



# VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

## Tuesday, March 19, 2024



Registration – \$25.00

Continuing Education Units Available - \$15.00 each

## Expanding Supports to Children with Autism Who Demonstrate Problem Behavior

**About the Conference:** This conference is sponsored by the WNY Regional Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders and The Summit Center for teachers, therapists, other helping professionals, and parents. The field has made considerable progress in the effective treatment of children with autism and behavior problems that interfere with school functioning. Nevertheless, there are examples of unsuccessful intervention efforts, particularly with children with comorbid conditions or significant social and pragmatic communication impairments. In addition, there have been some criticisms that interventions are challenging to implement in a school setting and may lack an expression of compassion. This conference will provide participants with a broader perspective of essential elements of effective and compassionate interventions for children who present developmental and behavioral challenges.

**Register for this conference at:**

<https://nysrcasd.org/events/1212/registrations/new>

---

### **PRESENTATION 1: Supporting Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Co-Occurring Mental Health Diagnoses (and their Teams!)**

**Presented by Katherine Bellone Mount, Ph.D., BCBA, ABPP**

**Associate Professor, Center for Autism Care, University of Texas Medical Center**

**Dallas, Tx.**

**8:30 – 10:00 AM**



**BIOSKETCH: DR. Bellone Mount** is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and a Certified Behavior Analyst with specialization in treatment of children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders. Dr. Bellone received her undergraduate degree in psychology from Louisiana State University. She completed graduate work at The University of Southern Mississippi, where she earned an M.A. in Psychology and a Ph.D. in School Psychology. Dr. Bellone completed her predoctoral internship and postdoctoral fellowship in the Pediatric Developmental Disabilities Clinic at Kennedy Krieger Institute/Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

In 2014, she joined the faculty of University of Texas Southwestern as part of the Department of Psychiatry in the Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities. Dr. Bellone's clinical services focus on assessment and treatment of challenging behaviors in children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders or related disabilities including individuals with comorbid emotional, social, and behavioral challenges.

Speaker Disclosure: Dr. Mount is not being compensated by the WNYRCASD and The Summit Center and has no other financial or nonfinancial disclosures to report.

**ABSTRACT:** With the significant increase in the identification and prevalence of ASD, the diversity of individual needs continues to grow. Working with persons with ASD/autistic people demands practitioners to address not only behavioral needs, but emotional and social aspects of their experience as well. Gaining an understanding of the common co-occurring mental health needs of autistic people is critical to developing effective support plans across clinical and educational settings. This session will focus on expanding behavioral conceptualization to include relevant aspects of mental health needs, as well as how to enrich our efforts in supporting learners with ASD through therapeutic strategies. Additional emphasis will be placed on approaches that strengthen collaboration and consultation to support each member of the treatment team.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants will be able to identify changes in the conceptualization of mental health needs for individuals with ASD and common co-occurring conditions.
2. Participants will gain insight into the therapeutic principles to enrich their work with individuals with ASD, such as self-determination.
3. Participants will be able to identify strategies to support effective collaboration with other members of an intervention team (parents, teachers, aides, and administrative personnel).

---

## Presentation 2: Practical Applications of Compassion-focused Care for Clients Experiencing Harmful or Dangerous Behaviors

Presented by Kristine A. Rodriguez, M.A., BCBA  
Chief Clinical Officer, Autism Learning Partners

Monrovia, CA

10:15 – 11:45 AM



**BIOSKETCH:** Ms. Rodriguez leads the clinical development, training, research, and client outcomes initiatives at Autism Learning Partners, as Chief Clinical Officer. She is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) with more than 15 years of experience in autism services, holds a master's degree in exceptional student education from the University of West Florida, and is currently a doctoral student and adjunct professor at Endicott College. She presents at regional and national conferences, focusing on topics such as cultural responsiveness, compassion-focused care, innovations in service delivery, and scaling clinical quality. She has authored peer reviewed articles and book chapters on compassion-focused care, cultural responsiveness, Acceptance and Commitment Training, and ABA-based services for adults.

Speaker Disclosure: Ms. Rodriguez is compensated in part by the WNYRCASD and The Summit Center and has no other financial or nonfinancial disclosures.

**ABSTRACT:** Applied Behavior Analysis is a philosophically compassionate science, with guideposts set forth in seminal literature orienting practitioners to align practices with client values, to continuously assess for social validity, and to ensure outcomes are meaningful to those we serve. Beyond improving acceptability, studies in medical literature have demonstrated that expressions of empathy and compassion resulted in improved patient outcomes, highlighting an opportunity for behavior analysts to explore the relationship between compassion-focused applications and treatment effectiveness. Rooted in the seminal behavior analytic literature and using healthcare models as a reference, research practitioners in ABA have proposed similar models for demonstrating compassion. This presentation will provide a synthesis of compassion-forward and assent-affirming practices in pediatric medicine, school programs, and home and clinic-based services.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Summarize conceptual underpinnings of compassion-focused care.
  2. Describe practical, compassion-focused treatment selection procedures for the treatment of problem behavior.
  3. Describe methods for assessing social validity, from the perspectives of both client and caregiver.
  4. Describe considerations for maximizing short- and long-term benefit while minimizing short- and long-term risks to client wellbeing.
- 



### Presentation 3: Communicative Alternatives to Challenging Behavior

Presented by Jill E. Senner, Ph.D., CCC-SLP and  
Matthew R. Baud, MS, CCC-SLP  
Technology and Language Center, PC (Dr. Senner, Owner)  
Evanston, IL  
12:30 – 2:00 PM



**BIOSKETCH:** Dr. Senner has more than 25 years of experience working with children with complex communication needs. She is the owner and director of Technology and Language Center where she specializes in providing augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) services via telepractice. Dr. Senner presents lectures on AAC topics online and around the world, has published research articles and textbook chapters on AAC, and is an adjunct professor of speech-language pathology at DePaul University.

**Mr. Baud** has worked with AAC for over 20 years. He currently is the Assistive Technology Coordinator at Niles Township District for Special Education (NTDSE) performing evaluations, trainings, and coaching communication partners. Matthew also has an AAC private practice working with individuals from birth through adulthood with complex communication needs. He is an adjunct professor at Saint Xavier University where he teaches a graduate course in AAC and has presented at national and state conferences. Matthew has published research in the areas of AAC.

Speaker Disclosure: Dr. Senner and Mr. Baud receive an honorarium for speaking and they receive salaries from Technology & Language Center, PC. They have no nonfinancial relationships to disclose.

**ABSTRACT:** Children with autism and complex communication needs may use challenging behavior as a form of expressive communication. Establishing, maintaining, and generalizing communication skills that are functionally equivalent and equally efficient than existing challenging behaviors can help. In this session, AAC strategies will be introduced that can improve expressive communication and reduce behavior. Supports for language comprehension will also be addressed.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. List four functions of behavior.
  2. Identify three visual supports that can reduce problem behaviors in children with autism and complex communication needs.
  3. Describe how AAC can be used to replace problem behaviors in children with autism and complex communication needs.
-

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

- 8:20 – 8:30**      **Opening Comments**
- 8:30 – 10:00**    **Presentation 1: Supporting Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Co-Occurring Mental Health Diagnoses (and their Teams!)**
- 10:00 – 10:15**   **Break**
- 10:15 – 11:45**   **Presentation 2: Practical Applications of Compassion-focused Care for Clients Experiencing Harmful or Dangerous Behaviors**
- 11:45 – 12:30**   **Lunch Break**
- 12:30 – 2:00**    **Presentation 3: Communicative Alternatives to Challenging Behavior**
- 2:00**              **End of Conference**

**Conference Cost: \$25.00**

**AHSA, BCBA, CTLE, OT/OTA, PT/PTA, PSY CEUs  
are available for an additional fee of \$15.00 each.**

These courses are made possible by a grant from NYSRCASD. Requests for accommodations/special needs may be sent to [wnyrcasd@thesummitcenter.org](mailto:wnyrcasd@thesummitcenter.org) or by calling 716-629-3417.

**Cancellation Policy:** If cancellation is received 48 hours prior to the start of the conference, the cost of the conference and CEUs will be fully refunded.

**CEU Opportunities:** There is a separate charge for each CEU type.



Genesee Valley Speech-  
Language-Hearing Association  
Intermediate Level  
0.45 ASHA CEUs

**SPEECH PATHOLOGISTS:** Course Completion Requirements: To obtain ASHA CEUs, participants must log in/out using their unique webinar link and complete the learning assessment survey at the end of the day. Registrants will receive a certificate of completion, via email when the course has been successfully completed. If participants

wish to earn ASHA CEUs, participants are required to attend all three presentations, complete an ASHA CEU Participant Form, and submit at the end of the workshop via email. **No partial credit will be provided.** The entire conference is offered for .45 ASHA CEU (Intermediate Level; Professional Area).



**OCCUPATIONAL AND PHYSICAL THERAPISTS:** Participants who attend all three presentations receive **4.5 NYS Continuing Competency Units for OTs/OTAs** and **5.4 NYS PT Contact Hours for PTs/PTAs**. To obtain CEUs, participants must log in/out using their unique webinar link and complete a required learning assessment survey and post-test provided by APOT. Registrants will receive a certificate of completion, via email when the course has been successfully completed. Associated Physical & Occupational Therapists is recognized by the New York State Education Department Office of the Professions as an approved sponsor of continuing education for Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy Assistants, Physical Therapists, and Physical Therapist Assistants. Associated Physical & Occupational Therapists, PLLC can be reached at [apotcontinuing@gmail.com](mailto:apotcontinuing@gmail.com) or (716)874-6175.



**ACE:** The Authorized Continuing Education (ACE) program exists to make a wide array of continuing education (CE) events available to Behavior Analyst Certification Board® (BACB®) certificants. ACE providers have been authorized by the BACB to provide Learning CE events for BCBA and BCaBA certificants. **4.5 ACE event CEUs** will be provided.



**CTLE:** The Summit Center is an NYS Department of Education approved provider of CTLE continuing education events available to teachers and administrators. **4.5 learning CEUs** will be provided.

**PSYCHOLOGISTS:** The Summit Center is a provider of CEU credits for Psychologists through the NYS State Education Department, Office of the Professions. **4.5 CEUs** will be provided. Provider number: PSY – 0222.

Each organization/entity uses its own calculation to determine the number of CEUs based on contact hours. As with all continuing education, the attendee should always verify CEU requirements by his/her professional organization and/or state licensure board.

## ABOUT

**The Summit Center** is a private-not-for-profit human service agency that serves children and adults with developmental, social, and behavioral challenges. Its range of programs includes a school for children with autism spectrum disorders as well as programs for adults with ASD and related disabilities. [www.TheSummitCenter.org](http://www.TheSummitCenter.org).

**The WNY Regional Center for ASD** is a collaborative program of The Summit Center, University at Albany and The Center for Autism and Related Disabilities. The Center is committed to providing information and practical strategies that are supported by scientific research – commonly referred to as evidence-based practice. The Center's activities consist of workshops and resource materials that provide practical guidance to professionals and parents. Workshops are offered at various locations throughout WNY. [www.thesummitcenter.org/what-we-do/wny-regional-center-for-autism-spectrum-disorder-asd](http://www.thesummitcenter.org/what-we-do/wny-regional-center-for-autism-spectrum-disorder-asd)