

ABCT AUTISM

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

August 2026 Digest



The Co-Chair Connection

Dear Autism SIG Members,

As we gear up for a busy and exciting fall, we want to share several important updates! First, a reminder that our **Autism SIG Preconference** has been scheduled for Thursday, November 12th. We hope you can attend as this remains a cornerstone event for our community!

We are also thrilled to introduce a new initiative from our Diversity Committee: the **Advocacy Champion Award**, which recognizes individuals who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to promoting affirming, inclusive, and community-informed practices. Keep an eye on our digest next month as well, as we will be unveiling even more information about this year's awards! We will be celebrating all award winners at our ABCT Conference Business Meeting this year.

As we wait in anticipation for ABCT in November, we encourage you to continue submitting information to be included in the digest. We are especially interested in nominations for the **SIG Spotlight** feature so we can celebrate the incredible, diverse work of our SIG.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our community, and we look forward to seeing you all at the preconference soon!

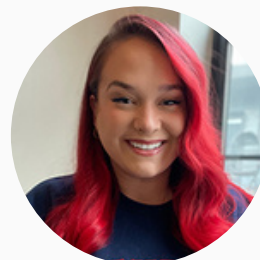
Warmly,



Katherine Pickard, PhD



Sadaf Khawar, PhD



Jordan Albright, PhD

Second Call for ABCT SIG Expo Submissions!

Still Accepting Submissions for the SIG Poster Expo at ABCT 2026!

We are excited to announce our annual call for SIG Poster Expo submissions for the ABCT 2026 Conference! The highest-scored submission will be invited to give an oral presentation at our in-person SIG Business meeting in Baltimore, MD!

We encourage submissions that align with the mission of ABCT and our SIG. We have attached our scoring rubric below.

ONLY trainees (i.e., from undergraduate through postdoctoral fellows) can apply as the first (and presenting) author.

Priority will be given to abstracts with completed data collection. Abstracts will be scored based on their significance, innovation, approach, commitment to underrepresented populations, and alignment with **the Autism SIG mission.**

Please submit your abstract **using this form** by August 7, 2026, at 11:59 pm PST.

What you need for submission:

- Title of presentation
- Authors* and institutional affiliation
- Conflicts of interest for authors (or N/A)
- Abstract (500 word maximum)
- Brief explanation on how your submission aligns with our **mission statement**
- Indicate whether your submission should be evaluated for consideration as a POSTER ONLY, ORAL ONLY, or POSTER and ORAL presentation.

If you have any questions, please contact Conference Planning co-chairs Jessica Granieri (jgranier...@ebp-nyc.com) or Alexis Khuu (khuu...@rowan.edu).



Call for Donations for Student Travel Awards

It's the time of year where we make a call for donations that support travel awards for students to attend the ABCT convention. Please consider making donations! Supporters will be thanked with virtual plaques at our Business Meeting to acknowledge their generous support.

SIG Spotlight

This section is dedicated to getting to know the incredible individuals who make up our SIG community. Each month, we will feature one or more SIG member(s), ranging from graduate students and early-career researchers to seasoned clinicians and advocates!

Our goal is to highlight the diverse paths, passions, and projects within our group, fostering deeper connections and potential collaborations across the ABCT autism community.

Alexis Brewe, Ph.D.



abrewe@augusta.edu

[www.linkedin.com/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/alexismbrewe)

[Linkedin in/alexismbrewe](https://www.linkedin.com/in/alexismbrewe)

Dr. Alexis Brewe is a member of our Communication and Outreach committee. She is an Assistant Professor with joint appointments in the Department of Community and Behavioral Health Sciences and Department of Pediatrics at Augusta University. She earned her PhD in Clinical Psychology, with a concentration in Child Psychology, from The University of Alabama and completed her predoctoral internship and postdoctoral fellowship at the University of North Carolina TEACCH Autism Program. Her research focuses on improving mental health care for autistic people across the lifespan by evaluating and adapting therapies, applying implementation science to increase impact and use of effective therapies in community settings, and identifying factors that influence treatment engagement and outcomes. Clinically, Dr. Brewe conducts autism diagnostic evaluations and provides evidence-based therapy to autistic people across the lifespan, partnering with clients to support a range of mental health and quality of life goals. She is launching her research lab this fall and welcomes opportunities to connect with Autism SIG members who share an interest in interventions, implementation science, and improving mental health services!

CONGRATS Alexis!

Listserv Lowdown

In Case You Missed It (ICYMI) - Below are submissions to the listserv that you may have missed this month!

Research Recruitment Roundup

- **Research Opportunity for Autistic Women**

Researchers at UCLA are looking for participants for a dissertation study examining autistic women's (ages 18-50) lived experiences of empathy through qualitative interviews. Interested in participating?

- For more information, please contact:
empathyautismresearch@gmail.com
- The study is entirely virtual and participants will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card.

- **Opportunity for Families Awaiting Autism Evaluations**

The A.J. Drexel Autism Institute is offering caregivers of young children (ages 16 to 48 months) the opportunity to get started with therapy without a diagnosis with the fully virtual OPT-In study. If you participate, you will work with an autism expert and can learn how to help your child build social, language, and other important skills. Benefits include: access to a fully online program for caregivers at no cost to you + You receive \$150 upon completion of study activities.

- **Spectrum for Life Interconnected Studies**

Seeking autistic adult research participants to complete online surveys. Help us understand how different life experiences, individual traits, perceptions, and attitudes can impact life outcomes such as health, employment, and quality of life.

- **Socio-Dramatic Affective Relational Intervention for Young Adults**

Click above to find out more information and determine eligibility for the study.

Listserv Lowdown

In Case You Missed It (ICYMI) - Below are submissions to the listserv that you may have missed this month!

Workshops & Webinars

- **Virtual Seminar Series Internship and Postdoc Live Q & A Internship and Postdoc Live Q & A**

The Autism SIG is hosting two panel discussions on applying to internships and postdocs with a neurodiversity focus. Each panel will feature trainees, clinicians, industry professionals, and researchers.

When? Wednesday August 26, 2026 at 3pmET (12pm PT and 2pmCT)

SIG Member Publications

- **Short Report: Limited Sensitivity and Specificity of the Spanish Social Communication Questionnaire in a Clinic Sample in Quito, Ecuador**
- **Brief Report: Adapting Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Anxiety in an Autistic Child with Intellectual Disability—A Single-Case AB-Design Study**

Other

- **Check out Polly the Brave Pufferfish!**

After working in private practice now for several years, a member of our SIG community noticed that there are very few accurate social emotional learning books with activities and exercises to assist with intervention. To fill that void, they wrote a children's book focused on addressing fears (particularly those most common in autistic youth). To learn more about Polly the Brave Pufferfish, see <http://iknowjustwhattodo.com> and follow @pollyandfriendsbooks on facebook and instagram!

Listserv Lowdown

In Case You Missed It (ICYMI) - Below are submissions to the listserv that you may have missed this month!

Career Corner

- **Job posting for Child Psychologist (Licensed or License-Eligible) – Georgia at Burrell Behavioral Therapy & Consulting**

Seeking a compassionate, evidence-based Child Psychologist to join their growing practice. They specialize in serving neurodivergent children, teens, and their families through individualized, collaborative, and family-centered care. To learn more about the practice, the population they serve, and their office location, please visit:

<http://burrelltherapyandconsulting.com>

Interested?

Please send your CV/resume and a brief introduction to:

lindsey.burrell@burrelltherapyandconsulting.com

- **Job posting for Tenure-track Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at Appalachian State University**

Appalachian State University is recruiting for a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at Appalachian State University, to begin in Fall 2027. The new faculty member would join the Clinical Psychology Psy.D. program, which adheres to a scholar-practitioner model and features small, mentor-matched cohorts and guaranteed assistantship funding for students. Faculty are active teachers and supervisors in the program and are active researchers as well. They have a collegial department and are excited to add to it!

Advocacy in Action

Explore this month's top advocacy updates, policy changes, and immediate opportunities for you to drive meaningful change.

Rescheduled IACC Full Committee Meeting Announced

The Office of National Autism Coordination has announced the rescheduled date for the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) Full Committee Meeting. Tuning into this meeting is a prime opportunity to stay informed on federal autism research directions and policy priorities.

Meeting Details:

- Thursday, August 27, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET.
- The event is fully accessible to the remote public via **NIH Videocast**.

The Committee welcomes public input to help shape national priorities. **The deadline to submit new written public comments is Thursday, August 20, 2026.**

- Check out ASAN's **Policy Advocacy Toolkit** on how to submit comments to the IACC.

The Increasing Mental Health Options Act (S. 5120)

This bipartisan legislation aims to eliminate the outdated Medicare rule requiring a physician's prior authorization before a patient can see a psychologist, allowing for independent practice across Medicare treatment settings. It also opens up Medicare bonus payments to psychologists practicing in mental health professional shortage areas.

- **Call to Action:** Monitor updates from APA Services, keep an eye out for upcoming grassroots mobilization alerts, and prepare to contact your reps to advocate for the bill's co-sponsorship and passage.

CMS Proposed Rule for the CY 2027 Physician Fee Schedule

CMS released its proposed fee schedule, which includes highly favorable provisions for psychologists, such as continuing to phase in a 19.1% increase to the work value of commonly billed services and restructuring practice expense calculations.

Because commercial insurance companies frequently benchmark their reimbursement rates against Medicare, these federal changes could trigger positive increases across the entire private insurance market.

- **Call to Action:** Submit public comments **by September 14** using the **APA Action Center** form for added ease!

Resource Hub



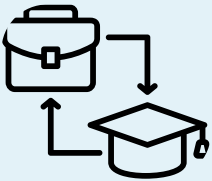
Autism Resource Library

List of autism-related resources, organized by target audience (e.g., clinicians, young adults) and topics (e.g., gender and sexuality, perspectives from non-speakers).



Autism Research Faculty

Our Training & Development committee recently updated and expanded our database of universities and faculty offering doctoral-level training related to autism and developmental disabilities. Check it out if you are applying to doctoral programs!



Clinical Internship Programs

For doctoral students applying to clinical internship, we also have a database of APA-accredited clinical internship programs with autism-related activities and tracks.



Joining the Autism SIG

We are excited to welcome new SIG members who are also members of ABCT! Non-members can still join our listserv to receive email updates and event notifications. Click or scan to learn more about SIG membership benefits.



Autism SIG's LinkTree

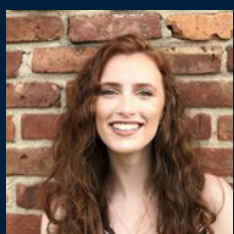
Please find helpful links on our linktree page, including our LinkedIn page!

Monthly Digest Committee



How to contribute to the monthly digest

If you want to be featured or share information to be included in the monthly digest, please use **this form** by August 21st!



Rachel G. McDonald
Co-Chair
Brown University



Britney Jeyanayagam
Co-Chair
St. John's University



Diondra Straiton-Webster
University of Miami



Angela Constantine
University of Albany



Kristin Walker
Stony Brook University



Nina Menon
Emory University



Alexis Brewe
Augusta University



Anna Barkey
University of Alabama



Grace Lee Simmons
University of
North Carolina



Lluvia Sanchez
University of
Southern California



Kyle Frost
University of
Massachusetts