Conference Program

Opening Keynote

9:00-10:00 am

- Toward a Future of Flourishing: Supporting Strong Transitions for Young People with ASD.
  Dr. Erik Carter, PhD
  Room: Grande Ballroom

  This presentation will focus on what we know works best for equipping students with the skills, supports, opportunities, and relationships that set them on a course a "good life" during and after high school. Dr. Carter will highlight current research addressing effective approaches for supporting students to (a) access rigorous learning opportunities in their school, (b) connect to relevant school and community experiences that prepare them for adulthood, and (c) develop supportive relationships with peers and caring adults. He will focus the ways in which schools, families, service systems, and communities can work in tandem to create a future of flourishing for young people with autism.

Morning Concurrent Sessions
10:15-11:15 am

- Serving Students with ASD and Other Developmental Disabilities in Inclusive Settings.
  Kristi Porter, M.Ed.
  Room: SC 206 A, B, C

  It is imperative to provide students with significant cognitive disabilities and/or behavior challenges meaningful opportunities to participate in general education settings. Although inclusion for all students has historically been a goal for school districts, building a system that supports both teachers and students can be difficult. This presentation will discuss how schools can provide more meaningful opportunities for students with autism spectrum disorders to participate in general education settings.
• Mental Health and Autism.
  Dr. Mikle South, PhD  Room: Center Stage
  Many individuals living with autism are impacted by co-morbidities including anxiety, depression, ADHD and many other diagnoses. This can complicate and already complicated situation for the individual living with autism. Mikle will focus on recent research involving assisting those with dual diagnoses and how to support an individual with anxiety, depression and recognizing indications of suicide ideation.

• My Voice Counts!
  Eric Stoker and Sarah Heuser  Room: SC 213 A & B
  Your Voice Does Count! Supported Decision Making (SDM) is a growing movement that promotes the idea that ALL people are capable of making decisions with support. SDM is a way to plan your life by working with a team of trusted supporters in order to make your own decisions about your future. SDM strengthens your ability to be self-determined and empowers you with the tools to live a supported life. Join adult autism self-advocates Eric Stoker and Sarah Heuser as they discuss their personal expertise and experiences with self-determination and supported-decision making issues.

• Highlighting Behavior Analytic Practice in Utah Schools.
  Dr. Aaron Fisher, PhD, BCBA-D  Room: Ragan Theater
  *BCBA CEUs Available
  This presentation with discuss applications of behavior analysis in school settings. We will focus on ways that universities, agencies, and school-based behavior analysts can use their skill set to improve outcomes for students, teachers, school staff, and parents. We will highlight different successful behavior analytic partnerships across Utah. Finally, we will discuss a road map for strengthening the relationship between behavior analysts and schools.

11:30-12:30 pm

• Autism Diagnosis in Girls and Women, what we know, what we don't know, and where to go from here.
  Dr. Julia Connelly  Rooms: SC 206 A, B, C
  Historically, it was believed that Autism Spectrum Disorders were four times more common in males than females. More recent insights are leading us to believe these estimations are far from correct and are greatly overestimating this gender gap. This presentation will focus on how girls and women with autism present differently from their male counterparts. We will discuss early childhood red flags for female autism, as well as behaviors and characteristics commonly related to autism in older girls, teens, and women with autism spectrum disorder. At the end of the presentations we will have time for questions and discussion.
• Helping Doesn't Have to Hurt: Building Resilience in Caregiving.
Marette Monson, LCSW  
Room: Center Stage

Individuals who work with and care for people with autism can sometimes become fatigued because of their efforts to help. This course is designed for parents, siblings, friends, teachers, and co-workers to continue to help without feeling burn-out or compassion fatigue. It is based on the work of Dr. Eric Gentry, a leading national expert in treating and preventing compassion fatigue and its companions.

• Orientation to Utah State Vocational Rehabilitation Services and how to get the most from VR services.
Richard Petersen, LVRC, CPM District Director  
Aimee Lagone, LVRC  
Room: SC 213 A, B, C

One of the most important avenues to achieve, independence and social inclusion for anyone is through employment. The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation offers services to persons with disabilities to prepare for obtain employment. This presentation is designed to introduce the vocational rehabilitation program we have here in Utah, describe the application process and how to access services as well as help explain how a person may benefit most from VR services. This will be an interactive presentation with the opportunity for questions and answers throughout.

• Navigating Relationships and Intimacy for Adolescents and Young Adults with ASD.
Dr. Wes Dotson, PhD, BCBA-D  
Room: Ragan Theater

This session will challenge audience members to think about what it means to build, maintain, and end successful adult relationships. In addition to describing common aspects of healthy relationships, the session will also provide tips and ideas for establishing and maintaining relationships of all kinds in adulthood. Both platonic and intimate relationships will be discussed, and audience members are encouraged and expected to ask questions and participate in discussion and direction of the session. Fair warning: topics discussed can be frank and detailed.

Luncheon and Exhibit Fair- Grande Ballroom 12:30-1:15

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions  
1:30 – 2:30 pm

• The Road to Independence: Think Marathon...Not 5K.
Crystal Emery, Easter Seals  
Room SC 206 A, B, C

Transition to adulthood is a tricky time for both students and their families. It is a developmental process that begins much earlier than one might think. This session discusses the developmental tasks of transition
beginning in early childhood and running through young adulthood. It will help parents see services and interventions through a different lens as we explore the idea that all services are transition services.

- **Changing the Conversation: Engaging Communities in Improving Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities.**  
  **Erik Carter, PhD**  
  **Room: SC 206 A, B, C**

  A “community conversation” is a unique, asset-based approach for engaging a cross-section of diverse citizens—including people from both within and (especially) beyond the service system—in making local changes that enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities. This presentation will focus on the practice and power of this approach to spurring community-level changes. Learn a practical and creative approach for launching local movements that invite ordinary citizens (not just the “usual suspects”) to be part of expanding opportunities and supports for community members with disabilities.

- **Autism in the Workplace in Utah: A Case Study Approach to Understanding ASD Employment Accommodations.**  
  **Jon Westover, PhD**  
  **Room: SC 213 A & B**

  The UVU Autism in the Workplace project is an ongoing project which aims to find what, if any, programs and training are being used by companies in tandem with vocational organizations to better employ individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Companies specifically examined include: Microsoft, Home Depot, Ford Motor Company, Freddie Mac, and the Marriott Corporation. While examining these efforts from businesses across the United States, we also take a closer look at the potential that companies in Utah have for starting their own Autism Employment programs, and the necessities associated with it. This presentation focuses on the experiences of companies that are leading the way with training and programs geared towards this particular set of workers. It also touches on how this issue looks closer to home in the state of Utah, what and how it can help individuals with ASD gain and maintain meaningful employment.

- **Successful Medical and Dental Examinations: Strategies for Supporting Individuals with ASD and Severe Behavior Challenges.**  
  **Dr. Jane Carlson, Phd, BCBA-D**  
  **Room: Ragan Theater**

  Routine medical and dental examinations are essential to health and well-being but can pose particular challenges to young adults with ASD. This research project demonstrates the efficacy of a multi-component approach to helping young adults with ASD and severe behavior challenges in helping these individuals be successful during these examinations. Intervention components, outcome data, health benefits, and financial considerations will be discussed.
2:45-3:45 pm

• **Inclusion: Together We are Better.**
  
  Nebo School District Faculty  
  Room: SC 206 A, B, C
  
  Inclusion can be difficult, especially for our most severe students. Inclusion is meant to benefit students at every cognitive level. Through school collaboration all students can access their least restrictive environment by training students and faculty, bringing typical students into self-contained classrooms, and bringing special education students into the general population. When inclusion is done successfully, benefits can be seen for all.

• **Achieving peace of mind and a sense of direction through family-centered care coordination.**
  
  Eric Christensen, MPH  
  Room: Center Stage
  
  “Care coordination”, as a concept, is on fire across the health, public health, and behavioral health sectors. It is a current requirement in several federal public health grants for children. Why all the buzz? What does care coordination even mean? Join us for an interactive session to explore how care coordination can guide families through the maze of public services and help them maintain their sanity.

• **Married... With Autism (Panel on ASD and Marriage).**
  
  Jared Stewart, M.Ed.  
  Room: SC 213 A & B
  
  It used to be thought that individuals with ASD did not get married, but recent research indicates that as many as 1 in 6 actually do. Unique minds make for unique marriages, and Autism adds a host of special considerations to what is already a complex and challenging relationship for anyone. Bring your questions on Autism and dating, romance, marriage, children, etc for our panel of couples where at least one spouse is on the Spectrum. Moderated by Jared Stewart, M.Ed., whose wife amazingly agreed to be part of this session.

• **The ABC’s of Everyday Behavior. How to see Functional Relations in Any Environment.**
  
  Kerry Shea, USU Doctoral Student  
  BCBA CEUs Available  
  Room: Ragan Theater
  
  Educators and clinicians are responsible for creating an effective learning environment for a diverse group of students and an ever-changing evolution of the daily environmental circumstances. While human behavior often feels unpredictable, years of research have uncovered variables in the environment that can help us predict if a behavior will occur or not. This session will provide a beginner level introduction to the ABC’s of human behavior, Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence. Participants will develop skills to assess current variables in the environment, and brainstorm and learn new approaches for modifying those variables to increase the likelihood that a child will learn a new behavior, or stop engaging in a problematic behavior.