



WOW Factor



Welcome to the March WOW Factor Recap! This month, we enjoyed connecting at community events and prioritizing professional development. Looking ahead, we're excited to kick off Autism Acceptance Month in April; visit our [community events](#) page for all the local events we support. We're also celebrating an incredible milestone as ABS Kids approaches our 15th anniversary. Fun fact: our very first ABS Kids center now serves as our Salt Lake City training facility!



Check out some highlights from March below!



2nd Annual Community Resource Fair
Rock Hill, SC

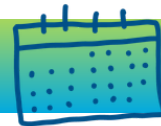


Cumberland Pediatric Foundation
Nashville, TN



SCAECE Annual Conference
Columbia, SC

April Upcoming Events



Check out the [Community Events](#) page on our website for upcoming events!

Step Into Kindness Autism Walk
April 4, 2026
Gastonia, NC

Autism Connect 2026
April 7, 2026
Columbia, SC

Southern Utah Early Childhood Conference
April 11, 2026
Cedar City, UT

Annual Walk with Autism
April 11, 2026
Ivins, UT

NFAR Race for Autism
April 11, 2026
San Diego, CA

Superheroes for Autism
April 11, 2026
Charlotte, NC

Sensory Safe Sunday
April 12, 2026
Columbia, SC

Superhero 5K for Autism
April 18, 2026
Fountain Inn, SC

20th Annual Strides for Autism Walk & 5K
April 18, 2026
Columbia, SC

Southern Utah Autism Conference 2026
April 18, 2026
Cedar City, UT

Healthy Kids Day
April 18, 2026
Upland, CA

3rd Annual A Walk for Joy
April 18, 2026
Kannapolis, NC

Savannah Ghost Pirates vs Greenville Swamp Rabbits (Sensory Friendly Game)
April 19, 2026
Greenville, SC

Picnic With Police
April 23, 2026
Orem, UT

Early Steps, Brighter Futures: An Autism Awareness Event
April 24, 2026
Greensboro, NC

Latest blog & Resources



[Hearing from One of Our Psychologists](#)



[Managing Anxiety in Autism with Dr. Susan W. White](#)



[Understanding Assessments at ABS Kids](#)



[Spring Break Tips for Neurodiverse Families](#)



Don't forget to download our Spring Break Transitions checklist - available in [English](#) and [Spanish!](#)



Episode #226

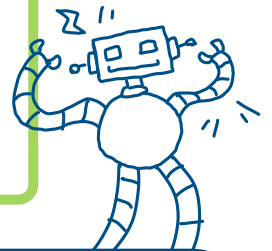
[**Managing Intense Emotions and Anxiety | with Dr. Susan White**](#)

Dr. White's work focuses on helping individuals manage intense emotions and anxiety, with a special emphasis on youth with autism.

Episode #227

[**Understanding Sensory Processing in Autism | with Dr. Shulamite Green**](#)

Dr. Shulamite Green, an Assistant Professor at UCLA and licensed clinical psychologist specializing in autism, sensory processing, and neurodevelopmental conditions. She leads the UCLA SCAN lab, where her research focuses on how the brain processes sensory information during adolescence.



Visit the ABS Kids Table!

Stop by the ABS Kids table at our next event! We've created a welcoming, family-friendly space filled with colorful displays and fun sensory-friendly items like fidget spinners and stress balls. It's the perfect spot for kids to explore while parents connect with us and learn more about how ABS Kids can support your family. We can't wait to meet you!



Celebrating 15 Years of ABS Kids

This month, as we gear up for Autism Acceptance Month and celebrate ABS Kids 15-year anniversary, we reflect on the incredible journey that has brought us here. From a small dream to a thriving reality, ABS Kids has grown into a movement that impacts hundreds of lives every day.

15 Years of WOW Moments

Our story is built on WOW moments; those small victories that lead to lifelong change. From helping a young girl find her voice and reconnect with her community to empowering families to move from isolation to inclusion, these moments remind us why we do what we do. Every breakthrough, no matter how small, is a testament to the dedication and heart of the ABS Kids team.



Listening and Growing Together

What sets ABS Kids apart is our commitment to listening: **truly listening**. Whether it's feedback from families, ideas from clinicians, to insights from administrators, every voice matters. This collaborative spirit has driven our growth and helped us create a culture where challenges are met head-on and differences are celebrated.



Looking Ahead

As we celebrate this milestone, we're also looking to the future. Our goals are ambitious:

- Continue leading in clinical quality.
- Find innovative ways to help families and children thrive.
- Develop future leaders who will make an even bigger impact.
- Expand our reach while maintaining the highest standards of care.

Thank You for 15 Years of Trust

This anniversary is not just about the past; it's about the future we're building together. To every family, child, and team member who has been part of this journey: thank you. You are the heart of ABS Kids, and together, there's no limit to what we can achieve.

Here's to another 15 years of WOW moments, teamwork, and life-changing impact!

Follow our socials
and make sure you
stay connected.



Beyond the Mask: Christopher Carazas's Journey from Silence to Survival

For Christopher Carazas, a Paraguayan American writer and "third culture kid," life meant constantly hiding his true self just to fit in. Masking his differences became a daily survival strategy.

For Autism Acceptance Month, we're excited to feature our latest Autism Weekly podcast episode with Christopher Carazas. He shares his journey of late autism diagnosis, the challenges of masking, and how telling his story brought hope—to himself and to others.

The Exhaustion of the "Dark Passenger"

As a child growing up in countries like Ecuador and Ghana, Christopher often felt overwhelmed by constant change and sensory overload. Labeled with ADHD, he developed his "dark passenger"—an inner voice urging him to stay quiet and blend in to cope with his differences. Christopher spent years masking his differences to appear "normal," achieving all the expected milestones yet always feeling out of place. At 35, his autism diagnosis finally explained a lifetime of sensory challenges and social exhaustion.

Resilience in the Face of Adversity

Christopher's story is one of remarkable resilience. After his diagnosis, he faced deep personal struggles, including psychological abuse and mental health challenges. Through it all, writing became his refuge and path to healing.

What started as a private confessional for his late girlfriend soon became a powerful message for many; through writing, Christopher turned his personal struggles into hope for others.

The Healing Power of Storytelling

His memoir, *Now That I'm Still Here*, has inspired countless in the neurodivergent community, showing the power of sharing your true story.

Soon after his book launch, a reader approached Christopher and shared, "This book helped me survive"—a moment that captured the true reach of his story.

Key Takeaways from Christopher's Journey:

- **Community is Everything:** Whether it is finding a local pickleball league, joining an autism support center, or walking his beloved German Shepherd, Shadow, finding an accepting community is crucial for healing.
- **Masking Takes a Toll:** True inclusion means creating spaces where neurodivergent individuals do not have to exhaust themselves trying to fit a neurotypical mold.
- **Healing is Not Linear:** Recovery and self-acceptance are ongoing journeys filled with ups and downs, and sharing that honest reality helps others feel less alone.



[Listen to the Podcast Episode Here](#)

spring social toddler time



SPRING TODDLER WELLNESS: JOIN US FOR TODDLER TIME!

This spring, ABS Kids is hosting **Toddler Time**, a free social skills group for children aged 2 to 5 on the autism spectrum. These fun, interactive sessions help young children build essential social skills in a warm, supportive environment.

Event Details:

Location: ABA Therapy Center, 986 Wellness Way Ste. 210, Fort Mill, SC 29715

Dates: Mondays, February 23 – March 30, 2026

Time: 10 AM – 12 PM

What to Expect:

Social skills activities for children with and without an autism diagnosis

A supportive space for play, learning, and connection

Families can connect and grow together

Special Guest:

Violet from Tayloring the Spectrum LLC will be onsite to answer questions about autism support and services in South Carolina.

Session Dates:

April 22nd

April 29th

May 6th

May 13th

May 20th

May 27th

Space is Limited!

Complete the interest form to secure your spot. Let's help your little one grow, connect, and thrive this spring!

Celebrating 15 Years of Impact: A Look at Our BCBA's and Psychologists

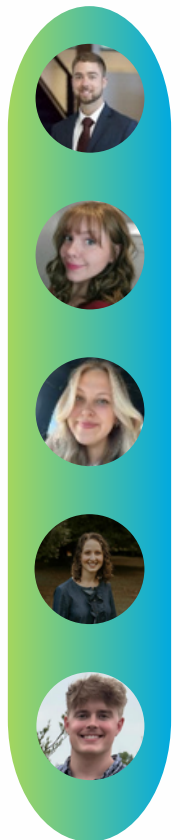
As we approach Autism Acceptance Month and celebrate ABS Kids' 15th anniversary, we want to honor the incredible work of our BCBA's and psychologists who embody our mission of providing family-centered care and advocacy. Their dedication, expertise, and WOW moments inspire us every day.

A Common Theme: Transforming Lives Through Dedication and Innovation

Across all their stories, one theme stands out: empowering families and clients to achieve milestones that once seemed out of reach. Whether it's helping a child speak their first words, supporting families through life-changing evaluations, or creating innovative programs like life skills curricula, our team is committed to making a difference.

Here are some standout moments and insights from our team:

- Dr. Andrew Jones ensures families receive timely, high-quality evaluations, helping over **3,500 children annually** access the services they need.
- Lexus Johnson developed a life skills curriculum to prepare clients for **independent living**, showcasing her passion for long-term growth.
- Maddie Mousley helped a family reduce behavioral challenges, enabling them to enjoy a **magical vacation to Disney**.
- Dr. Franke emphasizes early intervention, with WOW moments like a **non-verbal child greeting her with a "hi."**
- Conor Lumley started a mock preschool to help clients develop social and academic skills in a **supportive environment**.



Tips for Families During Autism Acceptance Month

- **Celebrate Milestones, Big and Small:** Every step forward is a victory. Take time to acknowledge your child's progress and the hard work behind it.
- **Advocate for Early Intervention:** Early evaluations and therapy can make a world of difference. Talk to your pediatrician about tools like the [MCHAT](#).
- **Build a Support Network:** Connect with other families, providers, and community resources to share experiences and advice.
- **Focus on Life Skills:** Preparing for independence starts early. Work with your BCBA to set goals that align with your child's unique needs.

Looking Ahead: 15 Years of Advocacy and Acceptance

As we celebrate 15 years of ABS Kids, we remain committed to our mission of empowering families and fostering acceptance. This Autism Acceptance Month, we encourage everyone to join us in spreading awareness, celebrating diversity, and supporting individuals with autism.



We are honored to be your trusted provider in ABA therapy.

Reviews like these are a reflection our team's dedication to providing high-quality care.

RIVERSIDE, IOWA STREET

I love the staff, they are very friendly and love all the children they work with. They all grow a special bond. 🙌

COLUMBIA SPRINGTREE

Love this center, love the staff, and my daughter's direct team is the best!

CHARLOTTE DAVID TAYLOR

This has been the best decision having ABS Kids part of our family. I really see a difference in my son's daily routine.

SALT LAKE CITY MORRIS AVE

I am eternally grateful to Marcy, Jacob, Kade, and Aubrey for all the progress my child has received. Thank you so much for everything; I have no words to express my gratitude to everyone.

SOUTH JORDAN

I have seen an immense amount of improvement from him by going into center. He is really socializing much better, is having such a fun time when going in and it's honestly the most amazing thing to see.

I really cannot tell you how much I appreciate the effort that ABS Kids has put into helping my son and I am forever grateful for the improvement that I am seeing.

WHAT'S YOUR WOW

CHECK OUT OUR
WOW MOMENTS
FROM MARCH!



Melodie B.

When I first started working with one of my clients, we were prompting him to verbally mand with one word. He is now manding for his wants and needs with full sentences throughout the entire session. He has been such a fast learner with all of his targets and goals, but seeing him create full sentences on his own is so amazing.

Seeing his progress verbally has been such a WOW moment for me and really encourages me in my direct care work. I feel so motivated and inspired by my client, and it encourages me to keep helping him progress because I know he can do amazing things.

CHECK OUT ANOTHER
WOW MOMENT ENTRY
FROM MARCH!



Alyssa P.

I have been assigned to a high behavior client, I started with her last week. Her behaviors typically last anywhere from 15 mins to an hour. She has consistently been having less than 10 minute behaviors with me since we started together last Monday. Today she did not have ANY tantrums & we were able to run some targets for the first time since starting together! I know that progress is not linear but this is such a big step in the right direction for us!! ☑

WOW FACTOR