

# Wednesday, March 6, 2019

Keynote

9:15 am -10:45 am

## Entering Adulthood with Autism Amy Gravino, M.A.



Amy Gravino, M.A., is Certified Autism Specialist and international speaker. As the founder and President of A.S.C.O.T Consulting, Amy offers autism consulting and college coaching services for individuals on the autism spectrum, mentoring services for young adults with autism, and professional presentations for conferences, autism events, schools, and professional development workshops. Amy has given two TED talks, spoken twice at the United Nations for World Autism Awareness Day (2011 and 2018), and presented to numerous audiences on a variety of topics, including autism and sexuality; issues faced by girls with ASD; growing up on the spectrum; bullying and bullying prevention; and transitioning individuals on the spectrum to higher education. Amy obtained

her Masters degree in Applied Behavior Analysis from Caldwell University in 2010, and currently serves on the Boards of Directors of Specialisterne USA, Yes She Can, Inc., and the Golden Door International Film Festival of Jersey City, and as co-facilitator of the Morris County support group chapter of ASPEN-NJ. Amy is now authoring "The Naughty Autie," a memoir of her experiences with dating, relationships, and sexuality from the firsthand perspective of a woman on the autism spectrum.

## **Financial Future Planning: Achieving a Better Life**

*Presented by Tia Marsili*

Usually we plan for our retirement, often together with a partner or spouse. When our child(-ren) with special needs are part of the picture, we need to plan for them as well. Where to begin? With the end in mind. Just like with the IEP, SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely) goals need to be a part of the process. So first, imagine your future, and your child's. What will it take to achieve your goals? Write them down. Do you need reduce your expenses in order to achieve these goals? Create a budget - for you and your child(-ren) to help plan for and provide the financial security you're pursuing for each of you. Do you know what government benefits are available? Are those part of your calculation? We'll review potential benefits and why they need to be considered during the planning process. In addition, we'll learn about Special Needs Trusts and ABLE accounts and how these options may play a role, as well as the proper allocation of ownership of assets and beneficiary designations. Join us as we use a person centric approach to plan for the future of your loved one.

## **Supporting/Teaching Individuals and Team Members in the Community**

*Presented by Justin Creech, BCBA, LBA*

Providing behavior consultation in community settings can present a host of challenges. This presentation will discuss lessons learned in attempting to train community members in data collection, behavioral procedures, and following behavior support plans. Based on experience, it will contrast effective vs. ineffective methods of training different community members, including families, group homes, and intermediate care facilities. The presentation will show how Behavioral Skill Training (BST) can be implemented effectively in community settings using a Multiple Probe across Staff Design.

## **Signs, Signs, Everywhere a Sign: How to Use Antecedents in Practice\***

*Presented by Dr. Byron Wine, Ph.D., BCBA-D*

Antecedents are common not only in clinical work, but in the everyday environment. This session will review the research on the use of antecedent-only interventions to influence behavior. We will review what makes antecedents effective, and how to enhance existing antecedent interventions.

\* This session is BCBA focused. 1.5 CE credits for BCBA's & BCaBA's.

## **Sexuality and the Spectrum: Lessons on Sex, Dating, and Love, Autism Style**

*Presented by Amy Gravino, M.A.*

Individuals on the autism are sexual beings, yet we are usually not taught the necessary skills to be successful in sexual and romantic relationships. This workshop illustrates the challenges faced in this area through the firsthand perspective of a woman on the spectrum to give an inside perspective on the triumphs and heartbreaks of young adulthood. She will discuss the potential for using ABA to help individuals on the spectrum learn dating skills and provide strategies for parents and professionals to properly and effectively address dating, relationships, and sexuality to

navigate relationships, avoid victimization, and become empowered.

## **Creating Trauma-Sensitive Environments that Benefit Everyone**

*Presented by Connie Honsinger, Ph.D., NBCT*

Trauma informed interventions can enhance classroom practices to support the needs of all students. Come learn practical classroom strategies for building social emotional learning competencies while maintaining an engaging classroom learning environment. Techniques to help students regulate and responding to disruptive behavior will be modeled. Lots of take-home strategies!!

## **The Importance of Teaching Social Skills\***

*Presented by Drew Mercer, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA; Amy Wick, M.S., BCBA, LBA; Brooke Hurdle, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA, & Jazmin Johnson, M.S., BCBA, LBA*

This session will discuss the importance of teaching social skills and how to implement different interventions to increase a student's repertoire. Foundational social skills will be identified and discussed in order to increase a student's repertoire with more complex skills. Different resources for teaching social skills will be examined and discussed. A general social skills model will be provided to assist the learners in organizing their own social skills programming.

\* This session is BCBA focused. 1.5 CE credits for BCBA's & BCaBA's.

## Autism & Co-Occurring Mental Health Conditions

*Presented by Dr. Micah Mazurek, Ph.D.*

Children and adults with autism are at high risk for co-occurring mental health conditions. These difficulties can have serious negative effects on daily functioning, quality of life, and long-term outcomes. This presentation will focus on the prevalence and characteristics of the most common mental health issues experienced by individuals with autism and will highlight evidence-based strategies for identifying and managing these symptoms.

## Putting the Function into Functional Communication Training!

*Presented by Danielle Kessinger, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA; Jenna Lewis, M.S., BCBA, LBA, & Brooke Ozz, M.S., BCBA, LBA*

This presentation will provide participants with guidelines to implement Functional Communication Training (FCT) to reduce or eliminate challenging or interfering behavior. The presenters will review the components of a FCT program and provide information on selecting appropriate replacement behavior. Presenters will also provide several strategies to promote generalization of the replacement behavior across environments.

## Why Wait? Life Skills Instruction to Prevent Problem Behavior in Children with Autism\*

*Presented by Dr. Einar Ingvarsson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA*

Behavior analysts have been at the forefront of developing assessments and interventions for challenging behavior. This work has resulted in a variety of approaches to functional assessment and analysis, as well as a number of effective behavioral interventions. However, there has traditionally been less emphasis on prevention of problem behavior, despite the fact that the behavior analytic literature contains a wealth of potentially useful prevention strategies. In this workshop, I will review research on life skills interventions (previously referred to as "preschool life skills") aimed at increasing appropriate behavior and preventing problem behavior. The intervention borrows from behavioral skills training and incidental teaching, with the aim to teach functional communication, instruction-following, tolerance of challenging situations, and simple social interactions. The original research was conducted with typically developing preschool children, but the program has recently been extended beyond the preschool age and to individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. I will focus on practical ways to implement the life skills intervention with groups and individuals, and discuss approaches to adapt the intervention to individual needs.

\* This session is BCBA focused. 1.5 CE credits for BCBA/BCaBA.