GNAO1 & GNB1 Conference 2026
Therapist's Bios and Lay Summaries

Tips and Tricks for Getting Started with Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

Kerrie Mansfield Rigberg, M.S., CCC-SLP and Christy Naghitorabi, M.S., CCC-SLP, M.A

Lay Summary: Please join us as we bust a few myths and misconceptions about AAC and learn instead some more helpful, real-life, researched-based strategies for using AAC with your family. Brief talk followed by an opportunity to ask questions and explore answers with Christy and Kerrie/"KK," two Board-Certified Speech- Language Pathologists (CCC-SLPs) specializing in Pediatrics.

Bio: Kerrie Mansfield Rigberg, M.S., CCC-SLP. As a board certified speech-language pathologist (Certificate of Clinical Competence, CCC-SLP, from the American Speech and Hearing Association, ASHA) since 2005, Kerrie provides highly skilled, experienced assessment and treatment services to children and clients across the lifespan.
Kerrie developed her clinical practice at United Cerebral Palsy of Tampa and Tampa General Hospital. Kerrie proudly served as a speech-language pathologist in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), pediatric intensive care unit (PICU), pediatric acute care, and on the Inpatient Pediatric Rehabilitation team. While serving on the Outpatient team, Kerrie identified a need in the community for a SLP with her background and experience to provide services in a more personalized setting. Through private practice in Tampa, Florida, Kerrie brings qualified and compassionate care to families. Specialized clinical services are also available to families and care teams via Telehealth. As Adjunct Faculty at the University of South Florida, Kerrie taught Pediatric Language Disorders in Fall 2020, expanding the graduate students' background in preverbal language skills, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) in emerging users, and infant-toddler feeding and swallowing development and dysphagia. Kerrie continues at USF as an Invited Speaker. Kerrie was selected to present Yoga, Meditation & Mindfulness for the SLP, Audiologist & Related Healthcare Provider at the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) National Conventions in November 2021 and November 2022. Kerrie serves as a volunteer with the PTSA school gardens at Roland Park K-8 Magnet School and Booker T. Washington Elementary. Kerrie has volunteered as the speech-language pathologist on vacations for families of children with special needs through Enriching Escapes. Kerrie has also served on the Board of Congregation Beth Am in Tampa since 2023. Kerrie and her colleague Christy Naghitorabi are proud to support the First Annual GNB1 Conference.

Bio: Christy Naghitorabi, M.S., CCC-SLP, M.A.
Christy approaches her caring, empathic, and evidenced-based work as a board certified speech-language pathologist (Certificate of Clinical Competence, CCC-SLP, from the American Speech and Hearing Association, ASHA) in pediatrics from a background teaching English to speakers of other languages. In addition to a Master of Science Degree in Speech-Language Pathology, Christy holds a Master of Arts degree in Applied Linguistics and TESOL as well as a B.A. in Spanish Language & Literature. Christy has been an Associate

in Kerrie Rigberg's speech-language clinic since Summer 2023. Christy also serves as a Partner with Ariadne Miranda, PhD, offering second language courses to the community.

From diagnosis to function: Occupational Therapy's Role in Rare Conditions

Tierra Momplaisir, OTR/L

Lay summary: This presentation explores the unique role of occupational therapy in supporting individuals with rare conditions beyond diagnosis alone. Attendees will gain insight into how OT practitioners promote participation, independence, and quality of life through functional and evidence-informed interventions across daily routines and environments.

Bio: Hello! I'm **Tierra Momplaisir**, and for 13 years, I've been dedicated to helping children grow, learn, and thrive through occupational therapy. My journey began at Florida Southern College, where I earned my bachelor's degree, followed by a master's in occupational therapy from Alabama State University in 2012. I'm currently pursuing a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy, with an expected graduation date in Spring 2026, a reflection of my commitment to lifelong learning and providing the highest quality care to the children and families I serve.

Unlocking Financial Resources: Step-by-Step

Advocacy Abby (Abby Zachritz)

Bio: Abby Zachritz is a mother of five, advocate, and guiding voice for families navigating disability and complex medical challenges. Known widely as 'Advocacy Abby,' she provides essential support and resources to families facing life-altering situations—offering practical tools, tailored guidance, and emotional support during their most critical moments. Her approach is both deeply personal and professional, rooted in her lived experience as a mother advocating for her own child with a disability.

As Co-Founder of the Connect Platform, Abby empowers families by connecting them with thousands of grants for equipment, therapies, and financial support across the U.S., Canada, and internationally. Through Connect, she ensures that no family has to face overwhelming circumstances alone—making critical resources more accessible than ever. Abby currently serves as the Director of Family Advocacy for SupportNow.org, where she helps families navigate the emotional and financial challenges of complex medical journeys through fundraising, community support, and custom registries. She also sits on the Board of Directors for the Parent Empowerment Network, which focuses on elevating the voices of families impacted by disabilities, rare diseases, and medical complexity.

Beyond her direct work with families, Abby consults with corporations and healthcare providers on how to better serve clients with unique and complex needs. As an inspirational speaker, she shares her message of hope, resilience, and practical

empowerment—proving that strength, connection, and advocacy can transform even the most difficult journeys.

Holding Ourselves With Care: A Conversation on Connection and Emotional Wellness

Lisa-Marie Mac Lean, GNB1 Parent and LMFT-A (Supervised by Kim Fry, LMFT-S)

Lay Summary: Parenting a child with high support needs is a meaningful journey, and it can also bring significant emotional, physical, and relational demands. This discussion offers a compassionate look at how ongoing caregiving can impact stress, wellbeing, and relationships. It explores how the nervous system responds to these pressures, sometimes showing up as overwhelm, shutdown, reactivity, or exhaustion in already full and demanding days. Rather than focusing on what is "wrong," it supports understanding what may be happening underneath the surface, both individually and within relationships, through a trauma-informed and attachment lens. It gently invites compassion and curiosity toward one's own internal experience, and highlights the importance of self-awareness, emotional safety, and repair, where deeper emotions often sit beneath everyday reactions. It also offers realistic, compassionate tools that fit into busy lives, small ways to support regulation, connection, and self-understanding in everyday moments.

Bio: Lisa is the mom to 10-year-old Isaac, who has GNB1, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Associate, Secretary of the GNB1 Advocacy Group, and the founder of With & Within Therapy, a Texas-based private practice supporting parents, caregivers, and couples raising disabled and medically complex children.

Originally from Trinidad and Tobago and now based in Austin, Texas, Lisa brings both lived experience and clinical training to her work. Her journey as a parent began at the beginning of Isaac's life, when she first began navigating the uncertainty and challenges that would later lead to his diagnosis of GNB1 after years of medical uncertainty. That experience deeply shaped her understanding of what it means to move through caregiving, grief, and love all at once, and the importance of having spaces where parents feel seen, supported, and not alone.

Through With & Within Therapy, Lisa offers a warm, compassionate space where families can feel understood as they navigate the complexities of raising children with disabilities and complex medical needs.

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