2017 Breakout Sessions

Session #1: 11:00 – 12:15

Counseling for People Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and/or Intellectual Disabilities (Whaleback Room)

In this breakout session, therapist, Jen Appleby, LCSW will outline the many potential benefits of outpatient therapy for individuals of all ages with ASD and/or ID. She will focus on some of the specific areas of therapy, including building and safely expressing a feelings vocabulary; learning and practicing skills for self-regulation; maximizing personal strengths; and working on the development of social skills. In addition, Jen will share examples of particular interventions found effective in her work, including play based activities, transactional supports, use of creative projects, and meaningful routines and rituals. She will also highlight specific ways the therapy process can be made accessible and meaningful for this population.

About the presenter:

**Jen Appleby** is an LCSW who has worked the last twelve years in Spurwink's day and residential treatment programs. She has provided extensive trainings in the CARE model, as well as on issues related to trauma. Jen has performed in both clinical and administrative capacities over the years, most recently supervising clinicians working with both our trauma and ASD populations. Prior to coming to Spurwink, Jen's early career focused on work with youth and adults with ASD and ID. In addition to her role as a clinical supervisor, Jen has been seeing clients on an outpatient basis, specializing in working with youth and adults who have experienced both traumatic stress and ASD/ID. Beginning April 2017, Jen will transition to her own private practice in Brunswick where she will continue to meet the needs of these populations. Her work with children, adults and families is bolstered by a strong commitment to providing compassionate, creative therapy tailored to meet the unique developmental needs of the individual.
Nutritious eating and physical activity are critical components of a healthy lifestyle. Maintaining this lifestyle can be challenging, especially for children with autism, intellectual disabilities or developmental disabilities and their families. While children with disabilities face many of the same challenges to being healthy as their peers, they also experience unique risk factors and additional challenges that increase their risk for obesity.

This presentation will give strategies, tools and resources that address healthy eating physical activity needs of children with disabilities. The curriculum is based on Maine’s 5-2-1-0 Let’s Go! Program, and include evidenced-based strategies for success. Attendees will also learn how to include components of the program into a child’s treatment plan.

Specific topics will include strategies to meet the needs of children with eating problems, creating attainable healthy eating goals, finding alternatives to food as a reinforcer or reward, making physical activities inclusive for all children and including a child’s treatment team as partners in achieving a healthy lifestyle.

The 5-2-1-0 Let’s Go! Program has developed a Tool Kit for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Attendees will be able to download a free copy following the conference to support the implementation of strategies learned through the presentation.

About the presenters:

*Diane Boas, MS* is a Project Manager at Let’s Go! where she develops tools, resources and trainings for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Let’s Go! is a nationally recognized pediatric obesity prevention program based at the Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital at Maine Medical Center. In addition to writing the Let’s Go! Toolkit for Children with I/DD she recently authored the Community Support Toolkit for the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council. She has worked for over twenty years in school, out-of-school and community settings to improve health, education, and quality of life outcomes for individuals with disabilities and their families.

*Allyson Lowell, LCSW* has worked with and advocated for children, youth and adults with special needs in Maine communities for more than 20 years. She is the Director of Program Services at Woodfords Family Services, and oversees all agency clinical and behavioral health programs. Previously, she served as the Director of Case Management Programs at Woodfords for more than 10 years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work and a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Maine.
Key components of Social Skills Training (Ballroom)

This workshop details strategies to motivate students to learn, ways to teach social skills, how to generalize skills into the natural setting and increase acceptance and tolerance from peers.

About the presenter:

Jed Baker, Ph.D. is the director of the Social Skills Training Project, an organization serving individuals with autism and social communication problems. He is on the professional advisory board of Autism Today, ASPEN, ANSWER, YAI, the Kelberman Center and several other autism organizations. In addition, he writes, lectures, and provides training internationally on the topic of social skills training and managing challenging behaviors. He is an award winning author of 9 books, including Social Skills Training for Children and Adolescents with Aspergers Syndrome and Social Communication Problems; Preparing for Life: The Complete Handbook for the Transition to Adulthood for Those with Autism and Aspergers Syndrome; The Social Skills Picture Book; The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond; No More Meltdowns: Positive Strategies for Managing and Preventing Out-of-Control Behavior; No More Victims: Protecting those with Autism from Cyber Bullying, Internet Predators & Scams; Overcoming Anxiety in Children and Teens; and School Shadow Guidelines. His work has also been featured on ABC World News, Nightline, Fox News, the CBS Early Show, and the Discovery Health Channel.

Session #2: 1:15 – 2:30

Exploring Options: A Conversation on Transition from High School to Adulthood - Pine Tree Society and Maine Parent Federation (Whaleback Room)

During this interactive workshop presenters will engage and provide attendees on the many topics associated with transition from High School to Adulthood. Content will include overviews on what is included in the Transition Plan, who should be involved in the Transition Plan, how the Transition Plan and IEP work together, guardianship, social security, adult services, post high school education/training, Work, independent and supported living, and much more. This session is truly intended to be a conversation to allow attendees to engage with the presenters and receive support and answers to questions they REALLY want to know.

About the Presenters:
Julie Brennan, LMSW, Pine Tree Society: Julie has been working in the field of Developmental Disabilities for over 19 years. Julie started her career in residential services at first providing support and then management of a few residential homes. She worked as a Resource Coordinator for the State of Maine, Office of Aging and Disability services (OADS) for almost 8 years prior to her employment as the Director of Case Management at Pine Tree Society. Through her previous employment with OADS Julie brings with her extensive knowledge of the services available in adult services and the steps needed to obtain the services. She is able to help support and guide case managers as well as parents through the transition and what to except when a child reaches adulthood.

Michael Bell, BS, Pine Tree Society: Michael has dedicated his career working to support individuals with Autism and Developmental Disabilities. For the last 8 years, Michael has been in Case Management Services with Pine Tree Society and is currently the Team Leader for Children’s & Transition Case Management Services. Michael has many years of experience supporting with the creation and implementation of effective transition plans, directly supporting individuals and their families with the many processes associated with transition, and helping establish the services and supports needed for a successful transition to life beyond high school. Raising a son on the spectrum and navigating his transition has also allowed for a very personal relationship with this subject matter and has additionally deepened Mike’s commitment in the field.

Ann Long: Ann Long joined Maine Parent Federation in 1999 as a parent information and training specialist. Since then she has worked under various MPF programs. She became interested and involved in the disability world following the onset of her adult son’s disability. She works assisting families throughout Maine by providing trainings on special education and other related topics.

Life Improvised: Creative Music Making for Social Skills, Schedules and Quality Time (Cumberland Room)

Music therapists use improvisation to meet client-centered goals in the moment and for long term generalization to school, home, and work. Music is a wonderful tool that can be utilized even by non-musicians to improve communication and life skills with the client or loved one for whom they are caring. In this workshop, we will:

- Learn how to choose songs and create playlists to get through a schedule of ADLs
- Become comfortable singing, rather than speaking, necessary information
- Practice connecting with others nonverbally, through the playful yet structured modality of percussion
- Learn about adaptive and homemade musical instruments as well as grant programs for instruments
- Access useful and easy-to-use music technology that you can incorporate at home
About the Presenter:

Kate Beever, originally from Gorham, Maine, studied at the USM School of Music and then worked for Frank Glazer before moving to New York City. She is now a Board Certified Music Therapist with a Master’s degree in Music Psychotherapy from New York University. While in New York, she interned at Beth Israel Medical Center and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. She returned to the fresh air of Maine to open Maine Music & Health. She works with clients of all ages with cancer, autism, cerebral palsy, brain injury, depression, developmental disabilities, dementia, and respiratory diseases. Kate presents at conferences and facilitates group and individual sessions while keeping an active performing schedule as a pianist and percussionist. She is also a trained REMO Health Rhythms facilitator and has her certification in Neurologic Music Therapy. Kate is a member of the Maine Arts Commission.

Cognitive and Behavioral Strategies for Individuals with Autism (Ballroom)

This presentation will explain the basics of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), overview modifications for its use in treating individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and describe practical applications for families. Examples of how to implement these strategies will be given. Attendees will come away with a basic understanding of CBT and how it can be used to treat problems associated with ASD and comorbid disorders.

About the Presenters:

Michael Scheib, LMSW-CC is a school psychology doctoral intern at the Center for Autism and Developmental Disorders (CADD) as well as Spring Harbor Hospital where he provides Outpatient and Inpatient behavior assessments, behavior therapy, social skills groups and family therapy. Michael specializes in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), Cognitive-Behavior Therapy (CBT) for individuals with developmental disabilities, and Habit Reversal Training (HRT). When not at work, Michael enjoys hiking, playing sports, coaching soccer, and playing rock n’ roll music.

Adam Golonka, PsyD, BCBA-D has provided behavior therapy in day treatment, public school, home, and inpatient settings. He specializes in helping individuals with developmental disorders and emotional-behavioral disorders decrease unsafe behaviors while learning new skills that promote self-management and independence. In doing so he works closely with caregivers to ensure continued behavioral progress across all settings. Currently, he functions as a behavior analyst and post-doctoral fellow at the Developmental Disorders Program at Spring Harbor Hospital.

Session #3: 2:45 – 4:00

New Findings on Older Adults with Autism (Whaleback Room)
The number of autistic adults is substantial, yet we know surprisingly little about them. The workshop presenters, who identified their own autism later in life, have conducted an international survey of 145 autistic adults age 50 and older, to be published in a forthcoming book. In this workshop, you will hear stories from the survey participants and learn about their lives, dreams, and challenges.

About the Presenters:

**Eric Endlich, Ph.D.** is a psychologist in private practice in Needham, MA. He has an adult autistic son, co-leads an Asperger support group at the Asperger/Autism Network (AANE), and presented at the 2016 Southern Maine Autistic Conference.

**Wilma Wake, LCSW** is a social worker whose practice in Kennebunk, ME focuses on autistic individuals and their families. She is an ordained minister with doctorates in education and theology. She has published several books and co-facilitates an autism/Asperger support group in Maine.

**Robert Lagos** is a computer programmer/analyst, musician, and statistician, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry and Computer Science. He facilitates an autism/Asperger support group in Maine.

**A Mandala of Pediatric Integrative Medicine: Pendulum Paradigms of Health and Healing in ASD (Cumberland Room)**

Session Details: The presentation will use the metaphor of a mandala to illustrate the interconnectedness between nutrition, sleep hygiene, the imponderable influence of digital media and toxic environmental chemicals on a child's ability to become a successful learner in their home, school and community.

The session will include:

- History of the mandala from ancient wisdom to modern education
- Introduction of Andrew Weil MD anti-inflammatory nutrition guidelines and discussion of brain gut health (microbiome) and epigenetics specific to ASD
- Discussion of sleep architecture and benefits of restorative sleep hygiene.
- CDC recommendations for computer interface and effect of digital media on neurocognitive function
- TENDR call for action (targeting environmental neurodevelopmental risks)
- Discussion of the origin of mindfulness and development through history. The use of yoga, poi spinning and mindfulness meditation with ASD children will be introduced.
Through scientific research and experiential learning individuals will gain knowledge and skills to facilitate health and healing for people with autism spectrum disorder.

About the Presenter:

**Linda S. Grigel MHP, PA-C, CCH** practices Integrative Medicine at Fall River Health Center in Falmouth, Maine. Her extensive background in medical and homeopathic education includes degrees in Physician Assistant, Master’s Health Profession, B.S. in Occupational Therapy and Diploma in Advanced Clinical Homeopathy.

Lindy’s interest in integrative medicine extends beyond the walls of Fall River Health Center. She was a homeopathic consultant to an NIH grant for the Maine Medical Center Family Practice Residency Program, and continues to be an active member in the MMC Department of Integrative Medicine. She mentors Family Medicine and Pediatric residents as well as participating in Integrative Medical rounds.

The wisdom gained from Lindy’s 37+ years of clinical experience, with expertise in neurodevelopmental disorders, is the basis for the workshop. She has presented to medical providers, educators and parents across the US and internationally. She is well known for her unique ability to bond with people of all ages from every walk of life.

**Connecting Behavior and Communication for Successful and Functional Outcomes (Ballroom)**

Learning Outcomes:

- Participants will demonstrate an understanding of the similarities that exist between behavioral and speech pathology services.
- Participants will demonstrate a global understanding of how behavior impacts communication and vice versa.
- Participants will be able to describe at least 2 strategies that can be incorporated to assist in decreasing problematic behavior and increase more effective communication.

About the Presenters:

Linda Bonnar MA, CCC-SLP, ATP began her work with Pine Tree Society began in the 1980s when she joined the Pine Tree Camp team as a camp counselor. Little did she know, that was
just the start of her impact on Maine people with disabilities and their families. Linda joined the Pine Tree Society team as a speech language pathologist in 1996 and in 2005 was named the director of the organization’s Speech Language and Assistive Technology program.

Linda is known for her contagious energy, enthusiasm and an unparalleled commitment to the people she serves. Her background is primarily in working with individuals with profound cognitive and physical challenges as well as those with Autistic Spectrum Disorders. She also works extensively with all Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) users.

Linda has earned the credential of Assistive Technology Practitioner by passing an examination administered by the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA).

Mark A. Geren holds a Master’s of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis from Northeastern University and is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst®. For over 20 years, Mr. Geren has effectively treated people from a variety of populations, including the brain-injured, psychiatric, and developmentally disabled. He has served as clinical chief for two brain injury rehabilitation facilities, and head of clinical training in other organizations. He has published articles in the Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis and the Journal of Experimental Analysis of Human Behavior, and has done speaking engagements both nationally and internationally. Currently, he provides behavioral consultation and training to schools, human services organizations, and hospitals.