

## Session Descriptions

**New Special Education Administrators** - This workshop will be a continued professional development for new special education administrators. Table talk discussions will be led by the MADSEC Executive Committee. Some topics that may be included: How to take care of yourself; Dealing with difficult communications; Referral Process; State Agency Clients; MaineCare Billing; Outside Placements; Parentally Placed Students; Home Schooled students; Questions and Answers

**SLO Improved 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classroom Behavior by 248%** - Lora Perry - Inclusion of students with IEPs, 504s, and/or those struggling with adverse childhood experiences (trauma), often result in behaviorally volatile classrooms. During the 2018/2019 school year, two mid-coast first grade teachers took on the challenge to utilize positive behavior supports, behavioral RTI and strategic responsive measures through weekly coaching with a BCBA/educational consultant. This resulted in an improvement of classroom behavior an average of 248% across the two classrooms between October and March. The project has intriguing implications not only because of the outstanding results, but also because it was undertaken by one teacher with 32 years of experience, and one who was a first-year teacher, suggesting the strategies and tactics are likely responsible for the results.

**Dyslexia Resources for Maine** - Tracy Whitlock - Dyslexia is addressed in legislation in over 30 states in the United States. In this workshop, an overview of this national landscape and the numerous resources available will be provided. Participants will review the updated Maine Department of Education dyslexia webpage and be asked to share district and school needs working with pk-12 students who display dyslexic characteristics. This information will be used to further tailor the updated webpage to the needs of Maine students, teachers, and administrators.

**Maine's 1% Cap & Waiver Procedure** - Sue Nay - A look at Maine's Participation Guidelines to identify students that meet the criteria to participate in alternate assessments. Proposed timelines for identification to meet the waiver application. Requirements of Action Plans for districts over the one percent cap and mandatory support provided by the Department within tier levels of identification for each district.

**Special Educator Perspective on Implementation of RTI/MTSS in Maine** - Rachel Brown & Benjamin Hutchins - This session will review the results from a recent study conducted by Dr. Amy Johnson and Ben Hutchins from the Maine Educational Policy Research Institute and the Center for Education Policy, Applied Research, and Evaluation that documented Maine special educators' experiences with Response to Intervention (RTI) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Johnson and Hutchins conducted a survey of current Maine special educators to learn the extent of their participation in RTI/MTSS for academics and behavior. Dr. Rachel Brown served as a consultant for this project. A total of 571 Maine special educators, including special education directors, teachers, specialists, and related service providers, completed the survey. The survey addressed three main questions about participants' experiences.

**Some of My Favorite Behavior Tips & Tricks** - Lora Perry - After raising my two kids with autism to adulthood, and being a BCBA since 2004, I've probably tried every trick in the book to help human behavior be the best it can be. Some tactics fall into the category of useless; others I'd label "a worthy endeavor, but not for me." But *some* stand out as "Holy cow, where have you been all my life?" "Whoever invented that is a genius," and "I'm pretty proud of coming up with that." I speak not only as a professional who works with a wide variety of special kids, but also as one who works with a wide variety of adults. --The kind of adults who teach students, or birthed kids (or married me 37 years ago.) This session is like Oprah's "Favorite Things," without the iPad. We'll explore tips and tricks you can bring to your teams to shape the behavior of ourselves and others from where it is, to where we'd like it to be.

**Making Difficult Conversations Easy** - Jane Golding - Why are some people so difficult to work with? Would anyone consider YOU a difficult person to work with? By making slight adjustments in your behavior, you will have a significant impact on building positive relationships. Honoring differences is the foundation for building trust, respect and commitment to common team goals. Use your own and others strengths to build positive results for everyone. Participants will: identify triggers of conflict; recognize importance of what we believe about conflict; identify value of proactive response to conflict; understand how to use a 4 step accountability model.

**ACES History – Now What Do We Do? Trauma Informed Interventions** - Ruth Crowell & Lisa Backman - Now that we have an understanding of the impact trauma has on our students, how do we develop interventions that are both sensitive to the student's trauma history and also effective in improving behavior? This workshop will focus on the development of effective interventions at the Tier I, II & III levels including both preventive measures and appropriate responses when trauma related behaviors emerge within the school setting.

**“We Need a Behavior Plan (That Works)”** - Lora Perry - Our schools are becoming increasingly inclusive, and therefore gen ed classrooms serve students with a wide range of behaviors. Students with autism, ADHD and trauma histories “blurt out,” “bolt,” are “off task” and are more “non-compliant” than ever before. Special ed students and their non-disabled peers sometimes swear, and sometimes demonstrate a lack of respect for authority that in our own youth we may have found incomprehensible. In these situations, it’s not uncommon for a teacher or administrator to reach out with, “We need a behavior plan, here!” What exactly is a “behavior plan?” Why do so many of them fail? What can we do to achieve behaviorally stable classrooms, in which all students have access to the curriculum, and more learning takes place? We will explore these and related questions, providing attendees with perspectives and tools with which to take steps toward more behaviorally stable classrooms.

**Quality Indicators for School Based Day Treatment Programs** - Elizabeth Davis & Nancy Smith - Many school districts are developing day treatment level services for students with complex behavioral, social and emotional profiles.

This workshop is designed to do the following:

1. Provide an outline of components of robust day treatment programs. Dimensions to consider will be outlined for participants.
2. Outline how administrators can develop day treatment level programming to meet the needs of complex students by defining essential components of treatment.
  1. Participants will be provided with a template that defines essential components of day treatment programming.
3. Provide a framework for program development.
  1. Explain how administrators can do an assessment of programmatic needs, including targets for staff development (teaching and clinical staff).
  2. A rubric for each dimension will be provided so administrators can identify where staff/programs are functioning on each dimension.
  3. Administrators will be coached around how to target areas for program development, with clearly defined goals outlined through the rubric.
4. Provide recommendations for research-based SEL curricula to apply in day treatment settings.
5. Provide “best practice” exemplars for paperwork associated with day treatment with a focus on how to collect meaningful data that will inform programming.
  1. Electronic forms will be provided that administrators can immediately use in their programs.

**Views of Special Educators on Leaving the Field: A Pilot Study** - Clarissa Fish & Danielle Pelletier - Securing and retaining special educators is becoming more and more difficult. The scope of their responsibilities is immense and continually changing. There is little research that focuses on the rationale for leaving the field and the supports required to prevent this. The purpose of this case study was to identify and understand the reasons special educators leave the profession. This study explores the experiences and perceptions of eight Maine special educators who have recently left the field and their views regarding the supports that were both helpful and lacking. This workshop will present the findings of a qualitative pilot study completed by Clarissa Fish and Danielle Pelletier as part of their University of Maine Doctoral Program in Prevention & Intervention Studies. Common themes and implications for future research and practice will be explored. This interactive presentation will include discussion, a brief survey and an audience Q&A.

**CDS Updates** - The presenter will provide an update on recent CDS-related legislation, positive developments at the agency, as well as existing challenges, an overview of variations of existing SAU/CDS collaborations, and opportunities for SAUs to partner with CDS to ensure that all eligible children receive necessary services in a timely manner. Time will also be set aside for questions and answers and to discuss SAUs experiences and opportunities for improvement in their relationships with regional CDS sites.

**MACM: Where We Are, Where we’re Going (and How You Can Help)** - Valerie Smith & Elaine Tomaszewski - This presentation will provide an overview of Maine’s Alternative Certification Mentoring program as of October 2019, and will outline both short-term and long-term goals for the project’s future. Many brains are smarter than one (or two) brains, so the remainder of the session will involve participants in a discussion and brainstorming period to explore various ways that MACM can increase its effectiveness for supporting new teachers in the present and future.

**LiveScribe SmartPen: Reducing Barriers for Students with Learning Disabilities** - Patricia Waters & Colbi Munson - The LiveScribe SmartPen is a pen with a camera at the tip and a microphone which is able to record audio. That audio is synced to the spot on special dot paper where it was touching when it was recorded. Besides acting as a mini-computer, the SmartPen comes with a desktop application allowing for recordings to be downloaded for replaying and sharing. In this interactive workshop, participants will be introduced to this piece of assistive technology with examples of use for students with disabilities. Participants will be given the opportunity to explore a variety of pre-made LiveScribe pen activities and brainstorm additional opportunities for use. This presentation will highlight several ways in which SmartPens were used by special educators address students’ needs in inclusive classroom settings. Consistent with research, results from this study suggest the LiveScribe pen can be used to increase academic achievement of students with disabilities.

Specifically, the LiveScribe pen 1) increased listening and processing, 2) enhanced recall of information, 3) promoted independence, and 4) increased instructional time.

**Shifting Perspective: An Alternative View on Student Engagement & Behavior** - Ann Christie & Kelley Fillion - Presentation will focus on shifting perspective on difficulties students and teachers experience in the classroom. Will provide alternative ways of viewing these difficulties and practical suggestions on decreasing them. Research based strategies can be used for ELL students as well as non-ELL students. Focusing on an outward mindset and student strengths will be leveraged to improve outcomes.

**Skillstreaming for Students with High Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder** - Sarah Howorth & Debora Rooks-Ellis - An estimated 1 in 59 children are diagnosed with ASD (Centers for Disease Control, 2018) which poses a significant challenge to educators because of the varying strengths and weaknesses regarding learning for students with ASD (Lopata et al., 2012). Students with ASD could have impairments in social relatedness and stereotyped and repetitive behaviors in interests, but could have intact cognitive ability and formal language skills (Lopata et al., 2012). As children become adolescents, their social difficulties become intensified by puberty and teenage social norms and expectations. Social communication deficits associated with ASD may result in rejection and social isolation having a profound impact on the individual, teachers, peers in the classroom, parents, and the community (McGinnis-Smith & Simpson, 2017).

How can Skillstreaming help? The 26 skills taught from the Skillstreaming curriculum were specifically selected to align with core and associated features of HFASD. This approach was used to ensure that the skills taught were anchored to core features that characterize these students.

**Review of Special Education Funding Formula Analysis** - Amy Johnson & Rachel Brown - Researchers from the Maine Education Policy Research Institute will present their findings from their most recent review of the special education funding model.

**Maximizing Physical Activity Opportunities for Children with Special Needs** - Diane Boas & Samantha Bowen - The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children should be active for 60 minutes per day. Due to a range of physical and behavioral challenges, children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are less physically active than their typically developing peers. Inadequate physical activity increases the risk of obesity, can further delay or compromise the development of motor skills, and limit opportunities to learn and practice social skills. In response, Let's Go!, an evidence based statewide obesity prevention program, has developed strategies, tools and resources to help special educators increase physical activity for their students with I/DD.

## **Maine DOE – A Potpourri of Topics**

**Transfer of IDEA Rights, Supported Decision Making & Self-Determination as Part of the Transition Planning Process** - Atlee Reilly & Staci Converse - This session will cover the responsibility of schools to provide notice of the transfer of rights at the age of majority. Recent changes to the Maine Probate Code and alternatives to guardianship will be explored, including the use of supported decision making. In addition, the session will provide practical information related to the use of self-determination goals (self-advocacy, goal setting, decision making, etc.) as part of the transition planning process under the IDEA.

**Considering the Benefits of the Physical Therapist in Supporting Students in Special Education Through the Transition from High School to Adulthood** - Hilary Terhune - At the end of the session, the participant will be able to: 1. Discuss how the five components of Transition Taxonomy 2.0 can improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities (National Technical Assistance Center of Transition - NTACTION); 2. Examine how the educational model for PT practice supports greater participation in transition supporting activities; 3. Organize areas in the NTACTION District Checklist where PTs enable students' participation in predictor areas; 4. Evaluate the relevance of models of healthcare/educational planning -International Classification of Functioning and Disability (ICF) in transition planning.

**Now I Know I'm a Real Author** - Patricia Moody & Debra Lewis Hogate - Students who take on the identity of a writer experience a greater sense of "security, belonging, competence and confidence" (LaBree, 2017). This session will share the practicalities of establishing and supporting a writer's workshop where students with special needs develop this identity.

**Trends and Innovations in Assistive Technology** - John Brandt & Kathy Adams- We all wish we could "keep up" with the constant changes in the "everyday" technologies in our lives. Keeping current with innovations in Assistive Technology (AT) designed or intended for students with disabilities can be particularly challenging. In this session we discuss some trends and new types of AT including "everyday" technologies that can impact the functional skills of students. AT for transition will also be shared. Resources for how to review new technology will also be shared.

**Responsible Use of Edible Reinforcement** - Nicole Boivin & Diane Boas - Children with developmental disabilities face many challenges to eating a healthy diet. As a result, they have a higher risk of developing obesity and nutritional deficiencies compared with their typically developing peers. Challenges include selective eating habits and ritualistic behavior during snack and mealtimes. Edible reinforcers are frequently used in children's behavior support plans. These reinforcers are often unhealthy and can contribute to a child's preference for unhealthy foods, causing immediate and long-term health risks.

Dr. Nicole Boivin, President of the Association for Maine Behavior Analysis and Diane D. Boas, a health educator with the Let's Go! Program at Barbara Bush Children's Hospital will share strategies to promote effective and responsible practices to decrease the use of edible reinforcement in special education.

**The Greatly Overlooked Impact of Visual Skills on Literacy Development & Learning** - Dr. Wilbert Libbey, OD, FCOVD & Gail Trefethern-Kelley, MS, OTR/L - This presentation examines the development of visual processing and the role it plays in a child's learning development and behavior. Visual skills and visual skill efficiency are not routinely nor consistently considered when a student may be showing signs of a learning delay. Dr. Libbey & Ms. Trefethern-Kelley will present the foundations of visual skills beyond acuity, and the impact they have on learning. They will describe their school-based vision therapy pilot program and outline the visual screening and intervention techniques they have developed. The presentation will detail how these screenings are implemented as part of kindergarten screening as well as in screening struggling readers. An overview of interventions will be provided for remediating visual processing challenges. These interventions are geared to be implemented by special education and Title I staff including OTs and Ed Techs.