

**The 6th Annual Binghamton Regional Center for ASD  
Spring Conference for Families, Educators, & Providers**

**Free!**

**Evidence-Based Supports for Children, Adolescents, & Young Adults**

**with Autism Spectrum Disorder**

**Friday, March 10, 2023**

**REGISTER NOW:** [tinyurl.com/BRCASD2023](http://tinyurl.com/BRCASD2023)

**FREE 5.0 NYSED CTLEs!  
FREE 2.5 BACB CEUs!**

**FREE 5.0 SOCIAL WORK  
CONTINUING EDUCATION CONTACT  
HOURS**

**2023 Virtual Conference Theme: Neurodivergent Coping and Social Success**

**8:30 AM Welcome & Updates ~ Dr. Gillis Mattson, Director- BRCASD**

**9:00 AM Keynote I - Stuck in the Middle! Program Development and Supports for Students with ASD at the Middle School Level** (1.5 CE/Contact Hours - **NYSED CTLEs**, **Social Work**, **BACB**)

***Sanja Cale, Ph. D., BCBA-D & Kristin Durante, M. S.***

Although inclusion has historically been identified as beneficial to all learners, it can also pose challenges for educators at the secondary level. A key component to successful inclusion programming for students with ASD is the provision of educational opportunities which mirror their social, academic, and behavioral needs. In this webinar, participants will learn how to analyze and implement school-based models of inclusion for students with ASD at the middle school level. The webinar will highlight a team-based approach that has been implemented in a public middle school program that can serve as a model across other public education settings. *\*\*Keynote I Q & A Session follows at 10 AM\*\**

**10:45 AM Keynote II - It's Never too Late: Friendships, Mental Health, and Well-Being in ASD Across the Lifespan** (1.5 CE/Contact Hours- **NYSED CTLEs**, **Social Work**)

***Amy Van Hecke, Ph. D.***

The past few years have highlighted the importance of developing and maintaining supportive, social relationships. This can be especially difficult, however, for those individuals that struggle finding like-minded people, making friends, and navigating the ups and downs of relationships. This talk will review research findings on the impact of friendships on autistic people across the lifespan. Connections will be drawn between high-quality, reciprocal friendships and mood, mental health, quality of life, and indicators of brain and physiological health. Evidence-based programs that support the development of healthy relationships amongst autistic people will be highlighted, with an overarching emphasis on equitable access to therapies, input from the lived experiences of autistic stakeholders and caregivers, and the importance of not assuming that supportive therapies are "one size fits all." *\*Keynote II Q & A Session follows at 11:45 AM\*\**

**12:15 PM Lunch Break**

**1:00 PM Workshop I - Occupational Therapy at Home: Helping Families Promote Skills in Everyday Activities**

***Deborah Eckhardt, OTR/L*** (1.0 CE/Contact Hours- **NYSED CTLEs**, **Social Work**)

Generalizing occupational therapy goals at home is often seen as impossible by many caregivers because there is a belief you need specific equipment or a specialized setting to be successful. Thankfully, not only is this not true, it gets in the way of the mission of occupational therapy- to help people overcome obstacles in completing daily life tasks. This workshop will teach participants how to use everyday activities as rich experiences for growth and offer a few, fun ideas to keep both providers or caregivers and those they support engaged. Ideas will be shared from clinical experience using evidence-based strategies to build bilateral coordination, visual-motor skills, and self-care skills.

**2:00 PM Workshop II - Making Sense of a Sensory-Intense World: Practical Coping and Opportunities for Connection**

***Rachel N. S. Cavalari, Ph. D., BCBA-D*** (1.0 CE/Contact Hours- **NYSED CTLEs**, **Social Work**, **BACB**)

Many autistic individuals report experiencing sensory input from the world around them differently than neurotypical individuals. With this comes sensory seeking or avoiding and a host of other associated emotional and behavioral needs. This workshop will place sensory needs in ASD in a coping framework related to executive functioning skills. Recommendations for coping with obstacles and educating others about neurodivergent experiences will be shared.

**3:00 PM Conference Adjourns; CTLE/CE Check-out**

# BRCASD Spring 2023 Keynote Speakers



## **Sanja Cale, Ph. D., BCBA-D**

Associate Professor, Exceptional Education & Learning Department, SUNY Old Westbury  
Director of the NYS Regional Center for Autism at SUNY Old Westbury

Dr. Cale is an associate professor at SUNY Old Westbury within the Exceptional Education & Learning Department, which seeks to facilitate the development of supportive, effective, and culturally responsive educators who excel in environments for individuals with disabilities and their families. Dr. Cale furthers this mission in her role as Director of the NYS Regional Center for Autism at Old Westbury (RCASD) to support individuals with ASD, their families, and practitioners with the ultimate goal of community integration. Dr. Cale's research focuses on preparing teachers to work with students with developmental disabilities and expanding FBA (Functional Behavioral Assessment) and PBS (Positive Behavior Support), which are approaches

that provide prosocial alternatives to dealing with challenging behaviors. For the past several years she has also consulted in several school districts, where she provides intervention to children with developmental disabilities, support services to their families, and training and supervision to professional staff in public school settings throughout Long Island and New York City.

### *Selected Publications*

Schrauben, K. S., Owen-DeSchryver, J., & Cale, S. (2019). STRIVE to improve educational outcomes: supporting students with disabilities in the general education classroom. *Psychologia Wychowawcza*, 58, 171-185. [doi:10.5604/01.3001.0013.6372](https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0013.6372)

Blakeley-Smith, A., Carr, E. G., Cale, S. I., & Owen-DeSchryver, J. S. (2009). Environmental fit: A model for assessing and treating problem behavior associated with curricular difficulties in children with autism spectrum disorders. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 24(3), 131-145. [doi:10.1177/1088357609339032](https://doi.org/10.1177/1088357609339032)

Owen-DeSchryver, J. S., Carr, E. G., Cale, S. I., & Blakeley-Smith, A. (2008). Promoting social interactions between students with autism spectrum disorders and their peers in inclusive school settings. *Focus on Autism and other developmental disabilities*, 23(1), 15-28. [doi:10.1177/1088357608314370](https://doi.org/10.1177/1088357608314370)



## **Amy Van Hecke, Ph.D.**

Professor of Psychology, Marquette University  
Executive Co-director, Next Step Autism & Trauma Clinic

Dr. Van Hecke is a developmental psychologist and neuroscientist, a professor of psychology at Marquette University, Executive Co-director of the Next Step Autism and Trauma Clinic, and co-founder of the On Your Marq college autism support program at Marquette. She studies the effects of evidence-based interventions, for preschoolers, adolescents, and young adults on the autism spectrum, on relationship development, well-being, and brain development and function. Dr. Van Hecke is also the co-developer of a health ambassador outreach program to ensure access to developmental assessment and supports for underserved, inner-city children. Dr.

Van Hecke mentors undergraduate and graduate students in clinical, school, and counseling psychology, nursing, speech pathology, and occupational therapy; is President of the Board of Directors of the Autism Society of Southeast Wisconsin; and has served on the Steering Team for the Wisconsin Community of Practice on Developmental Disabilities, and the Treatment and Intervention Advisory Committee for the State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services.

### *Selected Publications*

McVey, A.J., Schiltz, H., Haendel, A., Dolan, B., Willar, K., Pleiss, S., Karst, J., Carlson, M., Krueger, W., Murphy, C.C., Casnar, C., Yund, B., & Van Hecke, A. (2018). Social difficulties in youth with autism with and without anxiety and ADHD symptoms. *Autism Research*, 11(12), 1679-1689. [doi:10.1002/aur.2039](https://doi.org/10.1002/aur.2039)

Schiltz, H., McVey, A., Magnus, B., Dolan, B., Willar, K., Pleiss, S., Karst, J., Carson, A., Vogt, E., & Van Hecke, A. (2018). Examining the links between challenging behaviors in youth with ASD and parental stress, mental health, and involvement: Applying an adaptation of the family stress model to families of youth with ASD. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 48(4), 1169-1180. [doi:10.1007/s10803-017-3446-0](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-017-3446-0)

Schiltz, H., McVey, A., Dolan, B., Willar, K., Pleiss, S., Karst, J., Carson, A., Caiozzo, C., Vogt, E., Potts, S., Young, B., & Van Hecke, A.V. (2018). Changes in depressive symptoms among adolescents with ASD completing the PEERS® social skills intervention. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 48(3), 834-843. [doi:10.1007/s10803-017-3396-6](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-017-3396-6)



# BRCASD Spring 2023 Workshop Presenters



**Deborah Eckhardt, OTR/L**  
Occupational Therapist  
Institute for Child Development

Deborah Eckhardt is the lead occupational therapist at the Institute for Child Development's special education program, The Children's Unit for Treatment and Evaluation. Ms. Eckhardt earned her bachelor's degree in 2001 from Utica College of Syracuse University and obtained her NYS licensure in 2002. She has worked in public and private school settings with children from birth through 5th grade for support of various needs and in association with varying diagnostic profiles. Ms. Eckhardt has specific expertise in supporting children with ASD and DD to develop age-appropriate fine motor, adaptive/activities of daily living, and functional independence skills, as well as provision of parent coaching and training. She has expertise in both facility-based and telepractice delivery of services. Ms. Eckhardt is also an active member of the American Occupational Therapy Association and the New York State Occupational Therapy Association.



**Rachel N. S. Cavalari, Ph. D., BCBA-D**  
NYS Licensed Psychologist & Licensed Behavior Analyst  
Director - Children's Unit for Treatment and Evaluation, Institute for Child Development  
Director of Diagnostic Services - Child & Adolescent Diagnostic and Consultation Clinic, Institute for Child Development  
Assistant Director, Binghamton Regional Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders  
Adjunct Professor, Department of Psychology at Binghamton University

Dr. Cavalari serves many roles at the Institute for Child Development, but her primary role is as the Director of the Children's Unit for Treatment and Evaluation. Dr. Cavalari has specific expertise in diagnostic evaluation, behavioral assessment and intervention, and staff training as it relates to individuals diagnosed with developmental disabilities, particularly Autism Spectrum Disorder. She specializes in diagnostic evaluation for developmental and learning concerns for individuals ages 18 months old through 15 years old. Dr. Cavalari is also interested in systems analysis and regulation and practice issues for clinicians in New York state. She has served as a reviewer for numerous professional journals and has authored many peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. Dr. Cavalari has also served on the Board of Directors for the New York State Association for Behavior Analysis and presently serves on the Editorial Board for The New England Behavior Analyst with the Berkshire Association for Behavior Analysis & Therapy.

## BRCASD Initiatives 2022-2023



### **Communication Through Play!**

During the summer of 2022, BRCASD partnered with the ICD's Children's Unit for Treatment and Evaluation to host its inaugural Summer Series community event. For six Saturdays in July-September, SLPs, certified teachers, and a host of other talented staff made themselves available to support families in learning about evidence-based uses of Augmentative and Alternative Communication in naturalistic contexts. This series was a huge success in reaching our community.



BRCASD continues to offer families the opportunity to access the **Unstuck and On Target Program**. This online executive function curriculum is geared toward 8-11 year olds. For more information visit <https://www.unstuckontarget.com>. **If interested, email [brcasd@binghamton.edu](mailto:brcasd@binghamton.edu)!**



BRCASD is now offering 6-month subscriptions to interested families for Mightier™ - an app-based system to learn emotion regulation for children 6-14 years old. Tested and developed at Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital, this system makes coping accessible and fun. For more information visit <https://www.mightier.com/>. **If interested, email [brcasd@binghamton.edu](mailto:brcasd@binghamton.edu)!**

Follow us on Facebook!



The Institute for Child Development is committed to transforming the lives of children with ASD, their families, and their communities through compassionate partnerships and high-quality, person-centered, evidence-based practice. One of ICD's many affiliated programs is the Binghamton Regional Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders. The BRCASD, located on the Binghamton University campus in Binghamton, NY, is one of the seven regional centers affiliated with the New York State Regional Centers for Autism Spectrum Disorders (NYSRCASD). BRCASD's mission is to provide low-to-no cost evidence-based education and training for families, educators, and community professionals to improve services and outcomes for youth with ASD (ages 4-21). We serve Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga, and Tompkins counties.

Find us online!



# BRCASD Spring 2023 COA & CTLE/CE Information

## Certificates of Attendance

Participants who require a Certificate of Attendance (COA) to provide to their employer or retain for their records will be able to receive this post-conference.

- Once the conference closes, the NYSRCASD system is updated with the list of active participants from the Zoom webinar record within one week's time. *Please make sure you provide us with an accurate email when you register!*
- The NYSRCASD system sends automated emails to all attendees marked as present with links to surveys that participants need to complete in order to obtain a COA.
- Once all surveys are completed by each participant, the COA is generated automatically and emailed.
- If you attended our conference and do not receive an automated email with survey links to complete by the following Friday (3/17/23), please email us at [brcasd@binghamton.edu](mailto:brcasd@binghamton.edu) so we can assist. *Before reaching out to BRCASD, please always check your spam folder!*

## General Information for Continuing Education Hours

During our conference, each presenter will give the audience three distinct code words interspersed at different points in their presentation. Participants should write down the three code words for each talk to submit in a specific form after the conference only if CEs are being requested. *See above for instructions on certificates of attendance, which follow a different process.*

\*Please note - completion of the correct survey is necessary and time logged on the Zoom webinar is reviewed to determine if participants were present and eligible for CE hours after the conference closes. Validation and processing of CE hours and related certificates can take several weeks following the conference. Timelines are beyond BRCASD's control, as we partner with other departments at Binghamton University for processing of CE hours.

## CTLEs

If you hold a current New York State Education Department certificate and are seeking Continuing Teacher and Leader Education (CTLE) hours, we are pleased to offer 5.0 CTLE hours for this conference through the support of the Department of Teaching, Learning and Educational Leadership (TLEL) at Binghamton University. At the close of the conference, you should follow this link to complete the CTLE form for processing:

<https://forms.gle/gy2ULHX49JCZUnBH6>

**The CLTE form must be completed by 5 PM on the day of the conference. Late completion or requests for accommodation of this timeline will not be honored. The background color of the form for CTLEs is green.**

## Social Work Continuing Education Contact Hours

If you are seeking social work continuing education contact hours, we are pleased to offer 5.0 contact hours for this conference through the support of Binghamton University, SUNY, College of Community and Public Affairs, Department of Social Work. At the close of the conference, you should follow this link to complete the form for processing: <https://forms.gle/ym4aKc5SPHF3SbrY8>

*Binghamton University, SUNY, College of Community and Public Affairs, Department of Social Work is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers #SW-0143.*

*Binghamton University, SUNY, College of Community and Public Affairs, Department of Social Work maintains CSWE nationally accredited MSW and BSW programs.*

**The Social Work CE form must be completed by 5 PM on the day of the conference. Late completion or requests for accommodation of this timeline will not be honored. The background color of the form for Social Work CE is pink.**

## BACB CEUs

If you are seeking BACB CEUs, we are pleased to offer 2.5 Learning CEs for this conference (Keynote I & Workshop II only) through the support of the Institute for Child Development (OP-23-26627). At the close of the conference, you should follow this link to complete the CE form for processing: <https://forms.gle/Go9JdhTEJDiRdyvp7>

**The BACB CE form must be completed by 5 PM on the day of the conference. Late completion or requests for accommodation of this timeline will not be honored. The background color of the form for BACB CEs is blue.**