

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

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Janel Astor's work as a developmental and early intervention specialist began over 25 years ago and has always been her passion. She received her B.A. in early childhood education and an M.A. in education from San Jose State University. She is a co-founder of ConnectEd Developmental Therapies (www.connected.us.com) in San Jose and works closely with families, children, and teams in the clinic, school, and home settings.



Lone Beyer is a Psychologist, is the Deputy head of The Danish National Counsel for Children, and a Senior Consultant on implementation of Early Intervention Programs in the City of Copenhagen, Denmark. She has served as Head of Special School targeting 110 students with a diagnosis of ASD.



Jannik Beyer is also a Psychologist, and is the Senior Advisor for Danish Regions and Municipalities in Denmark. His professional background includes Head of Special Office on Autism and ADHD within the Danish National Board of Social Service, Director of The Danish Knowledge and Information Centre on Autism, and International Consultant on Education and Curriculum Development working in Asia and Africa under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.



Meghan Bonde is a school-based speech-language pathologist and district-wide preschool and assistive technology consultant in Colorado. She has experience providing assessment and intervention to students using the Social Thinking Methodology as well as providing consultation and professional development for staff from preschool to high school. Meghan has successfully integrated the Social Thinking Methodology classroom wide and has begun the journey toward school-wide and district-wide implementation.



Nichole Brezel, M.S., CCC-SLP is a lead speech-language pathologist in Richardson ISD and a member of the Autism Training and Support Team and the Neuropsychology Team. Her experience includes evaluation and treatment of students with disabilities in the mainstream setting, developmental programs, and behavioral programs in preschool to high school.



Nancy Cotton is a Clinical Developmental Psychologist, working as the Consulting Psychologist for Social Thinking® Boston and the Mental Health Specialist on Michelle Garcia Winner's Social Thinking® Training & Speakers' Collaborative. She received her Doctoral degree from Tufts University and trained and taught at Harvard Medical School. She has a decades-long career evaluating, treating and program planning for children and families with complex bio, psycho, cognitive, social profiles of functioning.



Pamela Crooke, PhD, CCC-SLP is Social Thinking's Chief Strategy Officer of Research, Content, Clinical Services and the Director of Social Thinking® Training & Speakers' Collaborative. She is also a clinician at the Social Thinking Center in California, where she maintains an active caseload of children, teens and adults. She is an international Social Thinking speaker and is the co-author (with Michelle Garcia Winner) of four award-winning Social Thinking books. Pamela has served on the clinical faculty of three universities and published a study on the effectiveness of using Social Thinking vocabulary in the schools.



Heather W. Erba, PhD, is a local girl raised in Los Gatos, CA, a lifelong student, committed teacher, and proud mom. She attended University of Colorado Boulder, received her teaching credentials at San Jose State University, and a MEd and PhD of Early Childhood Special Education at UNC-Chapel Hill. Currently Heather is a co-founder at ConnectEd Developmental Therapies in San Jose, CA.



Katie Farrish graduated from Ball State University in Indiana with a BS in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. After graduation she worked as a Behavioral Interventionist at Applied Behavioral Services in Cincinnati. Katie joined the Middlebridge community in Rhode Island in 2012 and currently teaches Social Pragmatics.



Sharon Gill is Director of Partners in Communication based in Melbourne, Australia. As a speech-language pathologist, Sharon is passionate about all areas of communication. Her personal interest is working in the Social Cognitive Communication domain. Sharon applies a multidisciplinary approach to social communication groups for varied age groups, including adults.



Paula Jensen Goodfellow is a school-based speech-language pathologist in San Diego, California. After a career as a teacher of English as a Second Language, she earned an MA in Speech-Language Pathology and found that her experience with teaching cultural norms led naturally to a specialization in social communication and cognition.



Terry Hart has over 40 years of experience as an actor, writer, artist, and teacher. A practitioner of Mime since 1976, Terry is a master storyteller who blends Spacework and Improvisation techniques. He has taught mime and improvisation to people of all ages. He currently teaches at Spectrum Lab in Los Angeles.



Stephanie Hubbell, M.S., CCC-SLP, a California-born speech-language pathologist, has been working with students in Neighborhood Charter School's Integrated Autism Program for the past four years. Prior to earning her master's degree at Emerson College in Boston, she worked as a behavior interventionist and served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Jordan.



Laurie Kaufman, PhD, is a licensed child psychologist and certified secondary educator, and is working toward certification as a mindful educator. She is a founding faculty member at Middlebridge School in Rhode Island and is creator of its Social Pragmatics curriculum. She currently teaches Social Pragmatics and oversees the Social Pragmatics department.



Chithra Kathiresan has been working as a speech-language pathologist in Singapore for over 20 years, upon completing her training in Australia. She has worked with adults and children with diverse needs both within hospital and community settings. Chithra is Hanen certified, is a certified DIRFloortime Trainer, and is a member of the Social Thinking® Training & Speakers' Collaborative.



Allison King, MS, CCC-SLP, has been a social cognitive therapist at Social Thinking® Stevens Creek since 2012. She received a Master's Degree in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Arizona. While she focuses on young adult independent living and transition skills, Allison works with clients across the lifespan.



Lara Kowalski, LCSW, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who attended Northwestern University for her undergraduate degree and the University of Illinois at Chicago for her Master's in Social Work. Lara has worked in the school setting her entire career. She is currently helping students in regular education with a variety of needs, as well as students with autism, and emotional and behavior concerns at Marion Jordan Elementary School in Palatine, Illinois.



Elizabeth Larkin is from Queens, New York, is a graduate of Syracuse University's Inclusive Education program, and holds certifications in both Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education. She is currently a teacher at Neighborhood Charter School: Harlem and takes great pride in having a classroom supported by a foundation of Social Thinking.



Beckham Linton is a speech-language pathologist and recently credentialed ADHD Coach who has worked in both the medical field and the public school system for 28 years. She is a member of the Social Thinking® Training & Speakers' Collaborative and in addition to her speaking, Beckham runs a small private practice and has dedicated her career to providing a safe space for people with social learning challenges to explore and expand in the areas of self-awareness, social-communication, personal problem solving.



Gretchen Schmidt Mertes is an Educational Specialist and a well-known presenter and consultant with over 20 years of experience in both general and special education. She is a member of the Social Thinking® Training & Speakers' Collaborative and her greatest passion is teaching educators how to use Social Thinking within their own classrooms and schools.



Jamie Brett Moniak is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Certified Animal Assisted Play Therapist. Since 1998, she has sought extensive training in Play Therapy, Filial Play Therapy, and Animal Assisted Play Therapy™. More recently, she has evolved her practice to include clinical training in the Social Thinking Methodology, Emotional Freedom Technique, and Mindfulness.



Linda Murphy is a speech-language pathologist and RDI® Consultant who loves going to work at her private practice in Beverly, MA. Linda co-authored *Social Thinking and Me* with Michelle Garcia Winner, and is the happy mom to two, young energetic boys who work on their emotional regulation every day!



Daria O'Brien is a speech-language pathologist in northern New Jersey with over 25 years' experience. Currently Daria works in a special education school with middle and high school students. She has taught graduate courses at local universities and is a second level doctoral candidate at the City University of New York.



Harri James O'Kelley works as a script supervisor in film and TV. But her most challenging, rewarding, and inspiring role has been in advocating for her three 2E (twice-exceptional) children. Her self-proclaimed "O'Kelley Lab" supports innovative, grassroots ideas to empower students in embracing their exceptionalities and gifts, including "Education Heroes" and "2E Trauma Mommas."



Cara Rossi is originally from Boston, MA. She completed her Master's degree in Childhood Education from CUNY's Hunter College. She has worked at the Neighborhood Charter School: Harlem for the past four years in their inclusive kindergarten classroom, where she embraces Social Thinking concepts to benefit each of her students' social emotional learning.



Andi Solochek, MS, CCC-SLP, has been a social cognitive therapist at Social Thinking® Stevens Creek since 2016. She received her Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Andi enjoys working with young adults and older teens, but is passionate about working with and supporting clients of all ages.



Sarah Ward, MS, CCC-SLP, is an internationally recognized expert on executive function and regularly presents on the programs she has developed with her Co-Director Kristen Jacobsen. Their 360 Thinking Executive Function Program received the Innovative Promising Practices Award from the National Organization CHADD. She has presented to over 500 public and private schools.



Ashlee Welday, MS, CCC-SLP, has been a social cognitive therapist at Social Thinking® Stevens Creek since 2013. She received her Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from Vanderbilt University. Ashlee enjoys working with clients of all ages. She has worked with the older teen and young adult population for the last five years.



Danyela Williams is a certified and licensed speech-language pathologist from New Jersey with over 20 years of pediatric clinical experience. She has worked with children from birth to age 21 in the school setting and private practice, with a variety of communication and behavioral difficulties.



Michelle Garcia Winner, MA, CCC-SLP is the founder of Social Thinking and specializes in the treatment of individuals with social learning challenges. She is a therapist at her Social Thinking Center in Santa Clara, California, as well as a prolific writer and international speaker. Michelle helps educators, mental health professionals, and parents appreciate how social competencies are integral to a person's success – be it in school, in relationships, in the community, or in his/her career. In 2008, Michelle was honored with a Congressional Recognition Award for her groundbreaking work in the field of social learning.