

ISSUES IN INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

Saturday, April 2, 2016 • 8:15 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD)

Ruth S. Harley University Center
One South Avenue
Garden City, New York 11530-0701
conference@ahany.org
ahany.org



Dear professional, family member, friend or individual on the autism spectrum:

The purpose of this conference, and the collaboration between AHA and the Ruth S. Ammon School of Education, is to address the educational, social and behavioral issues pertaining to people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Our internationally known speakers present current and effective strategies for individuals, families and the professionals who work alongside them, and important voices from the spectrum offer insights from their personal experience.

Jane Ashdown, Ph.D.
Dean
Ruth S. Ammon School of Education

Pat Schissel, LMSW
Executive Director
Asperger Syndrome & High Functioning Autism Association (AHA)
Conference Coordinator

ABOUT THE RUTH S. AMMON SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

As a scholarly community, we are committed to providing educational opportunities for professional growth at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels by creating authentic academic and field experiences, cultivating respect for the diverse populations we serve, embracing ethical practices and preparing our students to become reflective change agents through research, collaboration and leadership.

ABOUT AHA

The Asperger Syndrome & High Functioning Autism Association (AHA) serves individuals with Asperger's syndrome and related conditions, their families and the professionals who work with them, providing crucial resources and support as they face challenges, build on their strengths and fulfill their potential. Founded in 1988 and based in Long Island, New York, with a satellite office in New York City, AHA is directed by a dedicated volunteer executive board and expert professional advisory board. AHA's services reach nearly 10,000 people annually through one-to-one phone and e-support, more than a dozen monthly support meetings, a weekly e-newsletter, family recreation events, biannual education conferences, a biannual print publication titled *On the Spectrum* and signature fund-raisers such as its annual ROCK 'N' BOWL. By maintaining efficient administrative practices, 90 percent of every dollar donated to AHA goes directly to providing and expanding its services.

Conference registration includes a handbook containing materials from the presenters. A continental breakfast and boxed lunch are also included. Agency, school, camp, recreation and other service provider representatives will be available with information at our Resource Walkway. Books will be available for purchase at the conference bookstore. Presenting authors will be available to sign their books.

Should you, or your guests, require an accommodation based on a disability, or need to request an ASL interpreter, please contact the Office of Disability Support Services by phone at 516.877.3145 or email at DSS@adelphi.edu. Please allow for a reasonable time frame prior to the event; we suggest a minimum of five business days.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Registration, bookstore, resource, continental breakfast 8:15 a.m.–9:00 a.m.

Greetings from Adelphi and AHA 9:00 a.m.–9:15 a.m.

World Autism Awareness Day—Emily Brooks 9:15 a.m.–9:30 a.m.

MORNING PRESENTATION 9:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

“SWITCHED ON: UNDERSTANDING FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS”

John Elder Robison

After all the time processing his individual differences in his previous books, *Look Me in the Eye* and *Be Different*, John Elder Robison examines the ways he now relates emotionally and socially to others and in society. He will discuss what it is for him to understand others’ feelings and emotions (theory of mind). As stated in his latest book, *Switched On*, “For the first time in my life, I learned what it was like to truly know other people’s feelings. It was as if I was experiencing the world in black and white all my life, and suddenly I could see—and particularly other people—in brilliant, beautiful color.”

Participants will learn to:

- Define theory of mind (ToM) and how ToM is used to understand other people’s feelings.
- Identify concrete thinking and how it manifests to impact relationships.
- Identify what Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) is and how it’s related to autism.

JOHN ELDER ROBISON is an autistic adult and the founder of JE Robison Service Company, which repairs and restores high-end automobiles. He also teaches and works to shape autism research and treatment policy and is an active participant in the ongoing discussion of ethical and legal issues relating to autism therapy, services and intervention. Robison is the Neurodiversity Scholar in Residence at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. He currently serves on the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (IACC) and other boards for the U.S. National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control. His books have been translated into more than 15 languages and they are sold in 60-plus countries.

Resource Walkway and book signing 10:30 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

“VOICES FROM THE SPECTRUM: ADVOCACY THROUGH THE AGES” 11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Moderators: Kate Cody, Psy.D., and Kate Palmer, M.A., CCP, CAS

Presenters: Emily Brooks, Dena Gassner, M.S.W., Liane Holliday Willey, Ed.D., Becca Lory, John Elder Robison and Stephen Shore, Ed.D.

Individuals on the spectrum experience a range of advocacy needs throughout the life span. Panel presenters will discuss their personal experiences of advocacy needs at various stages in their lives.

Participants will learn to:

- Understand effective self-advocacy needs at various stages across the life span.
- Identify how to support relatives and clients in need of self-advocacy.
- Identify times throughout the life span in which individuals on the spectrum are at risk for needing increased self-advocacy.

KATHERINE CODY, Psy.D., is the coordinator of clinical services and training director at Spectrum Services. She conducts psychological and neuropsychological evaluations and psychotherapy services. She also trains and supervises externs and interns in school and clinical psychology.

KATE PALMER, CCP, CAS, is the president/CEO of GRASP, The Global and Regional Asperger Syndrome Partnership. She facilitates groups for GRASP and provides presentations and workshops. Her research has focused on executive functioning deficits in adults with Asperger’s syndrome, which intends to help solve employment, socialization and transitional difficulties.

EMILY BROOKS is a writer and social justice advocate who works with young people with disabilities in New York City. Brooks, who is on the autism spectrum, writes to change perceptions of disability, gender, sexuality and education.

DENA GASSNER, M.S.W., is an Adelphi University Ph.D. student in social welfare who serves on the national boards for The Arc, GRASP and the Autism Society. She spoke at the U.N. about the diagnosis of autism in women.

BECCA LORY was diagnosed with Asperger’s syndrome as an adult. Employed at AHA as community outreach coordinator and co-editor of *On the Spectrum*, she writes and speaks publicly, spreading awareness and encouraging self-advocacy.

STEPHEN SHORE, Ed.D., teaches in the Ruth S. Ammon School of Education at Adelphi University. He presents and consults internationally on educational and social inclusion. His books are translated into many languages. Dr. Shore is an AHA advisory board member.

AFTERNOON PRESENTATION

1:15 p.m.–2:15 p.m.

“INSIGHTS ON AGING WITH ASPERGER’S”*Liane Holliday Willey, Ed.D.*

A strong advocate of autism education and awareness since she was diagnosed with Asperger’s syndrome in 2000, Dr. Holliday Willey brings a unique view of ASD to her work. She has the perspectives of a professor of psycholinguistics, a member of a family with many people also on the spectrum and of a well-respected speaker and author who has had the privilege of collaborating with some of the most gifted people in the field of autism. She has lived, studied and presented the effects of ASD on adolescents, families, personal safety and females. Now 56, she’s adding ASD and aging to her areas of interest. Dr. Holliday Willey hopes her work and presentations will encourage caregivers to better understand, appreciate and support our older autistic population.

Participants will learn to:

- Define how the aging process affects the social life of people with an ASD.
- Define how the aging process can effect language processing for people with an ASD.
- List three fundamental supports that will improve the well-being of aging people with an ASD.

LIANE HOLLIDAY WILLEY, ED.D., has a specialty in psycholinguistics and learning style differences. She likes to share her experiences of living with Asperger’s syndrome with audiences worldwide, bringing to each presentation her humor and positive insight along with the real and not so happy memories she has gathered over the years during her stints as a university professor, writer, manure scooper, French fry maker, community volunteer, wife and mother. Whether she is talking to large groups, leading a small group seminar or writing a book or blog, Dr. Holliday Willey’s goal is to help others understand the importance of accepting differences and individuality. Her first book, *Pretending to Be Normal: Living With Asperger’s Syndrome*, was one of the first female autobiographies on Asperger’s syndrome.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Choose one.)

2:30 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

1. “THE RISKY ROAD TO ADULT SEXUALITY”*Lynda Geller, Ph.D.*

Individuals on the spectrum may develop in spectacularly uneven ways. The psychosocial underpinnings of sexuality are particularly vulnerable to this unevenness. This presentation will focus on the social problems that may result from these differences in psychosexual development. Compromised theory of mind (ToM), social isolation, poor self-esteem, lack of sexual knowledge and experience, perseveration and executive function differences may combine to produce a circumstance for young adults that is fraught with danger. Sexual harassment charges, child pornography arrest and sexually based swindling of naïve young adults will be discussed, among other risks that may be encountered traversing the road to adult sexuality.

Participants will learn:

- How ASD can affect psychosexual development
- How sexual harassment may be defined and what may be the ramifications
- How viewing pornography can easily morph into illegally accessing child pornography and what the terrible consequences can be
- The dangers the Internet can bring to those looking for social interaction or love online

LYNDA GELLER, Ph.D., is the founder of Spectrum Services, a multidisciplinary group of independent practitioners dedicated to children and adults with Asperger’s syndrome and related conditions. She is a member of AHA’s advisory board.

2. “FATHERHOOD AND THE AUTISM SPECTRUM”*Presenter and facilitator: Matthew D. Lerner, Ph.D.**Panelists: Mike Buffa, J.D., Bill Heslin, Jim Karpe and John Elder Robison*

The strengths, challenges and opportunities associated with parenting a child with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are increasingly recognized in research, clinical settings and among communities of families and individuals. The majority of this recognition has until recently focused on mothers. There has been increased awareness and participation of dads in the lives of their children, resulting in representation in the media, a growth of dads’ groups around the country and the emergence of new research focused specifically on fathers. This panel will highlight the new research in this area, then discuss important aspects of fatherhood that may manifest uniquely when parenting a child with ASD, including division of parenting responsibilities, the ways in which a father develops a connection with his child and the struggles for autonomy in adolescence, which may play out in significantly different ways among dads of children with ASD.

Participants will learn to:

- Explain the difference in parenting roles and responsibilities typically associated with fatherhood.
- Discuss how these roles may differ, yet represent important commonalities, among dads of children with ASD.
- Provide tips for other dads of children with ASD, as well as for their spouses, to be effective partners in their relationships with one another and as co-parents.

MATTHEW D. LERNER, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of psychology, psychiatry and pediatrics at Stony Brook University, directing the Social Competence and Treatment Lab. He researches how social problems emerge and how to ameliorate them via meaningful social connection. He is a member of AHA's advisory board.

MICHAEL A. BUFFA, J.D., is vice president of AHA, parent of a young adult with autism and an active member of the community. Buffa also serves as chair of the Long Island Family Support Services Advisory Council (LIFSSAC). His day job is as a litigator with Gialleonardo, Frankini and Harms.

WILLIAM J. HESLIN, CLU, ChFC, CAFI, is a longtime board member of AHA and the parent of a young adult with autism. He can be found at all AHA events with his family. He is also active in his day job at Metropolitan Life Insurance Company assisting families in future planning.

JIM KARPE, the father of two teenagers with developmental disabilities, works at JPMorgan Chase & Co. He runs the special needs division of West Side Soccer League and is parent co-chair of the Queens Council on Developmental Disabilities (QCDD).

3. "MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND ADULTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM"

Presenter and facilitator: Valerie Gaus, Ph.D.

Panelists: Alison Gilbert, Ph.D., Rebecca Sachs, Ph.D., and Jeremy Veenstra-VanderWeele, M.D.

Adults on the spectrum can and do live mentally healthy lives, and most professionals in this community do not consider autism spectrum disorder (ASD) a mental illness in and of itself. However, people with ASD are not immune to the mental health problems that any adult can face across the lifespan. In some cases, the characteristics of ASD can make people more vulnerable to the development of mental health problems such as anxiety or mood disorders. When this happens, high quality and evidence-based mental health services need to be accessible to people on the spectrum. This panel of mental health professionals will talk about when and where these services can be offered in the same way they would be to any other patient with an anxiety or mood disorder, and when the interventions need to be tailored to the unique needs of people on the spectrum.

Participants will be able to:

- List the signs and symptoms of common mental health problems that can affect adults on the spectrum.
- Describe the evidence-based treatment approaches for each of the most common mental health problems.
- Discuss the special considerations when applying these approaches to people on the spectrum.

VALERIE L. GAUS, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist with more than 20 years of experience providing mental health services to people with disabilities in her private practice offices on Long Island in Huntington and at Spectrum Services in New York City, where she offers psychotherapy to adults with ASD as well as those with stress, anxiety and mood disorders, using a cognitive behavioral approach. She is on the advisory board for AHA, the grant review committee for OAR and the adjunct faculty at Long Island University.

ALISON GILBERT, Ph.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist and a clinical assistant professor at Hofstra University School of Medicine. She is the clinical director of the Center for Research and Treatment of Bipolar Disorder at Zucker Hillside Hospital, Northwell Health (formerly named North Shore-LIJ Health System). Dr. Gilbert's expertise is in delivering evidence-based treatment interventions for depression and bipolar disorder.

REBECCA SACHS, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist specializing in the treatment of individuals on the autism spectrum who also experience difficult co-occurring disorders. Her expertise is in the top recommended treatments for anxiety disorders, OCD and related disorders, and how to optimally treat individuals with co-occurring disorders. She sees patients at Spectrum Services in Manhattan and in Park Slope, Brooklyn.

JEREMY VEENSTRA-VANDERWEELE, M.D., is a child and adolescent psychiatrist at Columbia University, the New York State Psychiatric Institute and the New York-Presbyterian Center for Autism and the Developing Brain (CADB). He does a blend of molecular and treatment research in ASD and related genetic syndromes, providing consultations for children, adolescents and adults with ASD at CADB.

4. "UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS, DATING, SEXUALITY AND YOURSELF"

Moderator and presenter: Kate Palmer, M.A., CCP, CAS

Panelists: Emily Brooks, Matthew Roth, Ph.D., and Lindsay Ryan, AC, QMHP

Society may believe that people on the autism spectrum are not interested in dating or relationships. This stereotype couldn't be farther from reality. In this presentation, Kate Palmer, GRASP's president/CEO, Lindsay Ryan, GRASP's vice president of operations, Emily Brooks, GRASP board member, and Matthew Roth, Ph.D., will be discussing relationships, dating, intimacy, sexuality, gender identity, communication within relationships, appropriate relationship boundaries and relationships in the context of social media.

Participants will learn to:

- Understand different types of relationships and social interactions.
- Conceptualize the intersection of sexual orientation preference and disability as it relates to themselves.
- Communicate their needs and wants concerning intimate relationships with partners.

MATTHEW ROTH, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral fellow at the Child Study Center at NYU Langone Medical Center. He specializes in the area of sexuality and the autism spectrum and has presented and published a number of studies in this area.

LINDSAY RYAN, AC, QMHP, is vice president of operations for GRASP and co-chair of the board of directors. She specializes in working with teens on the autism spectrum as well as behavior and mental health diagnoses. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in special education.

5. "PLANNING FOR YOUR FAMILY'S FUTURE: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE IS NO PLAN?"

Presenter and facilitator: Audra Dehan, J.D.

Panelists: Bruce Kanin, Jonathan Kaplan, Ph.D., and Stacey Kanin Roth, SLP

Parents and caregivers often understand the importance of estate planning for their children on the autism spectrum but find themselves unable to begin the steps required for this process. This workshop will explain the main considerations of estate planning while addressing the emotional and logistical obstacles that may be deterring parents and caregivers from seeking out assistance. Practical strategies for managing these obstacles will also be addressed.

Participants will learn to:

- Identify three important considerations in estate planning.
- Recognize circumstantial and emotional obstacles to estate planning.
- Practice techniques to manage the avoidance and emotional difficulties associated with estate planning.

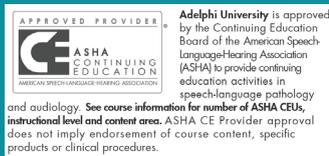
AUDRA E. DEHAN, J.D., is an attorney with more than 20 years of experience concentrating her practice in estate planning, wills and trusts, probate, elder law, special needs planning, real estate and general corporate law.

BRUCE KANIN is the father of two adult children. The oldest, a son, is on the autism spectrum. Kanin is a computer data architect, composer, animal lover, road warrior and world traveler who loves his family and a good laugh as often as possible.

JONATHAN KAPLAN, Ph.D., serves as the director of the SOHO CBT + MINDFULNESS CENTER. He has written two books, *Urban Mindfulness* and *ACT & RFT for Relationships*.

STACEY KANIN ROTH, SLP, is a speech-language pathologist and the younger sibling to a brother on the autism spectrum. Her professional career is devoted to working with individuals with ASD.

CREDENTIALING INFORMATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT



Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology CEUs are available through the Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA). This course is offered for (PENDING) ASHA CEU's (PENDING Level, Professional Area).

Adelphi University School of Social Work is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers #0032.



Autism Specialist CE hours obtained at the AHA conference can be used toward certification as an Autism Specialist (CAS) with the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES). Receive a 20 percent discount off your certification when you use our partner code: AHA. You must register on this form.

Attendance information for social workers, ASHA and autism specialist participants:

"New York State Office of the Professions (NYSED) regulations require that participants must be present for the entire approved educational activity in order to receive a certificate for continuing education credits. There is no accommodation in the state regulations for late arrival, late return from lunch or breaks or early departure. At present, there is no procedure for granting partial credit for approved continuing education events. If there are any changes in State regulation, this policy will updated accordingly."

Financial Disclosure Statement: Emily Brooks, Mike Buffa, Katherine Cody, Audra Dehan, Lynda Geller, Alison Gilbert, Bill Heslin, Bruce Kanin, Jim Karpe, Matthew D. Lerner, Kate Palmer, Matthew Roth, Stacey Kanin Roth, Rebecca Sachs and Jeremy Veenstra-VanderWeele have no financial or nonfinancial information to disclose.

Valerie Gaus, Jonathan Kaplan, John Elder Robison, Stephen Shore and Liane Willey have a financial relationship from royalties of the sales of their books. Nonfinancial relationships exist for Emily Brooks, Dena Gassner, Becca Lory, Kate Palmer and Lindsay Ryan as an individual on the autism spectrum and for Dena Gassner as an individual on the spectrum and a parent.

ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THE CONFERENCE BROCHURE CAN BE DOWNLOADED AT AHANY.ORG.

For further information: ahany.org • conference@ahany.org

Registration Information (Please copy form and send in separate application for each registrant.)

Name _____
Address _____ City/State/ZIP _____
Telephone _____ Email _____

Register online at ahany.org. Mail-in registration must be postmarked by March 19, 2016.

- \$150 AHA member* \$150 Not-for-profit agency
- \$190 Non-AHA member (Nonmember registration includes one-year membership in AHA.)
- \$75 Student \$75 Individual with ASD \$75 Adelphi faculty
- \$25 Fee for ASHA Autism specialist (no fee to AHA; fee to IBCCES) SW CE hours (no fee) SW no. _____

Students and Adelphi faculty must include a copy of current ID with registration, or mail in if registering online.

***Membership Policy:** Membership in AHA is a family membership for those residing in the same household. Your membership must be current as of the date of this conference. If you are unsure, please contact our office by email at conference@ahany.org, or by phone at **888.918.9198**. Your registration will not be processed with an incorrect fee.

A \$25 processing fee will be applied to all refund requests. No refunds after March 21, 2016.

Confirmation Policy: Online registrations automatically receive confirmation. If registering by mail or if further information is required, email conference@ahany.org.

Cancellation Policy: In the instance of event cancellation, all registrants will be fully reimbursed.

Dietary Requirements: Lunch includes a variety of sandwiches and salads (including vegetarian and gluten-free options), chips, cookies and a beverage. We cannot accommodate any other dietary restrictions and there is no discount if you bring your own lunch.

WALK-INS

Walk-ins will be charged an additional \$25. (Lunch may not be available; Adelphi's UC Café is open in the Ruth S. Harley University Center.)

REGISTER EARLY—SEATING IS LIMITED.

Check the Breakout Session you plan to attend. (Select one.)

- 1. ADULT SEXUALITY 2. FATHERHOOD 3. MENTAL HEALTH 4. RELATIONSHIPS 5. PLANNING

Workshops are assigned as applications are processed. Some rooms have limited capacity.

Payment method, select one:

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SCHOLARSHIPS

Partial scholarships are available online at ahany.org or send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the AHA's address, listed above, requesting the form. A registration form must accompany all scholarship requests.

HOTEL ROOMS

For information about local accommodations, visit adelphi.edu/visitors/stay.php.

DIRECTIONS

Participants can reach the conference via the Long Island Rail Road or car. For directions, visit adelphi.edu/visitors/directions.php.

ENCLOSED

Registration fee	\$ _____
Professional fees (ASHA) \$25	
ASHA no. _____	\$ _____
Tax-deductible contribution**	\$ _____
Total included	\$ _____

**Your tax-deductible contribution will be used to provide conference scholarships or to further the work of the Asperger Syndrome & High Functioning Autism Association, Inc.



Asperger Syndrome & High Functioning Autism Association

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