



# WOW Factor



Welcome to the WOW Factor Recap.

April was one for the books. From community walks to Autism Acceptance Month celebrations, this month reminded us why this work matters, and who it's for: our families.

Throughout April, we heard from staff, parents, and self-advocates across the ABS Kids community about what acceptance really means. One message stood out, shared by Davion A. | RBT IV - California:

"To each and every one of you who shows up daily with patience, compassion, and heart, you are making a difference in ways that can't always be put into words. This isn't just a month. It's every single day."

To every family walking this journey with us, thank you for trusting us to be part of it.

## Uplifting Your Community

At ABS Kids, community isn't just a backdrop to our work. It's part of it. When we show up beyond the clinic, we reinforce what we believe every day: that our kids and families deserve a world that includes, celebrates, and supports them. Our community partnerships help build that world, one event at a time.



**Autism Awareness Month Celebration & Walk  
- Antioch, TN**



## May Upcoming Events

May 2nd, 2026

Sensory Friendly Spring into  
Summer - Provo, UT

May 9th, 2026

Afya Njema Ministry Health Fair  
- Salt Lake City, UT

May 16th, 2026

Sensory Friendly Spring into  
Summer - Murrieta, CA

May 26th, 2026

Sensory Friendly Tuesday  
Evening - Provo, UT

Want to join us at an upcoming event? We'd love to see you there. For event details visit our [community event page on the website](#).

# California



NFAR Race for Autism - San Deigo, CA



Step Into Connection - Perris, CA



Aut2Run - Ventura, CA

# North Carolina



Sensory Friendly Easter Bash - Charlotte, NC



Heros for Autism - Charlotte, NC



Step into Kindness Autism Walk - Gastonia, NC

# South Carolina



Superhero 5K - Columbia, SC



20th Annual Strides for Autism Walk - Columbia, SC



Autism Connect - Columbia, SC

# Utah



Dixie Power Kite Festival - St. George, UT



# THIS MONTH ON



**In honor of Autism Acceptance Month, we sat down with Assistant Director of ABA Services; Lexus Johnson whose entire career has been built around one idea: every child deserves a real voice.**



"Functional communication training is about giving a child a remote control for their own world. It's all about agency."

**Lexus Johnson, BCBA, Assistant Director of ABA Services, Greensboro, NC**

**Lexus traces her passion for voice and advocacy back to a study abroad experience in Denmark, where she worked with orphan refugees who had been stripped of their native language. That experience shaped how she approaches every learner she works with today, making sure communication isn't just functional, but human.**

## **WOW Moment**

A young learner on Lexus' caseload was experiencing 15 to 30 elopement instances in a single three-hour session. Instead of focusing on stopping the behavior, Lexus and her team asked a different question: what is he trying to say? The answer was simple. He wanted someone to chase him. They updated his PECS book with an icon for "chase," taught him to use it, and reinforced it every time. Within days, elopement dropped to zero. A behavior that had been unsafe and unpredictable became a shared, joyful experience because a child finally had a way to ask for what he needed.

## **What Families Can Take From This Episode**

**Communication is the goal, always.** Lexus reminds us that behavior is communication. When a child does not yet have the words or tools to express what they need, behaviors often fill that gap. The goal is not to stop the behavior. It's to give your child a better way to be understood.

**Small tools can change everything.** A single new icon on a PECS book changed one child's entire experience. If your child uses AAC, PECS, or sign language, the tools work best when they reflect what your child actually wants and cares about. Talk with your BCBA about what to add or update.

**You are part of the team.** The progress Lexus described didn't happen in a vacuum. It happened because a team paid attention, asked the right questions, and adjusted. Your insight as a parent is part of that. You see things at home no one else does.

**[Listen to the Podcast Episode Here](#)**



## This Month, We Asked. You Answered.

Throughout April, we invited the ABS Kids family to share what autism acceptance means to them. From staff to parents to self-advocates, the responses reminded us why this work matters every single day.

### WHAT DOES AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MEAN TO YOU?

"Autism acceptance is realizing that on the spectrum we are all so different, and we all deserve to be understood." — **Maddie S.**

"It is about embracing differences in communication, behavior, and perspective, and recognizing that those differences are meaningful and important." — **Estefania L.**

"Acceptance is not just being aware autism exists. It is adjusting yourself, your expectations, and your communication so they feel safe, respected, and heard." — **Christian B.**

"Neurodivergence is worth celebrating." — **Lizzie B.**

"We will never be a one-size-fits-all society, and that is something that deserves to be celebrated, because it is in our differences that we learn and grow." — **Jordan S.**

### A MOMENT THAT CHANGED MY PERSPECTIVE

"Growing up with my little sister who has autism taught me to slow down and meet her where she was. I learned that communication is not just about words." — **Keandra D.**

"When he was understood, he was calm. It clicked for me that a lot of the behaviors come from not being understood." — **Alicia B.**

"I walked my son into school and noticed a special friend having difficulty in the hallway. At that moment it was not just behaviors." — **Leila B.**

"I was not diagnosed until I was an adult. Getting my diagnosis was like a weight was lifted from my body and soul. I felt seen and validated." — **Elizabeth B.**

"A child who once had frequent tantrums during transitions became more engaged when we taught functional communication. That experience shifted my perspective. Behavior is communication." — **Melissa C.**

## WHAT WORKING AT ABS KIDS HAS TAUGHT ME

"Working here has shown me just how wide and unique the spectrum can be. It has deepened my empathy and reminded me that every family is on their own journey." —

**Maria G.**

"Progress can look different for every individual, and even the smallest steps forward are meaningful." — **Keandra D.**

"This experience has deepened my understanding that each child deserves individualized, compassionate support that recognizes their strengths and challenges."

— **Teresa M.**

## A NOTE FROM THE ABS KIDS FAMILY

April reminded us of something we never forget: this work is personal.

To every staff member who shared their story, every parent who let us into their journey, and every individual who has trusted us with their care, thank you. Your words this month captured what we live out every single day.

As we celebrate 15 years of ABS Kids, we are reminded that the heart of this organization has always been the same. Show up with patience. Lead with compassion. Never stop believing in what is possible.

Here is to 15 years of changing lives, and to every moment still to come.



## Hear From Our Psychologist: Dr. Krystle Frazier Rancho Haven Center | California

Dr. Krystle Frazier has been with ABS Kids for five years, but her path was not linear. She first discovered ABS Kids while doing BT work, then stepped away to raise her daughter, return to school, and work in workers' compensation managing complex mental and physical health cases. It was not the right fit. When ABS Kids reached out about an evaluator role, she knew it was the right move. Evaluations, she says, are her happy place. Outside of work, she enjoys time with her husband, two daughters, and their pets, along with reading, traveling, and trying new foods.

### Finding Her Way to Psychology

Dr. Frazier originally planned to go into medicine but pivoted after realizing it was not the right fit. Life brought a military lifestyle, frequent moves, and delays in finishing school, but psychology clicked during her undergraduate studies. She went on to earn her master's and doctorate in an accelerated program, staying connected to autism through early BT work. That early exposure helped shape the work she does today.

### What Keeps Her Going

While evaluations are short-term, her WOW moments come when families return years later. After ABA, speech therapy, and school supports, she sees children make incredible progress and move closer to their developmental milestones. Seeing that kind of growth firsthand is what keeps her invested. She also collaborates closely with ABA teams, leading trainings on topics like anxiety, trauma, and behavior, and providing direct, hands-on support when needed. The ability to work alongside other clinicians and support families across disciplines is a big part of what she values most.

### A Note to Families

Most families come in with concerns about speech, not expecting an autism diagnosis. Dr. Frazier meets them where they are, helping them understand behaviors, ask the right questions, and make sense of what they are seeing. She emphasizes that a diagnosis is not a label, but a pathway to the right care and resources.

Her advice is simple: know typical development and trust your instincts. One delay does not mean a diagnosis, but if something feels off, it is worth bringing up. Early conversations lead to early support, and that can make a meaningful difference. At ABS Kids, the goal is always to look at the whole child, physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral, and provide families with not just answers, but a clear path forward.



# Hear From Our BCBA Brittany Alden DAS, BCBA | Hendersonville, TN

Brittany Alden did not stumble into ABA. She was drawn to it. Growing up in Florida, she discovered applied behavior analysis through a college internship and saw the lasting impact it had on clients and families. That experience set her path. She started as an RBT, earned her BCBA in 2020, and has been building on that foundation ever since. Outside of work, she enjoys reading, shopping, hiking in the Tennessee mountains, and chasing sunshine.

## Why ABS Kids?

When Brittany decided to relocate to Nashville, she found ABS Kids on LinkedIn. The values and the way the organization showed up stood out. What made her stay was the culture. It felt like a small company within a growing organization, with transparency, stability, and a place where clinicians feel heard. “I felt supported as a clinician,” she shares, “and that matters more than people realize.”

## A Passion for Growing the Next Generation

Becoming a BCBA was never just about her own growth. Brittany is passionate about mentoring others, from supervising RBTs to supporting future BCBAs. That drive led her into a director role. She is honest about the challenges of the field, but she focuses on building an environment where people feel supported and valued. When an RBT says they want to go back to school for ABA, that is a WOW moment for her.

## The Moments That Matter Most

For Brittany, the most meaningful moments are often the smallest. A child speaking for the first time. A client who can now go out with their family. Progress that changes everyday life. “Those micro moments may seem small to others,” she says, “but they are the biggest WOWs for me.”

## Meeting Families Where They Are

When families have concerns about ABA, Brittany listens first. She acknowledges their perspective and responds with transparency and collaboration. She keeps families involved, invites them to observe sessions, and ensures their goals are part of every plan. “Families trust us with their children,” she says. “Our job is to make sure they always know what is happening.”





This month, families across our centers shared what their experience with ABS Kids has meant to them. These are their stories.

## Nashville Wallace

Right now, our son is receiving ABA therapy from Kamie. As a family, we are very happy with her. Kamie is a very kind and sincere girl; she always helps us. She supports and understands us in any situation. Thank you, Kamie. Abu really likes you a lot.

## Salt Lake City Morris

Me gusta los terapeutas de mi hijo les ha ayudado mucho. [I like my son's therapists; they have helped him a lot.]

## Wildomar Clinton Keith

Im grateful I have a great team leading my son because he has behavioral issues badly. We are doing in home at the moment but we are going to transfer into facility soon at Clinton Keith his BCBA we have now is Amazing. She will be following him into facility. He has changed dramatically from November of last year . I hope we keep seeing improvements and he will be ready for kindergarten next year!

## Tooele Sheep

I am beyond happy with the team my child has. I love how Leanne she is above and beyond ✨. She is amazing she makes me feel like she does care about my child's progress. She is awesome at what she does in a lovely professional way. I would recommend her to other parents. Now Kaybree - oh my she is amazing! She always has a smile on. She always gives me updates on my child. She is always so welcoming it just gives me reassurance that my child will be taken care of while at the center. I can't express how grateful I am through this review. The girl in the front desk is super sweet too!

# WHAT'S YOUR WOW

CHECK OUT OUR  
WOW MOMENTS  
FROM APRIL!

## Caitlin P.

I've been working with my client since June of 2025, over the months we have been working HARD on motor imitation 'wave one hand' without any progress. Today during the first hour of our session, I stated the discriminative stimulus (SD) and my client waved to me independently! There were lots of tears, praises, tickles and laughs. I am so proud of him and his progress he has made! I can't wait to tell his family at pickup!



## Mickey A.

A WOW moment I've witnessed is seeing my son's growth, especially knowing he once received services at the same clinic where I now work. Watching him go from struggling with communication to initiating interactions on his own was incredibly powerful. Now, I get to witness similar breakthroughs with other children, which makes my role even more meaningful. Autism acceptance matters to me because I've experienced the journey both as a parent and a professional. Every child deserves to be understood, supported, and accepted for who they are so they can truly thrive.



# WOW FACTOR