



# 2025 DAY OF LEARNING SERIES

## BUILDING SUPPORT SYSTEMS!

JULY 19, 2025 | 8 am – 3 pm

<u>8:00</u>	Saguaro	<b>REGISTRATION &amp; CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST</b> <i>Continental breakfast in Saguaro Dining Room. Be sure to visit our Sponsors and Exhibitors!</i>
<u>9:00</u>	Ocotillo	<b>WELCOME &amp; OPENING REMARKS</b> <b>Ann Monahan, AZ Autism Coalition President</b> <i>Introductions and general information for the day's events.</i>
<u>9:15-10:15</u>	Ocotillo	<b>LEGISLATIVE UPDATE!</b> <b>Jon Meyers, Executive Director, Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council</b> <i>Demystify fact from fiction with accurate information on disability related legislative issues and learn how they impact the DDD community. This session will touch on changes to state DDD services including the Parents as Paid Providers program along with federal Medicaid changes and what to watch at both the state and federal levels.</i>
	Brittlebush	<b>CANNIBIS AND THE SPECTRUM</b> <b>William Troutt, NMD, Trulieve</b> <i>Considerations of utilizing cannabis as a therapy for individuals on the spectrum. Dr Troutt will discuss risks and benefits, constituents of the cannabis plant, THC, CBD and others, Dosage strategies, modalities of use, how the cannabis plant interfaces with our bodies and realistic expectations. Questions and interaction will be encouraged during this presentation.</i>
<u>10:30-11:30</u>	Ocotillo	<b>COMPASSION RECHARGE: STRESS RELIEF FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS OF NEURO DIVERSE CHILDREN, Dolores Tampos-Oksman, CAS, M.Ed., Love, Heal, Believe, LLC.</b> <i>Caring for a child with autism is a profound journey of love and dedication—but it can also be overwhelming, leading to exhaustion, stress, and burnout. This empowering talk shares practical, science-backed stress reduction techniques to restore balance, boost resilience, and recharge your emotional well-being. You'll discover how to care for yourself without guilt while providing your child's love and support through mindfulness, self-compassion, and boundary-setting strategies. Key Benefits: Reduce stress &amp; prevent burnout, Let go of guilt &amp; embrace self-compassion, Develop emotional resilience – Handle challenges with more patience and confidence, Restore energy &amp; joy in caregiving.</i>
	Brittlebush	<b>TEEN TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD: WHAT TO KNOW FOR TRANSITION PLANNING</b> <b>Victoria Ikerd-Schreiter, Esq.</b> <i>The law requires that students receiving special education be provided services to help them make a successful transition from high school to life post high school. This session will review the laws regarding this critical transition period, the Individual Transition Plan (ITP) process, the difference between a DIPLOMA and a CERTIFICATE, and types of assessments for establishing goals in the areas of Post-Secondary Education, Vocational Training, Integrated Employment and Independent Living.</i>
<u>11:30-12:45</u>	Saguaro	<b>LUNCH-Hot luncheon buffet with soup, salad, entrees, dessert, beverages.</b> <i>Enjoy lunch at your leisure in the Saguaro Dining Room. If you would like to attend the <b>Lunch &amp; Learn Special Session</b> at 12:00, please gather your items from the buffet and proceed to the Ocotillo Room to enjoy your lunch during the session.</i>
<u>12:00-12:30</u>	Ocotillo	<b>LUNCH &amp; LEARN SPECIAL SESSION: ANIMAL ASSISTED LEARNING</b> <b>Gary Davis, All In The Family LLC.</b> <i>Animal-assisted learning acknowledges the value of the human-animal bond in overall wellness. Consistent interaction with animals has been known to lower stress and increase health and social-inducing hormones such as oxytocin, dopamine, and endorphins. Working with animals also provide</i>

opportunities to develop relationship-building skills such as empathy, patience, present-moment focus, trust, touch, respect, responsibility and boundary-setting. We will be discussing past successes in our program as well as potential uses for this therapeutic tool on an individualized or group level.

**12:45-1:45**

**Ocotillo**

**CONFIDENT VOICES: EMPOWERING PARENTS TO ADVOCATE LIKE PROS AT IEP MEETINGS**

**Hope Kirsch, Esq., Lori Kirsch-Goodwin, Esq., Kirsch-Goodwin & Kirsch, PLLC**

*Join us for an empowering and informative session led by two nationally recognized special education attorneys who represent students and their families. This session equips parents and guardians with the knowledge, confidence, and practical strategies needed to effectively advocate for their child during IEP meetings—without the need to hire an advocate or attorney. Through real-world examples and clear explanations of legal rights, participants will learn how to: Understand the IEP process and key legal protections; Prepare for meetings with confidence and clarity; Ask the right questions and speak up effectively; Handle disagreements and navigate common challenges; Build strong, collaborative relationships with school teams.*

**Brittlebush**

**GUARDIANSHIP: PROCESS, TIMING & WHAT TO EXPECT**

**Matthew Gobbato, Esq., Sara Lignoski, Paisley McCullen, Mushkatel, Gobbato & Kile, PLLC**

*An attorney and two legal assistants from Mushkatel, Gobbato & Kile, PLLC will present on the process, paperwork and timing for being appointed as a guardian (or limited guardian). Understanding the process will take the mystery out of guardianship. The legal assistants are the first point of contact to clients and the court in this process. Learn what to expect, start to finish.*

**2:00-3:00**

**Ocotillo**

**GIVING THE DIGNITY OF RISK**

**Jared Stewart, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA, ASA, Scenic View Academy**

*It is completely understandable for parents and professionals to want to protect vulnerable Autistics. We see the obvious challenges and worry about their ability to safely navigate the world of adulthood. But that same urge to protect can sometimes go to extremes that actually end up disabling those individuals and robbing them of the opportunities and autonomy that could have led to greater resiliency, success, and quality of life. Join Jared Stewart, Autistic BCBA, to gain valuable insight into how to achieve the critical balance between our responsibility to care and the universal human right to make personal choices.*

**Brittlebush**

**CREATING A LIFE CARE PLAN FOR YOUR LOVED ONE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**Karen Starbowski, MassMutual SpecialCare**

*Creating a future that provides for both your own financial needs and those of a dependent with special needs can feel overwhelming. This workshop will discuss four focus areas that should be considered with integrated planning, and a recommended timeline to avoid any disruption in the care of a loved one with special needs.*

**3:00**

**END**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR, REGISTRATION OPENING SOON**

**OCTOBER DAY OF LEARNING  
EMPOWERING FUTURE SUCCESS!**

**October 18, 2025**

**8:00AM - 3:00PM**

**Topics:**

- Physical and Mental Health & Wellness
  - Housing & Supported Living
    - Building Life Skills
  - Employment Training & Services
    - Education Services & Supports
- Integrated Home & Community Support
- Invitations to repeat previous hot topic sessions

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## SERIES SPONSOR



## SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS



## LUNCH & LEARN SPONSOR - JULY



## JULY EXHIBITORS

All Abilities Ministry, All In The Family LLC, AZ Aspire Academy, Blue Balloon ABA, Exceptional HEROES, Gateway Academy, Love, Heal, Believe LLC, Mercy Care, Mesa East Valley Special Strong, MORIAH Cooperative Inc., Mushkatel Gobbato & Kile, PLLC, Scenic View Academy, Sensory Bionics, Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center, Trulieve

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