfortable I am with social interaction. The guide to using interaction stickers is in my Conference Program. I can also choose to wear a sticker to indicate to other attendees which pronouns I use.

Pronoun Stickers



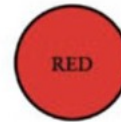
An integral part of making the most of everyone's conference experience is helping everyone feel included, respected, and appreciated. A person's name, their clothing, or any other outward signals don't necessarily tell you how that person identifies. To assist with gender-inclusive communication, pronoun stickers are available by the nametags near registration.



I am interested in interacting, but I have trouble approaching others and initiating interaction. Please feel free to initiate conversation with me.



I am interested in interacting with others, but only with those I'm familiar. Please approach or initiate only if you know me.



Please do not approach me or initiate interaction with me at this time.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17: FOUNDATIONAL WORKSHOP

11:30 a.m. Registration opens for Foundational Workshop
11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Exhibitors open
12:30-2 p.m. Autism 101, conference orientation
2-3:30 p.m. Hot topics in the autism community
3:30-4:30 p.m. Foundational Workshop small group sessions
4-5 p.m. AuSM Shop open

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

7 A.M. CONFERENCE REGISTRATION, AUSM SHOP, AND EXHIBITORS OPEN

8-9:30 A.M. KEYNOTE: YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE THIS KID PRESENTED BY DR. PAULA KLUTH

10-11 A.M. BREAKOUT SESSION 1

1. How to Write a Neurodiversity-Affirming IEP presented by Maren Christenson Hofer*, Joyner Emerick, and Ryan Haenze
2. Accessibility At Work – Disability Justice in the Workplace presented by Megan Perera
3. Trauma in Autistic Children and Young Adults presented by Beth Pitchford, Barb Lusk, and Sara Lahti
4. Estate Planning For Families with Special Needs presented by Jason Schellack

11:15 A.M.-12:15 P.M. BREAKOUT SESSION 2

1. The Roots of Behavior: A Neurodiversity-Affirming Perspective presented by Elizabeth Duffy and Michelle Pettit
2. Social Security Disability: What You Need to Know presented by Tanya Heitzinger and Sarah Dicks
3. Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth: Tools for Parents and Other Adults presented by Cat Hammond
4. Trauma in Autistic Adults presented by Beth Pitchford, Barb Lusk, and Sara Lahti

12:15-1:15 P.M. LUNCH

1:15-2:45 P.M. KEYNOTE: THE FUTURE OF AUTISTIC SELF-ADVOCACY PRESENTED BY DR. DEVON PRICE

3:15-4:15 P.M. BREAKOUT SESSION 3

1. Taking a Person Centered Approach to ADLs presented by Nicole Ogren and Jake Archbold
2. Leadership: Leading Without Conforming presented by Jillian Nelson
3. Assessing Transition Needs Among Individuals With Disabilities and Caregivers presented by Mahasweta Bose, Carl Arps, Dr. Rebekah Hudock*, Dr. Chimei Lee, and Maren Christenson Hofer*
4. What's Behind the Mask: An Exploration of Masking, Burnout, and the Autistic Experience presented by Santanna Ficken and Sophie Tomskey



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, APRIL 19

7 A.M. CONFERENCE REGISTRATION, AUSM SHOP, AND EXHIBITORS OPEN

8-9:30 A.M. KEYNOTE: BEYOND WORDS: EXPLORING AUTISTIC MULTIMODAL COMMUNICATION PRESENTED BY JOYNER EMERICK

10-11 A.M. BREAKOUT SESSION 1

1. The Art of Coregulation: Strategies to Regulate Emotions from Neurodivergent Perspectives presented by Tiffany Schroeder, Chelsey Hendrickx, and Revel Weber
2. Setting and Keeping Boundaries presented by Sara Lahti
3. Accessible Healthcare presented by Dr. Rebecca Vaurio
4. Centering Joy: Lessons Learned from a Family Camp for Autistic Children in the Somali and Oromo Communities presented by Rufo Jiru, Delia Samuel, and Fatima Molas*

11:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M. BREAKOUT SESSION 2

1. Empowerment and Belonging for Adult Women with Late Diagnoses presented by Laura Adrian
2. Bridging Silos presented by Sara Swan
3. Let's Talk About 'It': Building Comfort Around Sexuality and Development presented by Elissa Marble and Alyssa Perau
4. Autistic Mental Health: Preventing and Responding to Crisis presented by Amelia Maciejewski

12:30-1:30 P.M. LUNCH

1:30-2:30 P.M. BREAKOUT SESSION 3

1. "Subtle but Significant" Autism presented by Dr. Megan Helmen
2. Beyond To-Do Lists: Executive Function from an Affirming Perspective presented by Elizabeth Duffy and Santanna Ficken
3. Obtaining Assent in Service Provision for Autistic Individuals presented by Rebecca Kolb
4. Takeaways from the 2023 International ADHD Conference: RSD, Hormones, and More presented by Beth Pitchford

2:45-3:45 P.M. BREAKOUT SESSION 4

1. Research on Autism, Driven by Autistic Researchers (RADAR) presented by Isabelle Morris*, Freya Roherty*, and Jessica Sykes
2. Helping Autistic Minnesotans Make Friends: Lessons Learned from Hosting Events presented by Mitchell Schaps
3. Sleep Well: Tips and Tricks for Effortless Sleep presented by Jeremy Goldberg
4. Gifted and Autistic: Unique Strengths, Challenges, and Therapeutic Considerations presented by Jaime Ascencio

*MNLEND speaker

AuSM Bookstore and Exhibitor Tables

There will be many exhibitors from various organizations at the event providing resources about their services. I can find a list of exhibitors in my Conference Program.

These tables will be located throughout the hallways in the hotel.



The AuSM Shop

The AuSM Shop will be in the Bristol and Oxford Rooms.

There will be many items for sale, such as books, sensory tools, raffle tickets, and more!

I should bring cash and/or credit cards with me to the conference if I want to purchase anything from the AuSM Shop.

I can ask AuSM Shop staff for help finding any items or if I have any questions about what to buy.



AuSM Shop and Exhibitor Tables

The AuSM Shop and exhibitor spaces can become crowded, especially during registration and lunch hours. I may have to wait in line to visit a vendor or to check out in the AuSM Shop. There will be AuSM staff there to help keep any lines moving as quickly as possible.

I can also wait to visit these areas until the crowds have calmed down, which is usually during the presentation times. The AuSM Shop hours of operation are listed in my Conference Program.

Keynotes and Breakouts

Breakout sessions are an hour in length, and there will be four sessions occurring at the same time. These sessions take place in the Salons A, B, C and D.

For those with accessibility needs, there will be some rows reserved near the front of the room, and space at the back of the room to stand or sit on the floor. I can sit in the front if all the other seats are occupied. If I want to make sure I find a preferred seat, I should arrive to a presentation early. Seating is first-come, first-served. I should keep my belongings under my seat or on the table in front of me so that there are as many chairs available for people as possible.



Keynotes and Breakouts

There will be three different keynote presentations throughout the conference, two on Thursday and one on Friday. Each keynote presentation is scheduled to last 1.5 hours. Keynotes will take place in the Grand Ballroom.

It may be crowded in the Grand Ballroom during keynotes, as there are no breakout sessions occurring at the same time. I can plan to get to the Grand Ballroom early to find a preferred seat.



Sensory and Accessibility Details

There are many spaces throughout the main floor of the hotel where I can sit and relax. I can also visit the Quiet Room, which is in the Cambridge Room. There will be some sensory tools available for me to use while I'm in that space – these items stay in the Quiet Room.

If I need a quiet and comfortable space to pray, I can visit the Prayer Room. The Prayer Room is in the Edinburgh Room.

I can visit the Mothering Room when I need a private space for lactation. The Mothering Room is in the London Room. It has a fridge available.

Sensory and Accessibility Details

I can help make the conference more accessible for other people. I should avoid wearing any scented products to the event, as other individuals may be sensitive to smells, and refrain from using flash photography. Some attendees may be uncomfortable with physical touch. I will always ask for consent before touching someone else.

Some individuals may have mobility issues and/or move at a different pace than I do, so I will pay attention to my surroundings to avoid bumping into others, and I will be careful not to touch mobility devices or service animals without asking for consent first.

Sensory and Accessibility Details

I can expect natural light and several warm light fixtures in the main lobby. I can expect natural light in the hallways where the exhibitors will be present. The windows will be covered by beige sheer curtains.

The area where the Keynote and Breakout sessions take place have large warm lights.

Sensory and Accessibility Details

I will hear crowd sounds, such as people talking and laughing, which may echo in larger spaces like the main lobby. Speakers will use a microphone during presentations.

The hotel lobby and the bathrooms have light music. AuSM staff has requested the hotel to turn off the music during the Conference event.

Sensory and Accessibility Details

AuSM has asked attendees and staff not to wear scented lotions or perfumes during the conference, however I may still smell soaps or shampoos while I am at conference. The hotel will be replacing soaps in the restrooms with unscented soap.

The hotel does have a swimming pool. In some areas of the hotel (although none of the conference areas), it may smell like chlorine.

Sensory and Accessibility Details

Bathrooms are located across from registration. I can locate the bathrooms on the map in my Conference Program.

All toilets and sinks in the restrooms are automatic. There may be sound in the restrooms where talking may echo in the space. There are automatic paper towel dispensers for guests to use. The bathrooms, additionally, have paper towel holders next to the sinks.

There is one single stall bathroom located down the hall from the restaurant that guests can use.



Thank You for Attending!