

## Elevating the Field

Summer-Fall, 2025

### Recent Research and Publications



#### Visioning the future of residential treatment: Creating care communities

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



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**ABSTRACT:** Mary Jane Weiss interviews Rita Gardner, President and CEO of Melmark. Highlights include non-profit organization's expansion of residential options, an area of tremendous need for adults with autism. The vision for a comprehensive residential model that supports each individual in a familiar, responsive, and compassionate care context is truly compelling. As providers face caring for individuals with complex needs, such as those with severe behavioral challenges or who are aging, this model stands out as a creative and beneficial solution.



#### Advancing Community Inclusion for Individuals with ID/DD: History, Challenges, and the Role of Caregivers

Christina DeLapp, MS, BCBA, LABA



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**ABSTRACT:** Community-based living for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (ID/DD) has improved since the mid-20th century, in the context of a broader civil rights movement. A more discrete focus on the rights of individuals with disabilities arose during the 1960s and 1970s under John F. Kennedy's presidency after he passed the Community Mental Health Act (CMHA) in 1963. The purpose of the CMHA was to provide more accessible and comprehensive mental health services in community settings, rather than in large institutions.



#### How Can We Best Support Adults with Autism, their Families and Teams, through the Aging Process at Home?

Lara Redcay, MEd, BCBA  
Amanda Duffy MEd, BCBA, LBS  
Kristina Gasiewski, MOTR/L, MEd, BCBA



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**ABSTRACT:** Transitioning from a sibling to a prospective caregiver sibling is a large adjustment, and it can be difficult learning the ins and outs of becoming more involved with your sister's care team. Spending more time with your sister can help with getting to know her day-to-day life. Learn what she enjoys, what she struggles with, how she communicates. Let her get used to you being around more often.



#### Lifespan Treatment for Autistic Individuals: A Guide to Evidence-Based Practices

James K. Luiselli, Ed.D., ABPP, BCBA-D, Book editor,  
Haley Steinhauser, Ph.D., LABA, BCBA-D, Chapter: Response Interruption and Redirection  
Mary Jane Weiss, Ph.D., LABA, BCBA-D, Chapter: Discrete Trial Teaching



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**ABSTRACT:** Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder associated with significant deficits in adaptive behavior and everyday functioning, which challenges families, service providers, staff, and multidisciplinary professionals. If effective treatments and services are unavailable, significant changes in functioning among persons with ASD are often minimal, caregivers may continue to experience stress and economic hardship, and society will continue to play for expensive yet ineffective services.

### Recent Research and Publications



ASAT Real Science, Real Hope  
ASSOCIATION FOR SCIENCE IN AUTISM TREATMENT  
What are Areas of Concern When Working with Aging Adults with Autism?  
Lara Redcay, MEd, BCBA, Amanda Duffy MEd, BCBA, LBS, Kristina Gasiewski, MOTR/L, MEd, BCBA  
Published September 2023

#### What are Areas of Concern When Working with Aging Adults with Autism?

Lara Redcay, MEd, BCBA  
Amanda Duffy MEd, BCBA, LBS  
Kristina Gasiewski, MOTR/L, MEd, BCBA



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**ABSTRACT:** There is a significant need for professionals like yourself who are willing to learn to be able to support a really amazing group of people. As you begin this career journey, it's helpful to be aware of some key areas that may impact your work. Aging adults with autism face unique challenges that can affect their physical health, changes in challenging behavior, and end of life care. Understanding these considerations will help you provide thoughtful, person-centered care.



Melmark  
ASSOCIATION FOR SCIENCE IN AUTISM TREATMENT  
Evaluation of Service Provider Knowledge and Perceptions of Trauma-Informed Care  
Authors  
James K. Luiselli, Ed.D., ABPP, BCBA-D  
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Jill M. Harper, Ph.D., LABA, BCBA, CDE®  
Jennifer Ruane, Ph.D., LABA, BCBA, CDE®  
Mary Jane Weiss, PhD, BCBA-D  
Published September 2023

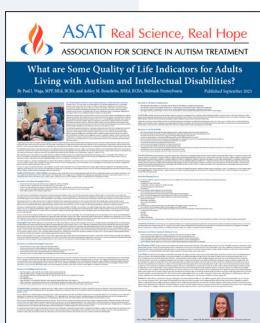
#### Evaluation of Service Provider Knowledge and Perceptions of Trauma-Informed Care

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Jennifer Ruane, Ph.D., LABA, BCBA, CDE®  
Mary Jane Weiss, PhD, BCBA-D



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**ABSTRACT:** Trauma-informed care (TIC) is a philosophy and approach to support individuals who experienced trauma and to prevent retraumatization when receiving treatment and healthcare services (DeCandia et al., 2014; Dewey and Horsley 2022). Fallot and Harris (2008) described five core components of TIC consisting of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment.



ASAT Real Science, Real Hope  
ASSOCIATION FOR SCIENCE IN AUTISM TREATMENT  
What are Some Quality of Life Indicators for Adults Living with Autism and Intellectual Disabilities?  
By Paul J. Waga, MPP, MEd, BCBA, and Ashley M. Benedetto, MSEd, BCBA  
Published September 2023

#### What are Some Quality of Life Indicators for Adults Living with Autism and Intellectual Disabilities?

Paul J. Waga, MPP, MEd, BCBA  
Ashley M. Benedetto, MSEd, BCBA



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**ABSTRACT:** Before we can discuss Quality of Life Indicators, we must first define what we mean when we say Quality of Life, or QoL in this context. QoL has been defined by The World Health Organization's terms "as an individual's perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns." (Mason et al., 2018, p. 1138). Therefore, in this article, we explore QoL indicators in individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, which includes discussions about the quality of relationships, community inclusion and access, overall health, safety, self-advocacy, individualized supports, and meaningful, fulfilling lifestyles they engage in and have access to. Implications for practice and advocacy are also discussed.

## Elevating the Field

Summer-Fall, 2025

### Expert Speaker Series



#### October 23, 2025: Translating Practice into Progress: Case Studies and Exemplary Outcomes

Geguel Landestoy, Katie Hagerty, Marta Trippe, Courtney Johnson, Colleen O'Grady, Gaelen Suarez, Anna Greene  
- 30 Attendees

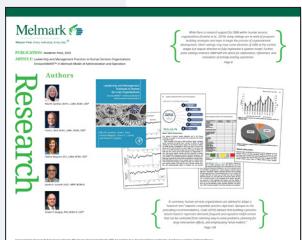
**ABSTRACT:** This event provided case examples of clinical and educational programming leading to successful outcomes across academic and daily living domains. The first set of case studies highlighted individualized strategies to enhance academic engagement and behavioral outcomes for students with special education needs. The second set of case studies provided a review of the current literature on toilet training and then outlined approaches to toilet training for individuals with autism and intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), each emphasizing the importance of promoting independence, dignity, and quality of life through individualized interventions. Following the presentations, the authors and audience engaged in an interactive question and answer period.

### Learn more and register for Melmark's 2026 Expert Speaker Series events!

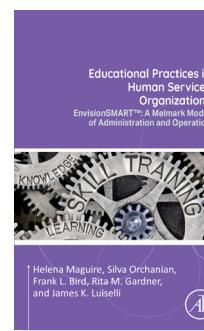
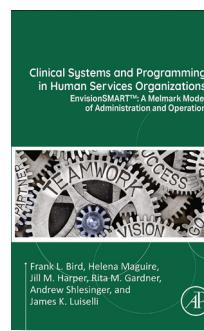
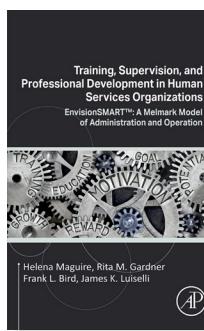
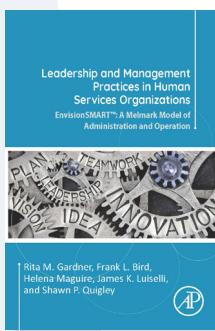


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### EnvisionSMART™



Melmark is continually expanding and raising the quality of service delivery systems in internal program delivery and throughout the country by disseminating and replicating the Melmark Model of Program Development and Clinical Treatment. Through an advanced program called EnvisionSMART™, Melmark showcases professional practitioner manuals, proprietary software and a four-book practitioner series. Melmark's EnvisionSMART™ has produced 286 publications, 202 conference presenters, 879 conferences, and boasts over 100 Melmark authors. Combined, this program provides an all-encompassing array of well-researched, documented tools to enable other providers to utilize the Melmark Model for Program Development. This will elevate the standard of services, while addressing every aspect of the critical educational, clinical and administrative functions that are vital to evidence-based, special education programs.



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**EnvisionSMART™**

## Elevating the Field

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### Presentations and Conferences



#### WIBA (Women in Behavior Analysis) Conference: July 23-25, 2025

Melmark Executive Vice President and Chief Clinical Officer Helena Maguire, Senior Director of Professional Development, Clinical Training, and Research Jill Harper, MNE Senior Director of Day Services Silva Orchanian, and Master Trainer Lauren Carter recently attended and presented at the Women in Behavior Analysis (WIBA) 2025 Conference. They led a workshop which introduced a behavioral approach within the Organizational Behavior Management (OBM) framework to improve workplace safety in human service organizations.



#### BABAT's 2025 Reach Conference: October 15-17, 2025

Melmark staff from across divisions were proud to attend and present multiple presentations at BABAT's 2025 Reach Conference.



#### Autism Law Summit: October 22-23, 2025

Melmark President and CEO, Rita M. Gardner, M.P.H., LABA, BCBA, CDE®, and Director of Program Administration and Clinical Services at Melmark Carolinas, Brad Stevenson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, CDE®, attended the 2025 Autism Law Summit, joining over 350 autism service providers, lawyers, policymakers, parents, and self-advocates. Together, these changemakers are shaping the future of autism services and advocacy, ensuring that every individual we serve has access to the care, support, and inclusion they deserve.



#### ABAI 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference: November 11-13, 2025

Rita Gardner, President and CEO of Melmark; Shawn Quigley, Chief Program Officer; Jill Harper, Senior Director of Professional Development, Clinical Training, and Research for Melmark New England; Jennifer Ruane, Director of Professional Development and Clinical Training for Melmark Pennsylvania; and Keri Bethune, Director of Educational Services for Melmark Carolinas, presented at the ABAI Twelfth International Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. Congratulations to the presenters for sharing the Melmark Model at the international level in the field of behavior analysis.



#### North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Conference on Exceptional Children: November 20-21, 2025

MCS Director of Program Administration and Clinical Services Brad Stevenson, Ph.D., BCBA-D, CDE® and Curriculum Coordinator Matt Dye presented "IEP Collaboration with ABA: When to Consider and What Should Be Provided," sharing practical insights on strengthening collaboration to better support learners with exceptional needs.



#### ASHA Convention: November 22-25, 2025

Olivia Fogarty, Speech Pathologist, and Sydney Rutkowski, Speech Pathologist, attended the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention in Washington, DC. This was a wonderful opportunity for their professional development and networking, while representing Melmark.