

EDUCATOR CONFERENCE



Effective Practice for Students with an Intellectual Disability, including Down syndrome and Autism

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

**David L. Lawrence Convention Center
Spirit of Pittsburgh Ballroom
1000 Ft. Duquesne Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA 15222**

\$100 - Includes CEU's



FEATURED GUEST SPEAKER: OSEP DIRECTOR, LAURIE VANDERPLOEG



**LITERACY
SKILLS**



Chris Lemons, PhD



TECHNOLOGY



Sean Smith, PhD



BEHAVIOR



David Stein, PysD



**TEACHING
TOOLS**



Dana Halle, JD

For more information, speaker bios, agenda and to register:

<https://www.ndscenter.org/outreach-education/educator-conference/pittsburgh-2019/>

Reading Intervention for Children and Adolescents with DS

Christopher Lemons, PhD

Learning to read is an important skill that supports future educational outcomes, employment, and independence. The goal of this session will be to provide a model of literacy for individuals with DS, to summarize recent research that has enhanced our understanding of effective methods to teach reading skills, and to provide strategies for supporting literacy development in children and adolescents with DS. Time will be provided for questions and discussion.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to summarize the key components of effective literacy instruction for individuals with DS.
2. Participants will be able to describe key findings from research on enhancing reading outcomes for individuals with DS.
3. Participants will be able to state at least three actionable steps they can take to support the literacy needs of their students or children with DS.

About the Presenter:



Dr. Christopher J. Lemons is an Associate Professor of Special Education at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and a member of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center. His research focuses on improving academic outcomes for children and adolescents with intellectual, developmental, and learning disabilities. His recent research has focused on developing and evaluating reading interventions for individuals with Down syndrome. He has published studies in peer-reviewed journals including *Exceptional Children*, *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, and *Remedial and Special Education*. Lemons has secured funding to support his research from the Institute of Education Sciences and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, both within the U.S. Department of Education. He is an Associate Editor for the *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*. He chairs the Executive Committee for the Pacific Coast Research Conference. Lemons is also Co-Director of the National Center for Leadership in Intensive Intervention and a Senior Advisor for the National Center on Intensive Intervention, both funded by the Office of Special Education Programs. He received his doctorate from Peabody College of Vanderbilt University in 2008. Lemons is a recipient of the Pueschel-Tjossem Research Award from the National Down Syndrome Congress. In 2016, Lemons received the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE), the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government on science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers, from President Obama. Prior to entering academia, Lemons taught in several special education settings including a preschool autism unit, an elementary resource and inclusion program, and a middle school life skills classroom. His areas of expertise include reading interventions for children and adolescents with learning and intellectual disabilities, with a focus on interventions for individuals with Down syndrome; data-based individualization; and intervention-related assessment.

It's Not Just Technology, It's Philosophy = Solutions For All

Sean J. Smith, PhD

This session focuses on how technology tools and solutions can be utilized to enhance the inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome in the general education classroom. A focus on the identification of potential barriers interfering with student development and overall access to the inclusionary setting will be addressed. A focus on current and future technologies that open BOTH the academic and employment world will be addressed. Finally, APPS, APPS, and MORE!

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to identify popular myth and misconception interfering in the learning process as they apply to technology for learners and those both with and without disabilities.
2. Participants will understand ways to integrate and create ideas and ways no tech and a variety of different technologies can be utilized at home, school and in the real world.
3. Participants will begin to apply practical ways to utilize tools and tech solutions to increase content accessibility in the general education classroom and further develop skills that promote independence across the lifespan.

About the Presenter:



Sean Smith, PhD, is working as a faculty member at the University of Kansas. Sean has concentrated his efforts on technology innovations that can further the development and independence of struggling learners and those with disabilities. Recently, this has included work in the area of online/personalized learning, virtual reality, and Universal Design for Learning. The parent of four school-age children, Sean's oldest son with Down syndrome has been a significant influence on his work.

Improving the Results for Students with Disabilities: A Road Map for Educators

Laurie VanderPloeg

We are all striving to improve outcomes for all learners, particularly those with disabilities. The Office of Special Education Programs initiative to facilitate systematic improvement plans is at the forefront of efforts. This session will feature an overview of OSEP's efforts to raise the bar for state special education programs to improve the educational outcomes for America's 6.5 million children and youth with disabilities, including our individuals with Down syndrome. This update will feature an understanding of the specific frameworks and efforts in place, an update on what OSEP is witnessing across the country in success of this work, and the next steps or stages in place to ensure that all stakeholders are working together to ensure that everyone has the necessary supports to address the needs of all children, including those with disabilities.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will gain an understanding of OSEP's current efforts to facilitate state systematic improvement plans targeting the needs of students with disabilities.
- Participants will be able to identify and understand how OSEP's leadership is having a direct impact on the supports and services in place and being provided to facilitate positive outcomes for our children and youth with disabilities.
- Participants will understand the vision and the additional steps underway to continue to build upon OSEP's previous successes to further the positive outcomes for all children.

About the Presenter:



Laurie VanderPloeg is the director of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), at the U.S. Department of Education. VanderPloeg ensures the effective implementation of OSEP's legislative mission, advises the assistant secretary on federal education policy related to individuals with disabilities, and provides leadership in addressing issues of American education for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities through OSEP activities and within the context of the policies of OSERS, the Department, and Congress.

Prior to joining the department, VanderPloeg served as director of special education at Kent Intermediate School District (Kent ISD) in Michigan. Also at Kent ISD, she served as assistant director for monitoring, compliance and parent support. Prior to Kent ISD, she served as a local supervisor of special education, and a special education teacher in the Grand Rapids Public Schools. VanderPloeg also served as an adjunct professor at Grand Valley State University in the special education administration program. She is a parent of an adult with disabilities. VanderPloeg graduated from Grand Valley State University with a master's in special education administration and a bachelor's degree from Grand Valley State College. She holds administrative approvals as both supervisor and director of special education and certification in learning disabilities, cognitive impairment, emotional impairment, and K-8 regular education.

Behavior & Down Syndrome: The Respond but Don't React Method

David Stein, PsyD

Behavior problems impact approximately 30% of children with DS. Left untreated, these same children often exhibit behavior problems as adults, limiting work and independent living opportunities. In order to address behavior problems effectively, one must understand the brain-based reasons for these challenges and direct treatment appropriately. This workshop will present the basic neuroscience of DS and how this informs effective behavior management, with practical strategies provided for use in the home and school settings.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the basic neuroscience of DS and its impact on behavior.
2. Understand the theory underlying effective behavior management strategies to support individuals with DS.
3. Take home specific tools for use in the home and classroom for supporting positive behavior for individuals with DS.

About the Presenter:



Dr. David Stein is the founder of New England Neurodevelopment, a pediatric psychology practice in Boston. He is the author of *Supporting Positive Behavior in Children and Teens With Down Syndrome: The Respond but Don't React Method*. Dr. Stein has served as Co-Director of the Down Syndrome Program and a pediatric psychologist within the Division of Developmental Medicine at Boston Children's Hospital, as well as an instructor at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Stein's clinical work is focused on neuropsychological testing, behavior therapy, and parent training with children who have neurodevelopmental disorders. Dr. Stein's research is focused on accurate phenotyping of complex and comorbid neurodevelopmental conditions, factors affecting long-term outcomes, and quality improvement.

Accommodations and Modifications: Keys to Accessing the Curriculum

Dana Halle, JD

This session will focus on adaptations to curriculum, assessment, environment and instruction to enhance learning. Adaptations enable students with Down syndrome to learn using the general education curriculum with its rich content.

Learning Objectives:

1. Participants will learn the difference between accommodations and modifications
2. Participants will understand the types of changes to curriculum, assessment, environment and instruction that can improve access to learning
3. Participants will walk away with strategies to adapt activities to create accessible curriculum

About the Presenter:



Dana Halle is Co-Founder and Executive Director of Down Syndrome Foundation of Orange County. She also developed and continues to expand *The Learning Program* and *LP Online*, educational platforms which improve academic outcomes for learners with Down syndrome. She currently trains and supports twenty Down syndrome organizations for delivery of their local Learning Programs, and she works with 180 parents through LP Online. Dana also provides weekly direct instruction on literacy, math and social skills to thirty students (ages nine through twenty-one) in DSF's Learning Center in Irvine, California. Dana attended Pomona College, where she earned a B.A. in Public Policy Analysis & Psychology and the University of California, Hastings School of Law, where she earned her J.D. Dana practiced law as a business litigator for ten years before taking time off to parent her three children, the youngest of whom, Nick, has Down syndrome. Soon after Nick's birth in 1998, Dana began advocating on behalf of children with Down syndrome and their families.