

2015 TOGETHER WE CAN CONFERENCE

Supporting Each Other Through Change and Transition



Saturday, May 2, 2015 • 8:15 am– 5:00 pm

Varied Industries Conference Center (south side of the Varied Industries Building)
Iowa State Fairgrounds, 3000 E Grand Ave, Des Moines, Iowa

CONFERENCE AGENDA

EDUCATION & TRAINING CREDITS	
Attorneys	3.75 CLE*
Social Workers	5.5 CEU
Foster Parents	5.75 Training Credit*

*See agenda for approved course offerings. Entire conference approved for Social Work CEUs.

8:15–9:00 a m	VENDOR AREA OPEN ALL DAY LOBBY & LOWER LEVEL	LOBBY	REGISTRATION/CHECK-IN & CHILDCARE DROP-OFF • Pick up your conference materials • Explore the conference area • Enjoy coffee and donuts sponsored by Dunkin Donuts & Iowa Home Care				
Open All Day		UPPER LEVEL, EAST END	ACTIVITIES Art Exhibit by Studio E: The Epilepsy Art Therapy Program The Epilepsy Foundation of Iowa partnered with Lundbeck to give individuals with epilepsy an opportunity to express themselves and their emotions through art. Art Exhibit by Beyond Expectations 2015: Whatever Makes You Happy! Quad cities parent Mindy Pace, and her daughter, Francine, who has autism, have been organizing art displays in their community for the past four years because Francine wanted to give all children with disabilities an opportunity to share their artwork. The art was created by children with disabilities living in the Quad cities. This year’s theme is “Whatever Makes You Happy!” Story Booth Sharing your story for the first time can be challenging, so the Story Booth is here to help you get started! Think of all the inspirational stories you’ve heard or read—you never know whose life you might empower by sharing <i>your</i> story. See your conference folder for more information.				
9:00–9:15 a m		UPPER LEVEL, WEST END	WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS <i>Bob Selby, Co-Founder, Holding Tiny Hands</i> KEYNOTE INTRODUCTION <i>Lisa Arechavaleta, President, ASK Board of Directors</i>				
9:15–10:15 a m			CONFERENCE KEYNOTE I Need to Touch the Words: A Different Path to Literacy <i>Ralph James Savarese & Emily Thornton Savarese</i> 1.0 Foster Training Credit				
10:15–10:30 a m		CONFERENCE BREAK • Visit the vendors • Check out the Story Booth • Stop by the FIND station • See the art exhibits					
MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS							
10:30–11:45 a m	Session content focus Disability Rights Law Health Education Transition Advocacy	CHOOSE ONE	ROOM A Lifelong Links: Your Connection. Your Choice <i>Ruth Thompson, Aging and Disability Resource Center</i> E A	ROOM A1 Tell it Like it Is! What You Want Health Care Providers to Know <i>Mike Hoenig & Ann Riley, Center for Disabilities and Development</i> H A	ROOM B It’s Not My Fault! Help Me! <i>Ellen McGinnis-Smith, Ph.D., Consultant, Learner Strategies and Supports</i> 1.25 Foster Training Credit E A	ROOM C Student and Parent Rights at IEP Meetings <i>Nathan Kirstein, Beth Rydberg & Cyndy Miller, Disability Rights Iowa</i> 1.25 CLE 1.25 Foster Training Credit D E A	ROOM D Is My Child Really an Adult? Negotiating Difficult Life Transitions <i>Ralph James Savarese & Emily Thornton Savarese</i> 1.25 Foster Training Credit T A
11:45 a m–Noon		LOWER LEVEL	BOX LUNCH PICK-UP Sponsored by Jason’s Deli & UnitedHealthcare Community Plan				

<p>Noon-1:00 pm</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">VENDOR AREA OPEN ALL DAY LOBBY & LOWER LEVEL</p>	<p align="center">CONFERENCE BREAK Enjoy your lunch and explore the conference area! • Visit the vendors • Stop by the FIND station to learn more and sign up • Share your story at the Story Booth • See the art displays</p>					
<p>1:00-2:15 pm</p>		<p align="center">BREAKOUT SESSIONS</p>					
<p><i>Session content focus</i></p> <p>Disability Rights Law Health Education Transition Advocacy</p>		<p>CHOOSE ONE</p>	<p align="center">ROOM A</p> <p>Activate! Engaging Literacy with Sensory Experiences <i>Zachary Stier, ZLS Consulting</i> 1.25 Foster Training Credit</p> <p>E A</p>	<p align="center">ROOM A1</p> <p>Powerful Tools for Thriving Caregivers, Part 1 of 2 <i>Kristi Cooper & Donna Donald, Iowa State Extension and Outreach</i></p> <p>H A</p>	<p align="center">ROOM B</p> <p>Thought it was a Light at the End of the Tunnel, Turns out it was an Oncoming Train... <i>Steph Steveson, Parent</i></p> <p>T A</p>	<p align="center">ROOM C</p> <p>Employment: Transition to Work and Reasonable Accommodations <i>Cyndy Miller & Beth Rydberg, Disability Rights Iowa</i> 1.25 CLE 1.25 Foster Training Credit</p> <p>D T</p>	<p align="center">ROOM D</p> <p>Planning for Permanency after Foster Care, Part 1 of 2 <i>Lori Moore, ASK Resource Center</i> 1.25 CLE 1.25 Foster Training Credit</p> <p>E A T</p>
<p>2:15-2:30 pm</p>		<p align="center">CONFERENCE BREAK Enjoy an afternoon snack sponsored by Jason's Deli & ZLS Consulting • Visit the vendors • Share your story at the Story Booth • See the art displays</p>					
<p>2:30-3:45 pm</p>		<p align="center">BREAKOUT SESSIONS</p>					
<p><i>Session content focus</i></p> <p>Disability Rights Law Health Education Transition Advocacy</p>		<p>CHOOSE ONE</p>	<p align="center">ROOM A</p> <p>Learning Disabilities 101 <i>Kathy Specketer & Vicki Goshon, Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa</i> 1.25 Foster Training Credit</p> <p>E A</p>	<p align="center">ROOM A1</p> <p>Powerful Tools for Thriving Caregivers, Part 2 of 2 <i>Kristi Cooper & Donna Donald, Iowa State Extension and Outreach</i></p> <p>H A</p>	<p align="center">ROOM B</p> <p>Assessing Skills for Future Living, Learning and Working: Parents Are Key! <i>Ann Lupkes & Sandy Kraschel, AEA 267</i></p> <p>E A T</p>	<p align="center">ROOM C</p> <p>Discipline under IDEA <i>Nathan Kirstein, Beth Rydberg & Cyndy Miller, Disability Rights Iowa</i> 1.25 CLE 1.25 Foster Training Credit</p> <p>D E A</p>	<p align="center">ROOM D</p> <p>Planning for Permanency after Foster Care, Part 2 of 2 <i>Tonia Smith, Iowa College Aid/DHS</i> 1.25 CLE 1.25 Foster Training Credit</p> <p>E A T</p>
<p>3:45-4:00 pm</p>		<p align="center">CONFERENCE BREAK • Visit the vendors • Share your story at the Story Booth • Stop by the FIND station • See the art displays</p>					
<p>4:00-5:00 pm</p>		<p>VARIOUS ROOMS</p> <p align="center">LET'S CONNECT! Room assignments and other details on the next page in your conference folder. 1.0 Foster Training Credit</p>					
<p>5:00 pm</p>	<p align="center">CONFERENCE WRAP-UP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you've turned in all of your evaluations prior to leaving. Your feedback is very important to us! • Children must be picked up from childcare no later than 5:15 pm. Thanks again to the Bob & Billie Ray Child Development Center at Easter Seals for providing fun, nurturing, and safe activities during the conference! 						

Refer to your conference folder for keynote and breakout session descriptions, presenter biographies, and other helpful conference materials.



CONFERENCE KEYNOTE & SESSION DETAILS

CONFERENCE
KEYNOTE

9:15-10:15 am

Upper Level Conference Room | I Need to Touch the Words: A Different Path to Literacy

Ralph James Savarese & Emily Thornton Savarese

1.0 Foster Training Credit

The Savarese family shares their inspiring story of discovering how to give their adopted son, DJ, the words to communicate with other people and the partnership they built with their son's school on his path to literacy.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

10:15-11:45 am

Room A Lifelong Links: Your Connection. Your Community. Your Choice

Ruth Thompson, ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center)

Participants will learn how statewide Option Counselors and Iowa's Aging and Disability Center, known as Lifelong Links, is a resource for Iowans 18 years and older, with any disability or income level, to find long term supports and services in your own community. **E A**

Room A1 Tell it Like it Is! What You Want Health Care Providers to Know

Mike Hoenig & Ann Riley, Center for Disabilities and Development

This is an interactive workshop designed for participants to tell their positive and negative experiences to help healthcare providers understand how to work respectfully with individuals with disabilities and you as a caregiver. Your stories and feedback will contribute to a training video. See conference packet for details. Come prepared to share! **H A**

Room B It's Not My Fault! Help Me!

Ellen McGinnis-Smith, Consultant, Learner Strategies and Supports

1.25 Foster Training Credit

What happens to the brain when a child is stressed? Learn about brain development, the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACES) study and strategies to help your child access their "thinking brain". **E A**

Room C Student and Parent Rights at IEP Meetings

Nathan Kirstein, Beth Rydberg & Cyndy Miller, Disability Rights Iowa

1.25 CLE

1.25 Foster Training Credit

This presentation will review commonly asked questions of what are student and parent legal rights at IEP meetings. Questions include signing a blanket release of information, what to do if school says they cannot afford special education services, and do we have to agree to use of restraint or seclusion in the IEP. There is time planned for questions from participants at the end of the session. **D E A**

Room D Is My Child Really an Adult? Negotiating Difficult Life Transitions

Ralph James Savarese & Emily Thornton Savarese

1.25 Foster Training Credit

Learn more strategies from Ralph and Emily as they continue to share their experiences as a family preparing for their son DJ's transition to living and learning as a college student. **T A**

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

1:00-2:15 pm

Room A Activate! Engaging Literacy with Sensory Experiences

Zachary Stier, ZLS Consulting

1.25 Foster Training Credit

Join this interactive presentation to learn reading techniques with books, music, puppets, and more to enhance sensory experiences for your child. Participants will receive a resource list of books and activities to use at home. **E A**

Room A1 Powerful Tools for Thriving Caregivers, Part 1 of 2

Kristi Cooper & Donna Donald, Iowa State Extension and Outreach

Discover self-care tools designed to help you thrive as a family caregiver. Experience and introduction to "Powerful Tools for Caregivers", and evidenced based curriculum that has positively impacted thousands of men and women across the nation. Learn about opportunities to bring this education series to your community. **H A**

Room B Thought it was a Light at the End of the Tunnel, Turns out it was an Oncoming Train...

Steph Steveson, Parent

Join in on the discussion of how to balance the beauty, the boundaries, and the bizarre days of your life as a parent of an adult with disabilities. **T A**

Room C Employment: Transition to Work and Reasonable Accommodations

Cyndy Miller & Beth Rydberg, Disability Rights Iowa

1.25 CLE

1.25 Foster Training Credit

This presentation will review the transition planning process for students with disabilities including the federal laws that govern transition and how to plan for competitive employment following high school. This session includes an overview of employment law under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the right to reasonable accommodations. **D T**

Room D Planning for Permanency after Foster Care, Part 1 of 2

Lori Moore, ASK Resource Center

1.25 CLE

1.25 Foster Training Credit

Participants will discuss permanency and how important it is for young adults as they prepare to age out of the foster care system. The transition planning process, specialized resources, and the necessary documents for this group of young adults will also be reviewed. **E A T**

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

2:30-3:45 pm

Room A Learning Disabilities 101

Kathy Specketer & Vicki Goshon, Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa

1.25 Foster Training Credit

This session will discuss the who, what, when, and why of Learning Disabilities. Basic information will be given about Specific Learning Disabilities and related disorders. Successful solutions and strategies will be shared for individuals across the lifespan.

E A

Room A1 Powerful Tools for Thriving Caregivers, Part 2 of 2

Kristi Cooper & Donna Donald, Iowa State Extension and Outreach

Discover self-care tools designed to help you thrive as a family caregiver. Experience and introduction to “Powerful Tools for Caregivers”, and evidenced based curriculum that has positively impacted thousands of men and women across the nation. Learn about opportunities to bring this education series to your community.

H A

Room B Assessing Skills for Future Living, Learning and Working: Parents Are Key!

Ann Lupkes & Sandy Kraschel, AEA 267

This interactive session will provide some ideas of how families can and should be involved in the transition planning process. Questions that will be answered: What is a transition assessment and why is it important for planning? How can assessments help parents and students today and in the future at school, home and in the community?

E A T

Room C Discipline under IDEA

1.25 CLE

1.25 Foster Training Credit

Nathan Kirstein, Beth Rydberg & Cyndy Miller, Disability Rights Iowa

This presentation is a review of discipline regulations under the Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA). Discussion includes: when a student with a disability can be disciplined; procedural safeguards regarding change in placements; restraint and seclusion under Iowa regulations, reporting bullying and harassment; how bullying can lead to a denial of a free and appropriate public education.

D E A

Room D Planning for Permanency after Foster Care, Part 2 of 2

Tonia Smith, Iowa College Aid/DHS

1.25 CLE

1.25 Foster Training Credit

Participants will continue to learn about the unique opportunities and supports available to youth in foster care as they prepare to transition to adult living, learning, and working. Special youth guest Micaela Osuch, from AMP (Achieving Maximum Potential), will share her story.

E A T

Various Rooms (see chart below) Let's Connect!

1.0 Foster Training Credit *NOTE: The Family Caregiver Let's Connect! group is not approved for Foster Training Credit. All other groups are Foster Training Credit approved.* This is a planned activity with facilitators to meet and network with other families from across Iowa. Meet in the rooms assigned below to each broad category of disability. Facilitators will review instructions and answer questions. Refer to the Let's Connect! information in your conference packet for detailed instructions.

DISABILITY GROUPS	LOCATION
Autism/Sensory	Room D
Emotional/Behavior	Room C
Learning Disability/ADD/ADHD	Room B
Physical Disability	Room A
Significant/Multiple/Low Incident	Room A1
Intellectual Disability	Upper Level, West end
Family Caregiver	Upper Level, East end

LET'S CONNECT!

4:00-5:00 pm

2015 CONFERENCE PARTNERS





CONFERENCE PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

CONFERENCE KEYNOTE PRESENTERS

Ralph James Savarese, Ph.D., is the author of *Reasonable People: A Memoir of Autism and Adoption*, which *Newsweek* called “a real life love story and an urgent manifesto for the rights of people with neurological disabilities”. The book has been featured on CNN’s “Anderson Cooper 360” and NPR’s “The Diane Rehm Show”. Dr. Savarese has published some twenty-five articles on autism, and with his wife, Emily, he co-edited the first collection of its kind on the concept of neurodiversity. A recent fellow at Duke University’s Institute for Brain Sciences, he currently teaches at Grinnell College.

Emily Thornton Savarese, M.Ed., is a parent and education consultant who has presented at various conferences and universities on topics related to inclusion. With her husband, James, she co-edited a special edition of *Disability Studies Quarterly* on Neurodiversity and co-authored an article titled “Literate Lungs: Breathing Difference into Literacy”. Before moving to Iowa, she was the educational coordinator and assistant director at the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

BREAKOUT SESSION PRESENTERS LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Kristi Cooper, B.S., M.S., is a Certified Master Trainer with the National Powerful Tools for Caregivers program and provides leadership for its implementation across Iowa. Kristi is a seasoned family caregiver and educator with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

Donna Donald, B.S., M.A., is a Certified Master Trainer with the National Powerful Tools for Caregivers program and provides leadership for its implementation across the state. Donna is a seasoned family caregiver and educator with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

Vicki Goshon, M.A.Ed., is a parent and grandparent of individuals with learning disabilities. She is also a special educator and a board member of the Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa and the Learning Disabilities Association of America.

Mike Hoenig, M.A., has been blind since birth and considered himself a strong disability advocate. At the same time, he respects and values the role of family and their ability to help individuals with disabilities identify and fulfill their dreams and to achieve a quality life. Mike currently works for the Centers for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

Nathan Kirstein, J.D., Drake University Law School, is a staff attorney at Disability Rights Iowa. He has previously worked as a contract attorney for the Public Defender’s Office in Des Moines. He is very involved in community activities, especially those relating to children and youth.

Sandy Kraschel, B.A., provides education, support and training to parents, teachers and AEA staff in her role as an AEA 267 Family and Educator Connection Coordinator. She collaborates with AEA staff from Early ACCESS to Secondary Transition and takes an active role in helping improve educational and support services for all students.

Ann Lupkes, M.A., is the Work Experience/Transition Coordinator for Area Education Agency 267. Ann provides leadership and consultation services for local school district and AEA staff regarding secondary transition.

Ellen McGinnis-Smith, Ph.D., holds degrees in elementary education, special education, and school administration. She has taught elementary and secondary students in the public schools in Minnesota, Iowa and Arizona. In addition, she has served as a special education consultant in both public and hospital schools and as an assistant professor of special education at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Dr. McGinnis also served with Des Moines Public Schools as Principal of the education program at Orchard Place, a residential and day treatment facility for children and adolescents with emotional/behavioral disorders. She has been an executive director of student support services in both Iowa and Colorado and is currently a private consultant. The author of numerous articles on identifying and teaching youth with emotional/behavioral disorders, Dr. McGinnis collaborated with Dr. Arnold P. Goldstein on earlier Skillstreaming books and is author of the newly released third editions of *Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child* and *Skillstreaming the Adolescent*.

Cyndy Miller, J.D., is a Senior Staff Attorney at Disability Rights Iowa (DRI), where she provides legal representation and advocacy to individuals with disabilities in areas including special education, community integration, guardianship and employment law. She earned a B.A. in English, with distinction, from University of Iowa and her Juris Doctorate from Drake University Law School. Prior to joining DRI, she was an associate in a private practice law firm in West Des Moines.

Lori Moore, B.S., M.S.Ed., earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. After teaching six years in Milwaukee, Lori returned to Madison to pursue her interests in supporting students with disabilities. While earning her Master of Science degree in Special Education from UW-Madison, Lori served as grant coordinator for the Wisconsin School Inclusion Project. She returned to teaching and served as an Inclusion Facilitator for two years where she assisted other teachers in establishing learning environments where all students successfully participate and learn. Currently, Lori is the Program Coordinator for the Post-Secondary Transition Project at ASK Resource Center where she enjoys providing information and support to people with disabilities and their families. She strives to collaborate with families, schools, community agencies and the Iowa Department of Education to positively impact outcomes for youth with disabilities.

Ann Riley, B.S.N., M.A., is the mother and extended family member of multiple young adults with disabilities. She worked for many years supporting families through creating one of the first inclusive childcare programs in Iowa. For the last ten years she has worked with state initiatives for improving access to programs and services for people with disabilities. Ann is a program manager at the Centers for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

Beth Rydberg, B.S., is an Advocate/Investigator at Disability Rights Iowa (DRI). She has worked at DRI for 13 years advocating for individuals with disabilities in areas including education, community integration, prisons, and abuse and neglect. Prior to her employment at DRI, Beth worked as part of the Parent Educator Connection at AEA 11 and as a social worker for children with significant disabilities.

Tonia Smith, B.A., M.A., is an Education Training Voucher (ETV) and All Iowa Opportunity Foster Care Grant (Foster Grant) Coordinator with the Iowa Department of Human Services and Iowa College Student Aid Commission. Tonia has over 15 years of experience working with youth in foster care and youth in a variety of settings and areas ranging from shelter, detention, substance abuse counseling, education and vocational planning. Her current position administers the ETV and Foster Grant program for qualified students who have aged out of the Foster Care system in the state of Iowa within in 30 days of their 18th birthday. ETV and Foster Grants have a similar eligibility criteria providing financial assistance to students from ages 16-24 with grant amounts up to \$8,500 dependent upon enrollment status and school selection. The Foster Grant program serves additionally qualified students who have exited Eldora State Training Home and Toledo Iowa Juvenile Home. She also serves on the Foster Care Youth Transition team.

Kathy Specketer, M.A.Ed. is a former special education teacher and currently the State Coordinator of the Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa. Kathy also has personal experience as the parent of a child with a disability.

Steph Steveson, is the mother of three wonderful adult children—all of whom are a lot of work at any given moment. She has spent time in the trenches with fellow parents as a Parent Educator Coordinator for Heartland AEA, and in her current job directing 3 to 400 children and 95 volunteers each week at the Indianola Community Church.

Zachary Stier, M.L.I.S., M.A. Ed., is the founder of ZLS Consulting whose primary mission is to ensure each learner’s potential. He is also the Director of Children’s Services at the Ericson Public Library in Boone. Zach has been a librarian for ten years, and has worked with countless families and communities on literacy needs that related to their situation to empower them to be lifelong readers. Zach is an active community member and sits on Drake University Head Start Policy Council, Storytellers Roundtable of Iowa, and Read Iowa.

Ruth Thompson, M.A., is the Program Manager for Iowa’s Aging Disability and Resource Center (ADRC) at the Iowa Department on Aging. She has years of experience in program development throughout the aging network, advocacy for persons’ with disabilities and collaboration with local, state and federal partners.

2015 CONFERENCE PARTNERS

