Children With Autism: School Supports

FACULTY

Connie Kasari, PhD, a professor of human development and psychology in the Graduate School of Education at UCLA. She has a joint appointment in the department of Psychiatry and the Center for Autism Research and Treatment. She is the principal investigator for several multisite research programs, including the Autism Intervention Research Network for Behavioral Health funded by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Characterizing Cognition in Nonverbal Individuals with Autism Intervention network by Autism Speaks, Interventions for Communication in Autism Network, and an Autism Center of Excellence Network grant on minimally verbal school-age children with autism, both funded by the National Institutes of Health. Her current research also focuses on developing targeted interventions for early social communication development in at risk infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with autism and peer relationships for school-age children with autism. She teaches courses in human development and advises graduate students at UCLA. She is on the treatment advisory board of the Autism Speaks Foundation, secretary of the International Society for Autism Research (INSAR), on the Executive Board of the annual Gatlinburg Conference on Research and Theory in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and regularly presents to both academic and practitioner audiences locally, nationally, and internationally.

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- Board member for Profectum Foundation, New Roads School, and Autism Speaks Science Board
- Consultant for Mount Sinai Autism Center and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Center (IDDRC) at Johns Hopkins

Erin Ofe Mauldin, MS, CCC-SLP, is a speech-language pathologist at Chatterbox Pediatric Therapy in Richmond Hill, Georgia. She graduated with her BA in English from Huntingdon College in 2012 and her MS in communication sciences and disorders from Auburn University in 2015. During her graduate studies, Ofe Mauldin researched school-based speech-language pathologists' knowledge and perceptions of bullying of students with autism for her graduate thesis, which was published in the ASHA journal Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools. Ofe Mauldin is a member of ASHA and has a special interest in working with children with autism spectrum disorder.

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Jessica Dykstra Steinbrenner, PhD, CCC-SLP, is a research scientist at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is also an adjunct assistant professor in the Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences and a certified speech-language pathologist. Prior to returning for her research degree, she worked as a speech-language pathologist with elementary and middle school children with autism and other developmental disabilities. Dykstra Steinbrenner is currently working for the Center on Secondary Education for Students with ASD (CSESA), a large multisite grant developing and evaluating a comprehensive intervention program for high school students with autism, the National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice (NCAEP), and Supporting paraprofessionals-Teacher use of Evidence-based practices with Learners having Autism Research (STELAR). She previously served as principal investigator on an applied research grant funded by the Organization for Autism Research titled “Improving Social-Communication and Engagement of Elementary Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Adapting a Preschool Intervention for Elementary School Classrooms.” Her research interests are in the area of autism spectrum disorder with a focus on school-based interventions and individuals with autism and significant communication needs.

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Diane Twachtman-Cullen, PhD, CCC-SLP, is a licensed speech-language pathologist specializing in autism spectrum disorder. She holds an MA in speech-language pathology, a sixth-year diploma in early childhood education, and a PhD in special education. She served for 11 years as editor-in-chief of Autism Spectrum Quarterly, an international trade magazine that ceased publication in 2015. She is the author of numerous chapters and articles on communication issues in autism as well as four books: A Passion to Believe: Autism and the Facilitated Communication Phenomenon; Trevor Trevor, a metaphor for children, designed to increase the sensitivity of typical peers toward classmates with special needs; How to be a Para Pro: A Comprehensive Training Manual for Paraprofessionals; and The IEP from A to Z: How to Create Meaningful and Measurable Goals and Objectives (co-authored by Jennifer Twachtman-Bassett). Twachtman-Cullen is a member and past co-chairperson of the Panel of Professional Advisors of the Autism Society (of America), and past recipient of the Divine Neurotypical Award given by the Global and Regional Asperger Syndrome Partnership, Inc., to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the lives of
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those with autism and Asperger’s syndrome. Twachtman-Cullen provides consultative services and training seminars nationally and internationally.

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**Catherine B. Zenko, MS, CCC-SLP,** is the director of the FSU Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD). She has served hundred individuals with autism, their families, and caregivers and has conducted trainings on local, regional, and national levels on a wide range of topics related to ASD. She is the co-author of two books: *Understanding the Nature of Autism: A Guidebook to the Autism Spectrum Disorders, 3rd edition* (2012), and *Here’s How to Provide Intervention for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Balanced Approach* (2013).

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