



Expanding Your Autism Toolbox: Strategies for Parents, Educators, Professionals & Others

September 19, 2015

SCHEDULE FOR THE DAY

AUDITORIUM

8:30 -8:40 **Welcome** – Randy Schmidt, RTAAF Director

8:40 – 9:10 **Keynote** – Presented by Deb Dimler-Warnke & Wade Kuiper. Deb currently works for State Operated services as a Program Manager. She has extensive professional experience with individuals with autism as well as the unique perspective of a parent with two sons on the spectrum. Wade lives with a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder. In addition to his job at SpeeDee Delivery he occasionally speaks to groups about his experiences as an individual with autism.

Deb & Wade will start the day off on a fun & positive note by sharing their story of living a successful life with autism.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS (choose one session to attend each time period)

9:15 – 10:15 **Identifying & Treating Autism in Infants & Toddlers** – Presented by James Rechs, LICSW, BCBA. James is a mental Health Professional at the Rochester Center for Autism & Associates in Psychiatry.

AUDITORIUM

Current research suggests that most parents of a child with autism notice their child's developmental problems before the child's first birthday. The CDC reports that children can be accurately diagnosed with autism by age two. However, the average age of diagnosis is age four. This means we are missing years of valuable opportunity to provide intervention & skill building for children who show early signs of autism. This presentation will explain how to identify early warning signs of autism in children as young as 9 months of age. In addition, it will outline how we can maximize the potential of these children even before they receive a formal diagnosis.

9:15 – 10:15 **Minnesota Life College: How Real Skills for Real Life Can Make a Real Difference for Your Young Person** – Presented by Nina Jonson. Nina is the Director of Enrollment & Outreach at Minnesota Life College. She has presented locally, state-wide & nationally on best practices for teaching sexual health education to students with special needs & has won the Teenwise Minnesota Outstanding Individual of the Year award for her work.

CAFETERIA

Learn how life changing the programs & services at Minnesota Life College can be for young adults with autism.

10:15 – 10:30 **BREAK and extra Q/A with presenters**

10:30 – 11:30 **AUDITORIUM** **Music Therapy Strategies for You** – Presented by Jenny Kruse, MA. Jenny is a Neurologic Music Therapist & has been practicing music therapy with children with autism & other disabilities for 14 years.

This presentation will answer questions about music therapy & how it is used to develop functional skills. Jenny will also provide some basic strategies to utilize music to achieve objectives with children.

10:30 – 11:30 **CAFETERIA** **Building a Person Centered One Page Profile** – Presented by Polly Owens. Polly is the Training Director at PossAbilities and an independent person centered planning facilitator, trainer & consultant.

One page profiles capture the strengths, interests & critical support needs of individuals so that information can be readily shared with others to build positive relationships, aid learning & facilitate smooth transitions. You will leave the session with the beginning of a one page profile for you, your family member or someone you support.

11:30 – 12:30 **LUNCH – IN THE CAFETERIA IF YOU PURCHASED LUNCH OR ON YOUR OWN**

12:30 – 1:30 **AUDITORIUM** **Scott Long** – Scott is a nationally known comedian who has appeared on NBC, FOX-TV and recently at Goonies in Rochester. His hilarious but poignant show tells of having a daughter on the autism spectrum.

1:30 – 1:45 **BREAK and extra Q/A with presenters**

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS (choose one session to attend each time period)

1:45 – 2:45 **AUDITORIUM** **The Gut-Brain Connection & Autism Spectrum Disorders** – Presented Stephanie Ewals, NTP. Stephanie is a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner working with people to help them find balance in their body through nutrition.

Emerging research is showing a direct connection between gut bacteria & brain health, generally referred to as the 'gut-brain connection'. Stephanie will discuss how common gastrointestinal disorders & nutrient deficiencies in ASD contribute to physical & behavioral symptoms and simple strategies families can implement to improve their child's health. Stephanie will talk about how nutrient deficiencies or excesses can contribute to success in healing.

1:45 – 2:45 **CAFETERIA** **Executive Function and Autism** – Presented by Jen Leuthold, MS, CCC-SLP. Jen is a speech-language pathologist & owner of Achievement Therapy Services. She specializes in working with individuals of all ages with autism spectrum disorders & other disorders affecting social cognition & executive function skills.

Executive function skills refer to vital processes of the brain that are necessary to *do* life! Attention, organization, time management, task initiation & completion – without these and other executive function skills, every day would be full of struggles & defeat. Learn what executive function skills are, what signs to look for to determine if someone is struggling with executive function and how we can support them.

2:45 – 3:00 **BREAK and extra Q/A with presenters**

3:00 – 4:00 **The Gut-Brain Connection & Autism Spectrum Disorders** – Presented Stephanie Ewals, NTP. Stephanie is a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner working with people to help them find balance in their body through nutrition.
AUDITORIUM

Emerging research is showing a direct connection between gut bacteria & brain health, generally referred to as the 'gut-brain connection'. Stephanie will discuss how common gastrointestinal disorders & nutrient deficiencies in ASD contribute to physical & behavioral symptoms and simple strategies families can implement to improve their child's health. Stephanie will talk about how nutrient deficiencies or excesses can contribute to success in healing.

3:00 – 4:00 **Tools for a Sensory Lifestyle** – Presented by Chris Hollman, OTR/L . Chris is an occupational therapist with over 25 years of experience working as a pediatric occupational therapist in a variety of settings. She has training in sensory processing disorders, oral motor skills, handwriting, visual vestibular assessment & therapeutic listening.
CAFETERIA

Chris will review tools that can be used as part of a sensory lifestyle (previously known as a sensory diet). The session will go through a typical day with possible strategies to incorporate into the day. Tools such as weighted blankets, t-stools, chewies, etc. will be available to look at during the last few minutes of the session.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



POSSABILITIES
Serving children and adults with disabilities

