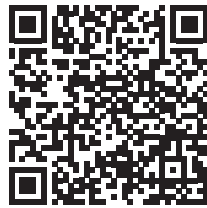


Recent Research and Publications



Expanding Equitable Access to Services for Individuals with Autism: An Interview with Rita Gardner

Rita M. Gardner, M.P.H., LABA, BCBA, CDE®
Mary Jane Weiss, PhD, BCBA-D



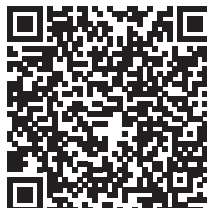
Scan to read the article

ABSTRACT: In this interview, President and CEO Rita M. Gardner highlights the non-profit organization Melmark's expansion into the Carolinas, an area of the country where many students with disabilities often experience ineffective education, and where there is an urgent need to provide quality services to individuals with autism. Rita also highlights the need to address systemic inequities in access to and treatment within educational settings. She envisions a service delivery world where providers work toward equitable access for all individuals, regardless of geographic location or individual characteristics.



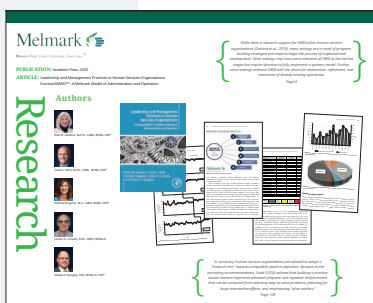
It's Never Too Late to Communicate: Increasing Communication Access for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism

Laura Nagy, M.S., CCC-SLP
(they/them/theirs)
Speech-Language Pathologist



Scan to view the poster

ABSTRACT: An estimated 5 million people in the United States are living with complex communication needs (CCN) (Beukelman & Light, 2020). This estimate includes people across all age groups and disability types who experience difficulties meeting their communication needs using only verbal speech. Alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) methods offer a way to communicate for people who do not use verbal speech or who have significant limitations on their speech. AAC may be appropriate for people of any age when they have the opportunity and support needed to learn.



Leadership and Management Practices in Human Services Organizations EnvisionSMART™: A Melmark Model of Administration and Operation

Rita M. Gardner, M.P.H., LABA, BCBA, CDE®
Frank Bird, M.Ed., LABA, BCBA, CDE®
Helena Maguire, M.S., LABA, BCBA, CDE®
James K. Luiselli, Ed.D., ABPP, BCBA-D
Shawn P. Quigley, PhD, BCBA-D, CDE®



Scan to view the poster

ABSTRACT: The EnvisionSMART™ guidebook series represents more than 25 years of administration and operation at Melmark, a multistate human services organization serving children and adults with IDD, neurodevelopmental disorders, and brain injury. The purpose of the series is to assist organizations in delivering high-quality education, treatment, training, supervision, administration, professional development, and behavioral healthcare services, particularly in settings with limited resources and capacity.

Elevating the Field

Winter-Spring, 2025

Expert Speaker Series



January 30, 2025: Developing Mathematics Fluency and Problem Solving in All Learners

Drew Polly, Ph.D.
– 27 Attendees

ABSTRACT: Participants engaged in a series of mathematics activities and unpacked how to best support learners' development in two foundational areas- fluency and problem solving. Resources that are open and freely available will be used, examined, and shared in an effort to increase participants' awareness of opportunities to consider how to best support learners.



Lauren Carter, M.Ed. BCBA LABA

February 27, 2025: Prompts and Prompt-Fading Procedures: Shaping Practitioners Repertoires to Promote Clinical Autonomy and Client Independence

Lauren Carter, M.Ed. BCBA LABA
Kara A. Reagon, PhD BCBA-D LABA
– 117 Attendees

ABSTRACT: The careful selection of prompts and prompt-fading procedures are two key variables in promoting effective and efficient learning. Although there is no standard prompting or fading procedures that work with all clients for all skills, more recently researchers have established tools to help identify efficacious prompts and strategies for fading. This presentation will review the instructional cycle: the environment, motivating operations, discriminative stimuli, prompts, response, and consequences. Discussion variables influencing the selection of prompts and fading strategies including: learner profile, stimulus control, and reinforcement. A review of research on prompts and prompt-fading strategies was presented along with case studies, and key takeaways for practitioners.



Kara A. Reagon, PhD BCBA-D LABA



March 20, 2025: In Pursuit of Refining our Understanding and Application of Generalization in Treating Severe Challenging Behavior

Brittany Tomasi, MA, BCBA, LBA
– 111 Attendees

ABSTRACT: Despite efforts to advance the technology of generalization, there continues to be limited research on empirically evaluating generalization-promoting strategies to facilitate behavioral change beyond the initial training environment in the treatment of challenging behavior. This presentation discussed the status of and pursuit of generalization when treating severe challenging behavior. Highlight discussed were current strengths and limitations of our field while also providing recommendations on how we might better systematically evaluate generalization strategies to contribute toward achieving more ecologically valid outcomes.



May 1, 2025: From Dilemma to Deliberation: Tools for Ethical-Decision Making

Christen Russell, PhD, BCBA-D, LBS, LBA
– 105 Attendees

ABSTRACT: Ethical decision-making is a critical skill for behavior analysts navigating complex dilemmas. This presentation explores a structured approach to ethical decision-making, emphasizing the importance of values, accountability, and foresight. Attendees will be introduced to two practical templates designed to mitigate the risks of ethical missteps: 1.11 Multiple Relationships Mitigation of Risk and Compliance Plan Template (Russell, in progress) and the Ethical Decision-Making Worksheet (Marya & Weiss, in progress).

Elevating the Field

Winter-Spring, 2025

Presentations and Conferences



North Carolina Association for Behavior Analysis 36th Annual Conference (NCABA): February 19-21, 2025

Melmark Carolinas Director of Program Administration and Clinical Services, Brad Stevenson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, CDE® and Educational Coordinator Anastasia Brown presented at the NCABA Annual Conference and engaged in valuable discussions on best practices in behavior analysis.



The Council of Autism Service Providers (CASP) Federal Fly-In Day: April 3, 2025

Members of Melmark's senior leadership team had the opportunity to attend the first Council of Autism Service Providers (CASP) Federal Fly-In Day this week in Washington, DC. CASP members were able to meet with their congressional representatives to discuss critical federal policy issues around autism services. Members of Melmark's leadership team and staff attended and presented at this year's Council of Autism Service Providers - CASP Annual Conference which brings together autism service provider organizations from across the country.



The Council of Autism Service Providers (CASP) Conference: May 4-6, 2025

Melmark Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer Helena Maguire, Chief Operating Officer Shawn Quigley, and MCS Director of Program Administration and Clinical Services Brad Stevenson shared insights regarding establishing and maintaining quality of care standards in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).

Additionally, Brad Stevenson presented a session about the history of school exclusion for students with autism and other disabilities, the advancements that should allow us to prevent it, and actions autism service providers can take to prevent it from occurring. MNE Vocational Coordinator Jessica Burke led a discussion about the successes and challenges of offering vocational services for individuals and shared key tips and features that can be helpful in the field.



American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Conference & Expo: April 3-5, 2025

Julia Fox, OT; JoAnn Clark, OT; Nick DiBello, COTA; and Julie Cranney, OT; as well as Samantha Chamberlain, Lead OT (not pictured), attended the AOTA (American Occupational Therapy Association) Annual Conference on April 3-5 in Philadelphia. This conference is the largest gathering of Occupational Therapist practitioners and students in the world.



Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies' 18th Annual Conference on Autism: Research - Based Solutions: April 4, 2025

Melmark Pennsylvania was proud to host Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies' 18th Annual Conference on Autism: Research-Based Solutions this week. The speaker line up included Melmark employees from across both Melmark New England and Melmark Pennsylvania, as well as other experts in the field.

Elevating the Field

Winter-Spring, 2025

Presentations and Conferences



Profound Autism Summit: April 10-11, 2025

Melmark professionals attended and presented at the Profound Autism Summit in Boston on April 10th and 11th. There were two presentations:

"Advocating for Empowerment: Navigating End of Life Care for the Aging Autistic Population," presented by Amanda Duffy, M.Ed., BCBA, LBS, Director of Clinical Services, Adult Programs; Lara Redcay, M.Ed., BCBA, Assistant Director of ICF/IDD; and Kristina Gasiewski, MOTR/L, M.Ed., BCBA, Behavior Analyst/QIDP.

"It's Never Too Late to Learn! Using AAC to Enhance Communication for Adults with IDD," presented by Lindsay Harre, M.S., CCC-SLP, Lead Speech Language Pathologist and Laura Nagy, M.S., CCC-SLP, Speech-Language Pathologist.



Glenwood Endowed Lecture Series: April 14, 2025

Maggie Haag, Executive Director of Melmark Pennsylvania; Heather Hirst, Senior Director of Rehabilitative Services; and Rita Gardner, President and CEO, spoke at the Glenwood Endowed Lecture Series on April 14th in Birmingham, Alabama. Their presentation was entitled "Planning for Aging in Place: One Organization's Journey."




Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) 51st Annual Conference: May 24-26, 2025


MCS Director of Program Administration and Clinical Services Brad Stevenson recently gave a presentation during the Association for Behavior Analysis International 51st Annual Convention about the history of school exclusion for students with autism and other disabilities, the advancements that should allow us to prevent it, and actions autism service providers can take to prevent it from occurring.

Leadership and Management Practices in Human Services Organizations

EnvisionSMART™: A Melmark Model of Administration and Operation



↑ Rita M. Gardner, Frank L. Bird, Helena Maguire, James K. Luiselli, and Shawn P. Quigley



Melmark 

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