
11th Annual Social Thinking® Global Providers' Conference
June 22 – 24, 2018

PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

Friday, June 22, 2018

8:30 – 8:45 Conference Kick-Off

8:45 – 10:15 Keynote Speakers: **Lone Beyer & Jannik Beyer** (Denmark)

Social Learning Across Time and Communities: A Life Perspective

It is thought-provoking how intuitively toddlers assess the social world and how quickly they learn and improve their social competencies. Their early social development is a steep climb, and as a result, we expect young learners to be “we thinkers” by the time they enter school. But not all students arrive at school ready to meet such high expectations. An explicit social curriculum is important for all learners. For individuals who struggle with social understanding and social learning, it's of vital importance for academic learning and development.

In this session we present a cross-disciplinary intervention project that uses the Social Thinking® Methodology's mind-set and vocabulary as its cornerstone. We will outline concrete and practical examples of how the program is implemented in early mainstream intervention services that reach *all* children ages 0 to 6, and from there, how it is incorporated in the transition to pre-school, primary grades, to independent living, and finally to support social anchoring and flexibility among elderly individuals whose health issues and loss of family network are changing the course of their lives.

The Resilience Program, developed by Poul Lundgaard Bak, MD, will be discussed during the presentation as a useful vehicle for piloting the Social Thinking Methodology and vocabulary.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Explain how to use the Social Thinking Vocabulary as an entry to facilitate social development in early childhood settings.
2. List two ways to encourage the transition from early childhood programs to school programs using Social Thinking Vocabulary as a shared frame of reference.

3. Describe how to organize practice-based research for promoting understanding of the critical nature of social relations among elderly individuals with autism.

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 12:00 Lone & Jannik Beyer – continued

12:00 – 12:45 Lunch provided by Social Thinking

12:45 – 2:15 Breakout Sessions

Pamela Crooke

Social Thinking® 101

Whether you're fairly new to Social Thinking or are a seasoned professional, periodically it's good to get a quick refresher about core concepts and vocabulary. This 90-minute session will provide attendees with an overview of key Social Thinking Vocabulary, the ILAUGH Model of Social Cognition (including basic strategies associated with each area), and the importance of going "back to basics" for some learners.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Define how teaching Social Thinking is different than teaching social skills.
2. Describe three to five strategies associated with the ILAUGH Model.

Meghan Bonde

But We Are Too Busy to Collaborate! Implementing Social Thinking® Classroom Wide

Today's high demands on educators to increase achievement test performance can leave little time for social emotional learning, and it often seems to get left behind. Yet, many students who struggle with social cognitive challenges, especially those who don't qualify for an IEP, lack the support they need at school. It's time to get "un-stuck" doing things the same way and learn new ideas to train staff and work together, even with limited time. In this presentation attendees will listen to fresh strategies for getting teachers and administrators on board to provide a more collaborative approach for supporting students. Creative service delivery models such as co-teaching will be discussed alongside using technology to help integrate the Social Thinking Methodology into the general education curriculum and daily routine. Be inspired to think outside the box about providing support to students and staff at your school with take-home general education classroom lesson ideas, structures, routines, and considerations for preschool to middle school. Families and professionals who collaborate with school staff will also walk away with concrete ideas to share to transform social emotional learning for all students!

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Explain a framework that fosters shared leadership to create time for collaboration among professionals.
2. Describe service delivery models and example interventions that help teach colleagues to integrate the Social Thinking Methodology into their classroom.
3. Describe new ideas for successfully integrating the Social Thinking Methodology classroom-wide or school-wide in their own setting.

Gretchen Schmidt Mertes

Wading Through the Mud: Advocating for a Deeper Look at Social Competencies in Special Education Assessments

Although deficits in social cognition have a direct impact on academic learning, schools often struggle to assess or identify these challenges in students. Service areas can get muddy and even if students qualify for services in these areas, there is often inconsistent understanding of what each type of service entails.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to assess children “in all areas of suspected disability.” It further provides that each child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) must contain measurable annual goals designed to “meet each of the child’s [...] educational needs that result from the child’s disability.” In an attempt to meet that requirement, school teams often assess social emotional skills, behavior and adaptive skills, yet these areas often overlap, creating confusion for the team and leading to misperceptions in IEP goals and services. Social communication and/or executive functioning deficits often go unrecognized, and at first glance, students with challenges in these areas often don’t appear to qualify for services. This presentation will explore the relationship between these areas and offer insights to clarify terminology and better determine areas of need and disability, ultimately leading to better services for students.

Objectives. Participant will be able to:

1. Describe common areas of special education assessment beyond academics and cognitive skills.
2. Explain some possible assessment avenues that can identify social learning deficits as a service area.
3. Compare and discriminate between the areas of social emotional, adaptive, and behavior and how to incorporate the Social Thinking® Methodology into each.

Nancy Cotton, Paula Goodfellow & Michelle Garcia Winner

When Hopelessness Turns Inward: Individuals with Social Challenges and Suicide

Our goal for this presentation is to begin a conversation about the dark reality that a small but compelling percentage of our adolescents with “high level” social learning-social communication challenges are thinking about, trying, and succeeding at committing suicide. Paula Goodfellow, an SLP, will discuss three of her students who committed suicide in the last three years. Michelle will describe the type of student we should be paying close attention to, and Dr. Nancy Cotton, a clinical psychologist, will define risk factors and discuss how interventionists of all types (parents, educators, counselors, therapists) can talk about this challenging topic with each other. Dr. Cotton will also discuss what interventionists can do to care for themselves (self-protective practices) when suicide happens.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. List three risk factors for suicide in adolescents with social communication challenges.
2. Describe two ways that interventionists can engage team members to discuss concerns about individuals in their care.
3. Describe two self-protective practices to use when a student takes her or his life.

2:15 – 2:30 Break

2:30 – 4:00 Breakout Sessions

Heather W. Erba & Janel Astor

We Know Self-Awareness is Important... But How Do We Teach It?

In today’s “mindful” world, self-awareness is a term bantered around in yoga studios, corporate offices, and classrooms alike. As with social skills, we assume self-awareness develops intuitively given the benefit of a developmentally appropriate environment. Yet, not all children and adults follow this expected developmental trajectory. Very often children with social cognitive/social emotional learning challenges will have significant limitations in their private and public understanding of self. And, too often building self-awareness is the frequently forgotten first step to building better social competencies.

In this presentation we will discuss how we embrace self-awareness as the framework for all of our work with children, families, and teams. We will begin by defining private and public self-awareness, presenting a developmental sequence of this foundational ability, and summarizing recent research exploring this skill in children with ASD and ADD/ADHD. The remainder of the presentation will focus on specific tools and strategies you can use to directly teach and improve each child’s unique self-awareness.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Define the complexities of self-awareness and critically discuss the importance of direct instruction in self-awareness as the starting point for teaching social competencies.
2. Summarize the expected developmental sequence of self-awareness, and identify why and how specific profiles or diagnoses will impact self awareness.
3. List three specific tools they can use tomorrow in their practice with children and families to build self-awareness.

Chithra Kathiresan

Emotions: The Fuel of Relating and Thinking Across the Lifespan

How does a child develop the “natural” ability to attend, love, think, communicate, and create, as well as have self-control and feel compassion for others? These are the foundations for all social interactions and the mastery of academic skills, and we support the development of these capacities from the inside out. Our emotions help us make meaning of our experiences. They help us decide what is worth our attention, they help us integrate all learning, and bring distinct parts into a functional whole. How do we help children better organize emotions with experience, both in themselves and in others, and problem-solve around them?

In this presentation we will study how the DIRFloortime® model and Social Thinking® can be intertwined to develop a child’s spontaneous interactions, emotional regulation, empathic relationships, thinking, creative play, and problem solving. The development of emotional regulation and thinking in a child from age 2.5 years to 11 years will be illustrated through a case study. DIRFloortime and Social Thinking frameworks and principles will be applied to tailor both individual and group intervention within a therapy center.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Show how the Social Thinking®-Social Communication Profile links to the NDRC (Neurodevelopmental Disorders of Relating and Communicating) types of DIRFloortime.
2. Discuss a continuum of approaches based on the individual differences of a child, across the lifespan.
3. Demonstrate how the DIRFloortime model can be intertwined with Social Thinking to optimize therapeutic outcomes for the child, and support the development of thinking, feeling and learning.

Beckham Linton

Food for Thought: Social Thinking® Strategies for Staying Cool in a Hot Kitchen!

FOOD! Glorious food! It's what brings us all together! Preparing and sharing food with each other is what defines us as humans and is at the heart of building healthy social relationships. It's an activity we all enjoy at any age or skill level and is an opportunity for us to pass our social values and skills to our children and other loved ones.

Did you know the average person makes more than 200 food related decisions every day? We decide what to have for breakfast, when to take lunch, where to find a specific ingredient, or how to prepare a favorite dish for someone we love.

In this presentation we will explore how Social Thinking Vocabulary and concepts can be easily integrated into one of the most important daily social events in our lives... preparing and eating food! We will explore some of the social executive functions required for basic food preparation and how Social Thinking concepts such as Following the Group Plan, Thinking with Your Eyes, Flexible/Stuck Thinking, Expected/Unexpected behaviors, Size of the Problem, Body in the Group, and Smart Guess can be explicitly taught through the process of making simple kid-friendly snacks.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Describe how the concepts Following the Group Plan and Thinking with Your Eyes can be incorporated into food preparation activities.
2. List two strategies for helping kids regulate their emotions during food preparation activities.
3. Describe an example of a kid-friendly recipe and how it can be used to facilitate social-emotional awareness.

Ashlee Welday, Allison King & Andi Solochek

Think It, Share It, Do It! Helping Teens and Young Adults Tie It All Together

Think it, share it, do it! These are three simple steps to making a plan. Of course, we know that for our clients or students with social learning challenges this is anything but simple. Have you ever had a student who tells you all their great ideas but can't negotiate a plan with peers? Have you ever had a student who says "no" to everybody's ideas but can't come up with an alternative? Have you ever had a student who agrees to the group's ideas and then just stares at you?

In this presentation we introduce a treatment framework, Think It, Share It, Do It! to connect strategies and concepts to help students go from thinking to acting. We will break down the basic Social Thinking® Vocabulary and concepts involved in each step and help you identify where the breakdowns occur. You'll learn fun, engaging activities to support learning in older teens and young adults, and leave with activity ideas to explore in your own classroom or practice.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the three parts of the Think It, Share It, Do It! framework.
2. Explain how core Social Thinking concepts connect to the Think It, Share It, Do It! framework.
3. Apply the Think It, Share It, Do It! framework to their clinical practice.

4:00 – 5:30 Wine and Cheese Party and New Product Review

Saturday, June 23, 2018

8:30 – 9:00 Morning announcements and Remembering Ginny Thompson

9:00 – 10:30 Keynote Speaker: **Michelle Garcia Winner**
EMOTIONS: More Than You Think and All That You Feel

Saturday features a hands-on, interactive presentation that focuses the lens on emotional understanding of self as separate from emotional understanding of others. Michelle will examine how this understanding is the undercurrent of all forms of social communication, whether interpreting literature, sharing space effectively, or engaging in conversations. She will connect research to our clinical experiences to highlight how emotions are at the heart of personal problem solving, life memories (episodic memory), and fuel motivation to tackle goals.

The presentation will include practical treatment tools to focus our clients' emotional lens on self and others, develop a personal emotional vocabulary, and Michelle will discuss the role of *micro-emotions* and the value of engaging in moments of *micro-communication* across a day. The ultimate goal is to explore treatment ideas to help unpack and teach about the complexity of emotions within the dynamics of self-regulation and social communication.

Throughout the day, participants will engage in hands-on activities to explore the depth and complexity of feelings and emotions, and practice using these new treatment tools. We will also discuss and reflect on the social-emotional learning and Social Thinking journey through the lens of two adult clients and their clinicians.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. State and describe the differences among three different types of "self-regulation."
2. Explain and define the terms *feelings vs. emotions* and the role each play in how we process and respond to each other's intentions.
3. Describe why clients should create a scale with their own personal emotional vocabulary.

4. Explain how recognizing one's negative emotions may be the first step toward personal problem solving.
5. Describe how graphing one's own feelings across a day contributes to defining micro-emotions.
6. Explain how our emotions are central to forming episodic memories and generating related narratives.

10:30 - 10:45 Break

10:45 - 12:15 Michelle Garcia Winner - continued

12:15 - 1:00 Lunch provided by Social Thinking

1:00 - 2:30 Michelle Garcia Winner - continued

2:30 - 2:45 Break

2:45 - 3:15 Michelle Garcia Winner - Wrap up

3:15 - 4:15 **Michelle Garcia Winner, Pamela Crooke, Sarah Ward, Lone & Jannik Beyer**
Panel Discussion and Q&A: The Power of Emotions and Social Communication Across the Lifespan
Listen to our panel of experts discuss emotions and social communication from their personal and professional perspectives and then answer your questions!

Sunday, June 24, 2018

9:00-10:30 Keynote: **Sarah Ward**
Practical Ideas for Assisting with Weak Processing Speed and Exploring Core Connections to Executive Functioning

Most students with executive function (EF) impairments show clinically significant discrepant weaknesses in processing speed. Processing speed (PS) is how quickly we can perceive information, understand it, formulate and execute a response. PS is different from intelligence. It is possible to be bright, yet process information slowly.

Research shows PS was significantly impaired in 80% of students diagnosed with high to above average IQ and ADHD. In a study evaluating the correlates of learning profiles and PS, all students with language-based learning disability, dyslexia, nonverbal learning disability, and autism spectrum exhibit PS deficits and 77% were receiving IEP services. PS deficits affect a child's EF skills. Consider this analogy: "If EF is the car, PS is the engine. The more powerful the engine the faster the car can go. Good EF depends on the quality

of the engine. More efficient engines allow the car to function at a higher level of efficiency."

PS can limit productivity and EF skills to complete routines, follow instructions, finish homework, listen/read and take notes/summarize, integrate and encode information, write assignments that require complex thoughts, inhibit tangential thoughts and ignore distractions, transition between tasks, keep pace with the flow and process nuance in social conversations, acquire new material, reason under time demands, and decide what to wear, eat, write about, etc. Slow PS can bog students down in the details and they can't distinguish relevant from minor details and see the big picture. A student with PS challenges may be slow to retrieve ideas, or may even give a large number of disconnected ideas. This reduces the likelihood they can use their background knowledge to process incoming information to make connections to and predictions about a novel concept or to plan a novel task.

In this session you'll learn specific methodologies to improve processing speed for following routines, making decisions, processing directions, interpreting figurative language, thinking flexibly and increasing the automaticity with which students can plan, start, self-monitor, and complete simple and complex tasks within allotted time frames.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Summarize the relationship between speed of information processing and executive function skills.
2. Describe five therapy interventions that use block and box schema training to improve a student's schematic knowledge for following routines, making decisions, processing time, processing and responding to oral and written information, and planning tasks.
3. Describe how to use visual processing and conditional reasoning schemas to quickly process figurative language and respond quickly in social conversation.

10:30 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 12:00 Sarah Ward – continued

12:00 – 12:50 Lunch provided by Social Thinking

12:50 – 1:35 Breakout Sessions

Linda Murphy

A Case Study in "Disruptive Behavior": Looking at Three Special Boys Through a Different Lens

In this case study presentation, three 10-year-old nuanced social communicators will be introduced in the context of their social group. Over the years, these fast paced,

intelligent boys who have a great sense of humor have received diagnoses including ADHD, High Functioning Autism, and Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder. Each boy has found himself in trouble at school for “disruptive behavior” or for being overly emotional. When these challenges have been addressed using purely behavioral methods, it has affected their self-esteem and left them feeling misunderstood. These are the types of boys who usually know what is socially expected of them but cannot consistently apply their knowledge in the moment.

In our group, we have viewed and addressed their difficulties through an emotional regulation lens. We have been working on (1) helping them feel good about themselves, (2) increasing their self-control in the moment, and (3) helping them become better social thinkers. In this presentation, their journey and progress will be shared through video clips, example materials, and discussion. These boys are unique and fun to watch! Attendees will enjoy some laughs with these three special boys and walk away with ideas to support this more challenging profile in their own school or clinic. Ideas presented may be used for elementary school through middle school ages.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. List two practical strategies to promote and practice self-regulation during a small group session.
2. List two ways to help students recognize their own strengths.
3. List three guidelines for creating a positive learning environment for behaviorally challenging students in a small group setting.

Stephanie Hubbell, Elizabeth Larkin & Cara Rossi

We-Thinking: Teacher-SLP Collaboration for Wraparound Social-Emotional Learning

Infusing Social Thinking® into the classroom requires more than introducing curriculum components into existing structures – it requires shifting the framework entirely! In this presentation, a speech-language pathologist (SLP) and two classroom teachers specifically discuss how they have partnered to provide wraparound social-emotional instruction and support for students with social-cognitive learning challenges in a mainstream setting. Through a combination of direct teaching, modeling, and coaching, Neighborhood Charter School: Harlem’s school-based SLPs have played an important role in promoting a social-competency-driven model of instruction. Our teachers, in turn, have been able to translate this training directly into a class-wide philosophy by focusing on classroom design, specific instructional strategies, and a focus on situational problem solving. Through clear and planned dialogue and frequent opportunities for collaboration, our SLPs and teachers are in frequent communication about how to best support the needs of individual students, be it through targeted learning within Social Club sessions or the development of student-specific tools and strategies to promote carryover of Social

Thinking concepts into the classroom. The result is a classroom culture that truly puts social-emotional learning at the forefront of instruction.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. List three ways SLPs can help infuse social-emotional instruction into the classroom context.
2. Discuss three instructional strategies teachers can implement to emphasize social-emotional learning in the classroom.
3. Describe one proactive approach and one reactive approach for addressing student behavior.

Nichole Brezel

Cracking Socially Curious and Curiously Social: Using Social Thinking® Products to Create Practical Lessons for Middle and High School Students

“I’m too old for that!” This is what I heard when I tried to pull out the *Superflex®...A Superhero Social Thinking® Curriculum* with my seventh and eighth grade students after moving from elementary into secondary school. Putting away *Superflex* was hard, but it started me on a journey into the depths of another Social Thinking product geared to this age group, *Socially Curious and Curiously Social*. This workshop allows you to join me on my journey of turning a book into practical lessons using that and other Social Thinking products to create engaging, age-appropriate therapy. By applying technology, learn to incorporate additional activities using videos from popular commercials and TV shows while integrating concepts, strategies, and materials from these other Social Thinking books into cohesive units: *Thinksheets for Tweens and Teens*, *Sticker Strategies*, and *Social Fortune or Social Fate*. Lessons include guided discussion, opportunities for role play, and application of Social Thinking concepts by analyzing video clips. You will leave with a list of recommendations for combining these resources organized by the themes presented in *Socially Curious and Curiously Social*.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Discuss how to apply *Socially Curious and Curiously Social* practically to the classroom/therapy setting.
2. Demonstrate how to combine four Social Thinking products into interactive lessons.
3. Create EDpuzzle quizzes to encourage full group participation.

1:35 – 1:45 Transition

1:45 – 2:30 Breakout Sessions

Lara Kowalski

Size of the Problem for All Shapes and Sizes

What is the size of my problem and what is the expected reaction size? The answer, of course, varies with age and the level of the social mind as outlined on the Social Thinking®-Social Communication Profile. Marion Jordan Elementary in Palatine, IL is a regular education building that houses children K-6, as well as five self-contained classes for children with autism, and one self-contained class for children with severe emotional disabilities. The social worker at Marion Jordan uses many of the Social Thinking® Vocabulary concepts in various ways: within the self-contained classes, regular education classes, during announcements to the entire building, and in parent newsletters. Size of the Problem and displaying the expected reactions are key concepts taught in the regular education classrooms, as well as in the self-contained classes. This presentation focuses in on teaching Size of the Problem-Reaction Size and how modifications to the language and visuals can be made to better use them across different ages and with students at varying levels of the social mind. Participants will also learn how this concept has been used at varying levels of a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system at this school.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Describe how to use Size of the Problem school-wide in a K-6 building.
2. Explain how to use Size of the Problem across ages and with varying levels of the social mind.
3. Describe how to integrate Size of the Problem into a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports framework and student monitoring system.

Harri James O'Kelley & Terry Hart

For the Love of Social Thinking®: A Mom's Story & Mime as Therapy

This unique presentation by a mom and a mime instructor illustrates what is possible with love, relationship, play, early intervention, Social Thinking— and of course, mime.

Early intervention with Social Thinking can be key to social development in a child with ASD. And, following a child's lead is an empowering way to nurture a child's social and emotional growth. Harri's son, Jordan O'Kelley, is a good example of a child who, from early on, was able to grasp Social Thinking principles and utilize them. When Jordan got into the Young Storytellers Foundation's Summer Filmmaking Course, Harri was able to support Jordan's idea of creating a short film about a mime, by enrolling mime artist, Terry Hart, in Jordan's project. This collaboration led Harri, based on her understanding of Social Thinking, to realize the potential of mime as a tool to encourage ASD kids' social development.

Mime as Therapy (MAT) is an effective vehicle for teaching social skills and Social Thinking concepts, incorporating movement, physicality, emotion, and nonverbal communication

(across language barriers as well). In this presentation, Harri and Terry will demonstrate a new application of Social Thinking's ILAUGH Model, which therapists can add to their Social Thinking toolboxes. It can be tailored to any level of social development, and allows students to practice social skills and explore new social frontiers in a safe and supported environment. Participants will go home with exercises and techniques they can immediately incorporate into their practice and parents will be encouraged to follow their child's lead and inspire therapists to explore fresh new ways to apply Social Thinking concepts.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Teach warm-up exercises that can help adults focus and prepare students for their therapy sessions or classes.
2. Explain specific ways to add movement and mime techniques as a means of implementing the ILAUGH Model.
3. State an enrolling and empowering story involving Social Thinking and Mime as Therapy.

Laurie Kaufman & Katie Farrish

You Don't Outgrow The Zones: Adapting The Zones of Regulation® to Adolescents and Young Adults

The Zones of Regulation curriculum is a powerful and universal tool for teaching students of all ages to recognize emotions. The Zones curriculum has been most widely used with elementary school students, and the language and activities can often seem too young for older students. Integrating The Zones into a high school setting or using The Zones with young adults requires adapting the language and activities for an older audience.

In this presentation we will describe how to modify The Zones language so it is appropriate for older students, for 1:1 meetings, and in group and classroom settings. Practical materials and lessons will be included to teach The Zones to teenagers and young adults, use The Zones to identify emotions and thoughts, discuss the complexity of adolescent emotions, create high-school-appropriate interventions, and use The Zones to support and enhance a mindfulness curriculum for teenagers and young adults.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Describe teenagers' and young adults' possible feelings, thoughts, and body language in each of the four Zones in The Zones of Regulation curriculum.
2. Identify several ways to adapt teaching The Zones of Regulation curriculum to teenagers and young adults.
3. Explain how interventions incorporating The Zones of Regulation curriculum can help teenagers and young adults increase their awareness of self, awareness of others, and communication of feelings.

2:30 – 2:45 Break

2:45 – 3:30 Breakout Sessions

Daria O'Brien & Danyela Williams

Social Thinking® and Communicating With Compassion

In these times of reduced social interactions and increased violence, it is our obligation as facilitators of interpersonal and social-emotional skills to help our students learn to be more compassionate communicators. Students with social cognition difficulties often present with weak perspective taking skills, difficulty identifying and expressing emotions, and trouble making connections with others. In this presentation, two speech-language pathologists who work with students with a myriad of classifications ranging from “language-based learning disabilities” to “emotionally disturbed” will explore the correlations between the social communication philosophies taught within the Social Thinking Methodology and peaceful, compassionate communication. Specific methods and strategies based in Social Thinking principles will be presented to help students in grades K-12 learn and use the language of compassion and understanding, especially when expressing emotions.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Define communication skills that are critical to compassionate communication.
2. Implement activities that facilitate compassionate communication with students in grades K-12.
3. Describe how Social Thinking methods can integrate with language-based activities to improve compassionate communication skills with students in grades K-12.

Jamie Brett Moniak

Pawsitively Social: Social Thinking® Meets Animal Assisted Play Therapy™

Looking for a way to motivate kids to learn Social Thinking concepts? Having trouble getting social groups organized outside of, or even in the school setting? Needing more “in-the moment” engagement opportunities for children to learn how to play, collaborate, self-regulate, and problem solve with others? *Pawsitively Social* is an innovative solution to these challenges and integrates two well-established methodologies: Social Thinking and Animal Assisted Play Therapy. Animal Assisted Play Therapy (AAPT) provides a playful, accepting and motivating environment conducive to teaching the Social Thinking Methodology. Jamie works with her two canine co-therapists, Baxter and Sarah, to help kids increase their social-emotional awareness and skills. In this presentation, you will learn how to integrate these two methodologies to meet social-emotional learning goals. Specific Social Thinking curriculum to be

highlighted include *We Thinkers! Volume 1*, *We Thinkers! Volume 2*, *Superflex®... A Superhero Social Thinking® Curriculum*, and *Social Behavior Mapping*. Come enjoy videos of clinical examples, learn directive AAPT techniques, and then decide whether incorporating animals into your work with Social Thinking concepts may be right for you.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Name three goals that directive AAPT and Social Thinking have in common.
2. List three Social Thinking concepts observed being integrated into AAPT.
3. Demonstrate one way to increase perspective-taking skills while working with animal and child.
4. Demonstrate one way to use Flexible Strategy Cards while in session with animal and child.

Sharon Gill

Unpacking the “SSmarTs” of Social Communication for Teenagers and Their Parents

The innovative Social Smarts for Teens (SSmarTs) program is the first of its kind to offer structured social groups to promote adolescents’ emotional regulation and management of the social world. Participants’ parents are simultaneously taught skills that empower their role as “social coaches” to assist participants’ social, emotional, and organizational management. This up-skilling of both adolescents and their parents provides a powerful framework for improving participants’ success in a wide range of settings. In this session you will learn about the SSmarTs program’s methods for recruiting and screening participants, providing orientation, addressing changing dynamics within the group setting, and for closure and follow up. Clinical development and application of the SSmarTs program will also be discussed, laying out its successes, challenges, and prospects, as well as the research protocol with which the program is being evaluated. Ending the presentation will be a report on recent discussions to bring SSmarTs into the high school setting and the ASD support group environment.

Objectives. Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the positive factors in Partners in Communications’ implementation of SSmarTs.
2. Explain how to apply SSmarTs concepts and methodologies to their own practice.
3. Describe the potential of and prospects for implementing SSmarTs within a high school setting and an ASD support group environment.

3:30 – 4:30

Pamela Crooke & Michelle Garcia Winner

Q&A about the conference, Social Thinking Methodology, or anything else!