

ace

VCU-Autism

Center for  
Excellence

2022

# ACE Webcast Series

## Environmental Structure in the classroom: “Setting Up for Success”

Date: September 13, 2022  
Time: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.



Presenter: Kaitlin Erdman, Warren County Public Schools

Description: In this presentation, I will be discussing what I have found to be the most effective ways to structure your classroom so that your students, your instructional staff, and you as the teacher can be successful.

Kaitlin has been teaching special education students K-5 with significant cognitive needs for Warren County Public Schools in Virginia for 8 years. She graduated from Shenandoah University with a Bachelors of Science in Psychology and Masters of Science in Applied Behavior Analysis. Kaitlin attended UVA Wise where she completed her teaching licensure program to become a licensed Special Education Teacher. Kaitlin's passion is working with students who are on the Autism Spectrum and working with them in a classroom-based setting.

## Fostering Healthy Relationships and Preventing Abuse for Kids with Disabilities

Date: October 11, 2022  
Time: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.



Presenter: Molly Dellinger-Wray, she/her, Virginia Commonwealth University, Partnership for People with Disabilities

Description: Children with disabilities experience abuse at much higher rates than typically developing children. This webcast will explore practical strategies that parents and professionals can use to promote abuse prevention and foster healthy relationships for all children, especially those with disabilities. We will discuss some of the reasons why abuse exists at such high rates, how abuse differs, and what to do if someone discloses an unhealthy relationship.

Molly is part of the VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities, a university center for excellence in developmental disabilities. She earned her Master's degree in Special Education from SUNY Buffalo and began her career as a special educator for children with significant support needs and autism. Molly coordinates the Positive Behavior Support Project and was endorsed as a facilitator of Positive Behavior Support in 2007. She co-leads Home and Community PBS, a network of the International Association of PBS. For the past 15 years, she has coordinated and directed three projects that assist children and adults with disabilities with issues surrounding violence, abuse, sexual assault, and neglect. Together with a team of families and professionals, she helped to develop and research LEAP: Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention, an evidence-based intervention for adults with IDD. In addition to published academic journals, Molly is a regular contributor to Parenting Special Needs Magazine. Molly is certified trainer for Person-Centered Thinking and Stewards of Children. Her goal is to help everyone enjoy healthy relationships.

## Considerations for Autism Evaluations in the Public Schools

Date: November 8, 2022

Time: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.



Presenter: Ruth Aspy, Ph.D., The Ziguart Group

Description: Assessment of autism is challenging and fascinating. There is no such thing as an “easy” autism evaluation. The question to ask during the evaluation is “Who is this student and what do they need?” In answering this question, we see how very complex each person is and we look for the patterns that may indicate the presence of autism. Dr. Aspy will compare the DSM definition of autism used in private settings to the definition of autism in state and federal law. She will also examine the relationship between diagnosis in the private setting and eligibility under the category of autism in the public schools. Some issues related to educational identification such as educational need and recognizing autism in girls will also be addressed.

Dr. Aspy is a licensed psychologist specializing in transdisciplinary assessment and intervention for individuals on the spectrum. She is co-author of a comprehensive model of intervention, The Ziguart Model, which earned the Literary Achievement Award from the Autism Society. Dr. Aspy has provided training and consultation throughout the United States and internationally. She serves on the Autism Society of America's Panel of Professional Advisors. Her focus is on understanding the underlying characteristics of autistic individuals keeping their neurological/brain differences in mind. Dr. Aspy believes that kindness is at the heart of all good support strategies. She has an emphasis on working with females on the spectrum and with those individuals who have symptoms of catatonia.

To register for these webcasts please use the link below:

<https://vcuautismcenter.org/te/webcasts/upcoming.cfm>

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