

9th Annual
Social Thinking
Global Providers' Conference
June 24–26, 2016

Abstracts and Speaker Bios



Abstracts

Friday, June 24, 2016

8:30 - 8:45

Michelle Garcia Winner & Pamela Crooke

Perspectives: Viewpoints from Another Lens

8:45 - 10:15



Dr. Jed Baker, Director of the Social Skills Training Project

Managing Anxiety and Frustration in Children, Teens and Caregivers

Students with ASD, ADHD, anxiety, mood disorders, and those with learning challenges often present with difficulty regulating feelings. This workshop describes how caregivers can best think about difficult moments with children in order to achieve better outcomes. The majority of the presentation describes how to create prevention plans to reduce debilitating anxiety and frustration by modifying triggers, motivating participation, leaning to think differently about triggers, gradually face fears, and improve overall health and mood with exercise, mediation, and other calming strategies. Information is imparted through lecture, interactive exercises, and video clips.

10:15 - 10:35

Break

Dr. Jed Baker

Q & A - Related to his keynote address

Dr. Pamela Crooke

Social Thinking 101

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

10:35 - 12:00

Jessica Minahan

Between a Rock and a Calm Place: Classroom Strategies for Students with Anxiety-Related Behaviors

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) reports that one in four 13- to 18-year-olds has had an anxiety disorder in their lifetime. Heroic teachers are facing this challenge with little to no training in mental health and behavioral principles. This leaves teachers to learn on the job and rely on their instincts, and leaves students with anxiety at risk for poor outcomes that include disconnectedness from school, academic failure, poor social adjustment, and a disproportionate amount of suspensions and detentions. Students with autism or social deficits are at a greater risk than their typically developing peers for developing anxiety and anxiety disorders such as phobias, OCD, and social anxiety disorder. Understanding the role anxiety plays in a student's behavior is crucial and using preventive strategies is key to successful intervention. Effective behavior plans for these students must avoid the reward and punishment-based consequences from traditional behavior plans and focus instead on the use of preventive strategies and on explicitly teaching coping skills, self-monitoring, social skills, and alternative responses.

This workshop will translate clinical information into doable and easy-to-implement preventive tools, strategies, and interventions for reducing anxiety, increasing self-regulation, executive functioning, and self-monitoring.

12:00 - 12:50

Lunch, provided by Social Thinking

Keri Shoenbrun & Daphne Papageorge

Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Books on a Shelf vs. Real Culture Change: Using Partnership to Infuse Social Learning into School-Wide Systems

Have you ever wondered how to integrate Social Thinking® into the busy school day? Have you struggled to get support from school administrators? This presentation is designed to show teachers, parents and professionals how one group infused Social Thinking into a school-wide context, despite some of the expected barriers—funding, administrative support and teacher motivation. Our approach is a partnership between Developmental Connections, a Virginia-based nonprofit, and a series of elementary schools in Loudoun County, Virginia. We will begin by explaining our "bottom-up" approach and discussing the role of a nonprofit in providing the Social Thinking

curriculum in public schools. We will focus on the importance of a deliberate change management initiative to ensure that programs are not disliked mandates, but a powerful, organic culture change. In addition, we will describe how to integrate social learning into classrooms, Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS), training modules and after-school programs so that Social Thinking is not just a “book on the shelf,” but a common tool actively embraced in school culture. Finally, we will provide examples of managing culture change on various levels with administrators, teachers, parents and students, including students’ progress and case studies showing their results.

Elizabeth Burke

Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Connecting Common Core, Social Thinking and Digital Literacy in the Classroom

As a Resource Specialist, with a passion for teaching Social Thinking concepts, incorporating shifts in learning related to Common Core Standards with Digital Literacy provides opportunities for developing skills in the education setting. Our students with social cognitive challenges are having difficulty with the increased demand of collaborating, problem solving, explaining their thinking, speaking and listening requirements, etc. in Science, Math, Language Arts and Social Science. Combining Social Thinking concepts and Digital Literacy within a Differentiated Instruction model can provide a meaningful, engaging, exploratory learning experience. Teaching an Academic Communication class provides support for students that extends beyond “1x wk” therapy model. To demonstrate how this model can be an effective intervention, I’ve included several digital literacy projects to illustrate how students from emerging perspective takers to a nuance perspective takers can demonstrate understanding of Social Thinking concepts. Utilizing a preferred activity to teach non-preferred social skill concepts within a class structure provides opportunities to practice the hidden rules of learning. We are fortunate, this community of Social Thinkers pioneered by Michelle Garcia-Winner, to have this understanding of concepts and how they can help individuals with social cognitive challenges develop the skills to navigate the social world. With the educational setting moving toward a social learning model, this intervention is a must as we move into the 21st century.

Terese Jurgensen & Alicia Martin

Different Treatment Ideas/Is it Skill or is it Will? Utilizing the Social Thinking-Social Communication Profile to Create Parent Partnerships and Tiered Systems of Supports for Home and School

We are created for relationships. Diagnosed or undiagnosed, children with Social Thinking challenges are some of the most misunderstood and often lonely students in schools today. Many educators and parents do not understand what to do to support these children educationally, socially or emotionally.

The purpose of this presentation will be to outline the difference between SKILL and WILL. Utilizing the Social Thinking – Social Communication Profile as a means to partner with parents during team meetings, SKILL areas to be taught will be outlined for both home and school through tiered intervention systems of support. Additionally, the area of WILL, or matters of the heart, that include emotional supports, strengths, motivations, and dreams, will be outlined to create an effective treatment plan that partners home and school. These tools will be shared.

12:50 - 1:35

Continued

1:35 - 1:45

10 Minute Transition

Stephanie Hubbell & Sogol Shafiei

Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Beyond Test Scores: Building School-Wide Social Thinking Programming in Achievement-Driven Settings

The Neighborhood Charter School of Harlem (NCSH) is a high performing charter school located in Central Harlem, serving students in Kindergarten through fourth grades and housing a specialized, inclusion program for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). This presentation will demonstrate the utilization of Social Thinking to promote high achievement in an integrated charter school setting. The focus will be on how our school has expanded Social Thinking Vocabulary and concepts from a therapy context to the school more generally. Specifically, attendees will hear how we advocated for integrating Social Thinking methodology into a demanding academic curriculum by explaining how its principles can compliment and support existing behavioral and academic objectives. Teachers, counselors, and speech language pathologists will learn approaches for integrating Social Thinking concepts into school-wide culture and practice. Specific methods for training Social Thinking concepts covered in this session include: professional development sessions, consultative models of service delivery, and observational learning opportunities. Participants in this session will leave with an understanding of how to replicate these methods to train educators in Social Thinking principles as a way to promote both academic achievement and social-emotional development more widely.

1:45 - 2:30

1:45 - 2:30

Continued

Sarah Bartosch & Tricia LaPlante

Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Social Inquiry: A Classroom-Based Approach for Students with Social Learning Challenges at the Secondary Level

In response to the increasing numbers of students needing social cognitive intervention as a part of their Individualized Education Plan services at the high school level, the staff in the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District (Wisconsin) developed a two-year course titled "Social Inquiry" to provide daily social-emotional intervention to students on the autism spectrum and those with related disabilities. The course curriculum incorporates a variety of intervention tools, with a heavy focus on Social Thinking curriculum and materials as well as the Zones of Regulation® curriculum. The classroom-based service delivery model allows for deeper exploration of the social world and an increased opportunity to practice related social skills that would not otherwise be possible if only delivered by a specialist in a traditional therapeutic/pull-out model. The course is offered at both high schools within the district and can be taken for either elective credit or English credit as the coursework is aligned with the CCSS. Over the last 2.5 years, our team has learned a great deal about both the positive outcomes and the challenges related to the implementation of social intervention programs, as well as the need for a full continuum of services.

Stephanie Pepi

Different Treatment Ideas/Using Social Thinking to Predict and Increase Inclusion Success

After attending a Social Thinking conference in late April, I immediately began implementing both the checklist and the strategies with students in my district. We have a predominantly inclusive model and a lot of our students on the autism spectrum are struggling in the mainstream setting. Most campuses lack the knowledge and tools to identify students' social needs in order to intervene before frustration, and lack of skill turns to refusal and/or aggression. For some students, social skills interventions have been sufficient. For others it has been necessary to place them in a 1:1 setting to implement Social Thinking strategies as an intensive intervention. This presentation provides guidelines and suggestions for implementing Social Thinking strategies in both the general education classroom and in 1:1 situations for children whose social deficits are causing challenging behaviors in the classroom.

2:30 - 2:50

Break

Jennifer Jones & Allyson R. Martin

Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Social Thinking...Out of the Therapy Room, and into the Classroom

This forty-five minute presentation will show classroom teachers, special education staff, and speech language pathologists how they can work together to implement a very effective Social Thinking model in the general education setting. The presenters are a regular early elementary classroom teacher and a speech language pathologist who have worked together using this model successfully for the past two years. The impact of using Social Thinking in the classroom has not only encouraged generalization for the special education students working on this curriculum, but the regular education population as well. This session will show participants how they can make their schedule work to include classroom Social Thinking lessons. This session will give participants a "starting point" of how to effectively plan, collaborate, and implement Social Thinking in the general education setting. We will encourage participants to think "outside of the box" so all students can benefit from this curriculum. Get outside of the therapy room and get into the classroom!

2:50 - 3:30

Julie Smith & Tiffany Myers

Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Moving Social Thinking Out of the Office and into the Classroom through Concrete Specific, and Kind Feedback

Junior High and High School environments often lack specific behavioral programs to promote the prosocial behavior needed to be successful in the classroom, hallway, and community as a teenager and young adult. Educators and therapists in these settings fall subject to "politeness" and lack the tools needed to effectively teach students who struggle with Social Thinking® and related social skills in the classroom and beyond. We have found great success in helping teachers recognize that their annoyance with certain students may be related to the student's difficulty with underlying root and trunk skills (Social Thinking Social Learning Tree). Arming teachers with developmental knowledge of root skills such as theory of mind, joint attention, and gestalt processing and providing interventions that can target these root skills expands the impact of Social Thinking beyond direct intervention groups lead by therapists. This workshop will provide guidelines to build a teacher training program that has been consistently "sold out" for three years at New Trier High School, training a variety of school personnel to better recognize and support students with Social Thinking challenges. We will share our strategies for arming teachers to provide "concrete, specific, and kind" feedback to support Social Thinking school wide.

Nancy Cotton & Debbie Meringolo

Interactive Session about Mental Health and Parent Concerns

A clinical psychologist and educator will co-lead a panel discussion about mental health and parent-based concerns related to children and adults with co-morbid social thinking and mental health challenges such as social anxiety, depression, fear and oppositional behavior.

Michelle Garcia Winner, Ryan Hendrix, Kari Zweber Palmer, & Nancy Tarshis

Interactive Session about Using the We Thinkers Curriculum (4-7 years old)

The authors of the motivational developmental tool, the We Thinkers! Series will lead a panel discussion related to how to utilize Social Thinking's newly published Group Collaboration, Play and Problem Solving Scale (GPS) to launch into treatment plans while considering differentiated play-based instruction.

Nancy Clements & Pamela Crooke

Interactive Session about School-Wide Implementation of Social Thinking Components

During this panel discussion, participants will explore how components of the Social Thinking methodology can be adopted more broadly. We will provide five key factors to consider when rolling out Social Thinking class-wide, school-wide, or district-wide.

Saturday, June 25, 2016

8:30 - 8:45

Michelle Garcia Winner & Pamela Crooke

Perspectives: Looking Inside Out



Dr. Ross Greene & Michelle Garcia Winner

Complementary Angles: Using Collaborative & Proactive Solutions in Tandem with Social Thinking to Solve Problems and Teach New Skills – A Brand New Discussion

8:45 - 10:15

Dr. Ross Greene's Collaborative & Proactive Solutions model (CPS) and Michelle Garcia Winner's Social Thinking model share many common themes and are often used in combination. However, practitioners and other caregivers often have questions about how the two models converge (and diverge) and how to implement them in a complementary manner. In this workshop, Ross and Michelle will describe the many points of congruence between the two models (along with some differences), and provide an algorithm for initial assessment and subsequent intervention decision-making for classroom teachers, parents, specialists, and clinicians.

10:15 - 10:35

Break

10:35 - 12:00



Dr. Ross Greene & Michelle Garcia Winner

(continued)

12:00 - 12:50

Lunch, provided by Social Thinking

12:50 - 1:50



Matthew Geary & Christa Perkins

Lessons Learned Combining CPS (Collaborative & Proactive Solutions) and Social Thinking School-Wide Across our School District

Presenters will describe the practical steps the Manchester Public Schools took to blend the work of Ross Greene with the teachings of Social Thinking at all elementary schools in the district. The district implemented this approach as part of our work to shift school and district discipline practices from a model centered on punishment and exclusion to a model that empowers students by focusing on fostering social cognition, self-regulation, and problem solving.

Beginning with a pilot group of teachers working in a small number of schools, the district expanded to using the Social Thinking curriculum along with Collaborative and Proactive Problem Solving to all elementary schools in the district. Through coordination and collaboration among administrators, teachers and support staff, the district engaged in curriculum development, professional learning, and communication with parents and families as critical elements of this work that will be shared in the presentation. In Manchester, all stakeholders in student growth and development work together to support the social and emotional development of all students and adults through collaboration and open, honest dialogue about our challenges. This presentation is intended for individuals or teams who wish to utilize Social Thinking and Collaborative and Proactive Problem Solving as a tier 1 support for all students.

1:50 - 2:20



Dr. Ross Greene & Michelle Garcia Winner

(continued)

2:20 - 2:40

Break

2:40 - 4:00



Dr. Ross Greene & Michelle Garcia Winner

Wrap Up and Q & A

Sunday, June 26, 2016



Dr. Pamela Crooke & Michelle Garcia Winner

If You Build It, They Will Come (So let's build it right)

Schools all over the U.S. and abroad are beginning to implement components of the Social Thinking methodology in both small and large scale school-based roll-outs. And while many sites report outcomes that are encouraging, we currently lack a systematic and cohesive plan across school sites; leaving us unable to report these positive findings. This session will give participants a practical and basic architecture for understanding what, how, and with whom to implement Social Thinking. We will also discuss how components of the Social Thinking methodology are based on the research, developmentally designed for age groups, targeted to styles of learners, and infused within existing school-wide initiatives (e.g., *PBIS, SEL, RTI, etc.). Whether you are considering a systematic roll-out in your therapy groups, classrooms, schools, or districts – this session will provide the basics for that process.

9:00 - 10:30

10:30 - 10:45 **Break**

Nancy Clements

Being the Boss of Your Brain: Brain Boards and Beyond!

The ability to label, understand and manage emotions is at the heart of problem solving. When students lack emotional vocabulary and systems for self-control, their behavior can be confusing and result in negative, unintended social consequences. It is clear our students need specific teaching to build their capacity to become more self-aware, which then leads to teaching strategies targeted at building one's ability to more independently self-monitor, both of which lead to the capacity to independently problem solving. Teaching our students strategies targeted to turn down the "volume level" of their emotions leads to the active discovery that they have the power to "turn the channel" of their thinking from themselves to others. Through this explicit teaching our students can become the "boss" of their brains.

The lesson modules described in this presentation are designed for students in elementary to middle school (grades 2 - 8). The lessons can be rolled out in the context of small groups, classrooms, or individually, and can be targeted for use at home, school or in the community.

Shawn Amador

Using Humor, Theatre, and Collaborative Script Writing to Teach Social Thinking Concepts

Learn and experience how the art of social theatre can teach Social Thinking® concepts. The social theatre approach teaches "flexibility" as actors (clients and students) collaboratively write a play. The collaborative play writing process includes brainstorming, evaluating, practicing, re-writing, and performing. To create humorous plays, workshop participants will brainstorm awkward moments and discuss important social issues. With these ideas combined, participants will have a base to create a humorous play that teaches a lesson.

A review of research will show the effectiveness of theatre interventions with those who have social challenges. Workshop participants will participate in theatre games and strategies that help actors to "use their tools." To gain attention, actors must use their eyes, their ears, what is expected, and their brains to understand when others are talking, when it is their turn to talk, how to share the spotlight, and how to use the space on stage. Magic will also be demonstrated, as a tool to teach perspective taking.

In all, this workshop will include strategies such as the collaborative writing process, slow motion snowball fight, scarf juggling, teachable awkward moment plays, and magic tricks.

Ann Gray

How to Implement Peer Coaching: Communication Program for Teens & Young Adults

This presentation focuses on using Social Thinking Vocabulary, concepts, and practice guidelines to train neuro-typical peers to fill a coaching role for students with social communication learning challenges. While there are established peer intervention methods for younger children, the Peer Social-Communication Coaching Program

10:45 - 12:00

(includes audience activities)

10:45 - 12:00

(includes audience activities)

is specifically designed to create a naturalistic social situation where adolescents can practice the ideas and skills they are learning in therapy sessions. Through social communication "working lunches" peer coaches engage with teens with social learning weaknesses in a way that does more than just model social skills; it expands on the "thinking behind the social" in real time. Key ideas and skills taught during the peer coach training program not only strengthen peers' sensitivity to the differences of others, but also provide behaviorally defined strategies for coaches to use during their interactions with students with various levels of the social mind as outlined in the Social Thinking-Social Communication Profile. These peer coaching sessions expand on our small group therapy sessions and provide meaningful experiences for our therapists and clients to refer to when looking for positive examples of social success as well as to provide saliency to individual goals. Whether it's lessening anxiety, increasing "brain in the group" time, or reinforcing the Four Steps of Communication, peer coaching sessions are a valuable asset to any intervention plan.

12:00 - 12:50

Lunch, provided by Social Thinking

Nancy Tarshis, Noor Al Radi, and Allison Brudner

What If: Using Social Thinking to Teach The Power of Imagination?

Sharing space, tools, and ideas can be a challenge! In the current climate of STEM, STEAM and project-based learning, how do you get a group of disparate, wild and crazy kids to build, think, collaborate and share an imagination? This was the challenge of forming the first ever fully special needs chapter of the Imagination Foundation. Chapters, approximately 100 worldwide, are "pop-up learning spaces that foster creativity, entrepreneurship and 21st century skills through creative play." The foundation provides loose frameworks for projects that culminate in collective experiences. This presentation will address the how and why of creating a chapter and teaching students to build and share their imaginations. Through teaching strategies around planning, organizing, re-thinking mistakes, reframing mindsets, social thinking, and just plain fun, we spark the condition of possibility for flexing their creative muscles. For students with social-cognitive learning challenges accessing and participating in group learning experiences is often a bigger hurdle than academics. Social Thinking Vocabulary and concepts are one way to overcome this obstacle. Through this fun and enriching platform we have found a way to extend the learning of these important social executive function concepts and skills our students are learning in their therapy sessions.

Linda Murphy

How Can We Encourage Kids to Think Critically? Exploring Mindful Use of Language by Parents and Professionals

Each time we speak, we have the opportunity to choose our words. Speaking in a mindful way can mean that we are purposefully choosing words that will invite and empower individuals with social communication difficulties to think critically. When we pause to think about what we say and how we say it, kids in turn stop to think about what they say or do in response. In this presentation, participants will be shown a speaking style called "declarative language" that can be naturally used within social interactions to encourage connection and learning across areas of perspective taking, flexible thinking, problem solving and experience sharing. We will also explore how our new product, Social Thinking and Me, like all Social Thinking products, seeks to encourage declarative language in our interactions with our students.

Elizabeth Sautter & Kristen Wilson

Teaching Update: Why We Modified Whole Body Listening Larry Books to Create a 2nd Edition

Whole body listening has become a popular term and is an extremely effective strategy used for many years by parents and professionals in a wide variety of settings. This presentation will look at the origin and evolution of whole body listening, the complexity involved, and some critical aspects to be aware of when teaching and implementing this concept. We will provide practical teaching tools as well as accommodations for individuals unable to use all aspects of whole body listening. We will discuss the importance of having a compassionate mindset and teaching self-advocacy skills when whole body listening is challenging or not possible. We will review the new editions of the Larry series and discuss why the revisions were necessary. Participants will also hear from Susanne P. Truesdale, the creator of whole body listening, about the key role of the brain in this approach to listening.

1:35 - 1:45

10 Minute Transition

Laurie Kaufman & Katy Shamitz

Complete Stranger to BFF: Using the New and Improved Friendship Sequence to Teach Students to Evaluate Their Peer Relationships and Make True Friends

Making and maintaining friendships is a daunting task for many of our students who struggle with Social Thinking. Students cannot differentiate between acquaintances and friends and therefore are unable to predict how peers are going to respond to their friendship overtures. They often do not understand true, mutual friendship and are baffled when they are left out of social plans. The Friendship Sequence builds upon the usefulness of Winner's classic Friendship Pyramid, changing the model into a step-by-step process to teach students how to identify the level of any given peer relationship, and giving them tools to advance toward true bonded friendship with a peer.

The updated Friendship Sequence was overviewed last year at the 2015 Social Thinking Providers Conference by Katy Shamitz. This year's presentation focuses on applications of the Friendship Sequence. The Friendship Sequence can be applied to an endless number of topics for students with social challenges. Topics covered will include: lesson plans and activities for teaching the Friendship Sequence to middle and high school students, three major applications of the Friendship Sequence for students, and the value in having all staff use the same language of the Friendship Sequence with students.

Emily Vizza

The Social Thinking Model and Twice Exceptional Education

School-age children with social cognitive challenges often become resistant to participating in explicit social learning treatment. Over time they have had intervention using a variety of methodologies. Sometimes, depression and anxiety develop as they become aware of their social differences and the difficulties they encounter making connections. These feelings may culminate in resistance and push back when supports are provided. The Quad Preparatory School is a school for Twice Exceptional students who present with social learning challenges. While many students score in the superior range cognitively, our pupils represent a range of social cognitive and social communication profiles. The clinical staff at the Quad has developed a curriculum that includes school-wide adoption and implementation of Social Thinking® concepts throughout the day. Our overriding goal is fostering independent social functioning in mainstream environments. Aspects of this innovative approach include regularly scheduled social cognitive treatment, infusion of pragmatic goals and core Social Thinking concepts into academics, data collection to track program effectiveness, and clinical team oversight to ensure curriculum implementation. Academic staff is closely supervised and participate in ongoing training with clinical staff and members of the STTC. Given students' intellectual potential and unique skill sets, we follow a strength-based, social-cognitive model.

Amy Cummings & Judith Kuegler

Zoom- A Year of Social Thinking at a Kindergarten through 12 School

The theme of the 2015-2016 school year at Camelot Academy in Durham, NC was "Zoom." We wanted to give all our 130 students in grades K-12 the time, space, and tools to Zoom In to reflect on their own feelings, thoughts, reactions, assumptions and behavior, and Zoom Out to see how their actions affect those around them and become aware of other people's perspectives. Every student in the entire school participated in a weekly Zoom Class, for which we relied heavily on Michele Garcia Winner's Social Thinking curricular tools. We also reinvented our discipline procedures and implemented classes on cultural differences and the "Hidden Curriculum" in American schools with our English Language Learners. In our presentation, we will share what we did, the reactions of students, teachers, and parents, what we learned from the experience, and what we recommend to others who might want to implement Social Thinking on a school-wide level to students of diverse ages, backgrounds, and learning styles.

Dr. Pamela Crooke & Michelle Garcia Winner

New Directions and Q and A

New treatment ideas, developed this year in our Social Thinking clinic, will be shared to explore a deeper understanding of how to teach our individuals about their own physical presence, emotional understanding, and self-regulation.

1:45 - 2:30

2:30 - 2:45 Break

2:45 - 4:30

Biographies

Shawn Amador uses theatrical strategies to teach and practice social skills in groups. In recognition of this work, she received the Heartspring Innovation and Creativity in Special Education Award. As a school social worker and therapist she has served many populations with social deficits. Her favorite modalities include Social Thinking®, Mindfulness, and CBT.

Speaking on: Using Humor, Theatre, and Collaborative Script Writing to Teach Social Thinking Concepts

Dr. Jed Baker, Keynote Speaker, is the director of the Social Skills Training Project, an organization serving individuals with autism and related social communication problems. He is on the professional advisory board of Autism Today, ASPEN, ANSWER, YAI, the Kelberman Center and several other autism organizations. In addition, he writes, lectures, and provides training internationally on the topic of social skills training and managing challenging behaviors. He is an award winning author of 8 books, including Social Skills Training for Children and Adolescents with Aspergers Syndrome and Social Communication Problems; Preparing for Life: The Complete Handbook for the Transition to Adulthood for Those with Autism and Aspergers Syndrome; The Social Skills Picture Book; The Social Skills Picture Book for High School and Beyond; No More Meltdowns: Positive Strategies for Managing and Preventing Out-of-Control Behavior; No More Victims: Protecting those with Autism from Cyber Bullying, Internet Predators & Scams; Overcoming Anxiety in Children and Teens; and School Shadow Guidelines. His work has also been featured on ABC World News, Nightline, Fox News, the CBS Early Show, and the Discovery Health Channel.

Speaking on: Managing Anxiety and Frustration in Children, Teens and Caregivers

Sarah Bartosch is a speech language pathologist who has worked at the high school and transition levels for the past twelve years. She specializes in improving the social cognitive skills and social pragmatic communications skills in students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and related disabilities.

Speaking on: Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Social Inquiry: A Classroom-Based Approach for Students with Social Learning Challenges at the Secondary Level

Allison Brudner is a speech language pathologist at the Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center at Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx. In that capacity she treats patients, supervises graduate students, and lectures to parents and other professionals. Allie received her MS in Communicative Sciences and Disorders from New York University.

Speaking on: What If: Using Social Thinking to Teach The Power of Imagination?

Elizabeth Burke, M.Ed. is a Resource Specialist supporting students with social cognitive challenges. She currently teaches at Miller Middle School in the Cupertino Union School District, Cupertino, CA. She combines expertise in Social Thinking with differentiated instruction to provide meaningful learning experiences for her students.

Speaking on: Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking Wide/Connecting Common Core, Social Thinking and Digital Literacy in the Classroom

Nancy Clements is a speech language pathologist and Executive Director of Social Thinking Boston®, the East Coast sister clinic to Social Thinking Stevens Creek and Social Thinking Santa Clara. She brings a highly creative approach to her clinical practice, where she maintains a very active and varied caseload ranging from early social learners through adults.

Speaking on: Interactive Session about School-Wide Implementation of Social Thinking Components; Being the Boss of Your Brain: Brain Boards and Beyond!

Dr. Nancy Cotton is a Clinical Developmental Psychologist who received her Doctoral degree from Tufts University and completed Harvard Medical School internships and post-doctoral fellowships in adult and child psychology.

Dr. Cotton has a longstanding interest in the comprehensive treatment of children and adolescents with difficulties stemming from biological, psychological, social, communication, and learning vulnerabilities. She works closely with parents to develop their parenting skills and to understand their children's individual styles. She was the Director of a Harvard teaching hospital Inpatient Child Psychiatry Unit for ten years and worked as a principal consultant to the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health in program development and clinical treatment planning for children and adolescents in need of complex, intense, and comprehensive services.

Speaking on: Interactive Session about Mental Health and Parent Concerns

Dr. Pamela Crooke, Keynote Speaker, is the Chief Strategy Officer and a Senior Therapist at the Social Thinking Center in Santa Clara, CA. She is the co-author (with Michelle Garcia Winner) of four award-winning books related to Social Thinking. She has served on the clinical faculty of three universities and worked in the Arizona public schools for 15 years. Her current areas of research include practice-based research and implementation science related to the Social Thinking methodology.

Speaking on: Social Thinking 101; Interactive Session about School-Wide Implementation of Social Thinking Components; If You Build It, They Will Come (So let's build it right); New Directions and Q&A

Amy Cummings is a teacher and the Administrator for Outreach at Camelot Academy. In addition to teaching, she has directed nonprofits that provide innovative educational programs. She has a Masters in Education in Culture, Curriculum and Change from UNC Chapel Hill, and a BA in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University.

Speaking on: Zoom- A Year of Social Thinking at a Kindergarten through 12 School

Matthew Geary, Keynote Speaker, began his work as Superintendent of the Manchester Public Schools in July, 2014. During this time, Matt has supported the shift to a more student-centered approach to learning. Matt has also improved school climate and culture through implementing research-based practices and strengthening partnerships with families and the community.

Speaking on: Lessons Learned Combining CPS (Collaborative & Proactive Solutions) and Social Thinking School-Wide Across our School District

Ann Gray is a speech language pathologist with 22 years of educational experience and has owned her own clinical practice for 14 years. Ann specializes in work with individuals with social communication disorders, autism spectrum conditions, and related disorders. Her focus has been working with adolescents and young adults as well as building capacity of educators and parents. Ann developed and implements a comprehensive High School Peer Social-Communication Coaching Program which includes training for peer coaches and provides guided social skill practice for students with weak social learning skills. This program is empirically supported by using a cognitive behavioral approach, visual supports, and established peer intervention techniques. Ann has also completed the Social Thinking Clinical Training Program and has been using Social Thinking concepts in concert with other therapeutic strategies as she eagerly follows the growth in the field of social cognitive therapy. Ann is a parent of a weak-interactive social communicator and is passionate about helping others see through the lens of understanding by exploring the perspective taking spectrum.

Speaking on: How to Implement Peer Coaching: Communication Program for Teens & Young Adults

Dr. Ross Greene, Keynote Speaker, the originator of the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) approach – formerly known as Collaborative Problem Solving - as described in his influential books *The Explosive Child* (now in a completely updated fifth edition) and *Lost at School* (now in a revised second edition). Dr. Greene served on the teaching faculty at Harvard Medical School for over 20 years, and is currently adjunct associate professor in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech. He is also the Founding Director of the non-profit *Lives in the Balance*, which provides a vast array of free, web-based resources on his model and advocates on behalf of behaviorally challenging kids and their parents, teachers, and other caregivers. Dr. Greene lectures widely throughout the world and lives in Portland, Maine, with his wife and two kids.

Speaking on: Complementary Angles: Using Collaborative & Proactive Solutions in Tandem with Social Thinking to Solve Problems and Teach New Skills – A Brand New Discussion

Ryan Hendrix is a Social Cognitive Therapist at Social Thinking Stevens Creek in San Jose, CA and a private therapist in San Francisco. She trained and works directly with Michelle Garcia Winner and Dr. Pamela Crooke. Her diverse caseload experience includes preschool-age children through young adults with varying levels of social cognitive learning challenges.

Speaking on: Interactive Session about Using the We Thinkers Curriculum (4-7 years old)

Stephanie Hubbell has worked in the field of autism education as a behavior therapist, social skills facilitator, Special Education Peace Corps Volunteer, and most recently, speech language pathologist. She has her Bachelors from San Diego State University and her Masters in Communication Disorders from Emerson College in Boston.

Speaking on: Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Beyond Test Scores: Building School-Wide Social Thinking Programming in Achievement-Driven Settings

Jennifer Jones has been a practicing SLP for the past 17 years. She works with a diverse K-6 population. Mrs. Jones created and helped implement a system wide social skills camp in the Mountain Brook School system. She has also led professional development on the importance of social thinking.

Speaking on: Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Social Thinking...Out of the Therapy Room, and into the Classroom

Terese Jurgensen is an Administrator at Howard-Winneshiek CSD. For over 20 years, Terese has presented to educators, parents, and communities on a wide-range of topics to support students with social learning challenges. As the parent of a gifted son diagnosed with Asperger's, Mrs. Jurgensen shares a unique perspective.

Speaking on: Different Treatment Ideas/Is it Skill or is it Will? Utilizing the Social Thinking-Social Communication Profile to Create Parent Partnerships and Tiered Systems of Supports for Home and School

Dr. Laurie Kaufman is a licensed child psychologist and certified secondary educator. She was a founding faculty member at Middlebridge School and creator of its Social Pragmatics curriculum as a core academic content area for all students, every day. She currently teaches Social Pragmatics and oversees the Social Pragmatics department.

Speaking on: Complete Stranger to BFF: Using the New and Improved Friendship Sequence to Teach Students to Evaluate Their Peer Relationships and Make True Friends

Judith Kuegler is an artist and Art Teacher with extensive education in psychology. She is German by nationality, grew up in Papua New Guinea, and has lived all over the world. She works extensively with special needs children and their families and has a special interest in spectrum disorders.

Speaking on: Zoom- A Year of Social Thinking at a Kindergarten through 12 School

Tricia LaPlante is a speech language pathologist who has worked at the middle and high school levels for the past eight years. She specializes in improving the social cognitive skills and social pragmatic communication skills in students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and related disabilities.

Speaking on: Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Social Inquiry: A Classroom-Based Approach for Students with Social Learning Challenges at the Secondary Level

Alicia Martin is a special education and ESL teacher at Howard-Winneshiek CSD. Alicia's ongoing passion to empower students with disabilities is the driving force behind her career in education. Ms. Martin's first hand experiences provide insight into how Social Thinking strategies can move mountains in students' lives.

Speaking on: Different Treatment Ideas/Is it Skill or is it Will? Utilizing the Social Thinking-Social Communication Profile to Create Parent Partnerships and Tiered Systems of Supports for Home and School

Allyson R. Martin graduated from Millersville University in 2010 with a degree in Elementary Education. After graduation she worked at Mountain Brook Schools as a Special Education paraprofessional. Mrs. Martin currently teaches second grade at Mountain Brook Elementary. She earned her Master's Degree in Special Education in 2014 from Auburn University.

Speaking on: Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Social Thinking...Out of the Therapy Room, and into the Classroom

Debbie Meringolo, a special educator and developmental specialist, is the Associate Director of the Infant/Toddler Team at the Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center (CERC) at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She is also the director of the Baby Team parent-child treatment program, and the co-director of CERC's RELATE program, providing diagnostic evaluations and treatment for children/adolescents with communication and social challenges. In this administrative and clinical role, Debbie supervises clinicians, conducts evaluations, and provides treatment for children individually and in groups. Along with colleagues at CERC she also participates in a variety of research projects, examining early diagnosis of children with autism spectrum disorders.

In addition to her work at the clinic, she runs a part time Social Thinking practice along with Nancy Tarshis. They work with children ages 14 months through adult in individual as well as group sessions, consult to public and private schools and provide training for parents and professionals.

Speaking on: Interactive Session about Mental Health and Parent Concerns

Jessica Minahan is a board certified behavior analyst, special educator, and consultant to schools nationwide. She is a blogger on The Huffington Post, the co-author of The Behavior Code (with Nancy Rappaport, MD), and author of The Behavior Code Companion: Strategies, Tools, and Interventions for Supporting Students with Anxiety-Related or Oppositional Behaviors.

Speaking on: Between a Rock and a Calm Place: Classroom Strategies for Students with Anxiety-Related Behaviors

Linda Murphy is a speech language pathologist and RDI® Consultant, who received her Master's Degree from Emerson College. She loves going to work each day at her private practice in Beverly, MA. She is also the happy mom to two, young, "wow they've got a lot of energy!" boys.

Speaking on: How Can We Encourage Kids to Think Critically? Exploring Mindful Use of Language by Parents and Professionals

Tiffany Myers, LCSW, is a social worker at New Trier High School, where she has practiced for the last seventeen years. She has led groups using Social Thinking® for the last 5 years and completed the Boston Clinical Training Program in 2015. Tiffany has co-led presentations to educate teachers about Social Thinking for the last three years.

Speaking on: Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Moving Social Thinking Out of the Office and into the Classroom through Concrete Specific, and Kind Feedback

Kari Zweber Palmer is a speech language pathologist/Social Cognitive Therapist at her private practice, Changing Perspectives, in Excelsior, MN. She has co-authored, with Michelle Garcia Winner, Ryan Hendrix, and Nancy Tarshis The Incredible Flexible You: A Social Thinking Curriculum for the Preschool and Early Elementary Years. Additionally, Kari consults with local school districts on implementing Social Thinking into their programming.

Speaking on: Interactive Session about Using the We Thinkers Curriculum (4-7 years old)

Daphne Papageorge is a special educator in Loudoun County, Virginia, who spearheads a Social Thinking® program and supports teachers across the county. She has been recognized for excellence by The Co Teaching Connection for team teaching in inclusive classrooms. Mrs. Papageorge received her Master of Education from George Mason University.

Speaking on: Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Books on a Shelf vs. Real Culture Change: Using Partnership to Infuse Social Learning into School-Wide Systems

Stephanie Pepi has experience creating and supervising campus and districtwide behavioral intervention programs for students with significant behavioral challenges, creating and implementing effective Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), and designing and delivering training for school personnel and parents regarding special education, behavior, and autism. Her administrative experience includes hiring and supervising staff, creating and managing educational programs, and monitoring and improving student outcomes.

Stephanie's strengths include identifying areas of social/behavioral deficits, creating social profiles for students that describe how their social deficits interfere with their abilities to attend, learn, and socialize effectively, and assisting teachers, campuses, and families with implementing appropriate, effective interventions to address these challenges.

Speaking on: Different Treatment Ideas/Using Social Thinking to Predict and Increase Inclusion Success

Christa Perkins, Keynote Speaker, is a social worker who has worked in both regular and special education settings in Manchester Public Schools since 1998. Recently, she became the Social Emotional Learning Coordinator for the district. In this role, she has worked to develop the system's capacity to support the social emotional needs of all students.

Speaking on: Lessons Learned Combining CPS (Collaborative & Proactive Solutions) and Social Thinking School-Wide Across our School District

Noor Al Radi received her MS in Speech and Language Pathology at Teachers College, Columbia and practices at the Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center at Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx. In that capacity she treats patients, supervises graduate students, lectures to professionals and organizes parent workshops.

Speaking on: What If: Using Social Thinking to Teach The Power of Imagination?

Elizabeth Sautter, MA, CCC, is a speech language pathologist and co-director/owner of Communication Works, a private practice based in Oakland, CA that provides speech, language, and occupational therapy. She has specialized in supporting individuals with autism, developmental disabilities, social cognitive, attention, and behavioral challenges since 1996, and has worked with preschoolers to adults in private practice, schools, and hospitals. Since 2001, Elizabeth has focused on social cognitive and self-regulation intervention and training. She completed the Social Thinking® Clinical Training Program in 2008 and in 2010 completed Social Thinking's Internship Program. In addition to co-authoring with Kristen Wilson, Whole Body Listening Larry at School and Whole Body Listening Larry at Home, in 2014 she released her latest book, Make Social Learning Stick! Her relationship with her sister, son, and extended family members with special needs continues to make her work a life-long endeavor. Elizabeth enjoys hiking and yoga, and lives in Northern California with her husband, two sons, a dog, and a bunny rabbit.

Speaking on: Teaching Update: Why We Modified Whole Body Listening Larry Books to Create a 2nd Edition

Sogol Shafiei has been working at The Neighborhood Charter School of Harlem (NCSH) since August 2013. She received a Master of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology at California State University, East Bay. Prior to becoming a speech language pathologist, Sogol provided in-home and school-based Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) treatment to individuals with autism.

Speaking on: Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Beyond Test Scores: Building School-Wide Social Thinking Programming in Achievement-Driven Settings

Katy Shamitz is the founder/director of Skills for Living, a large, lively social learning center, and The Chapman Farm School, a safe, energetic, project-based middle/high school that weaves social education into every day. Katy is an urban transplant living on a farm with her husband, kids, goldendoodle, goats, and chickens.

Speaking on: Complete Stranger to BFF: Using the New and Improved Friendship Sequence to Teach Students to Evaluate Their Peer Relationships and Make True Friends

Keri Shoenbrun is the Executive Director of Developmental Connections, a nonprofit that supports children with developmental disabilities. Mrs. Schoenbrun holds an MBA and a Master in Public Policy from Georgetown University. As a parent of a child with social learning challenges, she is passionate about expediting.

Speaking on: Elementary School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Books on a Shelf vs. Real Culture Change: Using Partnership to Infuse Social Learning into School-Wide Systems

Julie Smith, MS, CCC-SLP, is a speech language pathologist from New Trier High School, where she has practiced for the past ten years and led groups using the concepts from Social Thinking® for six years. She recently completed the Clinical Training Program in Boston, MA and has co-led workshops to educate teachers about Social Thinking for the past three years.

Speaking on: Middle & High School Track: Using Social Thinking School Wide/Moving Social Thinking Out of the Office and into the Classroom through Concrete Specific, and Kind Feedback

Nancy Tarshis, MA, MS, CCC-SLP, is a speech language pathologist who is deeply experienced in a wide variety of treatment methodologies, including Social Thinking. She joined the professional team at the Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center (CERC) at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in 1992 and was named its Supervisor of Speech and Language Services in 1996. In that capacity, she maintains a clinical practice, seeing patients birth to 21 for diagnosis and therapeutic treatment, supervises seven speech pathologists, lectures to medical residents and psychology interns, and participates in research. She also serves as adjunct clinical instructor at Teachers College, Columbia, Lehman and Hunter Colleges, and New York University. As a member of the Social Thinking Training and Speakers Collaborative, Nancy speaks frequently across the U.S. on Social Thinking concepts and strategies and about the development and importance of play. She is a regular consultant to several New York City schools. Her independent clinical work includes Altogether Social, a Social Thinking-based practice she co-founded that serves clients age 14 months through 22 years. Altogether Social provides individual and group sessions, consultations to public and private schools, and training for parents and professionals.

Speaking on: Interactive Session about Using the We Thinkers Curriculum (4-7 years old); What If: Using Social Thinking to Teach The Power of Imagination?

Emily Vizza is the founding speech language pathologist at the Quad Preparatory School in New York City, a growing nonprofit which serves students who are Twice Exceptional and demonstrate social learning challenges. She received her Master of Science in Communicative Sciences and Disorders from New York University.

Speaking on: The Social Thinking Model and Twice Exceptional Education

Kristen Wilson, M.S. CCC, is a speech language pathologist who specializes in working with children, teens, and adults with social differences, language disorders, and autism. She is a Southern California native who has enjoyed working in a variety of settings since 2004. She believes building self esteem and self awareness and teaching self advocacy skills is the key to successful therapy. Kristen is the co-author of two books: Whole Body Listening Larry at Home! and Whole Body Listening Larry at School! Kristen lives in Placentia, CA with her husband and two daughters.

Speaking on: Teaching Update: Why We Modified Whole Body Listening Larry Books to Create a 2nd Edition

Michelle Garcia Winner, MA, CCC-SLP, Keynote Speaker, is the founder of Social Thinking and specializes in the treatment of individuals with social cognitive learning challenges. She is a senior therapist at the 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 thinking and social skills 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.

Speaking on: Interactive Session about Using the We Thinkers Curriculum (4-7 years old); Complementary Angles: Using Collaborative & Proactive Solutions in Tandem with Social Thinking to Solve Problems and Teach New Skills – A Brand New Discussion; If You Build It, They Will Come (So let's build it right); New Directions and Q&A