

**2021
TWC**

Together We Can

**A STATEWIDE CONFERENCE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH
DISABILITIES, THEIR FAMILIES, AND THE PEOPLE WHO
SUPPORT THEM.**

THIS YEAR WE ARE “UNPACKING” THE TWC CONFERENCE!

IN RESPONSE TO VIDEO FATIGUE, THE TWC CONFERENCE PARTNERS ARE UNPACKING THIS YEAR’S CONFERENCE OFFERRINGS. JOIN ENGAGING KEYNOTE SESSIONS THAT REPRESENT THE USUAL CONFERENCE TRACKS. EXPERIENCE FUN VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE KIDS (and the WHOLE FAMILY) TO REPLACE THE CHILDCARE ACTIVITIES. ENJOY A GIFT BOX DELIVERED RIGHT TO YOUR DOOR IN PLACE OF THE EXHIBITOR FAIR. AS ALWAYS, THE TWC CONFERENCE IS FREE TO ATTEND.

ATTEND ONE “UNPACKED” 2021 TWC EVENT, OR ATTEND THEM ALL!

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP BY

ASK Resource Center • Bob and Billie Ray Child Development Center • Easter Seals of Iowa
Iowa Department of Education • Iowa Statewide Independent Living Council

CONFERENCE AGENDA

EDUCATION & TRAINING CREDIT

For information on credits, refer to Page 7 of this Agenda, the TWC Conference webpage, and the registration. Information will be updated as it is received.

***BE ONE OF THE
FIRST 200
REGISTRANTS
BEFORE
APRIL 30TH
AT NOON AND
RECEIVE A FREE
GIFT BOX!***

GIFT BOX EXHIBITOR FAIR

In place of the usual exhibitor fair, one Gift Box will be shipped to the first 200 registrants! **Register by NOON on April 30th to participate.** A shipping address is required. The Gift Boxes will contain information and items that conference goers would typically collect at the exhibitor fair.

PARTICIPATING EXHIBITORS

ASK RESOURCE CENTER, AUTISM SOCIETY OF IOWA, BOB AND BILLIE RAY CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF IOWA, DECODING DYSLEXIA OF IOWA, DISABILITY RIGHTS IOWA, EASTER SEALS OF IOWA, FRANK VARVARIS DISABILITY PLANNING, IOWA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL, IOWA FAMILY AND EDUCATOR PARTNERSHIP, IOWA STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL, LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION OF IOWA, MOSAIC, NAMI IOWA, STEPS BY KEI-CHE, AND MORE!

Saturday Morning Keynote Sessions

10:30 AM — NOON CENTRAL ON SATURDAY, MAY 1st, 2021



*AJ Paron-Wildes
and Devin Wildes,
Mom-&-Son Team,
Artists & Designers*

*Family Advocacy
&
Self-Advocacy
Keynote Session*

The Boy Who Spoke Through his Art. A Story of Determination, Finding Purpose and Beating the Odds.

Session Description:

At this session you will learn the story of a young boy, and his journey told through his mother's eyes. All people are motivated by three things: autonomy, mastery and purpose. We teach our children autonomy and mastery, but we fail many times to teach them purpose. This story is about a young boy that has beat all the odds because he found his way to purpose. The presentation ends with a video presentation of this young man speaking to the audience about his passions which is remarkable since his mother was told he would never speak.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about the tough navigation parents face trying to find the right help.
- Understand what motivates all people and how that can be harnessed from those around you.
- Learn how purpose can fuel anyone to accomplish the impossible.
- Build empathy for others that may not look, act, or think like you.

Speaker Biographies:

A.J. Paron-Wildes has acquired significant experience working in the design/build industry. She has created and led an award-winning design/build firm, developed national programs for ASID, and developed design research programs for the University of Minnesota. Her work is featured in many television segments for HGTV, PBS and Bob Vila. A.J. has also been a design consultant for interiors in healthcare and education. From school settings and therapy environments to her most noted work on the building for the MIND Institute in Sacramento, California; AJ has blended her skills as a designer with the experience of raising her son.

Devin Wildes was diagnosed with severe autism at the age of 3. He didn't talk, had lots of tantrums and his parents had a hard time taking him anywhere. They had no idea how to reach him. What his mother wanted the most was to hear Devin's voice, to communicate with him and for him to one day be able to go to school with his neighborhood friends. Devin attended Fraser Child and Family Center until the age of 6 when he was able to transition to a public school.

Devin learned to speak, finding his voice through art - quite literally. As a young autistic artist, this is his story of triumph. Through the power of art, Fraser and family, Devin surpassed all expectations to not only speak; but move the world around him through his art. Now as a young adult in his twenties, Devin has a fulfilling career attending Interact Visual & Performing Art Center where he creates art every day. Not only does he speak, he professionally talks about his art around the country to audiences inspired by his talent and perseverance.

Saturday Morning Keynote Sessions

10:30 AM — NOON CENTRAL ON SATURDAY, MAY 8th, 2021



LeDerick Horne
Poet, Self-Advocate,
Author & Entrepreneur

Self-Advocacy
&
Youth Leadership
Keynote Session

Youth Leadership and The Self-Advocate’s Role in Building Better Systems

Session Description:

During this self-advocacy focused keynote, LeDerick Horne will draw upon his own experiences as a student of color with a disability. Participants will engage in an activity to help them find their own voices as self-advocates as part of the transition planning process. Youth and young adults in the audience will explore their roles in building more inclusive and equitable systems. Families and support workers will come away better equipped to address the challenges facing youth today - knowing how to engage developing leaders so they can help build equitable systems.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn key strategies for developing self-determination skills for students with disabilities including mentoring, systematic development of disability awareness, and delivering supports in a way that is culturally competent.
- Understand how building communication skills, developing a clear understanding of one’s abilities, and knowing how to access accommodations are key to long-term success.
- Describe the importance of disability identity to reduce stigma and improve student engagement and disability pride.
- Address the challenges facing students with disabilities from communities of color to help families and those who serve them build equitable systems.

Speaker Biography:

LeDerick Horne is a poet, advocate, and co-author of the book “Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities: A Path to Pride and Success” – Released by Brookes Publishing Co. Within his presentations, LeDerick shares his own experience as a black, male student with a learning disability from New Jersey who was able to graduate from college with a BA in mathematics.

LeDerick is one of the nation’s most sought after speakers dedicated to improving the outcomes of minority youth and youth with disabilities. During his presentation, LeDerick gives advice to help all students develop positive identities beyond classification. He shares strategies for helping students reach their transition goals as well as advice to helping students develop positive relationships in school, in other systems and in the adult world.

Saturday Morning Keynote Sessions

10:30 AM — NOON CENTRAL ON SATURDAY, MAY 15th, 2021



Len Sandler
Clinical Professor of Law
Director, Law and Policy In Action Clinic
University of Iowa College of Law



Nathan Kirstein
Staff Attorney
Disability Rights Iowa

Disability Law
Keynote Session

Updating Seclusion and Restraint Practices in Iowa Schools

Session Description:

Len Sandler and Nathan Kirstein are two of the attorneys who helped reform Iowa's "Chapter 103" rules. Chapter 103 dictates what can and cannot occur as part of the use of seclusion and restraint on students in Iowa's schools. Over the past few years, advocates like Len and Nathan, along with many family leaders and advocates, have worked with the Iowa legislature and Iowa Department of Education to update Chapter 103 and the practices it allows. Len and Nathan will introduce session participants to what has been accomplished and talk about why it matters to the health, mental health, safety and education of Iowa students. They will also share what these changes mean for schools, families and students across the state.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the history of and key elements to updates in Iowa's Chapter 103 rules.
- Understand how the updated Chapter 103 rules change practices in Iowa classrooms/schools and why that is important for student health and safety.
- Describe the ways in which families may be informed of and involved in decisions to use or not use seclusion and restraint of their children in school.

Speaker Biography:

Len Sandler is a Clinical Professor of Law at the University of Iowa. He founded and directs the award-winning Law and Policy in Action Clinic to give law students experience solving recurring, systemic problems that cannot be addressed through litigation. Len and the law students he supervises played a key role in researching and drafting the Department of Education's Chapter 103 rules, conducted workshops, and advocated for limiting the use of seclusion and physical restraints in schools. After stints as a U.S. Navy submariner and a newspaper reporter, Len received his law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law. A Reginald Heber Smith Community Lawyer Fellow, he represented migrant farm workers, abused and neglected children, persons with disabilities, and low-income families before turning to clinical teaching. He has practiced law and taught at law schools in Maryland, Vermont and Iowa.

Nathan Kirstein graduated from Drake University Law School in May 2011 and was hired as a staff attorney at Disability Rights Iowa in October 2012. He primarily represents clients in the areas of legal rights violations in juvenile justice and child welfare facilities and students and families in special education cases. Previously, he was a sole practitioner primarily representing clients in juvenile justice/child welfare cases, landlord/tenant cases, and wills/trusts. He was also the program coordinator for a gender specific after school program on the near North side of Des Moines, Iowa.

Saturday Morning Keynote Sessions

10:30 AM — NOON CENTRAL ON SATURDAY, MAY 22nd, 2021



Warren Phillips
*PhD, Associate
Professor,
Therapist &
Entrepreneur*

**Health and Wellbeing
Keynote Session**

Practicing Mindfulness for Yourself and with Your Family

Session Description:

With disability as a part of the lives we navigate, we sometimes struggle to be intentional about self-care, compassion, and connection even more than other people do. During this interactive keynote, participants will learn on-the-go grounding and coping strategies for handling overwhelming emotions and challenging events. The take-away's will help to relieve stress and regain control of well-being right in the moment. The strategies taught in this session are designed to be useful for you **AND** for you to model to your family members.

SPECIAL NOTE: Directly following this session, Project Sunshine's expert in mindfulness and meditation, Lisa Roberts, will wrap up the 2021 TWC Un-Conference sessions with a kid-friendly and accessible, gentle-stretch session for the whole family! Learn more on the next page of this agenda.

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss coping in the face of COVID and other stressors.
- Understand how being present with emotions and thoughts can help parents and children cope with stressful events.
- Learn how to use grounding techniques for yourself and demonstrate them to your family members to self-regulate emotions.
- Introduce the idea of action planning for coping skills to increase well-being.

Speaker Biography:

Dr. Warren Phillips is the Clinical Director of Central Iowa Psychological Services, a group mental health practice that provides comprehensive psychological assessments and counseling to children, teens, and adults. He is also the President of Transformative Workplace Solutions and an Associate Teaching Professor at Iowa State University in the Department of Psychology. Since 1996, he has counseled, coached and mentored individuals, families, groups and organizations to improve their overall sense of well being while also growing a successful small business, employing 25 full and part-time therapists and consultants. Dr. Warren uses his expertise to provide solutions to internal conflict, improvements to communication, and reduction of daily stressors.

Saturday Interactive Sessions for the Kids (and the Whole Family!)



NOON — 1:00 PM CENTRAL WITH PROJECT SUNSHINE



Project Sunshine is an international nonprofit supporting children and families facing medical challenges. In the United States, they work with a corps of over 20,000 volunteers, and partner with over 425 medical facility partners to bring joy and play to children. Project Sunshine's TelePlay program was created last year to bring play and activities to children and families through our trained volunteers, via a HIPPA-compliant Zoom platform.



Noon to 1 PM, Saturday, May 8th (ages/abilities 10-14): How many candies can you name in the order of the alphabet? We'll start you off - A for Airheads! Next? Obviously, B for Butterfingers. How many alien movies can you name in 15 seconds? What about salad dressings? You have exactly 15 seconds to think of a list of things related to the category provided. Come join us to play two games – *Alphamania* and *On the Clock*! For *Alphamania* you'll work as a group to see how far you can get in the alphabet within a category. For *On the Clock* you take on the challenge of thinking fast or phoning a friend to beat the clock!

Registration limited to 15 participants. Virtual activity. No supplies needed.



Noon to 1 PM, Saturday, May 15th (ages/abilities 5-9): Did you know that newborn kangaroos are only about an inch in length or how about the fact that cows are color blind? Do you like to get creative with your hands? Come join us for two activities – *Amazing Animals Trivia* and *Exploring Animals with Creative Art*! Put your animal knowledge to the test with Trivia and explore the materials provided along with your friends!

Registration limited to 15 participants.

Register by April 30th to receive the FREE art supplies. Shipping address required.



Noon to 1 PM, Saturday, May 22nd (ages/abilities 5+. Fun for the Whole Family): Join *Lisa Roberts*, an expert in yoga and mindful meditation, to experience an accessible, kid-friendly stretch; including gentle body movements and plenty of mindfulness tools for kids. Participation is optional; kids 5+, parents and caregivers are welcome to observe and join in as they please. Great for the whole family.

Registration limited to 15 participants. One registration can have multiple participants on one device/screen. Virtual activity. No supplies needed.

EDUCATION & TRAINING CREDIT

Social Workers, Licensed Mental Health Counselors, and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists are approved for **1.5 credit hours** for each Keynote session attended.

Approval is pending for Foster Parents, Family Peer Support Specialists, Peer Support Specialists, and Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse Professionals to receive **1.5 credit hours** for each Keynote Session.

Approval is pending for Attorneys to receive **1.5 credit hours** for the **May 15th Keynote Session “Updating Seclusion and Restraint Practices in Iowa Schools”**.

More information on credits and associated costs is located on the online registration form. Certificates will be mailed after sessions are complete and the registrant has paid all fees. Participants must attend the full session(s) for which credit is desired. Online attendance will be confirmed before certificates will be issued.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the partner organizations, exhibitors and attendees for being a part of the ninth annual Together We Can Conference!

This one-of-a-kind, statewide event would not be possible without your continued support.

CONFERENCE PARTNERS



ALLIANCE MEMBER



Committed to Parent to Parent USA Endorsed Practices



This conference was funded, in part, under grants from the US Department of Education, #H328M200077, and grant from the US Department of Health & Human Services, #H84MC24065. The contents of this publication do not necessarily represent the policy of those Departments, and the reader should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

ASK Resource Center is a member of the Parent to Parent USA Alliance, and also serves as Iowa's Family Voices State Affiliate Organization, Family to Family Health Information Center (F2F) and Parent Training and Information Center (PTI).