

# 29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL AUTISM CONFERENCE

## TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2019

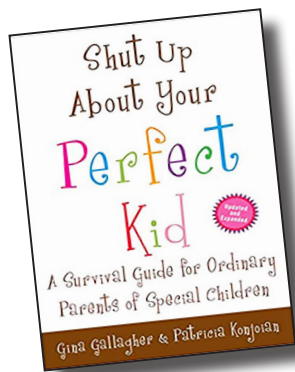
### THE SHERATON SPRINGFIELD MONARCH PLACE HOTEL

**NEW THIS YEAR - Breakout Sessions! Register early to sign up for your favorites.**

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

On a perfection-preoccupied planet, imperfect sisters - speakers - authors - mothers - house cleaners (and much more), keynote speakers Gina Terrasi Gallagher and Patricia

Terrasi dare to openly speak about the frustrations, stigmas, joys and challenges they have faced as parents of children with disabilities.



This refreshingly frank and enjoyable presentation, based on their best-selling book, *Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid, A Survival Guide for Ordinary Parents*

*of Special Children*, will leave you laughing out loud and celebrating the joys, gifts, and milestones of special children.



See inside for breakout session descriptions

## Attendee Information



116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366  
Easthampton, MA 01027  
(413) 529-2428

[www.autismconnectionsma.org](http://www.autismconnectionsma.org)

**29th Annual Autism Conference**  
*HOPE in Action:*  
*Building Blocks to a Fulfilling Life*

April 23, 2019  
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The Sheraton Springfield  
Monarch Place Hotel, Springfield, MA

Fostering a culture of inclusion, understanding, and empowerment.

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Registration Deadline is April 9,  
register early!\*

**General Registration Fee: \$125**

**Parent/Caregiver/Individual with Autism: \$75**

During Autism Awareness Month in April, Autism Connections' annual Autism Conference gathers over 400 parents, educators and professionals to connect, be inspired and build knowledge around the most current information on autism.

Keynote speakers this year are the dynamic duo of Gina Terrasi Gallagher and Patricia Terrasi, authors of *Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid, a Survival Guide for Ordinary Parents of Special Children*.

Registration includes breakfast, morning coffee and snack break, lunch, afternoon beverages and access to the Exhibition Showcase with more than 40 exhibitors.

**New this year: breakout sessions!**

New this year are breakout sessions at our NEW LOCATION of the Sheraton Springfield Monarch Place Hotel. Please see the next page for descriptions, and be sure to choose a morning and afternoon selection below. You can also register online at <https://autismconnectionsma.org/news-and-events/autism-conference/>.

#### Select workshops

Sessions repeat in the morning and afternoon

Morning session workshop:  
(circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Afternoon session workshop:  
(circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

\*No refunds after April 9.

**REGISTER** Please complete this form and mail it with a check or credit card information to arrive by **April 9, 2019** to: Joanne Lucey, Autism Connections, 116 Pleasant Street, Suite 366, Easthampton, MA 01027. For more information call (413) 529-2428 or email [joanne.lucey@pathlightgroup.org](mailto:joanne.lucey@pathlightgroup.org). For more information and to sign up online, visit: <http://bit.ly/ACconference2019>

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Company and/or Individual Name:

Address:

City	State	Zip
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Phone	Fax
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Email

Contact Name

#### MEAL SELECTION

Check here only if you are requesting the vegetarian/GF lunch

#### PAYMENT INFORMATION

I am mailing this form with an enclosed check.

Payment Amount Enclosed

Credit Card**	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard	<input type="checkbox"/> Amex
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Card #

Exp Date	CVC#	Phone
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Name on Card

Billing Address

City	State	Zip
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Signature

\*\*Please note the charge will be from Pathlight.

## Breakout Session Descriptions (sessions repeat in morning and afternoon)

### **1. Weaving the Way to a Successful School to Adulthood**

*Rick Hawes, Director of Employment Services at Berkshire County Arc*

In-depth overview of the key concepts and methods to facilitate young adults smoothly transitioning into adulthood and employment. This presentation will review best practices in the transition process to assist parents, educators, and human services agencies to provide quality outcomes.

### **2. Autism and Me**

*Allison Butler (paraprofessional), Milan Bonilla-Cruz (student)*

Allison Butler (Paraprofessional) along with her former student (and book illustrator) Milan Bonilla-Cruz co-authored a children's book together, and this workshop will describe their process. This book is written through eyes of Milan as he describes himself to show how he is similar to his typical classmates, as well as what might be harder for him, and specific strategies that help him that might also help other students with autism.

### **3. Teaching Boundaries and Relationships to Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities or Autism**

*Brian Melanson, Program Assistant at Whole Children and Maggie Rice, Program Director at Whole Children*

This presentation will focus on the Whole Selves curriculum and the practical skills teachers employ to create meaningful classroom experiences. This sexuality education program provides a basic foundation for learners of all abilities in a variety of topics pertaining to self-esteem, healthy relationships, healthy boundaries and sexuality; we would like attendees to understand the basics of our curriculum while also learning some skills for facilitating meaningful conversations and interventions in their own setting.

### **4. No More Books Not More Parent and Teacher Dirty Looks**

*Keynote speakers Gina (Terrasi) Gallagher and Patricia Terrasi*

Helping special needs children get the services they need to learn can be a stressful experience for parents as well as educators operating in the constraints of

tight school system budgets. In this fun and interactive workshop, presented at colleges and universities around the county, Patty and Gina share both the parent and educator perspective and provide real solutions for how parents and teachers can come together and meet in the middle of the IEP table.

### **5. ARICA: Autism and Insurance - What Families Need to Know**

*Amy Weinstock, Director of the Autism Insurance Resource Center at the University of Massachusetts' Medical School's Eunice Kennedy Shriver Center*

This presentation will discuss autism insurance for families in Massachusetts, including MassHealth and recent changes; eligibility and how to figure out what coverage you need; Premium Assistance; The Health Connector; covered treatments and how to access them; frequently asked questions, and where to get assistance; and the relationship between ARICA and your MassHealth plan.

### **6. Communication Supports for Individuals with Autism**

*Maggie Wurm, Assistive Technology Specialist at Collaborative for Educational Services and Jeanne Tuthill, SLP, Assistive Technology Specialist at Collaborative for Educational Services*

Many individuals with autism experience significant challenges with communication and social skills. These difficulties can be pervasive, affecting all areas of life. These individuals often benefit from visual strategies to support effective communication to help build relations as well as aide their comprehension of the world around them. A variety of visual supports and strategies to supply daily functional communication needs will be discussed, along with low and high tech Assistive Technology options.

### **7. Bridging the Gap: Intersection of ABA and Mental Health Counseling**

*Yvette Stoddard, Director of Academic Services – ASD; April Roche, Clinical Director/Clinician; Danielle Miller, Behavioral Analyst; Hillcrest Educational Centers*

Panel discussion for attendees to ask questions on how to get professionals to collaborate respectfully, while aligning

with their codes of conduct and ethical consideration. The workshop will also review an introduction to Trauma Informed Care and the therapeutic model and how those are bridged.

### **8. Grief-Strategies for People With Autism**

*Shelly Lenn, The Garden: A Center for Grieving Children and Teens, and previously Rick's Place*

Youth ages 5-18 can fully benefit from knowing the truth when someone close in their life dies. In this workshop participants will learn how to explain what death means, the range of feelings that can come up, and the importance of commemoration. Simple language will be shared, as well as readily available resources.

### **9. The Journey Continues: Successes and Challenges in Adulthood**

*The Panel is comprised of DDS Autism Service Coordinators and adults with autism who will share their experiences*

What happens after school and transition are over? DDS has now extended eligibility for adult services to adults with autism who do not have intellectual disabilities. This panel discussion will address the unique challenges that these adults experience. Areas of focus include living independently and other housing models, job training and the journey to maintaining competitive employment, attending college, and forming relationships and a social network.

### **10. Psychological and Neuropsychological Evaluations: Navigating the Process and Making Sense of the Results**

*David Kieval, Clinical Psychologist with specialty working with children, adolescents and families*

A comprehensive psychological evaluation can be a uniquely valuable tool in understanding a child's profile and how to best help him or her find success and fulfillment. Come learn what psychological evaluations are and what they can do for you. This session will address when and why you might seek evaluation, what types of evaluations to pursue for different goals, and what to expect from the discussion of specific instruments and domains that are likely to show up for children with autism.

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The Autism Conference is supported by Presenting Sponsor  
*Radcliffe is the Reason and Arthur Too! Fight for Autism*

 a Pathlight program  
**Autism  
Connections**

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