

The Arc of Illinois Living with Autism 2019 Conference

Thursday
October 3,
2019



9:00-10:30 a.m. - *“Chasing the Rabbit: A Dad’s Life Raising a Son on the Spectrum”*

presented by Derek Volk

Derek Volk’s oldest child—his only son— was two-years-old when his wife suggested, “Something is not quite right with Dylan.” They struggled for the next several years as they were bounced from one “expert” to another, each offering a unique perspective on Dylan’s challenging behaviors. Finally, at eight-years-old, Dylan was diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome and the Volk family was able to start making sense of Dylan’s differences. Derek will share his experiences raising a son on the Autism Spectrum. Both Dylan and Derek are authors and write about the challenges, triumphs and coping strategies from the early days to the adolescent years to life in the “real world” as a young adult.

10:30-10:45 a.m. - **BREAK**

10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. - *“Bad Choices Make Good Stories”*

presented by Dylan Volk

In his rollercoaster of a life, Dylan “Dielawn” Volk has made some interesting and questionable choices. Dylan will share his life experiences as a man with high-functioning autism. Dielawn will give a unique perspective on life through his funny, sometimes heart-wrenching, and always honest portrayal of the hardships and successes of navigating the obstacles of life from childhood to adulthood as a person on the autism spectrum.

12:00-1:00 p.m. - **Lunch -TAP Partnering Agencies: Services and Unique Programs**

1:00-2:30 p.m. - *“Improving Language and Communication Skills for Students with ASD”*

presented by Mary Wrobel, MA/SLP

All individuals with ASD struggle with issues of language, communication and social interaction. Language and communication are key to everything: academic success, behavior issues, interacting with others, achieving friendships and relationships, and gaining and maintaining employment. Improving on these skills should be a life-long endeavor and it’s never too early or too late to work on language and communication. This presentation will focus on the many strategies that parents, teachers and therapists can use to work on these important skills. This session will cover skills for young children to adolescents with examples and approaches for all abilities. You will learn specific strategies to help in the classroom and at home.

2:30-2:45 p.m. - **BREAK**

2:45-4:30 p.m. - *“After the Meltdown: Prevention, Intervention and Instructional Consequences”*

presented by Kathy Morris

Do you work with children or adolescents with autism who exhibit behaviors that interfere with their ability to effectively and efficiently navigate their environment? They may appear, obnoxious, overreactive, anxious, or unfeeling or withdrawn. They may lose control of their ability to cope or regulate their behavior which can send them spiraling into a meltdown. You may feel helpless, frustrated, and powerless after each meltdown. This session will provide practical strategies you will be able to take back home and to work, and is a fun-packed keynote designed for parents, educators, therapists and all those who are interested in providing supports to children and adolescents with autism, ADHD, behavior disorders or other disabilities.

About the Presenters



Kathy Morris

Kathy Kaluza Morris has been a special educator for 45 years, serving as a speech therapist, self-contained teacher of students with behavior disorders, moderate to severe developmental disabilities as well as a resource teacher and first grade teacher. She served as a diagnostician and supervisor in a district where she opened up the first two LIFE Skills programs in the state of Texas before becoming a consultant for autism, behavior and inclusion at a region service center in Texas. Starting her own business, igivuWings, in 1999 she provides seminars nationally and internationally. She served on the President's Commission on Special Education, was Teacher of the Year and recently, she and her husband were honored by The Arc of Texas with the Lifetime Achievement Award Serving Persons with Disabilities.

Kathy and her husband, Guy, "walk the walk and talk the talk" since the birth of their twin sons with developmental disabilities, including autism and cerebral palsy.

Derek Volk

Derek Volk is the author of the internationally acclaimed Amazon best seller, [Chasing the Rabbit: A Dad's Life Raising a Son on the Spectrum](#). Derek is a Maine businessman, supporter of Autism awareness, volunteer and philanthropist who, along with his family, was named the 2015 Spurwink "Humanitarian of the Year." He is the president and owner of Volk Packaging Corporation, a third generation, family owned, corrugated box manufacturer in Biddeford, Maine. His own company currently employs those who are deaf and on the autism spectrum.

A speech communications major at the University of Maine at Orono, Derek has always been comfortable speaking to an audience. From 2012 to 2019, Derek hosted a Saturday morning radio talk show on WLOB 1310AM in Portland, Maine. His shows can be heard online at www.derekvolkshow.com. Derek has been happily married to his high school sweetheart, Amy Volk, for 30 years. Former State Senator Amy Volk served four terms in the Maine Legislature fighting for people with disabilities. Amy and Derek are the proud parents of four children. Their son, Dylan, is 27-years-old and the inspiration behind Chasing the Rabbit. They also have three daughters, Mariah (24), Lilly (20) and Serena (15).

Derek's book and more information is available at www.chasingtherabbit.org



Dylan Volk

Dylan Volk is the author of [Bad Choices Make Good Stories: My Life with Autism](#). It is a deep look inside the brain of a young man with high functioning autism. It is also the sequel to the book he co-authored with his father, [Chasing the Rabbit: A Dad's Life Raising a Son on the Spectrum](#). After years of what his parents called "the diagnosis of the month club," Dylan was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome at the age of eight. Life has always been challenging for Dylan.

When he was little, he struggled with how to learn the rules and follow directions that often did not make sense to him. As he got older, he was challenged, especially socially, by a world that often seemed to go too fast for him to keep up. Even today, Dylan works hard to figure out what he needs to do in order to get through each day as a 27-year-old adult in a very fast-paced society.

Dylan is currently living in Los Angeles pursuing his goal of earning a living making people laugh as well as traveling around the country sharing his story to thousands of people. Dylan hopes the work and presentations about his books are helping families as they navigate through the difficulties of living life on the spectrum. Both books and more information is available at www.volkbooks.com



Mary Wrobel, MA/SLP

Mary Wrobel is the author of [Taking Care of Myself](#), a hygiene, health, puberty and personal safety curriculum for students with ASD and related disabilities. Her book won the Autism Society of America Outstanding Literary Work of the Year Award-Educational Division for 2004. Her most recent book, [Taking Care of Myself 2](#) is a guide for teens and young adults with ASD, and covers the topics of hygiene, health, public behavior, relationships, personal safety, and sex and sexual relationships. She has also contributed to two previously published books: [Autism 101 Manual](#) and [Asperger's and Girls](#).

Ms. Wrobel is a teacher and speech-language pathologist who has taught and worked with students with autism and other disabilities for more than 25 years. As a consultant, she trains both parents and teachers in communication and language approaches, behavior strategies, academic/curricular modifications, safety instruction, as well as health, hygiene, puberty and personal safety. Her extensive knowledge of and experience with assistive technology has helped her to create a large library of resources as well as individualized materials, supports strategies and accommodations and for a wide variety of students with disabilities.

Besides presenting nationally at several autism conferences, Ms. Wrobel has also taught university classes, has spoken to several parent organizations, and has offered numerous, varied workshops to many professionals including speech-language pathologists, nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists and teachers.

Cost & Registration

October 3, 2019 - 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Registration and Exhibits Open at 8:00 a.m.

Space is Limited - Register Early!

Registration Fees for Participants are:

Arc Members:

Professional.....\$150.00
Consumer/Family Member.....\$105.00

Non Arc Members:

Professional.....\$190.00
Consumer/Family Member.....\$140.00

The registration fee covers the cost of materials, refreshments and lunch. Please complete the attached registration form, fax it to 815-464-5292, then mail the hard copy along with your check to:

The Arc of Illinois
20901 S. LaGrange Rd., Suite 209
Frankfort, IL 60423
815-464-1832

CONSUMER STIPENDS: If financial restrictions prevent you from paying full registration, consumer stipends for self-advocates and families are available through funding from the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities by contacting The Arc of Illinois at 815-464-1832.

Groups of more than 7 from one agency are entitled to a 10% discount. If you have any special needs, please contact Becca Schroeder at 815-464-1832. Notice of any special accommodations are required TWO WEEKS prior to the event. **Please indicate on the registration form if you need a vegetarian meal.**

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS: Participants canceling their registration 72 hours in advance will be entitled to a credit or refund, less a \$50.00 administrative cost. No refund or credit will be given for cancellation less than 72 hours before the conference.

LOCATION
Doubletree Hotel
3003 Corporate West Dr.
Lisle, IL 60532
630-505-0900

Single or double accommodations are available at the reduced rate of \$114.00 at the Doubletree Hotel when you mention the code CIA with The Arc of Illinois. Please contact the hotel directly at 630-505-0900 to make room reservations. Reservations must be received by 9/11/2019.

Registration Form

3392

Living With Autism Conference

Thursday, October 3, 2019

One form per person, please print legibly. Your name will appear on your name tag as it appears on this form.

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Special Meal Request: _____

AMOUNT PAID: _____

You can also register at www.thearcofil.org

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

- _____ Fax form to 815-464-5292 and send check to
The Arc of Illinois
- _____ Check enclosed payable to The Arc of Illinois
- _____ P.O. or State Voucher # _____
- _____ Charge to my Visa, Mastercard, Discover or
American Express

Name as it appears on credit card:

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Card holder's signature:



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**Don't miss this
exciting
Autism Conference!**

**Space is Limited!
Register Early!**

**Visit the Exhibits!
Fun Silent Auction!
Play a game of Plinko for
\$10 to win prizes!
All game donations benefit
the Assistive Technology
Fund!**

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2019 Living with Autism Conference

- Derek Volk, author and father, will share his experiences raising a son on the Autism Spectrum.
- Dylan Volk, author, will share his life experience as a man with high-functioning autism.
- Mary Wrobel will cover language and communication skills for young children to adolescents with examples and approaches for all abilities.
- Kathy Morris, will provide practical strategies you will be able to take back home and to work, and is a fun-packed keynote designed for parents, educators and therapists interested in providing supports to children and adolescents with autism, behavior disorders and other disabilities.
- TAP partnering agencies will speak about the services and unique programs they offer throughout the State of Illinois.
- **Earn 6 CEUs** for QIDPs, Social Workers, Nursing Home Administrators, LCPC, Licensed Professional Counselors, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists.
- **Teachers will earn 6** Professional Development Hours.



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