Supporting Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Developing Systems to Support Evidence-Based Practice

Presenter: Cynthia M. Anderson, Ph.D.

Over 40 years of research has resulted in a significant knowledge base regarding best practices in interventions for children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. The vast majority of this work is focused on very young children, or, for school-aged children, on interventions to decrease problem behavior and increase independent living skills. Effective and sustained implementation of comprehensive supports for school-aged children has been documented in only a few studies.

In this workshop we will delineate key features of evidence-based interventions for children with autism. We will discuss as well features of effective school systems; qualities that allow schools to implement interventions (1) with high fidelity, (2) over time, and (3) with all children in need of intervention.

Objectives:
1. Identify the range of intervention targets schools must be prepared to address when supporting children on the autism spectrum.
2. Describe features of evidence-based practice (how do you know one when you see one).
3. Define systems features necessary to ensure high quality implementation of evidence-based practice.

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, School Administrators, School Psychologists, School Administrators, Related Service Providers

Biography:
Dr. Anderson is a professor in the School Psychology program at University of Oregon. She is the Head of the Department of Special Education and Clinical Sciences. She holds a PhD in Clinical-Child Psychology from West Virginia University and is a licensed psychologist and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. Dr. Anderson conducts research in interventions for severe problem behavior and is particularly interested in how organizations build and maintain capacity to implement evidence-based practice. She currently is PI on 2 federal grants and named investigator on 2 additional federal grants. She has published over 50 books, articles, and chapters in the area of applied behavior analysis and behavior supports. Dr. Anderson currently is an Associate Editor for School Psychology Review and on the Editorial Board for Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, the Behavior Analyst, Behavior Analysis in Practice, and Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions. She provides training and consultation to school districts nationally, working particularly closely with schools in Oregon, Maryland, and Virginia.

Seeing is Believing: Self-modeling with Children with ASD

Presenter: Tom Buggey, Ph.D.

Participants will learn about a state-of-the-art method in which children serve as their own instructional models: video self-modeling (VSM). Research underlying the use of video modeling suggests that this technique may be an effective way to teach skills to individuals with ASDs. This session will highlight the science behind self-modeling and the process of creating and using video self-modeling, from identifying behaviors to analyzing results.

Objectives:
1. Attendees will learn techniques of filming used with children with autism including role playing, imitation,
and capturing rare behaviors.

2. Attendees will better understand self-modeling and its potential applications.

3. Attendees will gain a basic understanding of the research and theory behind self-modeling use with persons with autism.

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, School Administrators, School Psychologists, School Administrators, Related Service Providers

Biography:
Tom Buggey, Ph.D. is professor and Siskin Children’s Institute’s Chair of Excellence at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and has been in this position since 2007. Prior to this he was a Professor of Special Education at the University of Memphis for 14 years and prior to that he was a teach in Pennsylvania and supervisor of special education in NFLD, Canada. He began his research in self-modeling in 1993 while completing his PhD in Early Intervention at Penn State University. In 1997 he carried out his first study with children with autism and since then has completed six other studies with this population with participants ranging from 2½ to 16 years of age and across behaviors such as social initiations, expressive language, and tantrums. His book “Seeing is Believing” is presently the only book on the topic of self-modeling. Dr Buggey presently conducts most of his research at the Siskin Children’s Institute in Chattanooga.

The Science of Making Friends for Adolescents with Autism: Evidence-Based Social Skills Training
Presenter: Elizabeth Laugeson, Psy.D.

Social deficits are known to be a significant problem for youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), yet very few evidence-based social skills programs exist for high-functioning adolescents with ASD. In this interactive and dynamic presentation, Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson will be providing an overview of PEERS, an empirically supported social skills program for teens with ASD and their parents. Within the framework of solid research evidence, concrete rules and steps of social etiquette will be highlighted to promote the development and maintenance of friendships for youth with ASD.

Objectives:
1. To familiarize the audience with social deficits common to adolescents with ASD.
2. To identify evidence-based methods of social skills instruction.
3. To provide an overview of the UCLA PEERS Program.

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

Biography:
Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson is a licensed clinical psychologist and an Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. Dr. Laugeson is the Director of The Help Group - UCLA Autism Research Alliance, which is a collaborative research initiative between The Help Group and the UCLA Semel Institute, dedicated to developing and expanding applied clinical research in the treatment of children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders. She is also the Director of the UCLA PEERS Program, which is an outpatient clinic providing parent-assisted social skills training for youth and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other social impairments.
Dr. Laugeson has been a principal investigator and collaborator on a number of NIH and CDC-funded studies investigating social skills training for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities from preschool to late adolescence and is the co-developer of an evidence-based social skills intervention for teens known as PEERS. She was the two-time recipient of the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award from the NIH from 2004-2007. Recipient of the Semel Scholar Award for Junior Faculty Career Development in 2008, and received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Pepperdine University in 2010. Dr. Laugeson has presented her research at international conferences throughout the world including the U.S., England, Italy, Canada, and Australia. Her work has been featured on national and international media outlets such as People Magazine, USA Today, the LA Times, New York Times, Washington Post, CBS, NBC, and Channel 4 in the United Kingdom, just to name a few.

Making Inclusion Work for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
Presenter: Tristram Smith, Ph.D.

Most students with autism spectrum disorders are now partially or fully included in general education at school. This presentation will outline a sequence of steps for individualized planning of an inclusive educational program, creating and training a team of school personnel to implement interventions, rolling out interventions in stages with ongoing consultation, and systematically monitoring progress and trouble-shooting. Interventions include strategies (used as needed for the individual student with ASD) to promote independence and engagement throughout the school day, adapt or modify the general education curriculum, provide supplemental individualized instruction if necessary, facilitate peer interaction, and arrange function-based behavior supports to reduce problem behavior when present.

Objectives:
1. To become familiar with trends for school placement of students with ASD
2. Identify evidence-based practices for serving students with ASD in schools
3. Increase knowledge of effective strategies for implementing evidence-based practices in inclusive school settings

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

Biography:
Tristram Smith, Ph.D., is an associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC), where he leads federally funded studies comparing the efficacy of different interventions for children with autism spectrum disorders. He is also a clinician in URMC’s Community Consultation Program, serving students with ASD and other intellectual disabilities in schools and other agencies. His commitment to the study and treatment of children with ASD began in 1982, when he had the opportunity to volunteer as a buddy for an adult with autism who lived near his college. This experience inspired him to apply to graduate school at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he studied clinical psychology and worked as a therapist researcher with O. Ivar Lovaas, Ph.D., in the UCLA Young Autism Project. Before moving to Rochester in 2000, he directed clinics for children with autism and their families in the states of California, Iowa, and Washington. He has authored or coauthored several of the most widely-cited studies on treatment outcomes for children with ASD.

Learning Better Ways to Cope: Teaching Individuals with ASD Skills to Replace Challenging Behaviors
Focus of the presentation will be on practical ways to teach coping skills to individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Specifically, techniques to assist with anxiety and problem-solving difficulties will be discussed. Emphasis will be placed on evidence-based strategies that can be taught and used in both a home and school environment.

Objectives:
1. Identify reasons why it might be appropriate to teach coping skills to individuals with ASD.
2. Describe different techniques to assist individuals on the spectrum with anxiety and problem-solving difficulties.
3. Identify at least one strategy that could be taught to an individual with ASD and used in both a home and school environment.

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, School Psychologists, School Administrators, Related Service Providers

Biography:
Melissa L. Rinaldi received her B.A. degree in psychology from New York University, and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in clinical psychology from the University at Albany, State University of New York. She is a licensed clinical psychologist in the states of New York and Rhode Island. Dr. Rinaldi has worked with individuals with disabilities, their families, and members of their support team in both clinical and research capacities for over a decade. She recently completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University where she provided individual and group therapy to children and adolescents with combined developmental disabilities and psychiatric conditions. Dr. Rinaldi has extensive experience conducting diagnostic, cognitive, and adaptive assessments of individuals with developmental disabilities and providing behavioral and educational consultation services to homes, schools, and residential facilities. Her research focus is on the development, administration, and evaluation of training models and treatment approaches for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.

Bully Proofing Strategies for Teens with Autism: Evidence-Based Approaches for Handling Peer Rejection
Presenter: Elizabeth Laugeson, Psy.D.

In this interactive and lively presentation, Dr. Laugeson will be providing concrete tools to aide parents, educators, and mental health professionals in helping teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders effectively handle bullying and other forms of peer rejection. Role-play demonstrations and behavioral rehearsal exercises will be provided.

Objectives:
1. To identify evidence-based strategies for handling verbal teasing and rumors/gossip.
2. To identify evidence-based strategies for handling physical bullying and changing a bad reputation.
3. To provide an overview of the UCLA PEERS Programs.

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

Biography:
Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson is a licensed clinical psychologist and an Assistant Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior. Dr. Laugeson is the Director of The Help Group- UCLA Autism Research Alliance, which is a collaborative research initiative between The Help Group and the UCLA Semel Institute, dedicated to developing and expanding applied clinical research in the treatment of children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders. She is also the Director of the UCLA PEERS Program, which is an outpatient clinic providing parent-assisted social skills training for youth and young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders and other social impairments.

Dr. Laugeson has been a principal investigator and collaborator on a number of NIH and CDC-funded studies investigating social skills training for children and adolescents with developmental disabilities from preschool to late adolescence and is the co-developer of an evidence-based social skills intervention for teens known as PEERS. She was the two-time recipient of the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award from the NIH from 2004-2007. Recipient of the Semel Scholar Award for Junior Faculty Career Development in 2008, and received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Pepperdine University in 2010. Dr. Laugeson has presented her research at international conferences throughout the world including the U.S., England, Italy, Canada, and Australia. Her work has been featured on national and international media outlets such as People Magazine, USA Today, the LA Times, New York Times, Washington Post, CBS, NBC, and Channel 4 in the United Kingdom, just to name a few.

A Spectrum of Apps for Students on the Autism Spectrum

Presenters: Heather J. Bridgman, MS, ATP and Nick Weiland, M.A., CCC-SLP

Discover the expanding world of applications, or "apps" for the iPod Touch, iPhone and iPad that support students with autism and other disabilities. This session will review apps that support students with autism in the areas of communication, cognitive challenges, restricted behaviors and special interests, social challenges, sensory challenges, emotional vulnerability, and motor challenges as referenced by the Underlying Characteristics Checklist by Ruth Aspy, Ph.D. and Barry Grossman, Ph.D. Criteria used to select quality apps will be discussed. This presentation will also allow participants to make connections between the intended use of an app and how it might meet the needs of students with autism.

Objectives:
1. Participants will name 5 iPod/iPad applications that are beneficial to students on the autism spectrum.
2. Participants will identify the characteristics of quality iPod/iPad applications and match to student need
3. Participants will be able to find new and recommended applications through on-line resources

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Psychologists

Biography:
Heather Bridgman has been working in the field of Assistive Technology for the past 18 years. She is a rehabilitation engineer and has worked in both the medical and educational environments. Her specialties include computer access, augmentative communication and universal design for learning. Heather has earned a master’s degree in systems engineering with a concentration in rehabilitation as well as a teaching license in the area of high school mathematics. Heather has presented at numerous state and regional conferences on a wide variety of assistive technology software,
Nick Weiland, M.A., CCC-SLP has been working in the field of disabilities with a focus on assistive technology for 35 years. Nick is currently the Southeast Regional Coach for OCALI, Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence Disabilities. Areas of interest and expertise include augmentative communication, assistive technology and universal design for learning.

**Effective School-Based Strategies for Dealing with Challenging Behaviors Demonstrated by Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Presenter: David Meichenbaum, Ph.D.

This conference session, designed for school professionals, will go beyond determining what is causing and maintain challenging behaviors demonstrated by students with ASD, and will additionally emphasize practical evidence-based strategies to decrease maladaptive behaviors, increase adaptive alternative behaviors, and evaluate the effectiveness of intervention plans. Attendees will consider whether their current means of responding to challenging behavior include the necessary elements to build skills and curtail future problematic behaviors.

**Objectives:**
1. To understand why challenging behaviors occur and reoccur, by considering the fundamental principles and methods of Functional Behavioral Assessments.
2. To become familiar with evidence-based strategies to reduce problematic behaviors and build adaptive alternative behaviors.
3. To recognize all that is needed in developing a comprehensive behavior intervention plan, including means for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of behavior plans.

**Target Audience:**
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, School Administrators, Paraprofessionals, School Psychologists

**Biography:**
David Meichenbaum, Ph.D. is a Clinical Psychologist specializing in the diagnostic evaluation and treatment of pervasive developmental and disruptive behavior disorders. He is the Director of Consulting Services at Summit Educational Resources in Buffalo, New York, and serves as a highly sought after consultant for school districts across western New York, offering behavioral and educational strategies for students with autism and severe behavioral challenges.

Dr. Meichenbaum has been a principal- or co-investigator in multiple studies evaluating the effectiveness and impact of behavioral and pharmacological treatments on functioning in youth, and has presented on these topics nationally and internationally. His publications include reports on effectively treating disruptive behavior disorders in primary care settings and strategies for facilitating treatment and communication with adolescents. Dr. Meichenbaum has held an adjunct instructor appointment at the University at Buffalo, having taught courses on child & adult psychopathology and the psychology of aggression & violence.

He has conducted workshops, trainings, and consultations to parents, teachers, psychologists, and other school and mental health professionals. A member of APA, AABCT, SSCP, and ABA, Dr. Meichenbaum received his doctorate of philosophy in Clinical Psychology from University at Buffalo, SUNY, and completed his pre-doctoral internship at Duke University Medical Center.
Socially Awkward? Helping Individuals with ASD Understand the Hidden Social World
Presenter: Mara L. Vanderzell, Ph.D.

Participants will gain an understanding of the social skill deficits associated with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and how those deficits impact an individual’s ability to successfully navigate through the social world. Participants will also learn aspects of the hidden social world and strategies for working with individuals with ASD to help them acquire skills to engage appropriately in social situations.

Objectives:
1. Participants will gain understanding of the underlying communication and social deficits associated with ASD
2. Participants will learn the implications on learning and behavior
3. Participants will be introduced to several strategies to teach hidden social rules to individuals with ASD

Target Audience:
Parents, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers, Related Service Providers, Paraprofessionals, School Psychologists

Biography:
Mara L. Vanderzell, Ph.D., is the Director of Consultation and Behavioral Services at the Kelberman Center, Inc., an affiliate of Upstate Cerebral Palsy in Utica, NY. Dr. Vanderzell received her B.S. in Psychology and Spanish from Union College and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the State University of New York at Stony Brook under the supervision of the late Edward G. Carr, Ph.D. Her doctoral dissertation focused on practical intervention strategies for challenging behavior displayed by individuals with developmental disabilities in home and community settings. Dr. Vanderzell completed her APA-accredited pre-doctoral internship working exclusively in the field of developmental disabilities at They May Institute, Inc. in Randolph, MA. Dr. Vanderzell has had many years of experience working with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), their families, and their school staff as an educational consultant, home behavior consultant, and direct service provider. She has delivered many trainings and workshops to parents and school personnel. She has published research in the field of developmental disabilities, applied behavior analysis, and positive behavior support and has presented her findings to national and international audiences.