



# Bring College Autism Expertise to Your Campus Community!

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# About me & Disclosures

- Psychologist at Emory Autism Center
- Director of Emory Oaks
- Member of the College Autism Network (CAN)
- Administrative Director of the CAN Consultant's Collective

# Supporting autistic students

What training needs does  
your campus have?

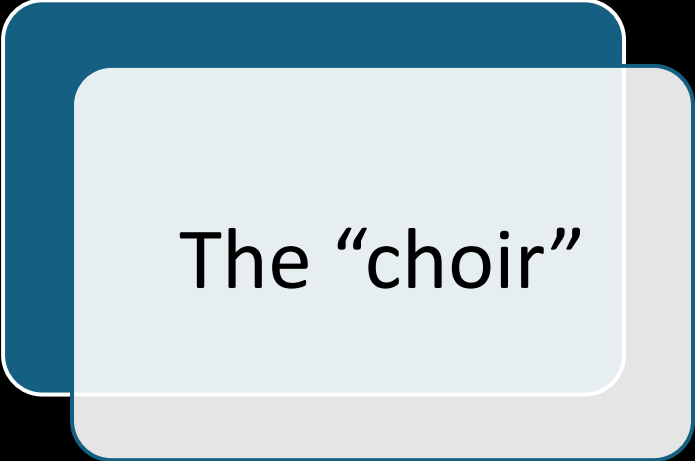
# Current landscape

- Roughly 2-3% of students are autistic
- Campuses are increasing their supports for autistic students
- Campus community members (e.g., faculty, staff, students, administrators) may believe they would benefit from information about how to best support autistic students
- Universal Design for Learning and Neurodiversity-Affirming practices make up the bulk of what community members can do

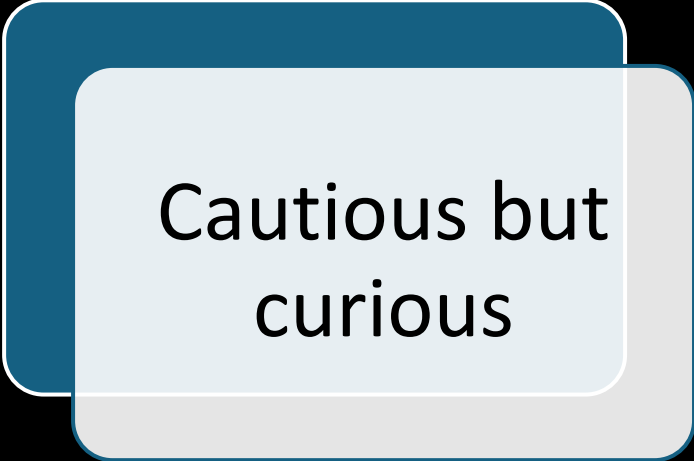
# Potential challenges

- Identifying professionals with expertise
- Matching audience with content and presenters
- Recruiting engagement and participation
- Translating knowledge to action and behavior change

# Your audience



The “choir”



Cautious but  
curious



Curmudgeons

# Solutions:

What can we do about this? How do we bring great information to our campuses? How do we bring systemic change towards inclusivity and accessibility?

# Good ideas

- Start a college autism support program
- Launch a campus-wide inclusion initiative (see CAN's Autism Inclusive Campus Designation project)
- Provide training and support for community members
- Nurture student organizations and student advocacy
- Celebrate autism and neurodiversity

# Components of a College Autism Support Program

Support for  
Academics

Mentoring

Social  
Engagement

Career  
Development

Mental  
Wellness

Community

Advocacy

Leadership



# Finding expertise

Who have you partnered with?

Content for a general training

# Outline for Content for a General Training



Vocabulary and Less-familiar Terms



Describe the “problem”: struggles, access, belonging



Suggestions, Strategies and Tips



Share resources and highlight campus partnerships

# Tips and Suggestions

Rapport

Foster  
Belonging

Ask Students

Manage your  
stories

Be direct

Visual

Flexibility

Reminders

Multiple ways  
to participate

Breaks

Connect

# Example:

Partnership between Gwinnett Technical College and  
Emory Autism Center

# Investing in Faculty and Staff Training

- Phase 1: General training for faculty and staff
- Phase 2: Workshop-style professional development
  - Audience: by department
  - Part 1: Panel discussion with autistic panelist and accessibility staff
  - Part 2: Case example and small group discussion


# Finding expertise and consultants

- Look within your own campus
  - Psychology and Counseling Departments
  - Counseling and Psychological Services
  - Disability Studies Department
  - College of Education
  - Autistic and neurodivergent identifying speakers
- College Autism Network's Consultants' Collective

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College Autism Network **CAN Consultants C**



**CAN Consultants' Collective**

College Autism Network (CAN) is a community of practitioners and scholars committed to improving the experience and outcomes of autistic emergent college students. The **CAN Consultants' Collective** is a group of CAN members with experience, expertise and interest in working with institutions of higher education and organizations in their surrounding communities that seek to develop or improve their programs, services and initiatives so that they are more inclusive, effective, welcoming and equitable. The outstanding consultants of the CAN Collective are available for consultation, technical assistance, and ongoing support of initiatives and projects.

Services might include













- Trainings/presentations for faculty and/or staff regarding best practices for supporting autistic students
- Consultation for envisioning, developing, implementing and/or sustaining a college autism program
- Technical Assistance and Consultation to meet criteria for the designation of an Autism Friendly Campus
- Training on designing and planning for events and programming that is sensory and neurodiversity friendly and welcoming
- Training for the staff and employees of businesses who wish to enact a welcoming and inclusive work environment for autistic employees

If you are seeking a consultant, we are here to help.

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If you are seeking a consultant, we are here to help.  
If you'd like, please complete our [CAN Consultants' Collective Request Form](#) or you may contact the Administrative Director of the CAN Consultants' Collective (Matt Sengall) at [matt.sengall@canconsultantscollective.org](mailto:matt.sengall@canconsultantscollective.org). Matt would be happy to learn more about your request and needs and get you connected to an outstanding member of the Collective.  
You may also review our Consultants below and reach out to a member of the Collective directly, if you'd prefer.

Select each consultant's box to discover more about them and their areas of expertise.

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  <p><b>Laurie Adams, EdW, MSW</b><br/>Executive Director of The Graduate Program in Health, USA</p>   |  <p><b>Lee Brinkette Williams, Ph.D.</b><br/>Executive Director of the College Autism Network in Rhode Island, RI</p>             |  <p><b>Julie Gardner, M.Ed.</b><br/>Assistant Director of Student Accessibility at Central Connecticut State University in Saybrook, CT</p> |
|  <p><b>Brad Cook, Ph.D.</b><br/>Assistant Professor of Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education (JULIE) at Michigan State University in East Lansing, MI</p> |  <p><b>Julie Dimattina, Ph.D., ABPP</b><br/>Clinical Psychologist with CBT Specialists, LLC</p>                                   |  <p><b>Eric Eastlick, Ph.D.</b><br/>Psychological and Educational Consultant with The College Consultants in Walnut Creek, CA</p>           |
|  <p><b>Brittany L. Jackson, Ed.D.</b><br/>Disability Services Coordinator and Adjunct Professor at Hope College in Elkhart, IN</p>                        |  <p><b>Kim Jensen</b><br/>Founder and Executive Director of CHAD (College Higher Education Autism Development) in Memphis, TN</p> |  <p><b>Brett Benson Nachman, Ph.D.</b><br/>Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, PA</p>                        |
|  <p><b>Emily Barkow, M.Ed.</b><br/>Director of On-Campus Housing at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI</p>   |  <p><b>Alysi Buehler-Fink, M.S.Ed., LPC-MHS, NCC</b><br/>College Autism Specialist in Chattanooga, TN</p>                       |  <p><b>Matt Sengall, Ph.D.</b><br/>Program Director of Cross-Campus at Emory University in Atlanta, GA</p>                                |

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**THAT'S A GREAT  
QUESTION!**



# Discussion

- What opportunities exist right now on your campus to help your community be more inclusive, welcoming and supportive for autistic students?
- What events have you hosted or attended in the past? What would you repeat? What would you do differently?
- In what ways does your campus celebrate neurodiversity?

# Thank you!!

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