



**autism**  
NOVA SCOTIA

Presents

## **Exploring the Spectrum Conference**

Thursday, March 2 to Friday, March 3, 2017  
World Trade and Convention Centre,  
1800 Argyle Street, Halifax, NS

Conference Schedule

## Keynote Speaker: Steve Silberman



Steve Silberman, author of the award-winning book *NeuroTribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity* is this year's keynote speaker. His work promotes an inclusive approach and full participation in society for people living with autism. It was also the first publication of its kind to receive the Samuel Johnson Prize.

Steve has spoken about autism at many major organizations and schools, including Microsoft, Yale and MIT. He also gave a TED talk about autism called "The Forgotten History of Autism", which has received over a million views.



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## Michael Doucet



Michael Doucet is in his 29th year of policing and lives in Belleville, Ontario. He has extensive experience helping vulnerable victims having mental health issues, developmental disabilities and those individuals with other marginalizing factors in their lives. He is dedicated to working with communities to improve understanding of autism and developmental disabilities in efforts to promote safety.

## Caitlin Neily



Caitlin Neily is a registered psychologist specializing in family-centred, evidence-based treatment for preschool and school-aged children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. In her practice she primarily uses strategies based on Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), including Pivotal Response Treatment (PRT) and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). Caitlin worked for 10 years at the IWK Health Centre on the Autism Team. Caitlin is a level V PRT trainer, certified by Koegel Autism Consultants, Santa Barbara, California.

## Jo-Lynn Fenton



Jo-Lynn Fenton is the mother of two boys with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder. She has been actively involved in the autism community since 1998 and has held numerous volunteer positions within the provincial autism community. She has sat on many government committees and most notably she was the President of Autism Society Canada. In 2011, she was awarded the Stewart McKelvey Green Jacket for her outstanding contribution to the autism community in Nova Scotia and is currently the Chair of Playing and Learning Together: Structured Recreation, Leisure, Social Club and Learning Opportunities for Individuals with Autism/ASD.



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## Dr. Isabel Smith



Dr. Smith is the current holder of the Joan and Jack Craig Chair in Autism Research. She is a member of the Scientific Staff at the IWK Health Centre. Dr. Smith's interests encompass the development, health and wellbeing of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, especially children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Her research also includes longitudinal studies of ASD; development and evaluation of interventions for ASD and associated behavioural and mental health problems; and ASD-related health, education and community services systems and policies.

## Cynthia Carroll



Cynthia Carroll is the national chair of the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance, and Executive Director of Autism Nova Scotia. In 2008, Cynthia founded the Autism Council of Nova Scotia, uniting autism groups across the province. In 2010, she participated in a working group that made 53 recommendations to government addressing gaps in service, resulting in the first ASD Action Plan in the country. In 2014, Cynthia participated in the development of a national needs assessment, and is currently working on a collective impact model called the Canadian Autism Partnership that will utilize shared leadership to address autism issues across the lifespan at the national level.

## Dr. Shannon Johnson



Dr. Johnson is a psychologist specializing in neuropsychological assessment and consultation. She completed a Ph.D. in Clinical Neuropsychology at the University of Victoria and a Post-Doctoral Fellowship at Indiana University, specializing in clinical and cognitive neuroscience. Shannon is an Associate Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry, and Pediatrics at Dalhousie University and is the Director of the Clinical and Cognitive Neuropsychology Laboratory. Her research program focuses on understanding cognitive difference in high-functioning children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders.



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## Conference Schedule Day One

9:00-10:00 a.m. **Steve Silberman** *The Evolution of Autism: Understanding, Acceptance, Inclusion*

Silberman will discuss the history of autism and the shift to a more inclusive society for those with ASD as highlighted in his award-winning book *NeuroTribes: The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity*.

10:30-10:45 a.m. **Break**

10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. **Michael Doucet** *Autism Spectrum Disorder and Safety in the Community -- Awareness for First Responders and Families*

This talk will offer best practices for first responders in understanding autism and engage parents in ways they can be best prepared if an emergency occurs.

12:15-1:15 p.m. **Lunch and Exhibitor's Hall**

1:15-2:30 p.m. **Caitlin Neily** *Managing Complex Behaviour*

Speaker discusses supporting preschool and school aged children using social communication strategies and Pivotal Responses approaches.

2:30-2:45 p.m. **Break**

2:45-4:00 p.m. **Jo-Lynn Fenton** *Not Your Typical Journey: Stories from the Destination so far...*

Speaker will share stories of raising her two exceptional boys, each diagnosed on opposite ends of the Autism Spectrum.



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## Conference Schedule Day Two

9:00-10:30 a.m. **Women's Panel**

Four women share their experience living with ASD.

10:30-10:45 a.m. **Break**

10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m. **Dr. Isabel Smith** *Research on Autism Spectrum Disorders in Nova Scotia*

Dr. Smith will present information about research being done locally about Autism Spectrum Disorders.

12:15-1:15 p.m. **Lunch and Exhibitor's Hall**

1:15-2:30 p.m. **Cynthia Carroll and the Autism Nova Scotia Team** *Transition Readiness and Employment*

Autism NS shares pre-employment and employment skills development programming and the opportunities for employment for individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

2:30-2:45 p.m. **Break**

2:45-4:00 p.m. **Dr. Shannon Johnson (Moderator)** *Relationship Panel*

A discussion exploring the experience of finding and developing personal relationships while living with (or loving someone with) ASD.