Keynote: Promoting Inclusion, Relationships, and Learning for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: The Promise of Peer-Mediated Supports

Presenter: Erik Carter, Ph.D.

Description: This presentation will address the effectiveness and feasibility of peer-mediated supports as evidence-based approaches for promoting inclusion and social participation within inclusive classrooms, extracurricular activities, and other school settings. Practical strategies for implementing peer support arrangements and peer networks will be shared, along with considerations for decision-making regarding the use of individually assigned paraprofessionals and other special education staff to promote school inclusion.

Objectives/Outcomes:
Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. identify how peer support and peer network interventions can benefit students with and without disabilities
2. summarize the practical strategies for recruiting students, developing effective intervention plans, orienting students to their roles, and supporting them as they work together
3. evaluate the social and academic impact of peer-mediated interventions, as well as advocate effectively for their use

Target Audience: Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Psychologists, School Administrators and Speech Language Pathologists

Disclosure:

Erik Carter: Financial – Dr. Carter receives royalties for his books Peer support strategies: Improving all students’ social lives and learning (2009) and Peery buddy programs for successful secondary school inclusion (2008); and he receives an honoraria from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for presenting at the 16th Annual Autism Conference. Nonfinancial – He has no relevant nonfinancial disclosures.

Biography:

Erik Carter, PhD, is Cornelius Vanderbilt Professor of Special Education and a member of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center. His research and teaching focuses on evidence-based strategies for supporting access to the general curriculum and promoting valued roles in school, work, community, and congregational settings for children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities. He previously worked as a high school teacher in now works closely with schools and community groups to support the inclusion and flourishing of students with disabilities. He has co-authored six books and more than 150 articles and book chapters. He has received the Distinguished Early Career Research Award from the Council for Exceptional Children, the Early Career Award from the American Association for Intellectual and Developmental
Disabilities, and the Patricia Sitlington Research Award from the Division on Career Development and Transition. He lives in Goodlettsville, Tennessee, with his wife and three children.

**Afternoon Breakout Sessions:**

**Social Skills Programming for Students with ASD in Public Schools**

**Presenter:** Erik Mayville, Ph.D., BCBA

**Description:** Several general issues relevant to the effectiveness of social skill instruction in public school settings will be discussed. These include the role of social skills in an educational program for students with autism, the importance of evidence-based practice, and instructional formats and features. Several specific aspects of social skill instruction, including assessment and identification of target skills, motivation, individualization, and generalization will be described. Examples, references, and descriptions of tools that will help educators and parents implement social skill instruction will be provided.

**Objectives/Outcomes:**

Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. identify two imperative characteristics of effective social skill instruction
2. summarize two evidence-based approaches for social skill implementation
3. describe two means of generalizing social skills

**Target Audience:**

Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Administrators, School Psychologists, and Speech Language Pathologists

**Disclosure:**

Erik Mayville: Financial – Dr. Mayville receives an honoraria from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for presenting at the 16th Annual Autism Conference. Nonfinancial – He has no relevant nonfinancial disclosures.

**Biography:**

Dr. Mayville received his doctorate in clinical psychology, developmental disabilities emphasis, from Louisiana State University. He completed his pre-doctoral internship in applied behavior analysis and developmental disabilities at the Kennedy Krieger Institute and Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD. He is completing a term as a Consulting Clinical Supervisor in the Department of Psychology at Yale University, and he has previously served as an Adjunct Professor of Behavior Analysis at the University of North Texas. Dr. Mayville is co-editor of the book Behavioral Foundations of Effective Autism Treatment. He has co-authored a number of published articles and book chapters on such topics as problem behavior, social skills, psychiatric disorders, psychotropic medication use, behavioral observation systems, and family and community-based programming for persons with autism spectrum disorders and developmental disabilities. He
has also served on the editorial board of several peer-reviewed journals, including Behavior Analysis in Practice, Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, and Behavior Development Bulletin. Dr. Mayville’s practice is focused on evaluation and educational program building with students with autism and intellectual disability.

Transition Plans that Deliver Results: Evidence-Based Predictors of Success

Presenter: Emily Iland, M.A.

Description: Post-secondary outcomes for adults with autism are discouraging, including poor results in employment and higher education. Many are socially isolated and disconnected. This presentation explores new data that will inspire parents and educators to reverse these disturbing trends. Evidence-based predictors of success, practical strategies and activities that can create a more promising future for youth in transition will be discussed.

Objectives/Outcomes:
Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. utilize data from the National Autism Indicators Report and other research to understand post-secondary school outcomes of young adults with ASD
2. identify predictors of post-secondary school success
3. explain the importance of self-discovery as an essential prequel to transition planning for students with ASD

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Administrators, School Psychologists, Self-Advocates and Speech Language Pathologists

Disclosure:
Emily Iland: Financial – Ms. Iland receives royalties for her books, Drawing a blank: Improving comprehension for readers with autism (2011) and Come to life: Your guide to Self-Discovery (2017), and she receives an honoraria from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for presenting at the 16th Annual Autism Conference. Nonfinancial – She has no relevant nonfinancial disclosures.

Biography:
Emily Iland, M.A., is an award-winning author, advocate, film-maker, researcher and leader in the autism field. As the mother of a young man with ASD, she brings personal experience and insight to her professional roles. She received her Master’s degree in Special Education at California State University Northridge (CSUN), where she is currently an adjunct professor in the Department of Special Education.

Ms. Iland’s son has autism and was the initial inspiration for many of the programs and services she is involved with. Through her work, she noticed that traditional master’s coursework did not sufficiently address
the topic of reading comprehension and autism, which prompted her to do an independent study of the subject. This led to writing the ground-breaking book, *Drawing a Blank: Improving Comprehension for Readers on the Autism Spectrum*. Ms. Iland applied the comprehension concepts she learned in her two most recent safety projects to promote mutual understanding between police and the autism/special needs community. These include the Experience Autism® training for law enforcement and *BE SAFE The Movie*, which uses video modeling structure and other supports to teach youth to interact safely with police.

Coming full circle, Ms. Iland co-authored her latest book with her son, Tom, who is an accomplished adult and self-advocate. *Come to Life: Your Guide to Self-Discovery* is the prequel to transition planning, helping youth with or without disabilities learn to understand and love themselves, find their place in the world, and find their voice to create the futures they want for themselves. Ms. Iland and Tom hope that *Come to Life* can help reverse the dismal outcomes that those with ASD (and related disabilities) are experiencing once they leave school.

**What to Do When Treatments Plans Don’t Work**

**Presenter:** Bobby Newman, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA

**Description:** This presentation will detail the process of conducting a functional behavior assessment in order to create intervention plans in response to challenging behavior. The importance of determining the variables that maintain the behavior’s function cannot be understated. After creating a function based hypothesis, professionals can create an intervention plan. Finally, this talk will describe how to assess the effectiveness of the implemented plan and troubleshoot ineffective plans.

**Objectives/Outcomes:**

Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. describe the process of collecting and analyzing data in order to develop a hypothesis of function of behavior
2. summarize the functions of behavior and how to create intervention plans consistent with each identified function
3. evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention based on data collected and describe the steps for troubleshooting ineffective intervention plans

**Target Audience:**

Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Administrators, School Psychologists, and Speech Language Pathologists

**Disclosure:**

Biography:

Bobby Newman is the Director of Room to Grow, and is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Licensed Psychologist and NYS Licensed Behavior Analyst. Dr. Newman is a published author of books and journal articles on regarding behavior therapy, the philosophy of behaviorism, and autism spectrum disorders. Dr. Newman is the Past-President of the Association for Science in Autism Treatment and the New York State Association for Behavior Analysis. In addition to speaking engagement, Dr. Newman also provides direct treatment, staff training and consultation around the world, and has been honored for his work by several parents and professional groups.

Structured TEACCHing to Support Functional Academics

Presenter: Kathy Hearsey, M.Ed.

Description: Structured Work Systems promote independence and engagement for students with ASD. This session will focuses on how to implement Structured TEACCHing strategies (physical organization, visual schedules, work systems, and material structure) to support the development of functional academics in a classroom and/or community setting.

Objectives/Outcomes:

Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. describe the connection between the learning styles of ASD and Structured TEACCHing Strategies
2. develop meaningful and individualized visual structure for students with ASD
3. implement Structured TEACCHing strategies to facilitate development of skills in the areas of academics and independence

Target Audience:

Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Psychologists, and Speech Language Pathologists

Disclosure:

Kathleen Hearsey: Financial – Ms. Hearsey receives royalties for her “Tasks Galore” series, and she also receives an honoraria from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for presenting at the 16th Annual Autism Conference. Nonfinancial – She has no relevant nonfinancial disclosures.

Biography:

Kathy Hearsey, M.Ed. has worked for the TEACCH Autism Program for 30 years and is the Director of Training. An educator by training, she has traveled nationally and internationally to train professionals working
with individuals with ASD in educational and residential settings. Creating and implementing Structured TEACCHing strategies and individualized skills in the classroom, home community and job sites are her areas of interest. Kathy is also an author of four of the books in the Tasks Galore Series.

**Strategies to Motivate: Using Positive Approaches to Teach Social, Academic, and Daily Living Skills to Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

**Presenter:** Erica Davis, LMSW

**Description:** This session will focus on the basic theories of motivation, basic principles of reinforcement, and how these theories and principles can be applied to increase motivation in school-age individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Discussions will include ways to teach, reinforce, and motivate to develop social, academic, and daily living skills in a variety of settings.

**Objectives/Outcomes:**

Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. recognize evidence-based practices and tools for increasing motivation in students with ASD in multiple settings
2. explain reinforcement principles and how the principles are applied for use in motivating individuals with ASD
3. identify the theories of motivation in individuals with ASD

**Target Audience:**

Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Administrators, School Psychologists, and Speech Language Pathologists

**Disclosure:**

Erica Davis: Financial – Ms. Davis receives a salary from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities. Nonfinancial – She has no relevant nonfinancial disclosures.

**Biography:**

Erica Davis, LMSW, received a B.A. in psychology from Siena College and a Masters in Social Work from the University at Albany, SUNY. Ms. Davis has worked at the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for over ten years, and she is currently the Training Program Coordinator. She coordinates a training program for school districts throughout NYS on a Positive Behavior Support process. She also works with families in the Capital District to effectively teach their children pro-social skills, which decreasing challenging behaviors. Her professional experience includes providing counseling and case management services to individuals with developmental disabilities, as well as working with individuals to increase independence, daily living and communication skills.

**Drawing a Blank: Improving Comprehension for Readers with Autism**
Presenter: Emily Iland, M.A.

Description: This presentation focuses on readers with ASD who decode well but don’t understand what they read (hyperlexia). Session will include a discussion of the challenges these students face, the consequences of comprehension failure, and the current status of research in this area. Participants will learn to teach five “free and easy” evidence-based intervention strategies.

Objectives/Outcomes:
Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. summarize how the features of autism spectrum disorders affect comprehension and comprehension breakdown
2. identify more than 30 comprehension skills to teach explicitly
3. demonstrate five evidence-based comprehension strategies to help readers understand what they read

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Psychologists, and Speech Language Pathologists

Disclosure:
Emily Iland: Financial – Ms. Iland receives royalties for her books, Drawing a blank: Improving comprehension for readers with autism (2011) and Come to life: Your guide to Self-Discovery (2017), and she receives an honoraria from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for presenting at the 16th Annual Autism Conference. Nonfinancial – She has no relevant nonfinancial disclosures.

Biography:
Emily Iland, M.A., is an award-winning author, advocate, film-maker, researcher and leader in the autism field. As the mother of a young man with ASD, she brings personal experience and insight to her professional roles. She received her Master’s degree in Special Education at California State University Northridge (CSUN), where she is currently an adjunct professor in the Department of Special Education.

Emily’s son, Tom, has autism and was the initial inspiration for many of the programs and services she is involved with. Through her work, she noticed that traditional master’s coursework did not sufficiently address the topic of reading comprehension and autism, which prompted her to do an independent study of the subject. This led to writing the ground-breaking book, Drawing a Blank: Improving Comprehension for Readers on the Autism Spectrum. Emily applied the comprehension concepts she learned in her two most recent safety projects to promote mutual understanding between police and the autism/special needs community. These include the Experience Autism® training for law enforcement and BE SAFE The Movie, which uses video modeling structure and other supports to teach youth to interact safely with police.
Coming full circle, Emily co-authored her latest book with her son, Tom, who is an accomplished adult and self-advocate. *Come to Life: Your Guide to Self-Discovery* is the prequel to transition planning, helping youth with or without disabilities learn to understand and love themselves, find their place in the world, and find their voice to create the futures they want for themselves. Emily and Tom hope that *Come to Life* can help reverse the dismal outcomes that those with ASD (and related disabilities) are experiencing once they leave school.

**Living Well on the Spectrum: Positive Approaches to Stress Management**

**Presenter:** Valerie L. Gaus, Ph.D.

**Description:** Living with autism can make an individual and family vulnerable to stress. This workshop will describe approaches found in positive psychology and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) that can be useful to manage those day to day stressors so that life can be more enjoyable.

**Objectives/Outcomes:**

Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. define human stress and what makes individuals vulnerable
2. describe how CBT and positive psychology can offer individuals strategies for managing stress
3. design a plan based on using personal strengths to reduce vulnerability to stress and to increase time spent on meaningful activities

**Target Audience:**

Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Administrators, School Psychologists, and Speech Language Pathologists

**Disclosure:**


**Biography:**

Valerie Gaus, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist who has been a practicing psychotherapist for more than 20 years. She specializes in individual psychotherapy for adults of all ages, with extensive experience serving people with disabilities, autism, anxiety, depression, trauma and stress-related problems. She approaches therapy using a cognitive-behavioral framework, she has authored numerous articles and book chapters on this topic. In addition, she has authored two books: *Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Adult Asperger Syndrome* (2007) and *Living Well on the Autism Spectrum: How to Use Your Strengths to Meet the Challenges of Asperger Syndrome/High Functioning Autism* (2011).
Priorities: Preparing for the Future

Presenter: Kathy, Hearsey, M.Ed.

Description: This session will highlight prioritizing independence, flexibility, generalization, well-being, self-advocacy and coping strategies to support students in their present environment and to be successful beyond the classroom setting.

Objectives/Outcomes:
Following participation in this seminar, participants will be able to:

1. develop meaningful and individualized activities that focus on priorities for educating individuals with ASD
2. implement visual supports and strategies that support the individual with ASD in a variety of settings
3. develop and implement beginning relaxation and coping strategies

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Psychologists, and Speech Language Pathologists

Disclosure:
Kathleen Hearsey: Financial – Ms. Hearsey receives royalties for her Tasks Galore series, and she also receives an honoraria from the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities for presenting at the 16th Annual Autism Conference. Nonfinancial – She has no relevant nonfinancial disclosures.

Biography:
Kathy Hearsey, M.Ed. has worked for the TEACCH Autism Program for 30 years and is the Director of Training. An educator by training, she has traveled nationally and internationally to train professionals working with individuals with ASD in educational and residential settings. Creating and implementing Structured TEACCHing strategies and individualized skills in the classroom, home community and job sites are her areas of interest. Kathy is also an author of four of the books in the Tasks Galore Series.