



**MSL Midwest Symposium  
for Leadership  
in Behavior Disorders**



**2026 Event Site**

# **2026 SYMPOSIUM**

**March 5, 6, 7, 2026  
Sheraton Crown Center • Kansas City, Missouri**

*MSLBD is an ACE provider and offers Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)  
Type 2 CEUs from the Behavior Analyst Certification Board.*

*CCBD-Endorsed Activity: A letter certifying attendance may be requested at the Registration Table.*

# WELCOME

Welcome to the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders. Universities, public schools, non-profits, and state agencies in Alaska, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington have once again joined in planning a forum to examine many of the important issues facing teachers and parents of students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). We hope that you will gain new insights, establish professional contacts, and obtain new perspectives to meet the ever-changing educational challenges of improving the lives of children and youth with behavioral needs.

Speakers, topics, and exhibited materials do not necessarily represent the official viewpoints and positions of the Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders (MSLBD), nor should any endorsement be inferred.

**No part of the program may be audio or video recorded. Please silence your electronic devices while attending sessions.**

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders (MSLBD) is to foster leadership that advances equitable education opportunities and outcomes for students with behavioral needs and to support the professionals and families with whom they are connected.

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

Reesha Adamson, Missouri State University, Springfield, MO

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Aimee Hackney, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM

James Hogan, Children's Institute for Learning Differences Renton, WA

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Antonis Katsiyannis, Clemson University, SC

Alison Lovelace, Anchorage School District, AK

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Matthew McNiff, Nebraska Education Service Unit 5, Beatrice, NE

Lindsey Mirielli, Juniper Garden Children's Research Project, University of Kansas, KS

Barbara Mitchell, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS

Patrick Mulick, Auburn School District, Renton, WA

Rose Osnaya, University of Missouri-Columbia, MO

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Gretchen Scheibel, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

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Carl Smith, Emeritus, Iowa State University, Ankeny, IA

Jason Travers, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

Vanessa Tucker, University of Washington, Puyallup, WA

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Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders

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# WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2026

7:00 p.m. - SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION/INFORMATION DESK OPEN  
9:30 p.m.

BALLROOM  
FOYER

# THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2026

7:30 a.m. - SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION/INFORMATION DESK OPEN  
5:00 p.m.

BALLROOM  
FOYER

9:00 a.m. - MORNING HALF-DAY PRESYMPOSIUM WORKSHOPS  
12:00 p.m. Coffee & Tea available until 9:30 a.m.

## WS01. What Do I Do If They Don't: Behavioral Strategies and Philosophical Changes That You Can Use on Monday Morning

NEW YORK

Working in any field with children can be challenging work. When that environment also includes defiant and oppositional students, the challenge can seem overwhelming. What are some strategies that you can use when they don't want to do what you ask them? What do you do when the children refuse? How do you adjust your thinking so that you are focusing on the management of behavior instead of the behavior managing you? This workshop will provide easy to implement strategies that reframe your attitude towards resistant behavior and effectively address student challenges. (Introductory, Intermediate)

**Matt McNiff, PhD**, Behavior Consultant, Educational Service Unit #5, Beatrice, NE

## WS02. An Ounce of Prevention: Antecedent Strategies for Supporting Students with Developmental Disabilities

ATLANTA

**BCBA CEUs** Challenging behaviors in students with developmental disabilities can disrupt learning, strain teacher-student relationships, and create stressful classroom environments. Instead of solely relying on consequent strategies, evidence-based antecedent strategies may be implemented in order to prevent challenging behaviors from occurring--resulting in less disruption to learning and the overall classroom environment.

This session will explore how practical, preventative strategies rooted in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) frameworks can reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviors in students with developmental disabilities. Through real-world examples, case studies, and collaborative problem-solving, attendees will leave equipped with practical tools to create supportive, structured, and engaging learning environments. (Intermediate, 3.5 BCBA CEUs)

**Keith Radley, PhD, BCBA-D, NCSP**, Dee Endowed Professor of School Psychology, Department Chair, University of Utah, Bountiful, UT

## WS03. An Awesome Academic Session at this Behavior Conference

EMPIRE

Reading, writing, and math can be challenging for many students. In this session, we highlight several research-validated practices for the support of reading, writing, and math. First, we focus on math because it always plays second fiddle to reading. We will highlight and discuss five research-validated practices for your math instruction: building vocabulary, using representations, modeling and practicing, building fluency, and solving word problems. Second, we focus on writing because it is ignored as much as math. We will dig into research-validated writing practices that align with the Simple View of Writing, including those in the areas of transcription, text generation, and self-regulation. And finally, we will pay a bit of attention to reading and research-validated practices in comprehension. (Basic, Intermediate)

**Sarah Powell, PhD**, Professor, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX; **Erica Lembke, PhD**, Curators' Distinguished Professor, Associate Dean for Research, Special Education, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO

## WS04. Supporting Student Behavior with AI: A Hands-On Workshop

CHICAGO

Artificial intelligence (AI) is envisioned to transform various aspects of society, including the way we educate students with disabilities. This hands-on workshop offers a practical introduction to AI's role in special education, led by team members from a leading national center dedicated to supporting the use and adoption of technology in special education. Participants will explore how AI influences curriculum design, instruction, learning supports, and assessment practices. The session will also address key ethical considerations, particularly those related to the responsible implementation and provision of meaningful support for students with disabilities. Participants will leave with tools, resources, and real-world strategies that can be applied immediately in their educational setting. (Basic, Intermediate)

**James D. Basham, PhD**, Professor and **Yerin Seung**, Graduate Research Assistant, University of Kansas, Center for Innovation, Design, and Digital Learning (CIDDL)

<b>WS05.</b>	<b>Supports and Services Around Challenging Behavior in a Shifting Policy Landscape: Whither EBD?</b>	<b>SAN FRANCISCO</b>
	This presentation begins with a brief update on federal policy around student behavior, in an admittedly shifting landscape. While this is NOT a policy session, we first take stock of current trends in special education law, funding shifts, and evolving guidance around behavior and disciplinary practices. But we then focus mainly on two questions: (a) what does the current political landscape mean for children and youth with or at risk for EBD, and (b) what should educators know and prioritize in serving students and families with the best available, evidence-based supports? We offer guiding principles educators might consider to help them support students with EBD in the most effective, ethical manner; navigate disciplinary challenges with equity and fairness; and maintain both their professionalism and personal well-being. (Introductory, Intermediate)	
	<b>Timothy J. Landrum, PhD</b> , Professor, Department of Special Education, Early Childhood, and Prevention Science (SECP) University of Louisville, Louisville, KY	
<b>11:00 a.m. –</b>	<b>EXHIBITS</b>	<b>BALLROOM</b>
<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	We invite you to visit the exhibits and representatives who have joined us for the 2026 Symposium.	<b>FOYER</b>
<b>12:00 p.m. –</b>	<b>LUNCH, ON YOUR OWN</b>	
<b>1:30 p.m.</b>	Enjoy Spectators Restaurant and Link@Sheraton Café. The Crown Center Food Court, restaurants and shops, are easy to access from “The Link” walkway on the mezzanine level.	
<b>1:30 p.m. –</b>	<b>AFTERNOON HALF-DAY PRESYMPOSIUM WORKSHOPS</b>	
<b>4:30 p.m.</b>		
<b>WS06.</b>	<b>100 Real World Strategies for Students with Oppositional Defiant Behaviors, Anxiety, ADHD and More</b>	<b>NEWYORK</b>
	This session will provide an array of evidence-based strategies that meet the needs of students with these challenges. Strategies that work as well as strategies that don't work and why will be shared. Activities will be built into the session and they are designed to take back to use in the classroom on Monday morning. At least 100 strategies will be shared for diffusing difficult situations, building emotional regulation, strengthening relationships, and utilizing the arts. (Introductory)	
	<b>Beverley Johns, MS</b> , Special Education, Learning and Behavior Consultant, Retired Professional Fellow, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Illinois	
<b>WS07.</b>	<b>From “Oh Sh*t” to “A-Ha!”: Core Components of an Effective Behavior Support Program</b>	<b>CHICAGO</b>
	Without the necessary program components, specialized behavior programs have fallen short in providing essential support for students that struggle with emotional and behavioral challenges. (Jones & Greenwood, 2016). Throughout this session, participants will explore key components of a specialized behavior program for students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) and autism. Attendees will hear directly from teachers who are in the trenches with them and working in a specialized behavior support setting. This presentation will be interactive and collaborative, while giving actual resources, tools and strategies to take back and use tomorrow. Attendees will walk away with the skills and expertise to create, enhance, and improve their behavior programs that support students with EBD and those on the autism spectrum. (Introductory, Intermediate)	
	<b>Carrie Fairbairn, MEd</b> and <b>Sallye Vanderplas-Lee, BA</b> , Elementary EBD Teachers, ESU 3, LaVista, NE	
<b>WS09.</b>	<b>From Escape to Engagement: Transforming Challenging Behavior</b>	<b>ATLANTA</b>
<b>BCBA CEUs</b>	Escape-maintained challenging behavior represents the largest single function of challenging behavior exhibited by individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD). In these situations, two goals exist: reducing challenging behavior and establishing or strengthening an alternative, appropriate response. In this workshop, we will discuss how to arrange contingencies that (a) promote the occurrence of alternative, appropriate behavior, (b) reduce challenging behavior, and (c) allow for practical implementation. In addition, we will discuss the roles positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, and extinction can play in the development of such interventions. The workshop will lean heavily on published accounts of successful intervention from the scientific community, with an emphasis on educational environments or adapting the procedures for educational environments. (Intermediate, Advanced, 3.5 BCBA CEUs)	
	<b>Joel Ringdahl, PhD, BCBA-D</b> , Professor, University of Georgia, Province, GA	
<b>WS10.</b>	<b>Let’s Reimagine Behavior Disorders with UDL Jams!</b>	<b>SAN FRANCISCO</b>
	We’ve done the research, delivered the trainings, and sold the programs—yet kids are still struggling. More of the same is not acceptable. To better support students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), we must think differently, act differently, and move quickly. This session reimagines professional development as a jam session: structured but improvisational, deeply resonant, and joyful. Using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as the framework, participants will explore music as a metaphor for inclusive practice – where variability is expected, choice is essential, and improvisation is a strength. Participants are not just attendees, but	

creators. Working in “bands,” they will identify problems of practice, design and perform solutions, and contribute to a shared resource that builds a movement for engaging, memorable professional learning. (Introductory, Intermediate)

**Jose Blackorby, PhD**, Co-Director of Research in Learner Variability and Impact, WestEd/HGSE, San Francisco, CA

## FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2026

<p><b>7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION/INFORMATION DESK OPEN</b> Coffee and hot tea available until 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>BALLROOM FOYER</b></p>
<p><b>8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>EXHIBITS</b> We invite you to visit the exhibits and representatives who have joined us for the 2026 Symposium.</p>	<p><b>BALLROOM FOYER</b></p>
<p><b>8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</b> BCBA CEU</p>	<p><b>KEYNOTE SESSION</b> <b>The Knobs &amp; Dials of Behavior: A Spectrum of Clinical and Practical Applications Derived from Behavior Analysis</b> The core idea of behavior analysis directs attention to the circumstances producing behavior rather than the behaving person. Thus, it results in understanding and fixing problems rather than blaming people for those problems. Virtually everything this idea touches improves. It has revolutionized approaches to multiple areas of problem behavior (e.g., incontinence, habits, sleep, addiction, etc.). Still, the idea has only begun to be harnessed. The assertion of this presentation is that in addition to improving the lives of clients in need, it can also be used to improve the lives of their providers, and indeed, the lives of all people. This presentation will describe several options derived from behavior analysis, the application of which could exert a powerful beneficial influence on everyday life. (Intermediate, 1.0 BCBA CEUs) <b>Patrick Friman, PhD</b>, Director Center for Behavioral Health Emeritus, Boys Town, Boys Town, NE</p>	<p><b>SHERATON GRAND BALLROOM</b></p>
<p><b>10:00 a.m.– 10:20 a.m.</b></p>	<p><b>COFFEE BREAK &amp; EXHIBITS</b></p>	<p><b>BALLROOM FOYER</b></p>
<p><b>10:20 a.m.– 11:20 a.m.</b></p>	<p><b>CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS – SET 1</b></p>	
<p><b>1.1</b></p>	<p><b>Preliminary Results of a Multi-Site Examination of Check-in /Check-out: Implications for Practice</b> Check-in/Check-out is one of the most widely used Tier 2 interventions within a continuum of positive behavioral interventions and supports across the United States. This session will present preliminary data from an Institute of Education Sciences funded on-going randomized control trial. Findings to date, implications for research, and practice will be discussed. (Intermediate) <b>Tim Lewis, PhD</b>, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO; <b>Howard P. Wills, PhD</b>, Juniper Gardens Children’s Project, University of Kansas, Kansas City, KS; <b>Sara Estrapala, PhD</b> and <b>Lisa Powers, PhD</b>, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO</p>	<p><b>ATLANTA</b></p>
<p><b>1.2</b> BCBA CEU</p>	<p><b>Show and Tell: Comparing Modeling and Explicit Instruction for Teaching Augmentative and Alternative Communication</b> Modeling (i.e., aided language input, augmented input, aided language stimulation) is a widely recommended strategy for teaching augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. However, many studies on modeling include additional teaching techniques, such as prompting students to use their AAC systems, making it difficult to isolate the effects of modeling alone. In this session, we share findings from a study that directly compared explicit AAC instruction to modeling alone for five autistic students who use AAC. We report individual student outcomes and examine how characteristics such as imitation skills and receptive language influenced response to each intervention. Results offer practical guidance for tailoring AAC instruction based on learner needs. We highlight the importance of using ongoing data to inform decisions and adjust strategies for efficient, individualized AAC instruction. (Advanced, 1.0 BCBA CEU) <b>Jenee Vickers Johnson, PhD, BCBA-D</b>, University of Missouri-Kansas City, MO; <b>Heather J. Forbes, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCBA-D</b>, West Chester University, West Chester, PA</p>	<p><b>NEW YORK</b></p>

<b>1.3</b>	<b>Implementing a Safe Place for Emotional Regulation in the Classroom: Considerations from Behavioral Science</b>	<b>CHICAGO A</b>
<b>BCBA CEU</b>	<p>Calm down corners are potential tools to support self-regulation in the classroom. However, they also have the potential for disruption, if not used correctly. Presenters will offer implementation considerations for establishing calm down corner procedures using a behavioral approach to learning, including considerations of stimulus control, explicit teaching of procedures, fidelity of implementation, and reinforcement for engaging in self-regulation strategies. Do's, don'ts, and individual student considerations also will be discussed. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced, 1.0 BCBA CEU)</p> <p><b>Robin Parks Ennis, PhD, BCBA-D</b>, University of Alabama, AL; <b>Mary Rose Sallèse, PhD</b>, University of Alabama at Birmingham, AL</p>	
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Para Power: Creating Sustainable Systems to Train and Retain Support Staff</b>	<b>CHICAGO B</b>
	<p>Paraprofessionals play a critical role in supporting students, yet many districts struggle with high turnover and inconsistent training. In this session, we will discuss current challenges in paraprofessional retention and training, review relevant research, and highlight evidence-based strategies to build their skills and confidence. (Introductory)</p> <p><b>Carrie Brandon, MEd, NBCT</b> and <b>Kassandra Spurlock, MEd</b>, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ</p>	
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Out of Sight, Out of Mind? Exposing and Addressing Informal Removals in Special Education</b>	<b>CHICAGO C</b>
	<p>This presentation explores how informal removals—undocumented exclusions of students with disabilities from educational settings—perpetuate inequities and violate protections guaranteed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These practices, such as sending students home early or relocating them to hallways or offices, often occur without access to academic instruction or behavioral support. As a result, students are denied their right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Drawing on recent federal guidance (OCR/OSERS, 2022) and the National Disability Rights Network's Out from the Shadows report (2022), this session highlights the disproportionate impact of informal removals on students with emotional and behavioral disabilities and racially minoritized youth. A stakeholder-informed survey project targeting educators, administrators, and parents will be introduced. Findings from this research will inform future policy recommendations, improve oversight mechanisms, and guide school-level interventions aimed at ensuring compliance, equity, and meaningful inclusion. (Intermediate)</p> <p><b>Wendy L. Cornell, MEd</b>, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO; <b>Chad A. Rose, PhD</b>, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC</p>	
<b>1.6</b>	<b>MASTER TEACHER STRAND</b>	<b>CHOUTEAU</b>
	<p><b>From Intention to Impact: Practical Systems for Data Collection and Analysis in Special Education</b></p> <p>Special educators are expected to collect and use data to drive instruction—but intention alone isn't enough. According to the Integrated Behavioral Model, effective data practices require intention plus the knowledge, skills, and systems to act. This session offers practical tools for building classroom-based systems that make data collection doable and meaningful. Participants will learn how to embed academic and behavioral data into daily routines, use task analysis to break down complex student challenges, and identify specific, teachable skills. We'll explore low-prep strategies for tracking progress, examples of how to use data to shape IEP goals and behavior plans, and tools to analyze trends and adjust supports. Designed for special educators and behavior specialists, this session is hands-on, strategy-rich, and immediately applicable. Attendees will leave with adaptable templates, real-world examples, and a framework for using data with intention—to better support students with challenging academic and behavioral needs. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced)</p> <p><b>Kaleigh Pickett, EdS</b>, Missouri State University, Springfield, MO; <b>Stacy Slabaugh, MEd</b>, Olathe School District, Olathe, KS; <b>Jodie Tagel, MEd, BCBA</b>, Educational Service Unit 8, Neligh, NE</p>	
<b>1.7</b>	<b>Teachers and Parents as Partners (TAPP): Improving Student Behavioral Outcomes Through Teleconsultation</b>	<b>EMPIRE A</b>
	<p>Teachers and Parents as Partners (TAPP) is an individualized intervention in which parents and teachers, with guidance from a consultant, engage in collaborative problem solving to address students' concerns and bolster the family-school partnership. Experimental research has established TAPP's efficacy for students with behavioral and social-emotional concerns (Sheridan et al., 2025). Unfortunately, TAPP is not always feasible in rural or other underserved communities where TAPP consultants are limited or non-existent. Teleconsultation offers potential as a method of delivering TAPP ("Tele-TAPP") that bypasses access barriers facing underserved communities (Witte et al, 2023). The purposes of proposed presentation are to provide (1) a detailed description of Tele-TAPP intervention; (2) evidence for Tele-TAPP's efficacy for improving parent- and teacher-reported problem behaviors and social skills as well as parent and teacher ratings of their satisfaction with Tele-TAPP; and (3) hands-on strategies for practicing Tele-TAPP, including methods to build and strengthen family-school partnerships. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced)</p> <p><b>Amanda L. Witte, PhD</b>, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Lincoln, NE</p>	

**1.8 From Strategy to Success: Coaching Teachers to Implement Evidence-Based Practices Using Behavioral Skills Training** **EMPIRE B**

Learn about a coaching process based on Behavior Skills Training (BST) framework, designed to support special education teachers in implementing evidence-based, high leverage, practices. Presenters will share how they support teachers through modeling, practice, and feedback. Attendees will come away with tools to support sustainable change. (Intermediate)

**Lindsey Fritts, MEd**, Blue Springs School District, Blue Springs, MO

**1.9 Increasing Inclusion of Students with EBD in General Education Classrooms** **EMPIRE C**

Students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) are often removed from general education settings due to disruptive behaviors and unmet needs. This session will examine how to increase the inclusion of students with EBD in mainstream classrooms by aligning with legal mandates and implementing adequate supports. We will review the IDEIA (2004) requirements for providing a continuum of alternative placements and least restrictive environments (LRE). We will then explore evidence-based strategies to help students with EBD succeed alongside their peers. Challenges unique to rural schools, such as limited resources and staffing, will be addressed with creative solutions to ensure all students can thrive in inclusive settings. (Introductory)

**Jill Nelson, MEd**, Fort Dodge Schools; Fort Dodge, IA; **Angela Tuttle Prince, PhD**, Iowa State University of Science & Technology, Ames, IA

**11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS – SET 2**

**2.1 Examining Teachers' Use of Opportunities to Respond and Feedback with Students with Challenging Behavior: Findings & Suggestions for Training** **ATLANTA**

This session provides an overview of what we know about opportunities to respond and feedback as teaching strategies to engage students during instruction. With a focus on those students with challenging behavior, we will summarize our research on how teacher behaviors change when confronted with student behaviors and other circumstances throughout the school year. (Intermediate)

**Terrance Scott, PhD** and **Todd Whitney, PhD**, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY

**2.2 Recognize. Relax. Record.: A Practical Teacher-led Tier 2 Intervention for Managing Anxious Feelings** **NEW YORK**  
**BCBA CEU**

Educators and school leaders are increasingly concerned with how to support students experiencing internalizing behaviors at school. These behaviors—such as avoidance, excessive worry, and somatic complaints—can interfere with academic engagement and overall school success. A recent national survey found professional development focused on internalizing concerns was the second most requested topic among educators (Common et al., 2021), highlighting a critical need for feasible, effective school-based interventions. To address this need, we developed Recognize. Relax. Record. (RRR), a Tier 2 intervention designed to be delivered within integrated tiered systems by classroom teachers for students with internalizing challenges. RRR combines small-group instruction in self-awareness and self-regulation skills with self-monitoring to increase engagement and use of relaxation strategies. We will share preliminary findings of the first randomized-controlled trial of RRR. We will present preliminary findings on student outcomes, treatment integrity, and social validity. Participants will access intervention materials, for immediate use. (Introductory, 1.0 BCBA CEU)

**Kathleen Lynne Lane, PhD, BCBA D, CF-L2, Allison M. Bernard, MEd**, and **Elise Sarasin, MSE**, University of Kansas Lawrence, KS; **Carrie Brandon, MEd, NBCT**, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

**2.3 Talk Human to Me: Explaining Social-Emotional Development to Everyone** **CHICAGO A**

Social-emotional development has recently become a source of controversy. This session will equip educators with clear, nonpartisan messaging to define what social-emotional development is (and is not) and why it is critical to student success. Participants will learn strategies to communicate its value and purpose effectively across diverse stakeholder perspectives and to build common ground around shared values. (Intermediate, Advanced)

**Mary Rose Sallese, PhD**, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham AL; **Robin Parks Ennis, PhD, BCBA-D**, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa AL

**2.4 Student Voice in Function-Based Behavior Support Plans: A Person-Centered Approach** **CHICAGO B**

Many function-based behavior support plans are developed with minimal student involvement which can disconnect interventions from students' lived experiences. Without meaningful input, plans may fail to reflect students' strengths, goals, or personal and cultural identities, ultimately limiting their effectiveness. Person-centered planning (PCP) provides a

promising framework for amplifying student voice in the development of behavior support plans. This session will offer clear, practical strategies to help practitioners elevate student voice, reduce barriers to student participation, and strengthen function-based interventions by leveraging the underexplored potential of developing within a PCP approach. (Introductory)

**Analyn White, MEd** and **Renee Speight, PhD, BCBA-D**, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

- 2.5 From Firefighting to Frameworks: Leveraging BCBA in Tiered Systems of Support in Public Schools** **CHICAGO C**  
**BCBA CEU** Public schools are increasingly relying on BCBA, yet many districts lack the systems necessary to integrate their expertise within tiered frameworks. As a result, BCBA are often used reactively in crisis situations rather than proactively to build capacity and improve outcomes. This session provides a practical model for designing organizational systems that utilize BCBA within a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework. Drawing on principles from organizational behavior management (OBM) and behavioral systems analysis (BSA), participants will learn how to evaluate existing processes, map workflows, and implement proactive structures that enhance collaboration. Common barriers to BCBA integration will be addressed, along with scalable strategies for improving student outcomes, staff satisfaction, and fidelity to behavioral practices. A case example from the Anchorage School District will be presented as a replicable model. Attendees will leave with tools to reflect on their own systems and actionable steps moving from firefighting to frameworks. (Intermediate, 1.0 BCBA CEU)  
**Alison Lovelace, PhD, BCBA-D**, Anchorage School District, Anchorage, AK
- 2.6 MASTER TEACHER STRAND** **CHOUTEAU**  
**Keeping Kids in the School Community: Smarter Alternatives to Suspension**  
How's your school suspension program working for you? Perhaps it's not helping the kids at all. Maybe we need to change our approach. . . . This presentation explores how traditional suspension practices negatively affect student outcomes including higher dropout rates, lower graduation rates, and limited post-secondary success. It highlights effective alternatives like restorative practices, Positive Behavior Support Programs, and school-based mental health services. Participants will learn to build data-driven behavior teams that identify behavioral gaps, deliver targeted interventions, and support positive change. The session also introduces the In-School-Solutions model as an alternative to in-school suspension, focusing on addressing root causes, restoring relationships, and teaching students healthier, more constructive ways to engage with their school community. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced)  
**Jan Burgess, MME, MAEd**, Temporary Alternative Placement Center, North Kansas City Schools, Kansas City, MO; **Andrew Morton, MEd, EdS**, Mount Vernon R-V School District, Mount Vernon, MO
- 2.7 Including Student Voice in Corridos Interventions: Implications for Students, Teachers, & Leaders in Special Education** **EMPIRE A**  
Consideration of student cultural voice holds promise for improving individual behavioral interventions, classroom management, and educational leadership. In this session, we will share pilot results of a survey study administered to ten middle school Native students with autism in a local district in Tucson, Arizona. The study was designed to gather a cultural understanding of the students' sense of belonging, ethnic affirmation, perception of discrimination, and music preferences. The overall goal is to study the inclusion of these Native voice aspects in the development of culturally relevant behavioral interventions, such as social stories with music (e.g. corridos). More broadly, we will discuss the potential impact of understanding cultural voice on classroom management decisions of teachers and school/district issues considered by educational leaders. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced)  
**Carlos Garcia Ramirez, MA** and **Carl Liaupsin, EdD**, The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ
- 2.8 Teaching Students to Advocate for Their Needs: A Function-Based Approach** **EMPIRE B**  
**BCBA CEU** Students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, often face poor academic and post-school outcomes, despite access to evidence-based behavioral interventions. One promising support is self-advocacy instruction, which equips students to request help or accommodations and is linked to improved long-term success. However, students with EBD often lack the foundational skills needed to self-advocate effectively. Explicit instruction has been shown to successfully teach these skills. While function-based interventions (FBIs) reduce problem behaviors, limited research has explored combining FBIs with explicit self-advocacy instruction. Function-Based Self-Advocacy (FBSA) is a structured intervention designed to teach students with or at risk for EBD how to advocate for their needs based on behavioral function. This session will highlight the FBSA framework, present outcomes from related studies, and discuss implications for implementation. (Introductory, 1.0 BCBA CEU)  
**Tosha Owens, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA**, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC

**2.9 Increasing Involvement in the Transition IEP for Students with Behavior Disorders**

**EMPIRE C**

Despite federal requirements for transition planning, students with behavior disorders (BD) are often left out of critical IEP decisions. This session introduces a structured, practitioner-friendly model that supports meaningful student participation in the transition IEP process. Participants will learn how to implement four key components – assessment, evaluation, preparation, and participation – to help students with BD contribute to and even lead their IEP meetings. Drawing on real examples from high-poverty, urban schools, this session will highlight strategies for building student voice, self-advocacy, and postsecondary planning skills. Attendees will receive free tools and templates, such as accommodations self-assessments, course of study worksheets, and student-led IEP scripts. This session is designed for educators, behavior specialists, and transition teams who want to improve postschool outcomes and empower students with BD, especially those from underserved communities, to actively shape their future. (Introductory)

**Angela Tuttle Prince, PhD** and **Sihan Wu, MA, MEd**, Iowa State University of Science & Technology, Ames, IA

**12:30 p.m.- LUNCH, ON YOUR OWN**

**2:00 p.m.** Enjoy Spectators Restaurant and Link@Sheraton Café. The Crown Center Food Court, restaurants and shops, are easy to access from "The Link" walkway on the mezzanine level.

**2:00 p.m. - CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS – SET 3**

**3:00 p.m.**

**3.1 Breaking Barriers: Reducing Restraint, Eliminating Isolation, and Fostering Inclusion in Public Schools**

**NEWYORK A**

**BCBA CEU**

When responding to escalated behaviors, the use of restraint and isolation can have a lifelong impact on the student involved. Reducing the use of these practices requires a district-wide commitment to change, to which there are many layers. Through multi-disciplinary collaboration, improved structures, tiered behavior supports, and the proper utilization of BCBA's, Patrick Mulick has led a shift away from the use of restraint and isolation in the Auburn School District in Washington state. When the work is done right, we can prevent many escalations before they ever happen. Come learn moves you can start making today to more effectively plan for students with high behavior support needs in your schools. (Introductory, 1.0 BCBA CEU)

**Patrick Mulick, MEd, BCBA**, Auburn School District, Auburn, WA

**3.2 Helping Anxious Kids Be Less Anxious**

**NEWYORK B**

We all experience anxiety. But when is it a problem? And how can we best support students when anxiety is underlying so much of their challenging behavior? In this session, we will explore how anxiety is different from general stress, when anxiety is healthy and when it is a barrier to learning, and how to help anxious kids thrive at school and at home. Join us to learn more about the "emotional" side of emotional and behavioral disorders. (Introductory)

**Scott Fluke, PhD**, Olathe Public Schools, Olathe, KS

**3.3 HELP! I Need Somebody: Navigating Language and Behavior Across Inclusive Settings**

**CHICAGO A**

This interactive session explores the complex relationship between language disorders and behavioral disruptions from the perspectives of a speech-language pathologist, special educator, and a behavior interventionist. Grounded in current research and informed by daily practice, this session introduces the HELP framework as a practical guide for addressing both language and behavior challenges in the school setting. Participants will receive a teacher-focused checklist designed to mitigate common language and behavioral barriers within the classroom. Through discussion, real-world examples, and collaborative reflection, attendees will gain tools to connect research to actionable classroom strategies. This session empowers educators to reframe challenging behaviors and implement effective supports targeted at language development. Participants will walk away with practical strategies and a renewed sense of confidence for meeting the needs of complex learners. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced)

**Mary Beth Hammond, MS, CCC-SLP**, Model Laboratory Schools, Eastern Kentucky University; **Marie Manning, PhD**, Eastern Kentucky University; **Ty Shouse**, Model Laboratory Schools, Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, KY

**3.4 Improving Mathematics and Self-Regulation Skills with SRSD Math Instruction**

**CHICAGO B**

This session presents Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) Math instruction, emphasizing evidence-based mnemonics for teaching fractions and long division to students with and at-risk for disabilities. Participants will examine how self-regulation strategies are integrated within the SRSD Math framework to enhance student learning and engagement,

particularly for those with at-risk for emotional and behavioral disorders. Additionally, attendees will receive practical resources and lesson plans for immediate implementation. (Introductory, Intermediate)

**Ashley Shaw, EdD**, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, KS; **Robin Parks Ennis, PhD, BCBA-D**, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**3.5 Discipline in 2025: Legal Implications, Common Sense Executive Order, and Evidence-Based Practices to Support At-Risk Students** **CHICAGO C**

In response to the 2025 Executive Order on “Common Sense Discipline,” schools must navigate renewed calls for exclusionary practices alongside long-standing obligations to protect the rights of students with disabilities. This presentation offers an accessible overview of the legal landscape affecting school discipline, with particular attention to students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders. Attendees will learn how recent policy changes interact with federal protections (e.g., IDEA, Section 504) and how to avoid legally and ethically problematic disciplinary decisions. The session also highlights evidence-based alternatives to exclusion—such as de-escalation techniques, restorative practices, and preventative classroom strategies—that are supported by behavioral theory and aligned with trauma-informed care. Practical tools, case vignettes, and implementation resources will be provided to support application in real-world settings. This session is designed for educators, administrators, and caregivers seeking to promote both student well-being and policy compliance within an evolving disciplinary climate. (Intermediate)

**Katherine A. Graves, PhD**, Utah State University, Logan, UT; **Lawrence Altman, JD**, Avila University, Kansas City, MO

**3.6 MASTER TEACHER STRAND** **CHOUTEAU**

**AI Literacy 101: Leveraging AI for FBAs, BIPs, and Behavior Intervention in K-12 Special Education**

This interactive session explores how AI technologies can support the functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plan (BIP) process, behavior data collection, and individualized intervention design. Presenters will demonstrate practical AI tools and strategies that educators and teams can use to enhance decision-making, streamline paperwork, and provide more personalized behavioral supports. Participants will leave with tools, templates, and a roadmap for integrating AI into their current behavior systems with fidelity and ethics in mind. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced)

**Stacey M. Hirt, PhD**, Special Education Consultant, Columbia, MO; **Kaleigh Pickett, EdS**, Missouri State University, Springfield, MO

**3.7 Evidence-Based Practices to Build Relationships, Support Behavior, and Facilitate Language Development** **EMPIRE A**  
**BCBA CEU**

We will discuss evidence-based instructional practices that promote high quality teacher-student relationships (TSRs) and language development for elementary students. We will review the importance of high-quality relationships, and how positive TSRs can create environments which dually support students’ language and behavioral needs. Then, we provide an overview and step-by-step guidance on two evidence-based strategies to build high quality relationships. (1) instructional choice (Jolivet et al., 2002), and (2) Banking Time (Pianta et al., 2001). Opportunities for incorporating instructional choice to build positive relationships and expand language include engaging in student-centered conversation and modeling language around student interests. Instructional choice may be incorporated throughout instructional activities as a universal strategy to enhance engagement. Banking Time, conversely, is a tier three strategy for individual students who require intensive intervention to build positive relationships and expand language repertoires. We will discuss intervention selection, decision-making, implementation, and student progress monitoring for each strategy. (Intermediate, 1.0 BCBA CEU)

**Kelsey Smith, MEd, BCBA** and **Kathleen Tuck, PhD, BCBA-D**, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS; **Jason Chow, PhD**, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN

**3.8 Skill Deficit, Not Defiance: Reframing Behavior in Trauma-Impacted Youth for the Classroom** **EMPIRE B**  
**BCBA CEU**

In today’s classrooms, educators and behavior analysts are increasingly supporting students impacted by complex trauma, dysregulation, and persistent behavioral challenges. While applied behavior analysis (ABA) offers a robust framework for understanding and changing behavior, its integration with trauma-informed practices is essential to ensure supports are not only effective but also compassionate and contextually appropriate. This session explores how educators and behavior analysts can meaningfully apply trauma-informed care principles within a behavior-analytic framework to support the whole student and to advocate for systems-level changes within their schools. (Intermediate, 1.0 BCBA CEU)

**Hannah West, PhD, BCBA**, Sunflower Pediatric Behavioral Health, Olathe, KS

**3.9 Bring Your Own Data (BYOD): Using AI to Write Legally Defensible Behavior Goals** **EMPIRE C**

This interactive breakout session introduces participants to a practical, evidence-based process for integrating AI into behavior goal development. Designed for special educators, behavior specialists, and transition coordinators, the session demonstrates how large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT can support the translation of raw student behavior data into

individualized, legally defensible, and SMART goals. Participants will learn prompt engineering strategies, ethical considerations, and methods for aligning AI-generated content with functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plan (BIP) data. Using de-identified examples, presenters will model how to input progress monitoring data and refine goal statements to ensure legal compliance and educational benefit. Attendees will leave with editable goal-writing templates and an implementation protocol they can use in their own schools. While AI tools are featured, professional judgment and fidelity to evidence-based practices remain central to this approach. (Advanced)

**Sihan Wu, MA, MEd** and **Angela Tuttle Prince, PhD**, Iowa State University of Science & Technology, Ames, IA

**3:15 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. – CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS – SET 4**

**4.1 Strategies to Incorporate Student Voice in Behavior Interventions: Lessons Learned from a Pilot Study** **NEWYORK A**

Providing opportunities for student voice can improve the cultural responsiveness of interventions and lead to stronger outcomes. We will describe a framework for embedding student voice in behavior interventions to address needs across general and special education settings and include findings from a pilot study of a new behavior intervention. (Intermediate)

**Sara Estrapala, PhD** and **Destinee Boddie, MA**, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO; **Shannon Locke, PhD, CCC-SLP**, University of Missouri, Belton, MO

**4.2 Supporting Teachers of Students with EBD: Understanding Behavior Intervention Practices, Barriers, and Needs in Restrictive Settings** **NEWYORK B**

This session will present findings from a survey examining how special education teachers in restrictive settings support students with or at risk for Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD). The study examines teachers' current use of behavior interventions, their perceptions of intervention validity, barriers to implementation, and their professional development needs. By centering teacher voice, this research aims to inform more responsive, proactive, and supportive classroom environments while reducing reliance on punitive practices. Results will highlight key challenges educators face and offer actionable recommendations to strengthen teacher autonomy and confidence in behavior intervention decision-making. (Introductory, Intermediate)

**Kassandra Spurlock, MEd**, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ

**4.3 Strengthening School Behavioral and Mental Health Teams Through Interdisciplinary Teamwork** **CHICAGO A**

Effective collaboration between school-based mental health and behavior teams is critical to supporting students identified with emotional-behavioral disorders, yet many schools struggle with siloed systems and unclear roles. This session explores research-based strategies for fostering integrated teamwork. Participants will examine key findings from the literature, including common barriers to collaboration and the positive impact of shared goals, structured communication, and joint intervention planning. The session will provide practical tools and examples; such as co-led student support meetings, cross-disciplinary data sharing, and collaborative problem-solving protocols that can be implemented immediately to improve team functioning and student outcomes. This session is designed for educators, behavior specialists, school counselors, and administrators committed to improving collaboration and maximizing support for student mental health and behavioral success. (Introductory)

**Stefanie (Rene) Salyer, EdS** and **Benjamin Tobe, MEd, MA**, Penn State University, State College, PA

**4.4 Enhancing FBA-BIPs by Incorporating Contextual Fit for Effective and Sustainable Implementation** **CHICAGO B**

Beyond the technical adequacy of Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), whenever BIPs don't align with the day-to-day realities of the educators expected to use them, their implementation can fall short of fidelity. Therefore, it impacts the effectiveness of their impact on student behavior. This session will focus on the importance of building BIPs that not only address the behavior's function but also incorporate the context in which they are implemented. We'll look at ways to examine and strengthen that fit using team-based tools and planning strategies that support collaboration among educators and administrators. Drawing on research and recent federal guidance, this session will offer clear, actionable ideas for creating BIPs that educators can follow. This session will help participants rethink how contextual fit influences fidelity and how to design plans that truly work. (Introductory)

**Madison Imler-Brandt, MS, BCBA, LBA**, University of Missouri, Columbia MO

**4.5 Teaching Emotional Regulation: A Skills-Based Approach to Student Behavior** **CHICAGO C**

**BCBA CEU** This presentation will provide practical, evidence-based strategies for teaching emotional regulation to students with autism and emotional regulation deficits. Participants will gain an understanding of the fight, flight, and freeze responses and the escalation curve, as well as how these physiological reactions impact behavior. The session will focus on proactive and compassionate approaches to de-escalation, with an emphasis on explicitly teaching skills that promote regulation, flexibility, and cooperation. Attendees will leave with actionable tools grounded in the principles of behavior analysis to support students in developing lasting self-regulation skills. (Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced, 1.0 BCBA CEU)

**Kristina Friedrich, MEd, BCBA, LBA, CCTP** and **Marissa Roll, BCBA, LBA**, Columbia Public Schools, Columbia, MO

**4.6 MASTER TEACHER STRAND**

**CHOUTEAU**

**Hope Matters: How to Measure and Grow It in the Classroom**

In this presentation, we will outline strategies for assessing students' levels of hope and implementing interventions that enhance their sense of possibility, confidence, and determination. By prioritizing hope, we aim to equip students with the mental and emotional tools they need to navigate challenges and thrive both inside and outside the classroom. We will share strategies for growing hope in students and pair them with first-hand experiences and examples from our classrooms. We will help participants understand how hope is rooted in basic human needs, including psychological needs (Dweck, 2017). We will introduce participants to a hope scale, guide them through completing it, and present strategies they can use to address hope with their students. We intentionally foster hope in students by using strategies that empower them to believe in their ability to shape a positive future. We help students recognize and overcome obstacles to hope. We use effective approaches such as hope-centered storytelling, hope maps and journals, and opportunities for students to exercise autonomy as they pursue their aspirations. (Introductory, Intermediate)

**Josh Wikler, ME**, Piper School District, Kansas City, KS; **Anne Baptiste, MA**, Educational Service Unit 7, Columbus, NE; **Malinda Forsberg, PhD**, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Menomonee Falls, WI

**4.7 Selection City: Decision-Making and Progress Monitoring Guides for Selecting and Implementing Behavioral Interventions in Elementary Classroom Settings**

**EMPIRE A**

**BCBA CEU**

As you consult with educators, do you often find yourself wondering which behavioral intervention may be a good fit for a student? Are you concerned why fidelity is low? Does a student refuse to use the interventions designed in the behavior plan? This session will provide easily available access to researched-based and educator informed intervention decision-making guides for five educator-identified acceptable behavioral interventions. Editable graphing templates and data collection templates to support evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions will be shared. Attendees will explore the evidentiary support for the guides and leave with access to take the guides and implement them in their settings on Monday! (Intermediate, 1.0 BCBA CEU)

**Kathleen N. Tuck, PhD, BCBA-D** and **Kelsey H. Smith, MEd, BCBA**, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

**4.8 Start Your Day the PBIS Way: Proactive Strategies for Positive Classroom Climate**

**EMPIRE B**

Start your school day with intention and impact! This interactive session will introduce evidence-based strategies aligned with Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), designed to build a positive, inclusive classroom climate from the moment students walk through the door. Presenters will model each practice—Positive Greetings at the Door and Responsive Classroom Morning Meetings—while sharing essential components and practical tips for implementation. Participants will leave with actionable steps to strengthen student relationships, increase engagement, and proactively support student behavior within a PBIS framework. (Introductory)

**Abby Patel, MA, CCC-SLP** and **Leslie McKinley, MA, LPC**, Olathe Public Schools, Olathe, KS

**4.9 Developing and Implementing a Model for Effective Mental Health and Wellbeing Service Delivery in Middle Schools**

**EMPIRE C**

**BCBA CEU**

Improving students' mental health and wellbeing is one of the highest priorities for schools post-pandemic, yet many schools are unprepared to manage these needs. In this presentation, we will discuss the development of the Pathways framework, a collection of digital materials and professional learning opportunities designed to facilitate effective implementation of mental health and wellbeing interventions within schools. We will review the need for school-based mental health and wellbeing services and discuss the co-design process in which our team collaborated with school and district staff to iteratively develop the Pathways framework and materials. Finally, we will present data from an ongoing randomized control trial of the Pathways model. (Introductory, Intermediate, 1.0 BCBA CEU)

**Nicolette Grasley-Boy, PhD, BCBA**, WestEd, Bridgewater, NJ; **Nicholas Gage, PhD**, WestEd, Brooklyn, NY

**4:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

**POSTER SESSION**

**ATLANTA**

The Poster Session will highlight innovative research, emerging practices, and practical applications across topics central to our field. Presenters will be available to share their work, answer questions, and engage in thoughtful discussion with attendees. This interactive session provides a valuable opportunity to explore new ideas, connect with colleagues, and expand your professional network. Whether you are seeking research insights, classroom strategies, or potential collaborations, we invite you to join us for an engaging exchange of ideas. A card-only bar is offered and complimentary hors d'oeuvres are provided. Beverage tickets are NOT valid at this event.

**P01. Seclusion and Restraint: Themes in Recent Settlement Agreements and Recommendations for Educators**

In the 2020-2021 school year, approximately 52,800 students were physically restrained (n = 35,000), mechanically restrained (n = 2,100) or subjected to seclusion (n = 15,700). The US DOJ, Civil Rights Division has initiated investigations into six school districts in

various locations all over the country (Florida, Iowa, South Carolina, Alaska, Washington, and Kansas). Findings of each investigation revealed violations which led to a list of guidelines for corrective action. Since this is an issue that continues to be a persistent concern, school leaders and teachers need to be aware of these settlements to ensure that school policies safeguard against violation of a student's civil rights. The purpose of this presentation is two-fold 1) to discuss litigation involving the use of seclusion and restraint with a particular emphasis on the most recent settlement agreements involving students with disabilities and 2) provide educators with recommendations for improved practice. (Practitioner Focused)

**Melissa Hullett, LPES, NCSP**, Clemson University, Clemson, SC

**P02. Utilizing High Probability Sequences in the Virtual Environment to Support Behavioral Engagement**

This project explores the use of behavioral momentum to support engagement and task completion for students with emotional-behavioral disorders (EBD) in virtual learning settings. Four high school students receiving behavioral support participated in the intervention, which involved presenting a sequence of high-probability tasks followed immediately by a low-probability academic task. Data were collected through observational measures. Results indicated that all participants showed an increase in completion of low-probability tasks over time, with average gains ranging from 1.6 to 4.6 tasks per session by the end of the intervention. These findings support the feasibility and effectiveness of using high-probability task sequences to build momentum and reduce task avoidance in online environments. This low-effort, high-impact intervention can be easily implemented by practitioners and educators to enhance student engagement in remote instructional contexts. (Practitioner Focused)

**Stefanie (Rene) Salyer, EdS**, Penn State University, State College, PA

**P03. Medication Non-Adherence in Beginning College Students with ADHD: Problems, Solutions, and Practical Resources**

Research indicates that college students with ADHD are less likely to adhere to medication treatment than any other age group which results in increased chances of academic failure, social problems, and struggles managing the adjustment to college life. Without the parental supervision they have grown used to, their adjustment to self-management may fail without strategic assistance from skilled interventionists. Further, many beginning college students with ADHD deny or underestimate the impact the disorder will have. Evidence has established that the primary reason is that students are unable to separate myths from facts about their disorder, the medication they take and the side-effects they experience. Fortunately, there are research-based solutions for the above concerns. Conference attendees will enjoy our practical application of these solutions through our valuable "how to" instruction. We will also disseminate free, valuable materials to put into practice when addressing the targeted problems listed above. (Practitioner Focused)

**Becca Shackelford, Jamie G. Wood, EdD, Lauralynn King, Gerardo Luna, and Zachary Schultz**, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, KS

**P04. Autism and School Belonging: Lessons from a Mixed Methods Comparative Study with Nonautistic Peers**

This poster presentation will illustrate the primary takeaways from a dissertation study titled "Autism-specific stigma and belonging: a mixed-method 3-group comparison of the sense of belonging of students with and without autism based on their school setting." Findings, including the need to belong and overarching differences in lived experiences that influence students with autism, will be covered. Examples of student reports illustrating differences between high school students with autism and nonautistic students across four belonging constructs, peer belonging, adult support, general school belonging, and what it means to belong will be provided. In addition, participants will have access to recommendations from students with autism on creating school environments that foster belonging. (Practitioner & Research Focused)

**Shannon Locke, PhD, CCC-SLP**, University of Missouri, Belton, MO

**P05. Teaching Autistic Students Using Robot Assisted Instruction**

This exploratory study investigated the feasibility and effectiveness of using a robot assisted curriculum with autistic students in a New England public school. Over a 6-month period we used a multiple baseline across participants design, descriptive data collection, and interviews with stakeholders. We collected observation data on the conversation skills of 7 autistic students (ages 6-13) and descriptive data to track participant use of the robot and curriculum. While most students increased conversation skills from baseline to intervention phases, there was much variability across students and too much overlapping data points to claim causality between variables. Feedback from students, families and teachers was mixed with mostly positive but some negative comments. While promising, more research is needed to understand the factors in the potential of robot use in schools. (Research Focused)

**Paul LaCava, PhD**, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI

**P06. Emotional Disturbance and Co-occurring Speech/Language Deficits**

The relationship between speech and language difficulties and behavioral problems has been well-documented in the literature. Children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders often display maladaptive behaviors that negatively impact their school success and social adjustment. Specifically, students with emotional disturbance (ED) by definition often experience "an inability to build or maintain satisfactory relationships with peers and teachers" (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA], 2004). We conducted a scoping review to gain an understanding of the state of the literature related to school-age children and youth with ED who experience co-

occurring speech/language difficulties. A total of 13 reviews were included in our summary of the literature, representing more than 4,073 children and youth with ED in kindergarten through 12th grade. Takeaways for researchers and practitioners will be shared. (Research Focused)

**Lisa Bowman-Perrott, PhD**, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

**P07. To the Future and BEYOND!: Implementing Transition Instruction for Youth with and At-Risk for EBD in a Juvenile Justice Facility**

Youth with and at-risk for EBD in juvenile justice facilities should be receiving transition instruction and programming that aligns with their unique needs while connecting them with school and community resources needed to be successful once they return to traditional K-12 schools and the community. In this poster presentation, we will discuss the barriers to providing transition instruction to youth in juvenile justice facilities. A particular emphasis will be placed on how we implemented a transition curriculum (i.e., integrated career-readiness and exploration, independent living, self-determination skills, community integration) and youth-centered transition planning (i.e., person-centered planning) with adolescent females with behavioral challenges in a juvenile justice facility. An overview of our findings, future directions, and implications for practice will be discussed. (Practitioner Focused)

**Olivia R. Hester, PhD, Allyson Pitzel, PhD, Sara Sanders, EdD, and Kristine Jolivet, PhD**, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**P08. Youth Perspectives on Challenging Situations Influencing Their Negative Behaviors and Highlights of Their Perceptions of the Facility Environment Across Time**

Many youth with and at-risk for emotional and behavioral disorders receive their educational services in restrictive settings (e.g., alternative education schools, residential treatment centers, juvenile justice facilities). Within these highly structured settings, it is critical that the environment be safe, supportive, strengths-based, and educationally-focused; however, this can be a challenge due to the negative and unsafe behaviors these youth present. Based on a mixed methods study, this poster will qualitatively describe the outcomes of a series of youth focus groups intended to better understand youth perspective on persistent challenging situations influencing their negative behaviors as well as quantitatively highlight their perceptions of sense of safety and support within their restrictive settings across time. Findings, both themes and examples, from the focus groups and significant patterns across timepoints will be shared. Future research directions will be provided and practical implications for facility staff/teachers to improve youth behaviors and facility safety. (Practitioner Focused)

**Kristine Jolivet, PhD, Sara Sanders, EdD, Olivia R. Hester, PhD, and Allyson Pitzel, PhD**, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**P09. "All 3's!": Exploring the Impact of SRSD with Intensified Self-Evaluation Instruction on the Writing Performance of Girls At-Risk for EBD**

This study explored the use of the self-regulated strategy development instructional approach with intensified self-evaluation instruction on the persuasive writing skills of adolescent girls at-risk for emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). A multiple-baseline across participants design was used to examine the effects on persuasive writing performance. During lessons, in addition to teaching youth the POW+TREE mnemonic, the interventionist taught the youth how to self-evaluate their writing performance. Youth were also taught how to self-evaluate their effort, motivation, and attitude towards the essay prompt topic. After post-instruction, youth demonstrated an increase in both their writing outcomes and their ability to self-evaluate their own writing. (Research Focused)

**Kristine Jolivet, PhD, Sara Sanders, EdD, Olivia R. Hester, PhD, and Kristine Jolivet, PhD**, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

**P10. Functional Assessment-Based Intervention in PK-12 School Settings**

We report findings of a meta-analysis examining the evidence base for Functional Assessment-Based Intervention (FABI; Umbreit et al., 2024) in PK-12 school settings. We briefly describe key features, including the Function Matrix and team-based approach, as well as each step of the FABI model: (1) Identifying Students Who May Need a FABI; (2) Conducting the Functional Assessment; (3) Collecting Baseline Data (4) Designing the Intervention; and (5) Testing the Intervention. We detail procedures and results of the systematic search, coding, and reliability. We present findings related to methodological rigor of included studies, designation of FABI as a promising practice according to CEC (2014) guidelines, and results of the meta-analysis. We conclude with a discussion of limitations, implications for practice, and future directions. To support implementation efforts, we connect participants to a series of free, open-access FABI professional learning resources available at ci3t.org including a six-part FABI Enhancing Ci3T module series. (Research Focused)

**Elise Sarasin, MSE, Kathleen Lynne Lane, PhD, BCBA-D, CF-L2, Allison M. Bernard, MEd**, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS; **Eric Alan Common, PhD, BCBA-D**, University of Michigan-Flint

**P11. Recognize. Relax. Record. Examining a Tier 2 School-Based Intervention Package to Support Students with Anxious Feelings: Preliminary Findings**

This poster presents findings from a randomized control trial of Recognize. Relax. Record., a school-based Tier 2 intervention designed to support students experiencing anxious feelings. Student participants learn to (1) recognize their anxious thoughts and feelings, (2) use relaxation strategies, and (3) self-monitor their emotional and behavioral responses (i.e., engagement, anxious feelings, use of relaxation

strategies). We present findings related to evaluating student performance, treatment integrity, and social validity. Attendees will be able to explore newly developed Comprehensive, Integrated, Three-Tiered Model of Prevention (Ci3T) Enhancing Module resources designed to support implementation (ci3t.org). (Research Focused)

**Amy A. Buffington, MEd, Allison M. Bernard, MEd, Kathryn Louise Johnson, BA, and Elise Sarasin, MSE,** University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

**P12. Supporting Preschoolers' Autonomous Social Problem Solving in Authentic Classroom Setting**

A secondary data analysis was conducted to reanalyze data from an alternating treatments design used to evaluate the effectiveness of visuals only and visuals combined with precorrections in enhancing preschool children's autonomous social problem-solving (SPS) skills during authentic classroom play activities. The data were reanalyzed to measure each individual child's use of refusal, negotiation, persist, and move on strategies in response to naturally occurring social problems during free play. Results indicated that the SPS visual-only condition effectively increased refusal and negotiation behaviors for most participants, whereas visuals combined with precorrections were less effective. Persist and move on remained at low occurrences across conditions. Research implications, practical implications, limitations, and areas for future research are discussed. (Practitioner Focused)

**Yunru Fu, MEd,** Omaha Public Schools, Omaha, NE; **Kathleen Tuck, PhD, BCBA-D,** University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

**P13. Shift Beliefs, Shape Behaviors: The Effects of Causal Attribution Re-Training on Pre-Service Educators Positive Interactions with Students**

This poster presents results from a single case design study investigating a packaged intervention designed to strengthen pre-service educator (PSE)-child relationships. The intervention package consisted of causal attribution re-training for PSEs. Using a multiple baseline across participants single case design, this study evaluated the effects of the intervention on PSE-child interactions and child engagement. Causal attribution re-training represents an innovative way to help future educators build supportive, effective relationships with all students, providing a promising addition to professional development focused on managing challenging behavior and fostering positive classroom climates. Implications for college professors, administrators and classroom teachers will be discussed. Links to the causal attribution re-training materials and professional development workshop will be freely provided through QR codes displayed on the poster. (Research Focused)

**Kelsey Smith, MEd, BCBA and Kathleen Tuck, PhD, BCBA-D,** University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

**P14. A Comprehensive Review of Articles Published in Behavioral Disorders: Volumes 35-49**

Over the last 50 years, *Behavior Disorders* has been a leading journal for disseminating key information on emotional and/or behavioral disorders (EBD). The current review extends the work of Gage and colleagues (2010) and provides a comprehensive summary of all articles published in *Behavior Disorders* over the past 15 years. Several national and international events, such as the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) and the COVID-19 pandemic, have occurred since the original 2010 review. Articles published in volumes 35(1) through 49(4) were reviewed and cataloged over multiple variables. Results provide a review of key trends across published manuscripts, and we will discuss the most prominent trends published in the last decade and a half. Finally, we will present and discuss implications for the journal and the field of EBD. (Research Focused)

**Madison Imler-Brandt, MS, BCBA, LBA and John Augustine, PhD,** University of Missouri, Columbia, MO

**P15. Practice-Based Coaching for Effective Teaching Practices: A Systematic and Quality Review**

This systematic review evaluated the quality of research on practice-based coaching for effective teaching practices using the What Works Clearinghouse 5.0 standards. We identified 27 studies that met inclusion criteria and assessed their methodological rigor, delivery characteristics, targeted practices, and participant sociodemographics. Findings highlight the rigor in practice-based coaching and inform the use of practice-based coaching as a coaching strategy to improve educational outcomes for children with disabilities, including emotional behavioral disorders. (Research Focused)

**John Augustine, PhD,** University of Missouri, Columbia, MO

**P16. Change for the Better: Assessing Readiness to Adopt Applied Behavior Analysis in Michigan Public Schools**

Many students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) need evidence-based intervention in school, and applied behavior analysis (ABA) offers an array of treatment options shown to improve outcomes. However, in Michigan and elsewhere, ABA has not been thoroughly integrated into public schools. This presentation will discuss the mechanisms thought to predict organizational readiness for change (ORC) among a representative sample of Michigan public educators (N = 346) faced with the potential adoption of specialized ABA classrooms. Findings suggest that changemakers should focus on both commitment and efficacy when trying to enact change, such that educators are willing and able to adopt ABA classrooms. Findings also highlight the potential importance of alignment between a school's climate and the proposed intervention and attention to mechanisms related to organizational change, which will likely make the adoption of ABA classrooms in public schools more successful. (Research Focused)

**Brian Brutzman, PhD, BCBA, LBA,** Heartland ABA, Omaha, NE

**P17. Effectiveness of Universal Social Skill Lessons Targeted for Freshmen Success**

Social skills support academic and behavioral success but are often overlooked in high schools, particularly for at-risk students and students with disabilities. This poster shares outcomes from universal social skill instruction, including teacher feedback, and offers practical strategies for class-wide implementation to support student positive behavior and engagement. (Research Focused)

**Lindsey Mirielli, PhD**, Juniper Gardens Children's Project, Kansas City, KS

**8:00 p.m. - MSLBD PARTY**

**ATLANTA**

**11:00 p.m. Lip Sync Battle, DJ, Dancing, Competition, Prizes, Card-Only Bar and Snacks**

Join us for MSLBD's Friday Night Party! Here is your chance to show off your Lip Sync talents and win cash prizes!

Individuals and groups, talented and otherwise, are encouraged to participate! Bring your drink coupon from the take-home bag for a free beverage. Don't miss the fun!

## SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2026

**8:00 a.m. - SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION/INFORMATION DESK OPEN**

**BALLROOM**

**12:00 p.m.**

**FOYER**

**9:00 a.m. - CONCURRENT SATURDAY SESSIONS**

**11:30 a.m.** Coffee & Tea available until 9:30 a.m.

**Legal Developments in the Education of Students with EBD: What Teachers Need to Know and Why**

**NEW YORK**

**SA 1.** This workshop provides a timely and practical update on legal and policy issues affecting students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Participants will gain insight into recent court decisions, state-level due process hearings, and guidance that impact how schools support students with EBD. Special attention will be given to the legal implications of providing school-based mental health services, discipline procedures, and the most frequent missteps that lead to litigation or compliance findings. Educators, administrators, and support personnel will leave with actionable strategies to promote legally sound and educationally effective practices in their schools. (Introductory, Intermediate)

**Katherine A. Graves, PhD**, Assistant Professor, Utah State University, Logan, UT; **Angela Tuttle Prince, PhD**, Associate Professor, Iowa State University of Science & Technology, Ames, IA; **Jason C. Travers, PhD, BCBA-D**, Professor, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA

**SA 2. From Prevention to Response: SEL and Restorative Practice Strategies to Reduce Disproportionality in School Discipline**

**ATLANTA**

In this workshop session, International Institute for Restorative Practices Associate Professor Doug Judge will present implementation frameworks and practice guides for integrating proactive and responsive Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Restorative Practice (RP) approaches in K-12 schools. Organized within the SEL Signature Practice framework and utilizing opportunities to practice, the session will focus generally on the integration of SEL and RP as an evidence-based approach to promote academic excellence and reduce race- and ability-based disproportionality in special education referral and classroom/school exclusion. We will review both critical and practical guidance for sustained implementation, as well as three assessment frameworks to assist with systematic troubleshooting and evaluation. (Intermediate)

**Doug Judge, PhD**, Associate Professor, International Institute for Restorative Practices Graduate School, Seattle, WA

**SA 3. Human-Centered ABA: Ethics, Assent, and Meaningful Outcomes**

**CHICAGO**

**BCBA CEUs**

Applied behavior analysis is most powerful when it is both effective and ethical. As the field continues to evolve, behavior analysts are being called to ensure that services are not only data-driven, but also respectful, collaborative, and responsive to the lived experiences of clients and families. This session explores a human-centered approach to ABA grounded in evidence-based practice across home, school, clinic, and interdisciplinary settings. Participants will examine how to meaningfully incorporate client voice through assent practices, evaluate the social validity of intervention targets, and prioritize outcomes that enhance quality of life rather than simply reduce behavior. Through applied case examples, we will explore how to balance behavioral rigor with relational safety, cultural responsiveness, and real-world system demands. (Intermediate, 3.0 BCBA CEUs for Learning and Ethics)

**Hannah West, PhD, BCBA**, Sunflower Pediatric Behavioral Health, Olathe, KS

**SA4. Kindness and Caring as an Antidote to Bullying**

We are living in unprecedented times where bullying behaviors have become more normative and even accepted. How do we teach students and adults to reject bullying? One solution is to teach, model, and support acts of kindness, caring, and bravery. (Introductory)

**Susan Swearer, PhD**, Willa Cather Professor of School Psychology and Chair, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Lincoln, NE

**SAN  
FRANCISCO**

**11:30 a.m. ADJOURNMENT AND HOTEL CHECKOUT**

## 2026 AWARD AND STIPEND RECIPIENTS

MSLBD annually recognizes individuals with several awards for outstanding service to individuals with EBD. The organization also seeks to encourage outstanding scholarship in doctoral and pre-service training. It provides a one-time stipend to assist students pursuing a degree in special education with a program emphasis in EBD or a closely related field. We want to congratulate the recipients of this year's awards.

***Outstanding Leadership Award***

Kristine Jolivette, PhD, Professor,  
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

***Outstanding Advocacy Award***

Leanne Bauer, Muskegon High School,  
Muskegon, MI

***Outstanding Educator Award***

Natalina Gannon, Summit Academy,  
Special School District of St. Louis County, MO

***Outstanding Building Leadership Award***

Craig McDaniel, Tri City Day School, Haysville, KS

***Unsung Hero Award***

Mary Jo Anderson, EdD, Overland Park, KS

***Doctoral Degree Stipends***

Melissa D. Hullett, LPES, NCSP,  
Clemson University, SC

Stephanie Lashawn Jackson, MS, CCTP,  
Texas A&M University, TX

***Commitment to Equity Stipend***

Victoria Volk, BS, Little Wound Middle  
School, Porcupine, SD  
University of Kansas Master's Student

***2026 MSLBD Master Teachers***

Jenna Mattox MEd, MA, Educational  
Service Unit 7, Columbus, NE  
Victoria Volk, BS, Little Wound Middle  
School, Porcupine, SD

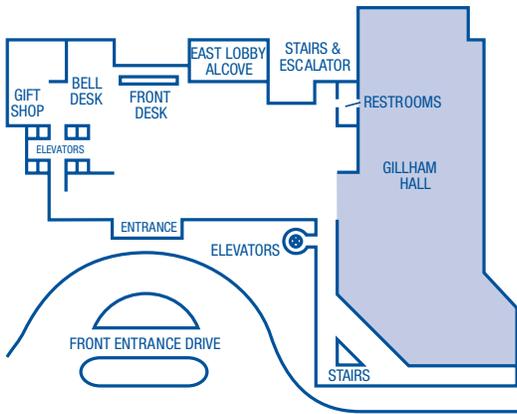
Stipend applications and individual award nominations are due each year on November 1. A complete list of available awards, due dates, and nomination forms may be viewed on our website: <https://mslbd.org/get-involved/awards-nomination.html>.

# 2026 MSLBD SYMPOSIUM PRESENTERS

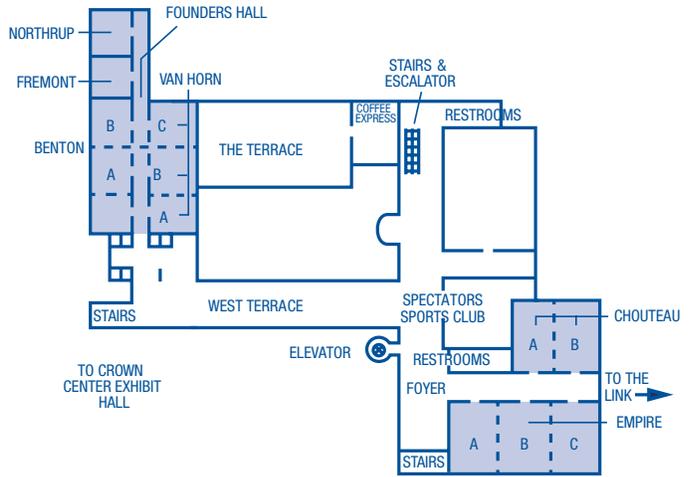
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# HOTEL MAP

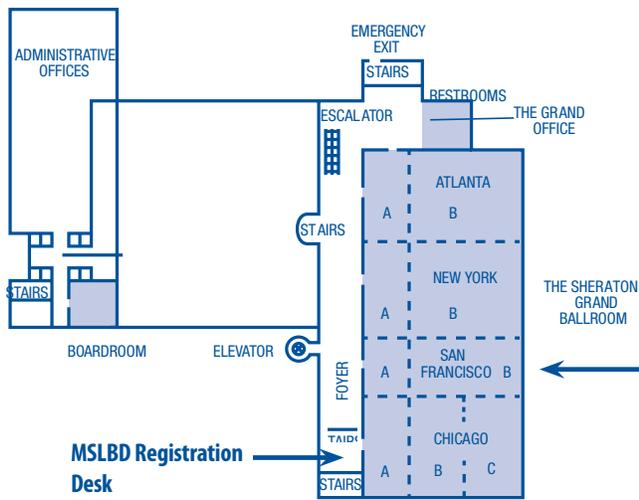
## LOBBY LEVEL



## MEZZANINE LEVEL



## BALLROOM LEVEL



On Friday, San Francisco becomes a corridor to access New York A, New York B, Chicago A, Chicago B, Chicago C.