Texas Parent to Parent

Proudly Presents our
18th annual
Parent Conference

JULY 14-15, 2023

TxE2P HAS BEEN PROVIDING SUPPORT, INFORMATION, AND EDUCATION FOR TEXAS FAMILIES FOR 20 YEARS

For more information: 866-896-6001
www.txp2p.org
Have a great 2023

Texas Parent to Parent Conference
18th Annual Statewide Parent Conference

Amerigroup is a proud supporter of TXP2P

Get connected

www.myamerigroup.com/TX

1-844-756-4600 (TTY 711)

TXMKTAL-1012-19
YOUR LIFE, YOUR DIRECTION

WHAT IS CONSUMER DIRECTED SERVICES?

IT'S ABOUT EMPOWERMENT!

IT ALLOWS YOU TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE BY SELF-DIRECTING YOUR STATE FUNDED SERVICES.

IF YOU OR YOUR LOVED ONE IS RECEIVING ATTENDANT OR NURSING SERVICES THROUGH MEDICAID, CONSUMER DIRECTION PUTS YOU IN THE DRIVER’S SEAT:

• YOU HIRE AND SUPERVISE YOUR EMPLOYEES.
• YOU USE US TO PROVIDE YOU WITH HR AND PAYROLL SUPPORT.

ALL OVER TEXAS

Available in all long-term care programs: STAR Kids, CLASS, DBMD, HCS, TxEml, PHC, STAR+PLUS* and PCS

CALL US AT 1-866-675-7331 OR VISIT WWW.CDSINTEXAS.COM
WHERE
YOU ARE THE
BOSS

FOR MORE INFORMATION
1-866-528-6499

SERVING STATEWIDE
SINCE 1997

We partner with individuals of every age and disability to assist them with living a more independent lifestyle. With either CDS or Agency option, you have choices that help you take charge of who comes into your home.

OUR
MISSION

To assist individuals to live independently with maximum choice and control in their home and community regardless of age or disability.

ONGOING SUPPORT
CONSULTATION

We offer multilingual consultation support to ensure high-quality care and service.

www.inhometexas.com
Hablamos Español

BEING YOUR OWN BOSS MEANS:

- Deciding who comes into your home to provide services
- Setting hours and wages (within authorized weekly hours and state guidelines)
- Recruiting, training, or terminating your attendants
- Directing your own attendant care
Welcome to Texas Parent to Parent’s 18th Annual Parent Conference

On behalf of the Staff and Board of Directors of Texas Parent to Parent, we want to welcome you to our 18th Annual Parent Conference. We hope you enjoy this wonderful opportunity to gather together, network and learn from one another in order to help your families thrive and grow. We hope the training opportunities will provide you with what you need at this moment and in the future. Texas Parent to Parent is here to help in whatever way we can – please come to the registration desk for any questions you may have.

We’d like to thank all our Sponsors, Scholarship Sponsors, Exhibitors, volunteers, and many supportive friends that continue to make this event possible. Working together, our commitment to families in Texas continues and we could not do this work without you!

We hope you enjoy the conference and recharge while you are here. Have a great time and thanks for coming!

“NO-GUILT” ZONE!

This is YOUR conference - if you choose to sit & visit with another attendee or just sit & enjoy what quiet you can find, that’s okay with us. We believe you’re the best judge of what you need to get from this conference!

Conference Program at a Glimpse

★ Conference Center Map: Separate Yellow Sheet in your bag
★ Overall Conference Schedule and General Information: pages 5-10
★ Session descriptions and locations: pages 11-22
★ Biographies: pages 23-32
★ You may go to any session you like but if a room gets full, we’ll have to close the session due to the fire marshal regulations. The session facilitator will let you know the status of the room if it is full.
★ Networking is important, but please be considerate of others and take conversations out of the session rooms.

PLEASE NOTE: By attending the Texas Parent to Parent Conference, you grant permission to TxP2P to take photographs and/or videos of you and to use photographs and/or video of your likeness in any type of media, including websites and print publications without compensation or reward. Please talk to the staff at registration if you want to revoke this permission.
CONFERENCE AGENDA

Friday, July 14, 2023

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  Registration – Breakfast (7:30 - 9:00 a.m.)
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  Childcare – Veramendi J & I
                      Peer to Peer Summit – Veramendi G & H
9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Welcome and Keynote Speaker – Veramendi E & F
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Break
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Breakout Session #1
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.  Lunch Veramendi E & F
1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Breakout Session #2
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.  Break
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  Breakout Session #3
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.  Family Fun Night – Veramendi E & F (dinner is on your own)

Saturday, July 15, 2023

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.  Registration - Breakfast (7:30 - 9:00 a.m.)
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  Childcare, Sibshop - Veramendi J & I
                      Peer to Peer Summit - Veramendi G & H
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Breakout Session #4 (NOTE: This session is only 1 hour)
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Break
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Breakout Session #5
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.  Lunch Veramendi E & F
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.  Breakout Session #6 (NOTE: This session is only 1 hour)
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Break
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.  Breakout Session #7
4:45 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.  Closing Session Veramendi E & F
Please Thank Our Sponsors & Stipend Sponsors!

Please stop by our SPONSORS’ & SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS’ tables and thank them for their amazing support of our conference. They are all located in the hallway close to registration. Their financial support makes it possible for parents, children & teens to attend the conference for less than the food costs or at no cost. It also provides those wonderful goodies like conference t-shirts, stadium cup, lunch cooler, as well as name badge holders, Peer to Peer Summit & Child Care t-shirts, and games at the Family Gathering Fun Night.

Please Thank Our Exhibitors, too!

Please visit our Exhibitors in the Spring Lake C and down the hallway in front of the Spring Lake Ballroom to learn about their products and/or services. Remember to have them initial your Exhibitor Game in order to be eligible for door prizes.

Hotel Stipends, CEUs, and Lunch:

Hotel Stipend: If you received a hotel stipend through TxP2P, we must have your signature on our paperwork to turn into the funder or we cannot cover your room. If you didn’t fill out this paperwork, please return to registration to take care of this.

CEUs: If you are getting CEUs, you must sign into each session and have the Session Facilitator stamp or sign your Session Summary page to show that you attended the whole session. If you don’t have that stamp or signature, we cannot give you CEUs for that session.

Lunches: Children/youth in childcare, Sibshop, or Peer to Peer Summit will be given lunches in their room.

** Parents are responsible for drop off and pick up of children at times and rooms designated below. **

* Please keep your cell phone VISIBLE in case we need to call or text you about your child. *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD CARE</th>
<th>PEER TO PEER SUMMIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration - Sign in begins at 8:00 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location: Veramendi J &amp; I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday - Session Time: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday - Session Time: 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIBSHOPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veramendi J &amp; I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday - Session Time: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please pick up your child in Child Care and drop him off in SibShops.
Our Keynote Speaker: Kayleigh Williamson

Kayleigh Williamson, 33, is an accomplished runner and published author who also has Down Syndrome. In 2017, she became the 1st person with Down Syndrome to complete the Austin Half Marathon. In 2019 she became a published author of a children’s book about that race. And again in 2022, she was the 1st to finish the Austin full Marathon. And on April 17th, 2023, she became the first woman with Down Syndrome to participate in the Boston Marathon. Her next goal is the New York Marathon. Much of Kayleigh’s success was due to her mother, Sandy Williamson, a CPA in the food industry. As Sandy has been not only her daughter’s lifelong caregiver, she also cared for her mother with Alzheimer’s. It was through her journey with her mother’s illness and her job that she felt driven in 2014 to change her daughter’s lifestyle and her own. She has completed 30 Half as well as 3 full Marathons at Kayleigh’s side. Through her work at the Hershey Company and Kayleigh’s initiative to bring awareness of health lifestyle changes within the disabled community, The Hershey Company has created a Caregivers Seminar to provide support to other employees. We hope it will help other parents as well.

TxFP2P Awards

Each year, TxFP2P recognizes outstanding parents and friends; this is the second time that we have honored them at the conference:

TxFP2P gratefully presents:

**TxFP2P Leah Rummel Volunteer of the Year Award:** Denise Smith

Thank you for your time and especially your passion in helping Texas Parent to Parent to support our families of children with disabilities and special health care needs in the state of Texas.

**TxFP2P Linda Litzinger Advocate of the Year Award:** Vivecca Hartman

Thank you for your time and especially your passion in helping Texas Parent to Parent to support our families of children with disabilities and special health care needs in the state of Texas.

**TxFP2P Ezequiel Quijano Friend of the Year Award:** In Home Attendant Services

Thank you for your support for Texas Parent to Parent and for Texas families of children with disabilities and special health care needs!

**TxFP2P Rosemary Alexander Parent Leader of the Year Award:** Susy Perez

Thank you for your support for Texas Parent to Parent and for Texas families of children with disabilities and special health care needs!
Lunch Entertainment. Zackary LaViola will be playing the piano during lunch Friday and Saturday.

Zack is a 20-year-old deafblind musician with prodigious musical skills. This was readily apparent to everyone when he plucked out melodies and songs on xylophones and pianos years before he spoke his first words! He is the epitome of “when words fail, music speaks.” Zack had a stroke, has severe autism, is legally blind, has cortical vision impairment, a severe expressive language disorder and a functional hearing loss that is equivalent to deafness. To this day, music remains his primary mode of communication. Zack has become a good vocalist but is an extremely gifted pianist and budding percussionist. He has performed throughout Texas for many different disability organizations and has earned many awards and medals for his classical piano playing, including gold and silver medals in UIL at the state level. Zack’s dream is to play alongside friends who share his passion and love for music. Through his music, Zack has changed the perspective of many who had a limited understanding of disabled youth with complex support needs and the amazing gifts these individuals can bestow.

**TxP2P Raffle Drawing:** Saturday at lunch in Veramendi E and F (Noon – 1:30 p.m.)

Friday - Family Fun Night, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Veramendi E & F
Includes carnival games *(Dinner is on your own)*

Closing Session, 5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Veramendi E & F

**Hotel Embassy free Wi-Fi for the conference**

**txp2p2023**
*DON'T FORGET* *YOUR RAFFLE TICKETS*

PURCHASE PRICE:
$5.00 PER TICKET OR
5 TICKETS FOR $20.00

100% OF YOUR DONATION HELPS SUPPORT TxF2P FAMILIES

---

Circle your prize choice and write on stub.

1. Full size Blue Butterfly Quilt
2. 4 tickets to SeaWorld San Antonio
3. 4 Schlitterbahn New Braunfels
4. 4 tickets to Morgan’s Wonderland/Inspiration Island

Texas Parent to Parent 1-866-896-6001
www.txp2p.org

Drawing Sat. July 15th, 2023
Need not to be present to win

---

TxF2P’s Board of Directors & Staff

**Board**

Ellen Bauman, Chair
Ezequiel Quijano, Jr.
Elizabeth Hong
Susan Burek
Christine Broughal
Stefan Cole

**Staff**

Rosalba Calleros, Executive Director
Sue Regimbal, Financial Director
Cynda Green, Program Director
Randall Alexander, IT
Norma Castro, Program Assistant
Martha Aguilar, Family Support Lead
Patty Geisinger, Family Support
Greta James-Maxfield, Family Support & MEd Coordinator

Mary Jane Ledesma, Family Support
Alejandra Arrigunaga, Family Support
Adriana Valadez, Transition Co-Coordinator
Dora Saavedra, Transition
Amy Litzinger, Advocacy Network
Linda Litzinger, Advocacy Network

---

Session Tracks
(tracks are the middle 2 numbers in the session #)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Advocacy</th>
<th>11 Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Autism</td>
<td>12 Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Behavior</td>
<td>13 Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Low-Incidence Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Medical/ Therapy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mental Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Parent Leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Self-Advocacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Self-Determination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EVALUATIONS**

Don’t Forget to Fill Out Your Evaluation Form and Turn It in Before Leaving Your Sessions.

Your input is important, and we greatly appreciate your taking the time to help us better serve you and your families.
Session 1040 – Government Benefits 101: Understanding SSI and SSDI

Allison Schaberg, Consolidated Planning Group

Allison will review SSI & Medicaid, SSDI & Medicare and Childhood Disability Benefits. Many of our children with disabilities do not qualify for SSI & Medicaid as minors. The landscape changes when they turn 18. Whether you are already getting benefits and aren’t sure if your benefits are maximized or you need guidance on how to get started, you will learn from this session. Allison will review when and how to apply, how to be prepared for your appointment and how to maintain eligibility going forward. You may also learn how to maximize benefits for your family.

Session 1041 – Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waivers

Elizabeth Tucker, EveryChild, Inc.

Elizabeth will present information on the Texas Home and Community-Based Services waivers (HCS, CLASS, etc.), including who is eligible, how to apply and the types of benefits available. Waivers pay for things like home modifications, respite, adaptive aids, habilitation, personal care services and respite. Texas does not consider a parent’s income when determining a child’s eligibility for most of these programs. The waivers open a world of new possibilities and opportunities for children and families.

Session 1042 – Personal Networks: Creating Community for our children

Denise Sonleitner, TxP2P

The best guarantee of a safe and secure future for a person with a disability is to have caring relationships in their life. Personal networks are communities of friends, family members and others who assist and collaborate with a person who may be at risk of isolation because of disability. Networks promote social opportunities, assist with decision-making and offer a committed safety net of support. In this introductory presentation, you will learn about personal networks, how to start a network and hear many powerful stories from families and network members who have started a network. Please join us!

Session 1043 Person Centered Outcome Statements

Jeff Garrison-Tate

Parents and people with lived experience participate in a wide range of planning meetings intended to support the person to pursue goals based on how they want to live their lives. Jeff will provide you with an overview of how discovery of what is important to and for a person should guide the development of person-centered outcomes.
Session 1060 – What is in your Genes? Genomics in 2023
Mary Elizabeth Parker and Martine Gould, U.R. our Hope

The field of genomics has blown up in the last decade. What was unthinkable and unaffordable just 10 years ago is a reality today. Navigating the myriad of types of genetic testing as well as the companies that provide the testing can be daunting. U.R. Our Hope will educate families on the current opportunities for testing and funding including research studies.

Session 1110 – Autismo 101
Adriana Crostley, Autism Society of Texas

En esa plática abordaremos conceptos básicos sobre qué es el Autismo incluyendo signos, síntomas, prevalencia, diagnóstico y tratamiento. También hablaremos de problemas que se han asociado al Autismo como los problemas sensoriales y de comportamiento, así como las comorbilidades del Autismo. Veremos una panorámica del Autismo a través de las diferentes edades y presentaremos algunas de las mejores prácticas. Finalmente daremos estrategias y consejos prácticos para mejorar la calidad de vida de las personas con Autismo y sus familias.

Session 1120 – How to Turn an Evaluation into a Good IEP
Shemica Allen, Personalized Learning Solutions, LLC

Shemica will provide information on two components of a good IEP. She will do an overview of the eligibility process, difference between school evaluations and private evaluations, differentiation between school eligibility and medical diagnosis and why an IEE is an option if you disagree with the school evaluation. You will also learn how to incorporate aspects of an evaluation into an IEP by utilizing strengths and address deficits identified in an evaluation.

Session 1130 – Transition to SSDI & Medicare?? Oh My!!
Sue Burek, TxP2P Volunteer

Many people with disabilities who get SSI and Medicaid will become eligible for SSDI when their parent retires, becomes disabled or dies. Not many people know this, and it probably brings up lots of questions about your child’s/adult child’s waiver: How will SSDI affect my SSI? Will I lose my Medicaid or my Waiver? When will I qualify for Medicare? What happens when my Medicare starts - which plan should I choose? I need HELP!!!! Sue will answer these questions and more.

Session 2010 – Mock Hearing
Linda & Amy Litzinger, TxP2P

Mock Bill Hearing! For Dads, Moms, Youth! Come learn the process of testifying at the Capitol or your county, city or school board. Bring the topic of your choice and choose to testify or just listen! Taught by the TxP2P Advocacy Team!
Session 2030 – Meeting Our Children’s Sensory Needs  
*Stacy Wright, Stacy’s Sensory Solutions*  
Behavior is communication. So, what are our children’s actions telling us they need in order to be regulated and successful? Stacy will look at the role sensory integration plays in helping our children stay focused, relaxed and confident.

Session 2040 – DAD’s Only  
*Jeff Garrison-Tate & Ron Lucey*  
This is an informal chance for Dads to come together and just talk. To listen and to learn from other dads, to share great things about our kids and to discuss some of the challenges we face. As a dad, you are the expert on your child. Come by and share what you have learned from your child and what your hopes are for their future. Or just come and listen.

Session 2041 – Sibling Panel  
*Mary Jane Ledesma, TxP2P*  
Being a sibling to a child with a disability has a great many rewards and struggles. Listen and share life lessons with young and adult siblings on this journey and learn what they have learned from their siblings with a disability or special health care needs.

Session 2050 – My TSBVI Journey: A Parent’s Perspective  
*Barbara Knighton, TSBVI Family Lynx Leader*  
Have you ever wondered about TSBVI (Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired) and what is it like to have your child attend a residential school? Barbara will explain her journey from becoming a family leader to having her son attend TSBVI full time. Topics covered: how it all began, DARS case manager (BCP specialist) involvement, baby steps, the battle to get in, adjusting to school away from home, finding ways to become involved (creating a hybrid PTO during COVID), going through transition to adulthood and planning for the future.

Session 2060 – Out of the Mouths of Babes  
*Mary Elizabeth Parker & Kristin Witte-Hubbard, U.R. Our Hope*  
Children with undiagnosed and rare disorders need to be heard. We need to learn about their experiences to improve how we engage and interact with them and the medical profession. U.R. Our Hope presentation will highlight the insights of children who know what it is like to travel the diagnostic journey. Through their eyes, you will hear about resources and supports for those with undiagnosed and rare disorders.

Session 2110 – Los Programas Opcionales de Medicaid  
*Gilda Gil, Pasos del Norte*  
En esta sesión, los participantes se familiarizarán con los programas opcionales de Medicaid en Texas. Especialmente saber que hay largas listas de espera para recibir los servicios por consecuencia, es importante que entendamos qué son estos programas y qué opciones hay para las personas con discapacidades.
Session 2130 – Guardianship and Alternatives to Guardianship
Alison Packard, Packard Law Firm

When a child with disabilities becomes a legal adult, how does a parent continue to protect and make decisions for that child? Alison will discuss the guardianship option as well as alternatives to the guardianship, such as powers of attorney, supported decision-making agreements, special needs trusts and representative payees. She will suggest factors to consider in determining the best course of action for your adult child. Alison will also provide an overview of the guardianship process in Texas, including the timeline, court procedures, options for limited guardianship, requirements for maintaining the guardianship and tips for a smooth proceeding.

Session 2131 – Transition ACTION Groups: From Vision to Action!
Denise Sonleitner, TxP2P

Often, when parents think about all the components of transition, they can get overwhelmed and paralyzed into inaction, which can lead to fear and a feeling of hopelessness. Parents struggle to imagine a safe, happy and productive life for their children with disabilities as adults. Transition Action Groups (TAGs) are a great way for a group of families to work together on not only visualizing transition, but also on supporting each other to achieve their transition goals and objectives. In this introductory presentation, Denise will discuss how TAGs can help families prepare for all stages of transition.

Session 3040 – Peace of Mind Planning: Key Steps to Protect Your Child
Ivy Goldstein & Elizabeth Tucker, DSHS CSHCN & EveryChild, Inc.

Parents, understandably, are overwhelmed at the thought of a time when they can no longer provide and/or oversee their child’s daily needs. None of us, though, are protected from unexpected events or the inevitable. Planning helps support a good, meaningful life for our children and avoid a crisis. Join Ivy and Elizabeth to learn the top 3 things needed to put a simple – but essential – plan in place, just in case. They will share what works and what doesn’t, and you’ll leave with key information down on paper. Ivy and Elizabeth know it’s not easy but want to help you take the first steps!

Session 3041 – Grief and the Stages of Adaptation
Greta James-Maxfield & Patty Geisinger, TxP2P

Learn to make sense of the emotions you may be experiencing, how grief applies to being a parent of a child with a disability or special health care need and how to identify the stages that most parents experience on this journey.
### Session 3042 – Texas School Safety Center-School Safety Updates

**Nate Turner, Texas School Safety Center**

Nate will provide an overview of the Texas School Safety Center, resources available, mandates, Upcoming projections, and answer your questions.

### Session 3043 – Fostering Healthy Relationships Between Siblings

**Lauren Gerken, Brianna TenBrink & Sabrina Gonzalez**

Learn about fostering healthy, supportive and fair relationships between siblings who have different ability levels. You will hear the perspective of siblings with and without disabilities, who will discuss the sibling dynamic from childhood through adulthood, parental influence, support, advocacy and family dynamics.

### Session 3070 – Trauma Informed Care

**Holly Fullmer, HHS**

We will be exploring how stress and trauma impacts our bodies and brains and how we can respond and deal with the impact through trauma-informed practices.

### Session 3110 – Care for the Caregiver

**Martha Aguilar, TxP2P**

Necesitamos encontrar el tiempo para cuidar de nosotros mismos. Sin embargo, eso puede ser todo un reto cuando nuestros hijos están pequeños, enfermos o tienen problemas en la escuela o de comportamiento. Sabemos que es importante empezar a dedicarnos 5 minutos de cuidado a nosotros mismos. En esta plática estaremos hablando de estrategias que le ayudarán a empezar o a tener un mejor cuidado de su persona y de esta forma pueda cuidar mejor de sus hijos.

### Session 3120 – Texas Legislative Update

**Steven Aleman, Disability Rights Texas**

The 88th Legislature Regular Session began in January 2023 and ran through the end of May 2023. This year state lawmakers considered several topics that are important to students with disabilities. Steven will explain which special education bills passed and what comes next.

### Session 3130 – Work is Possible When You Get SSI!

**Mary Jane Williams, Family to Family Network**

Too often families & youth with disabilities think that they cannot work and still get SSI/Medicaid. This is far from the truth! Mary Jane will discuss work incentives, especially for youth who are still in high school, that can be used to keep SSI and Medicaid.
Session 4010 – Inclusive Recreation Starter Kit: Participation Tools

Erin Fogarty, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service & TCDD

Families and self-advocates are often aware of specialized and adapted recreation resources within their communities. But what if self-advocates or youth would like to participate in an activity that includes both people with and without disabilities? Erin will provide strategies to talk with community organizations about the benefits of and approaches to providing inclusive recreation. Self-advocates and family members will leave with practical resources to help guide this discussion to promote inclusive participation.

Session 4030 – Early Childhood Handbook

Ali Baucom, BCBA, LBA Baucom Behavioral

Building big skills in little kids - get a taste of applied behavior analysis (ABA) while learning in-the-moment tools for responding to common early childhood challenges in a way that strengthens more beneficial skills. Ali will touch on boundary setting, sibling conflict, responding to lying, and shaping big skills like communication, regulation and problem-solving skills, designed for parents, grandparents, teachers and other caregivers.

Session 4040 – Navigating Family Relationships

Michelle Tate

We all know that parenting is hard. We all know parenting a child with a disability is hard. It is even more complex when navigating the relationship between siblings when there is more than one child with a disability. This can also impact the relationship of the caregivers. We often do not have the ability to "just find a sitter" for a date night. Michelle will give tips, guidance and suggestions on how to manage these relationships. You are not alone in this journey.

Session 4060 – Building the Medial Home of your Dreams

Maureen Benschoter & Greta James-Maxfield, TxP2p

You should feel welcomed, heard and understood at your child's doctor's office. Your child's doctor should be a champion for your child's healthcare. Everybody deserves patient centered medical care that is compassionate, continuous, comprehensive, coordinated and culturally effective. Patients should feel they are equal partners with medical providers. Join Maureen and Greta to learn how to build the medical home of your dreams. You will come away with the tools to build and shape the care team that meets your needs.

Session 4110 – Mindfulness para Mejorar nuestro Bienestar Emocional

Isabel Rivera

Mindfulness es una práctica que consiste en una serie de ejercicios que ayudan a prestar atención al presente, a no vivir en el pasado ni abrumarse tanto por el futuro. Mindfulness también es un estado de ánimo, una forma de ver y vivir la vida que ofrece beneficios como aprender a manejar el estrés y la ansiedad. Te hablaré más de lo que es, los beneficios y cómo poder incorporar el mindfulness a tu vida diaria.
Session 4120 – First Steps Toward Inclusion
Deborah Tomai, Rio Grande Valley Down Syndrome Association
Deborah is reaching out to all parents but especially those who have young children who are just beginning the journey of inclusion. What vision do you have for your child’s life? How can you help your child get off to a good start? Learn why inclusion is important in the community, school and life in general. Deborah will also give parents tools to advocate for inclusion in preschool, PreK and early elementary.

Session 4130 – Who Gets Invited to the Party: Transition Services
Christine Broughal & Mara LaViola
The more the merrier when it comes to transition planning, and it should not be a surprise party or a belated one. Learn who should be invited, how that invitation should come about, and what kind of services and supports should be offered at the party. As always, Christine and Mara bring new perspectives and insights to effective transition planning as the Texas Workforce Commission is not the only invitee.

Session 4131 – Health Care Transition: Partnering with the School Team
Ivy Goldstein & Amy Litzinger, DSHS CSHCN and TxP2P
Moving from pediatric to adult-based care isn’t an automatic, seamless process for youth with disabilities and/or chronic medical conditions. Whether your child plans to work, pursue higher education, volunteer or do something else, having their health in check is a foundation for their good life. Let’s make preparing for adult health care easier by partnering with the school team when transition planning begins at age 14. Join Amy (a self-advocate) and Ivy (parent-professional) who will share personal experiences and insights about this essential transition. You’ll take away tools and sample IEP goals to promote your child's good and healthy life in adulthood.

Session 5020 – Autistic Burnout: Prevention & Recovery
Jacquie Benestante, Monica Díaz & Joe Carr, Autism Society of Texas
Adults with autism will present on masking, burnout and how to prevent burnout from happening. They will also discuss strategies for self-care and recovering from burnout. This information will be helpful for parents & caregivers to know and understand as they raise their child, and also informative for adults with autism.
Session 5040 – Developing a Person Centered One Page Description
*Jeff Garrison-Tate*
A One Page Description (OPD) offers a brief snapshot of what is important to a person, what supports they need, and what other like and admire about the person. One Page Descriptions are created for a specific purpose. An OPD is a person-centered skill that can be used by anyone to provide specific and immediate information with multiple uses.

Session 5041 – Care for the Caregiver
*Greta James-Maxfield & Patty Geisinger, Txp2p*
We all need to find time to care for ourselves! But that can be such a challenge when our children are young, ill or struggling with health, behaviors or school issues! We know it is important to begin with just 5 minutes of self-care. Let’s chat about all the ways we can reconnect with ways to care for ourselves so we can care for our children!

Session 5042 – Personal Support Networks: Do-It-Yourself or...Together!
*Denise Sonleitner, Txp2p*
Are you ready to get started? Come learn how to start a personal support network for your child, step-by-step and side-by-side with other parents. This session is for families who attended the Personal Support Networks presentation on Friday morning or are already familiar with networks. Denise will cover all the steps to starting a personal network, do-it-yourself (DIY) style. During the session, we will work together in small groups, identifying possible network members and developing network goals. Parents agree that the hardest thing about personal networks is getting started, so join us and encourage fellow parents to take the first steps.

Session 5090 – If I Ran the World: Self-Advocates Redesign Texas!
*Amy Litzinger & panel*
Come hear from a self-advocate panel about how we could redesign our lives for a more perfect world; recommendations, changes, person-directed plans. Harnessing the power to determine our lives! All self-advocates are welcome to join our panel speakers up front or stay in the audience, as you wish!

Session 5110 – Introducción a la Educación en el Hogar
*Isabel Rivera*
En esta presentación aprenderás más sobre el proceso de educación en el hogar. Además, la presentadora compartirá su experiencia con diferentes curriculums, reglas en Texas, y que les ha funcionado y no desde su experiencia educando en casa a dos niños durante los últimos 10 años, incluido un hijo con habilidades diferentes.
Session 5120 – Code Switching: Framing Special Education (SPED) Learning Outcomes
Shailen Singh, Assistant Professor at Texas State University
Shailen will provide a primer on how to create intentional learning outcomes appropriate for IEPs. He will also help you understand: 1) the basic SPED law/IEP creation processes 2) the steps/characteristics associated with a well written learning outcome 3) how to turn desired skillsets for your children into outcomes appropriate for SPED related conversations.

Session 5130 – Transition 101: Beyond the Red Tape
Cindi Paschall, TxP2P Volunteer
Goal for this session…explore transition services and tips for creating a meaningful transition for your child and point you in a direction to learn more. Cindi will cover topics on starting early, identifying your beliefs, creating a vision, considering all aspects of life, researching possibilities, self-determination, self-advocacy, letting go, government funded programs and understanding eligibility requirements.

Session 6020 – Misconceptions of ABA Therapy
Wendy Cassman-Maurer, Cole Health
Wendy will discuss the misconceptions of Applied Behavior Analysis therapy from the course of disability history. What is ABA therapy and how can we continue to grow in ABA therapy with statewide expansion and accountability measures? Learn about access to ABA therapy in the state of Texas and access to free ABA programs.

Session 6040 – End of Continuous Medicaid Coverage Update
Rachel Patton, Kelli Williams & Gina Carter, HHCS
On December 29, 2022, Congress passed the 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act, which separated the continuous coverage requirement from the PHE declaration. HHSC began unwinding Medicaid continuous coverage effective April 1, 2023. This session will provide information on ongoing activities related to the end of continuous Medicaid coverage.

Session 6070 – Strategies for Helping Children and Teens Manage Stress
Laura Frame, Ph.D., L.P., L.S.S.P., N.C.S.P.
Laura will discuss and illustrate how stress impacts our brains, and then teach how self-compassion can be a useful tool to combat stress. She will engage you in a few guided exercises, so you are able to understand how to utilize self-compassion to cope with stress. Laura will also provide a list of resources to use as you work to incorporate self-compassion into your child’s day-to-day life.
Session 6080 – Learn More About Being a Parent Leader
Linda & Amy Litzinger, TxP2P
Join us for an informal discussion about leadership, how you can become a family or parent leader and how you, your family and your community will benefit.

Session 6090 – Equal Power Because it’s the Right Thing To Do!
Ty & Aimee Day, Parent and Self-Advocate
Have you ever felt powerless at school? Like you have no choice and control over your education or goals? Join Ty, and his mother Aimee, as he shares his story of how they used trauma-informed care and person-centered thinking to help him grow into a young man who is a strong self-advocate and has equal power when he is working with his IEP team to plan for his future.

Session 6110 – ¿Cuál es la gran idea detrás de la inclusión?
Veronica Alvarez, Partners Resource Network
El propósito de este taller es proveer una perspectiva general sobre lo que es la inclusión y su importancia en la educación y desarrollo de los niños con y sin discapacidades. Veremos lo que significa la inclusión, sus beneficios para los niños de todas las edades y cómo esta se incorpora en el marco de IDEA. También exploraremos algunos principios fundamentales de IDEA y como éstos afectan los esfuerzos de integración a los niños con discapacidades.

Session 6120 – Homeschooling the Hard-to-Teach Child
Carla A. Scruggs, TxP2P Volunteer
Parents will learn about the opportunities and advantages that come with homeschooling from a parent who homeschooled for twelve years. Carla will discuss how challenges like autism, ADHD, dyspraxia, and anxiety can affect learning and some ways to address those challenges. She will also discuss how developing competence in your child can help with self-esteem and confidence, which can lead to the desire to try new things. Carla will cover homeschool methods, choosing curriculum, setting flexible routines and how to use daily activities for learning as well as how to help your child not be overwhelmed.

Session 6130 – Demystifying Workplace Accommodations
Betsy Furler, For All Abilities
Moving into the workplace can be overwhelming for a young person with special needs. Accommodations or supports in the workplace can level the playing field. Betsy will introduce you to some great ideas for accommodations and methods to figure out what accommodations are needed for the job.
Session 7020 - Early Intervention in Autism
Wendy Cassman-Maurer, Cole Health

Learn about early identification of autism and interventions to help aide support! Wendy will cover free statewide resources that are accessible in aiding therapy and school-based interventions. Creating programs to help generalize skills from school to home and community to school, there are a vast number of resources to help aide yourself, child, student or patient. Wendy will be interactive with you to help identify and provide a resource to help gain access to many free interventions that are out there!

Session 7040 – Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Planning and Responding to Emergencies or Disasters
Lisa Treleaven & Greta James-Maxfield, TxP2P

Do you and your family have a plan to rescue yourselves in case of an emergency at home or school? What about in case of an area-wide disaster? Have you been working on a plan? Maybe it's on a to-do list that you just don't know where to start, when it's finished or what you don't know? Join Greta and make plans A, B, C, & D to safeguard your home & each member of your family including those whose condition, healthcare equipment, prescriptions and nutritional needs require careful attentive planning and resources daily.

Session 7041 – Vision Building: Creating a Life Full of Possibilities
Cindi Paschall, TxP2P Volunteer

Do you struggle to get through the day? Overwhelmed when thinking about what the future holds for your child? Wish you had a crystal ball? If you answered yes to these questions, you won’t want to miss this session! Join Cindi as she explores tips, tools and strategies to help you (and your child) move from fear of the unknown to a vision with hopes and dreams for the future and an action-oriented plan to achieve them.

Session 7050 – Calm Seas or Stormy Seas? How’s That Reading Weather?
Linda Whitman & Lois Holguin

Your child is struggling to read? Linda and Lois know you're right! They will help with topics including 2021 Texas Dyslexia Handbook, IDEA, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, assessments, data, strategies and programming. Did you know Dyslexia affects math? Dyscalculia! Welcome Aboard!
Session 7090 – A Peer Support Specialist View of IDD and Mental Health Services

Jordan Smelley, Self-Advocate

Jordan will start with his story including barriers he faced and had to overcome in order to gain access to needed IDD and Mental Health services and supports. Then he will cover what peer support is, what Peer Support Specialist do and don’t do and briefly cover the Texas Medicaid Billable Peer Support Certifications and where to find more information on them. Finally, before ending with a 15-minute Q&A session, Jordan will cover how individuals with IDD can benefit from Peer Support including covering relevant part of the Texas Administrative Code for Texas HCBS Waivers Providers.

Session 7100 – Self-Determination in Early Childhood

Aubri Simpson, Manifest Academy

Aubri will cover the 6 components of self-determination and how you can support your children in early childhood to meet their academic and social goals.

Session 7110 – Taller de Transición 101

Martha Aguilar y Dora Saavedra, TxP2P

El objetivo del Taller de Transición 101 es proporcionar a los participantes una visión general completa de las estrategias, recursos y puntos a considerar a medida que las familias comienzan a crear una vida de calidad con y para sus hijos después de la graduación.

Session 7120 – Procedural Safeguards & ARD Guide: Know Your Rights

Tara Williams

People with disabilities have important rights. They can’t always stand up for themselves, so there are laws to protect them. As a parent, you need to know about these laws and the different ways they protect your child. The Procedural Safeguards protect the rights of students with disabilities and their parents. These safeguards include the right to participate in all meetings, examine all educational records and obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of the student. Parents also have the right to Prior Written Notice when the school proposes to change or refuses to change their child’s identification, evaluation or placement.
Martha Aguilar
Martha is the Co-Coordinator of the Family Support Program at TxP2P. She coordinates parent matching and follow-up and provides bilingual parent and volunteer support. Martha and her husband, Rene, have 3 children, two boys and a girl. Their youngest, Angela, has Down syndrome. **TxP2P Staff**

Steven Aleman
Steven is a Senior Policy Specialist with Disability Rights Texas in Austin. He guides advocacy efforts aimed at improving the state’s laws and policies for special education. Prior to joining Disability Rights Texas, Steven had many years of experience in policy analysis, law, mediation, and teaching. Steven has a Master of Public Affairs degree from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, and a J.D. degree from the Law School at George Washington University in Washington, DC.

Shemica Allen
Shemica is the owner of Personalized Learning Solutions, LLC, and a former educator with over 15 years of special education teaching and administration experience. She has experience as a Lead Case Manager/Response to Intervention Coordinator, Special Education Team Lead/Administrator and Vocational Adjustment Coordinator. She also has experience as a Life Skills Teacher, Content Mastery Teacher, Homebound Teacher and In-Home Trainer. Currently, she is a Special Education Advocate Training (SEAT) Instructor for COPAA where she helps to train others to advocate for students with disabilities. Shemica has attended hundreds of ARD/IEP, 504 and Student Support Team (SST) meetings.

Veronica Alvarez
Veronica is a Regional Coordinator at Partners Resource Network TEAM Project in the Region 13 Austin area since 2017. Previously, she helped families of children with disabilities as part of the Board of the Texas Association of Parents with Children with Visual Impairments with different roles for several years. She has a master’s degree in medicine Pediatrics from the Universidad de Monterrey (UDEM) in Mexico.

Ali Baucom, BCBA, LBA
Ali is a certified special educator and behavior analyst with nearly 20 years of experience working with young children and their caregivers. She has taught in inclusive preschools, trained teachers and pediatric therapists and managed therapy programs in homes, clinics and non-profits. Since 2013, she has provided parent and professional coaching services based on the principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA) through her private practice, Baucom Behavioral.

Jacquie Benestante
Jacquie is the Executive Director at the Autism Society of Texas (AST). She serves on the Autism Society of America’s Public Policy Advocacy Committee and works on state advocacy issues, including coordinating Texas Autism Advocacy Day as well as AST’s education events and programs.

Maureen Benschoter
Maureen is a retired internist and mother of George, a 21-year-old with complex medical needs. She has served as a family advocate on local and national projects working to improve systems of care for children with medical complexity. Maureen has very recent lived experience in building a medical home as George transitions from pediatric to adult medical care. **TxP2P Contractor.**

Christine Broughal
Christine has been advocating for children with disabilities for over a decade. As a person with a disability, mother of children with disabilities, an attorney and former certified teacher, she brings a unique perspective and extensive skills set. Christine advocates at the individual level, working with families to ensure their children receive the services they need, and at the State level as CEO of Texans for SPED Reform, alongside other advocacy groups to bring about positive and meaningful legislative change. In 2017, Christine was recognized by TxP2P for her legislative efforts to improve the preparation of general educators to teach students with disabilities.
Sue Burek
Sue is the parent of an adult child with disabilities who receives Medicaid, Medicare and Medicaid waiver services; an advocate for people with disabilities, and a member of three disability-based advocacy organizations: Texas Parent to Parent, Protect Texas Fragile Kids and Loving Hearts for All. Sue is also a retired state employee with 36 years of experience working with Texas Medicaid and other disability programs. After she retired, she was appointed by HHSC to serve on a Medicaid Advisory Committee, the IDD System Redesign Advisory Committee (IDD SRAC), where she advocates for people with disabilities who receive Medicaid Waiver services. Txp2p Volunteer.

Rosalba Calleros
Rosalba is the Executive Director and Family Support Co-Coordinator with TxP2P. Prior to TxP2P, she worked as a parent educator at Children's Disabilities Information Coalition (CDIC) in El Paso. In May 2009, she received her master's degree in Bilingual Education at the University of Texas at El Paso. Rosalba has a daughter born in 2012 and a son born in 1999 who introduced her to the disability world. This experience has taught her that parent-to-parent support is extremely important for the families of children with disabilities and has inspired her to provide support to other families since 2007. Rosalba’s main mission is to encourage parents to feel empowered and help their children to reach their highest potential with meaningful lives. TxP2P Staff

Joe Carr
Joe is a dedicated volunteer with the Autism Society of Texas, and currently chairs their Autistic Adult Advisory Panel (AAAP). He is an entrepreneur and community builder, founding a successful baby food company.

Regina (Gina) Carter
Gina is the Senior Advisor to the Deputy Executive Commissioner (DEC) of Access and Eligibility Services (AES). The AES manages the day-to-day operations, whose major responsibilities include oversight of over 9,000 employees who connect more than six million Texans to services, such as Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP (food assistance) and TANF (cash assistance). AES also develops and implements eligibility policy directed by the Legislature, state leadership and the federal government; and identifies and implements business process changes to increase operational efficiencies. Gina graduated from Texas State University with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. She has over 30 years of State service.

Wendy Cassman-Maurer
Wendy is a former special education teacher for over 10 years, with experience in early childhood, elementary, middle school, home services and community-based training. She holds her master’s degree from TAMU in Educational Psychology with a focus in Applied Behavior Analysis. She works in the greater Houston community for Cole Health with her passion in ABA therapy. She has created partnerships with UT Health and Baylor College of Medicine in training medical providers in early intervention therapy in ABA, speech, occupational and physical therapy. She is co-founder of Eagle Pass HEROES and on the Board of Directors for FEAT of Houston.

Stefan Cole
Stefan is from Gilmer, East Texas, and is a self-advocate and a TxP2P board member. He and his wife, Sarah, parent and homeschool their two sons with disabilities. Stefan is an avid researcher and an active leader in his community. He also enjoys camping and fishing.
Speaker Biographies

Adriana Crostley
Adriana is the Bilingual Project Support Specialist at Autism Society of Texas. She was a former physician in Mexico City and is also the parent of a son with autism who has high support needs. She hosts weekly Spanish support groups statewide, coordinates Spanish education events and presents for Autism Society of Texas. Adriana was also instrumental in the creation of the Autism Society of Texas' Spanish autism website!

Ty Day
Ty is a Junior at Bryan High School and a member of the Junior Varsity Tennis Team. He likes to do the best he can, and help others learn how to listen to their kids when they need help. It makes him happy to be seen as an equal and as a cool person on the inside. He enjoys drawing and spending time with people who care about him.

Monica Diaz
Monica discovered her neurodivergence (autism, ADHD, and OCD) in adulthood. She founded Autistic Freedom as a way to help others, and previously worked with hundreds of individuals diagnosed with autism and their caregivers. She is a member of the Autism Society of Texas’ Autistic Adult Advisory Panel.

Erin Fogarty
Erin has worked in clinical and community settings as a recreational therapist and wellness program manager. She has supported children and adults with chronic health conditions and disabilities in their goals to improve their health, gain community inclusion and quality of life; and has worked to reduce health disparities for people with disabilities. Erin currently serves as the North Regional Coordinator for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in partnership with Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. She has two school-age children with developmental disabilities.

Laura Frame, Ph.D., L.P., L.S.S.P., N.C.S.P.
Dr. Frame is both a Licensed Psychologist and a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology. She practices in the central Texas area and offers comprehensive psychological evaluations, independent educational evaluations and therapy. She has an extensive background in educational settings and has also worked in community mental health and hospital placements. Dr. Frame’s experience encompasses a variety of challenges including learning difficulties, autism spectrum disorders, developmental delays, depression, anxiety, behavioral problems, attention disorders and other health impairments.

Holly Fullmer
Holly holds a master's degree in Christian Counseling from Cairn University in Pennsylvania. She is a Certified Disaster Crisis Outreach Referral Professional and a certified Trauma Competent Professional. Holly began her career in the field of child welfare before shifting her focus to mental health. She is an experienced trainer of trauma-informed care, suicide prevention, mental health wellness, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and a Master Trainer for Road to Recovery. Holly currently works at the Texas Health and Human Services Commission in the Office of Mental Health Coordination as the Trauma-Informed Policy and Training Specialist.

Betsy Furler
Betsy is the founder of For All Abilities. She is passionate about optimizing the strengths of all people. At For All Abilities, Betsy leads the development of a solution that enables employers to easily and inexpensively support the unique strengths, needs and preferences of their employees. Betsy enjoys speaking about the value of our differences, workplace accommodations, technology and accessibility. She has spoken at national and international conferences including South by Southwest (SXSW) and TEDX. She earned a BA from Austin College and an MS in Communication Disorders from UT Dallas. She is a certified speech pathologist.
Jeff Garrison-Tate
Jeff has supported people with disabilities and their families for more than 40 years. He has held positions as a direct support professional, special education teacher, community advocacy organizer and a policy manager. He is one of the founders of Community Now! a non-profit organization that advocates for community inclusion. Jeff is also a founding partner of the Institute on Person Centered Practices and a certified Mentor Trainer with The Learning Community on Person Centered Practices. He is the founder and CEO for Better Lives, LP. Jeff lives in Bryan and has seven children, all of which are amazing.

Patty Geisinger
Patty is a TxP2P founding mother and volunteer on the Family Support Team. She is married to Joe and has 4 grown children (Josh, Jessica, Libby and Mary) and three amazing granddaughters (Aubrey, Abby and Ava). Daughter Jessica is 32, has cerebral palsy, seizures, microcephaly, and a recently diagnosed genetic condition called Cardiofaciocutaneous Syndrome (CFC).

TxP2P Staff
Laura Gerken
Laura is a public policy analyst for the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities, focusing on policy issues such as Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), guardianship, Intellectual or Development Disability (IDD) peer support. and more. She is the younger sister of a wonderful brother, has dystonia and cerebral palsy, and is a Ph.D. student in Adult Education at Texas State University.

Gilda Gil
Gilda is the Chief Operations Officer at the Paso del Norte Children’s Development Center, a non-profit organization that serves children with disabilities and special health care needs and their families. She is the mother of two children, a 26-year-old son that is deaf, has autism and an intellectual disability and a 20-year-old son that is neurotypical. She has dedicated herself to learn more about disabilities ever since her son was diagnosed. She has a Master’s Degree in Counseling. She now has more than 18 years of experience in working with families and children with disabilities.

Ivy Goldstein
Ivy is the State Health Coordinator for the Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) Program within the Texas Department of State Health Services. She oversees and supports numerous projects focused on improving the health, well-being and quality of life for children with disabilities and their families. Ivy is mom to two wonderful young adults, including Sophie, who has a diagnosis of Mowat-Wilson Syndrome. Sophie reminds Ivy every day that communities are strengthened when everyone is included, and everyone belongs.

Sabrina Gonzalez
Sabrina is a public policy analyst with the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD). In her role, she monitors disability issues in Texas and conducts activities that advance TCDD’s public policy priorities. Apart from working in the realm of public policy, Sabrina is also the older sibling of an adult with IDD and began her advocacy journey advocating for her sibling in the K-12 setting.

Martine Gould
Martine is a genetic counselor who has worked for major genetic testing companies over her career. With experience and contacts in the state and nationally, she is a vital resource to many families. Martine serves as the Genomics Consultant for the U.R. Our Hope.

Lois Holguin
Lois is an Educational Consultant & Advocate, Dyslexia coach, patient advocate, ex foster parent, with a BA in History and a minor in everything. Lois is also the parent of children who have dyslexia.
Barbara Knighton
Barbara is currently the Family Leader and co-founder for Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) Family Lynx, the family organization for the school. Her son is 18, a senior and has attended the school for 4 years. He has multiple impairments aside from his low vision. He has been in the special education system since he was 8 months old. Barbara is an avid advocate for students with disabilities and has been involved with family engagement for many years. Barbara enjoys connecting with families and helping them find the resources they need to assist and advocate for their children.

Mara LaViola
Mara is a graduate of Cornell University and the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. Mara advocates for children and youth with disabilities on the national, state and local levels to promote policy that enhances the lives of individuals with disabilities. Mara has won many awards for her advocacy and legislative work and has authored legislation passed at the state level. She was a member of the Council for Parent Attorneys and Advocates; a board member of the National Autism Association of North Texas; and is currently serving as a Board member of the Autism Society of Texas and the CEO for Texans for Special Education Reform.

Jess Ledesma
Jess retired after 25+ years of service to our country from the Marine Corps. He participates in the Down Syndrome Buddy Walk and helps his family when the need arises. He has a sister and a niece with Down syndrome.

Mary Jane Ledesma
Mary Jane is a member of the TxP2P Bilingual Family Support team and a conference speaker since 2009. She worked with the Family Advocacy Network (FAN) for Hays CISD. She has worked for over 42 years as a bilingual teacher for Austin ISD. MJ received her master’s degree in education at UT Austin in May 1981. She is a 1995 graduate of the Texas Council for Development Disabilities Partners in Policymaking program. May Jane and her husband of 36 years have four children ages 35, 32, 31 and 30. MJ has a sister and a daughter with Down syndrome. TxP2P Staff

Amy Litzinger
Amy is on the TxP2P Parent Leadership and Advocacy team, helping self-advocates and parents with whatever advocacy goals they have, including with agencies, legislators and advisory committees. Amy chairs TEA’s Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education and is Vice Chair of HHSC’s IDD System Redesign Advisory Committee. She holds degrees in English and Political Science from Southwestern University, and a MATS from Austin Seminary. TxP2P Staff

Linda Litzinger
Linda is on the TxP2P Parent Leadership and Advocacy team. She helps families to be appointed to state committees, to find the correct person at state agencies to solve issues, to meet legislators to file bills and to build a coalition with other groups addressing an issue. Linda serves on a higher education committee for persons with IDD and various task forces. She is the parent of self-advocate, Amy Litzinger. TxP2P Staff
Ron Lucey
Ron is the Executive Director of the Texas Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities and previously worked for the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) in several positions. He is a graduate of the University of Texas with degrees in government and communications. His perspective as a person with a vision disability has helped him effectively advocate for accessibility and the rights of Texans with disabilities. Ron served as an Austin city commissioner and chair of the Austin Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities, providing accessibility policy recommendations to the City Council and Austin’s previous five mayors. He is also the father of a young woman with a visual impairment.

Greta James Maxfield
Greta comes to Texas Parent to Parent by way of El Paso where most of her childhood years were spent with her family blending the culture & customs of the west Texas border with South Carolina roots. Following her move to Austin, she earned her Bachelors in the College of Natural Science at the University of Texas at Austin. Greta assists callers seeking information on resources, coordinates mentor matching and is the Coordinator of the TxP2P Medical Education Program and recruits Family Faculty to help train medical residents. She and her husband have a son who has autism and is nearly 24 years old.

TxP2P Staff

Aimee Ortiz-Day
Aimee is the mother of two young men who are talented, funny, kind and have a disability. As a certified Person-Centered Thinking trainer, she strives to incorporate Person-Centered Practices in all aspects of her professional and personal life. Aimee has spoken at multiple conferences and provided training for educators, law enforcement officers, individuals with disabilities, families and professionals.

Alison Packard
Alison is a special needs planning attorney with the Packard Law Firm in San Antonio. Her practice focuses on estate planning (including special needs trusts), guardianship, alternatives to guardianship, general probate work and government benefits eligibility. Alison’s passion for her practice comes from her personal life as the mother to a beautiful 29-year-old daughter with significant special needs. Alison knows what it means to fight for a child with disabilities. She understands the worry that parents have as they plan for children who will always need resources, supports and services. Alison finds joy in helping others on this journey.

Mary Elizabeth Parker
Dr. Parker received her undergraduate degree at Duke University in 1991 with a double major in biological psychology and physical anthropology. Her Master’s in Physical Therapy was awarded in 1995 from the Medical College of Virginia and her doctorate in Physical Therapy in 2012 from Texas Woman’s University. She is dually licensed in Texas and Connecticut, and is board certified in both neurologic and pediatric therapy by the Academy of Board Certified Physical Therapy Specialists, which is unique in the field. Her passion is working with those with undiagnosed and rare disorders, and she serves this community through her role as the Medical Liaison for U.R. Our Hope.

Cindi Paschall
Cindi is a parent passionately involved in advancing the human rights of personas with disabilities. She has dedicated the past 26 years to advocacy and applying her personal experience and knowledge in helping others. Over the years, Cindi has worked and also volunteered for various organizations designed to help people with disabilities live their desired lifestyle. Currently, Cindi serves as a co-presenter for the Texas Parent to Parent Pathways to Adulthood (PTA) Workshop Series and is a Regional Partner for the Navigate Life Texas website project. TxP2P Contractor.
Rachel Patton
Rachel is the Deputy Associate Commissioner of Program Enrollment and Support in Medicaid and CHIP Services. Rachel began her career at the Department of Human Services in 1998 as a case worker for Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities. Through the years, Rachel has held various positions in Access in Eligibility Services and Medicaid CHIP Services including serving as a management analyst in Managed Care Compliance and Operations and as a Contract Administration Manager in Health, Developmental and Independence Services.

Isabel Rivera
Isabel has a BS in Psychology, MS in Mental Health Counseling (in training). She is also the proud mom of two sons, one of them on the spectrum. Isabel has also been a homeschool mom for more than 10 years.

Dora Saavedra
Dora has been working with Texas Parent to Parent since 2019. She provides support to parents seeking information on transition to adult life for their children with disabilities. She also offers support at training and conferences. Dora has 2 daughters. Her oldest daughter is 29 years old and was born at 24 weeks gestation and diagnosed with mild cerebral palsy, autism and intellectual disability. Txp2p Staff

Jairo Sanchez
Jairo is a 2011 graduate of Jack C. Hays High School in Kyle, Texas. He has worked with the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) as a lifeguard for eight years. He is currently a First Responder with the Travis County Fire Department. He has an aunt and a sister with Down Syndrome.

Javier Sanchez
Javier is a 2006 graduate of Jack C. Hays High School in Kyle, Texas. He is a 2012 graduate of Texas State University in San Marcos. He worked with Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) as a lifeguard for eight years; and is currently working for the school district. He has provided swimming lessons to children with disabilities and has an aunt and a sister with Down Syndrome.

Alison Schaberg
Allison has spent more than 25 years in the insurance and financial services industry. Owner and Managing Partner of Consolidated Planning Group, she operates an agency in Sugarland and serving Texas & clients throughout the U.S. Allison and her team are focused on helping their clients who have children with disabilities or special health care needs reach their financial goals and objectives through holistic and comprehensive financial planning.

Carla Scruggs
Carla homeschooled her two children for twelve years. Her children are variously diagnosed with autism, ADHD, sensory integration disorder and learning disabilities. They are now young adults - one went on to graduate from a major Texas university with a B.S. in Anthropology, the other completed a post-secondary certificate program at community college, and both became Eagle Scouts. Carla has a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and worked in that field for several years. She now enjoys helping families learn to work with their kids in a way that benefits the entire family.
Aubri Simpson
Aubri is the Executive Director of Manifest Academy, which is a vendor with the Health and Human Services Blind Children's Program and also, have supported the initiatives of the Early Childhood Intervention Agencies in San Antonio. She is also the President of the Parent Organization of the Texas Association of Parents with Children with Visual Impairments. Her background in Early Childhood Education from Career Point College has supported her endeavors in creating sustaining programs in San Antonio. She has been married to her husband, Toni, for 9 years and together they raise their sons.

Shailen Singh
Shailen is an Assistant Professor at Texas State University, in the Department of Organization, Workforce, & Leadership Studies. His research focuses on helping parents to understand and be successful in navigating disability-related administrative processes. **TxP2P Contractor**.

Jordan Smelley
Jordan is a certified Mental Health Peer Support Specialist in Texas and a person in long-term recovery from Intellectual and Developmental Differences with Co-occurring Mental Health challenges. He partly defines his own recovery in relation to the opportunities available to present and educate the community on topics around supporting individuals with IDD. Jordan prioritizes his ability to advocate for himself and others, as well as find robust resources to address ongoing issues that may present. He has created and delivered presentations to multiple conferences and other events and has been involved in IDD Peer Support projects throughout Texas.

Denise Sonleitner
Denise is the Co-Creator and Lead Facilitator of the Texas Network Connections Program at Texas Parent to Parent. Denise loves talking to other parents (and anyone else who will listen!) about personal networks and how this powerful tool helps families raising a child who has a disability. In 2010, with support from friends and family, the Sonleitners started a personal network for their son Maverick, known as 'MavMen.' Her past service includes: Austin Mayor’s Committee for People with Disabilities, Texas Parent to Parent Board of Directors & Chairperson, Children’s Policy Council, StarKids Advisory Council and Partners in Policymaking. **TxP2P Contractor**

Michelle Tate
Michelle is the mother of 3 children, each of which has a different disability. Her desire to best assist them led her to change career paths and teach special education. Michelle and her husband continue to navigate this unplanned journey to help their sons be the best they can be.

Briaanna TenBrink
Brianna serves as the Leadership and Advocacy Program Manager at the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. Brianna is a graduate and now leader of the Texas Partners in Policymaking program. She strives to combine her experience as the eldest sibling to two younger sisters on the autism spectrum and her passion for developing the potential of others to train self-advocates, family members and disability professionals on how to implement or advocate for improvements to services, conditions and family supports for individuals with disabilities.

Deborah Tomai
Deborah is co-founder and current president of the Rio Grande Valley Down Syndrome Association. She is a 2018 graduate of Texas Partners in Policymaking, and also served as the Regional Facilitator for the RGV TX Partners class of 2018-2019. Deborah has worked to educate herself and other parents about advocacy, person-centered planning, inclusive education and more. She has served locally as a parent leader with Easterseals RGV and McAllen Mamas of Children with Disabilities and is a cofounder of the RGV Disability Advocates Coalition. She is married to Emmett and mom to three great kids: Evan, Corrie and Ben.
**Speaker Biographies**

**Lisa Treleaven**
Lisa received a Doctor of Education in Executive Leadership in Mental Health and Human Services and a Master of Arts in psychology from Houston Christian University. She has three wonderful children, one of whom has complex medical needs, including a tracheostomy. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor, an experienced family advisor on the topic of children with special health care needs and a consultant in the fields of education and mental health. Her work centers around amplifying valuable patient and family voices to improve physical and mental health care. Lisa and her family are passionate about advocating for individuals with disabilities and supporting their families and the professionals who serve them.

**Elizabeth Tucker**
Elizabeth, Executive Director of EveryChild, Inc. has over 39 years of experience in advocacy, policy and program development to support children and adults to receive the supports they need to live in the community. She has a deep understanding of the Texas system of services and supports for individuals with disabilities including Medicaid and waiver services. She actively works with families to access the services that they need and provides recommendations to Texas state agencies on needed improvements. Elizabeth believes all children and adults should be supported to live a full and inclusive life surrounded by friends and family.

**Nate Turner**
Nate is the Associate Director of School Safety Readiness at the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC). Nate has spent time in law enforcement, the military and the education field. He was a patrol officer for Lake Jackson Police Department, a Counterintelligence Special Agent for the U.S. Army and spent 16 years in public education. After his time in the classroom, Nate moved into administration where he was an assistant principal. Nate then became the Safety and Security Director for a west Texas school district before taking on the role of Associate Director of School Safety Readiness at the TxSSC.

**Linda Whitman**
Linda is an Educational Consultant & Advocate after retiring as an educator. She holds certifications in Clinical Supervision, Mid Management with a MS Ed in Secondary Education and is a Dallas County CASA advocate.

**Kelli Williams**
Kelli works for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and has served in several positions. Currently serving as the Interim Director of Community Engagement, Kelli has spearheaded the Community Partner Program, a highly successful initiative aimed at fostering collaboration between HHSC and community organizations. Under her guidance, the program has flourished, resulting in enhanced support and services for Texans. Kelli holds a Bachelor of Science degree and is currently pursuing her graduate studies. Above all, her greatest accomplishment is her family, and she lives by the motto: “Cinderella is proof that a new pair of shoes can change your life!”

**Mary Jane Williams**
As Executive Director of Family to Family Network, a Houston parent organization, Mary Jane knows how scary the future can look when parents take this journey alone and that finding services & support can be confusing for families. She works to break down barriers for families by helping families see possibilities and believes that children’s futures shouldn’t be dictated by a disability label. She is a Cornell University Work Incentive Practitioner and earned a Youth-C Work Incentive Certificate and enjoys sharing her experiences and the knowledge she gained from raising two successful adults.
Tara Williams M.A., M.Ed.
Tara is the mother of Aidan, 18, a recent graduate of Cinco Ranch High School who was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome at age 8. Tara has served in the special education classroom in various capacities on every level for 10 years. She currently works as an Educational Diagnostician in Katy ISD. Outside of school, Tara works to teach parents their rights & the rights of their students. Tara is married to Stephen, and together they have Aidan & Cody. They enjoy yelling for their beloved Aggie sports teams, travel and hanging out with their assorted pets.

Kayleigh Williamson, Keynote Speaker
Kayleigh is 33 and an amazing young woman with Down Syndrome. In 2017, she became the first person with Down Syndrome to complete the Austin Half Marathon. In 2022, she completed the Austin Marathon. As a result of her completing the marathon, the city of Austin issued a proclamation naming February 22, 2022, Kayleigh Williamson day. She has also completed a total of 20 half marathons. In April 2023, she made history again by becoming the first woman with Down Syndrome to participate in the Boston Marathon. Due to an injury, she had to stop the race at mile 21. Kayleigh continues to train for more races and has a goal of completing a half marathon in every state (5 so far). In 2019, she became a published author of a children's book about her first half marathon. Later this year, she will be featured as one of several avatars in a game created by the force behind Candy Crush, Mutant Ninja Turtles and Angry Birds. The game, Phenoms, will be based on actual athletes with different disabilities with the goal of bringing awareness worldwide to everyone’s abilities.

Sandy Williamson, Keynote Speaker
Sandy is Kayleigh’s mother (see above). She is a Certified Public Accountant in the food industry. She has been the caregiver for her daughter and her mother, who had Alzheimer’s. It was through her journey with her mother's illness and her job that she felt driven in 2014 to change both her and her daughter's lifestyle. She has completed 3 marathons and 30 half marathons, 20 of which were with Kayleigh. She is beside her daughter with every step of Kayleigh's races. Sandy is also a part of the Global Business Solutions for The Hershey Company. Through her and Kayleigh’s initiative to bring awareness of health lifestyle changes within the disability community, The Hershey Company has created a Caregivers Seminar to provide support to other employees.

Kristin Witte-Hubbard
Kristin is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) with more than 15 years of experience providing counseling services to people of all ages in a variety of settings. Most recently, Kristin has completed training in Natural Lifemanship and provides Equine Assisted Psychotherapy at Courage Ranch in Floresville. Kristin is a single mom of two amazing daughters, both of whom have rare medical conditions. As a result, Kristin has a passion for working with other families and children with rare diseases. Kristin also specializes in eating disorders and codependency. She has extensive training in internal family systems as well as Trauma Systems Therapy/Trauma Informed Care. Kristin holds a bachelor’s degree from Texas A&M University and a master’s degree from Hardin-Simmons University.

Stacy Wright
Stacy is the owner of Stacy’s Sensory Solutions. The inspiration for starting this business came from her desire to find tools to support her daughter, Natalie, who was diagnosed with sensory integration disorder when she was five. Natalie is now 20 and a freshman in college. Stacy’s passion is helping individuals find solutions and tools to help them stay regulated, focused and comfortable in their own skin.
Acumen Fiscal Agent
Autism in my Life
Autism Society of Texas
Better Lives, LP
Blind Children’s Program / Texas Health and Human Services
Circle of Care Pediatric Therapy
CC4C
Early Childhood Intervention / HHSC
Entrusted Pediatric Home Care
Kayleigh and Sandy Williamson
Navigate Life Texas / Texas Health and Human Services
Texas ABLE
The Arc of the Capital Area
Therapy 2000
Tindol Healthcare, LLC
Tranquility Incontinence Products
U.R. Our Hope
URS Medical

wavehealthcare.com
866-935-9283
Get Ready to Renew Your Medicaid

You have not had to renew your Medicaid since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Texas is now starting renewals again to see if you are still eligible. Everyone’s renewal date is different, so it is critical that you get ready to renew.

Don’t risk losing your Medicaid!

1. Go to yourtexasbenefits.com
   Log in or create an account to manage your benefits.

2. Check your address
   Verify or change your address under ‘Details.’

3. Renew your benefits
   Check ‘Select Details’ then ‘Time to renew.’ If it is time for you to renew, there will be a ‘Yes’ in the renew column.
   If you need help, call the number on the back of your ID card.

Watch your mail for a renewal packet and complete it right away.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).


Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association
Superior HealthPlan proudly supports Texas Parent to Parent.

SuperiorHealthPlan.com

Care that’s trusted by 50,000 families nationwide.

At Aveanna Healthcare, we’re dedicated to bringing families of medically fragile children and adults the in-home nursing they need. We’re not just another company that delivers care. We’re a company you can trust with your family member’s most challenging needs.

To learn more, call 512-372-3336 or email Jessica.Alston@aveanna.com
aveanna.com

We have locations throughout Texas!

Molina Healthcare is proud to sponsor the 18th Annual Texas Parent to Parent conference!

Thank you, Txp2p, for all that you do for Texas families!
Do you need help caring for your family member?

You can get paid to care for a family member with a disability or chronic condition.

We can also match your loved one with a caring personal attendant. Ask us how!

Find out more
www.LifeSpanTX.com
833-3-CARE-TX

*Referral bonuses for employees only
Admission of clients and employment will not be influenced in any manner by race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, veteran status, disability or any other basis prohibited by statute.
Medicaid in your neighborhood

Let us help with Medicaid. Aetna Better Health of Texas is committed to finding solutions for you and your family’s health care needs.

We can also help you understand and take advantage of great benefits like:

- Finding the right doctor in our statewide network
- Connecting to the 24/7 nurse line
- Earning over $300 in our Gift Card Program
- Getting the most out of your $300 annual OTC allowance on select health-related products

To apply for CHIP or Medicaid, please call your enrollment broker:
1-800-964-2777 (Medicaid or CHIP)
1-877-782-6440 (STAR Kids)
7-1-1 (TTY/Hearing impaired)

To learn more about Aetna Better Health of Texas visit us online at: AetnaMedicaidTexas.com/Info