

WOW

Factor recap

Welcome to the WOW Factor Recap.

This month was less about big announcements and more about showing up, in our communities, in our conversations, and in the everyday work that defines who we are. Looking ahead, summer is around the corner and our teams are already gearing up for amazing events and wonderful memories.

Check out the recap below for a look at the people, the breakthroughs, and the moments that shaped our month.

Every WOW matters, the loud ones and the quiet ones.



Sensory Friendly Spring into Summer - Provo, UT

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS MONTH



PODCAST HIGHLIGHT

[Gut-brain connection with Dr. Rosa Krajmalnik-Brown](#)



COMMUNITY IMPACT

San Diego Fire-Rescue team visits our ABA center



TODDLER TIME

ABS Kids is hosting Toddler Time, a free social skills group for children.

June Upcoming Events

Family Fun Carnival
June 6, 2026
St. George, UT

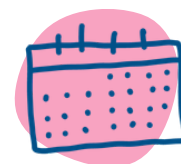
Sensory Friendly Summer Fest
June 6, 2026
Bountiful, UT

Sensory Summer Splashdown
June 13, 2026
Raleigh, NC

Autism Summer Fest
June 20, 2026
Camden, SC

Sensory-Friendly Tuesday Evening
June 23, 2026
St. George, UT

Sensory-Friendly Tuesday Evening
June 23, 2026
Rock Hill, SC



Family First - Life Skills: Helping Your Child Live Independently
June 24, 2026
Virtual

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](#).

June is Pride Month

Pride Month is more than a calendar moment. For ABS Kids, it reflects our commitment to whole-person care and to creating a workplace where every employee can show up fully. Research shows LGBTQIA+ individuals are diagnosed with autism at higher rates, and many of our clients, staff, and families live at this intersection.



Episode #131

Autism and the LGBTQIA2+ Community: Breaking Barriers and Building Inclusion / With Ms. Camille Williams

In honor of Pride Month, we're revisiting one of our favorite Autism Weekly conversations. In episode 131, [returning guest Camille "Cammie" Williams](#) joins us to explore the intersection of autism and the LGBTQIA2+ community.

A Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Cammie centers her work on diversity, equity, and inclusion through advocacy for autistic individuals. As a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community, she brings both clinical insight and lived experience to an honest conversation about breaking barriers and building a more inclusive world for everyone.





Toddler Time



Toddler Time: Social Skills for Children

This summer, ABS Kids is hosting Toddler Time, a free social skills group for children ages 2 to 6 on the autism spectrum. These fun, interactive sessions help young children build essential social skills in a warm, supportive environment.

What to Expect

- A supportive, welcoming environment led by our team
- Interactive activities that encourage play and social interaction
- A relaxed space for children and caregivers alike
- A chance to meet other local families

These sessions are completely free, and they run weekly throughout June and into early July.

Locations, Dates & Times:

- **American Fork, UT** Tuesdays, June 2 – July 7 | 10 AM – 12 PM
- **Kaysville, UT** Wednesdays, June 3 – July 8 | 10 AM – 12 PM
- **Provo, UT** Thursdays, June 4 – July 9 | 9 AM – 11 AM
- **Holly Springs, NC** Thursdays, June 11 – July 2 | 12 PM – 2 PM

Space is Limited! Click the location and complete the interest form to secure your spot. Let's help your little one grow, connect, and thrive this summer!



WHAT WORKING IN WOW MEANS AT ABS KIDS

You may see the phrase "Work in WOW" across our communications. Here is what it actually means, and why it sits at the center of how we care for the children and families we serve.

THE TRUE MEANING OF WOW

A WOW moment is any breakthrough that makes a real difference for a child and their family. Sometimes the moment is loud, like a non-verbal child using a communication device for the very first time, or a family reaching a milestone they have worked toward for months. Other times the moment is quiet. A second longer of eye contact than yesterday. A caregiver's sigh of relief after a productive session. No matter the size, every WOW pushes us toward the next one.

WHY WE CHOOSE TO WORK IN WOW

ABA therapy is demanding. It requires patience, expertise, and care. The reason we keep showing up is simple: the impact. When you witness a child achieve something they once struggled with, the work proves itself.

ROOTED IN MISSION AND VISION

Our mission is to empower children with autism and their families to reach their full potential. Our vision is to make sure every child and family affected by autism can access high-quality ABA therapy. Every WOW moment shows that mission in action.

EVERY ROLE PLAYS A PART

WOW is not just clinical work. It is the behavioral technician who helps a child move through a tough transition, and the front-desk team who makes a family feel welcome at every visit. Every role plays a part in the breakthroughs we celebrate.



THIS MONTH ON



This month, host Jeff Skibitsky sat down with Dr. Rosa Krajmalnik-Brown, a pioneering researcher at Arizona State University whose work is reshaping how we understand the connection between gut health and autism. Trained as an environmental engineer, Dr. Krajmalnik-Brown and her team were the first to show that changing the gut microbiome can change behavior and improve autism-related symptoms in people, not just in mice. The conversation explores what the gut microbiome actually is, how it influences neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine, and what her team's clinical trials are revealing about Microbiota Transplant Therapy (MTT).

WOW Moment

Dr. Krajmalnik-Brown shared the story of a child featured on ABC News who participated in her team's first trial. After treatment, he was sleeping through the night, doing better in school, and had moved from a special school into a typical classroom.

At the end of the interview, the reporter asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up. His answer: a doctor, because he wants to take care of people. That moment captures what her research is really doing, helping kids access more of their lives.

Key Takeaways

- GI symptoms matter. Constipation and diarrhea change which microbes thrive in the gut, which affects the chemicals being produced and how a child feels and behaves.
- Every microbiome is unique. Dr. Krajmalnik-Brown calls each person "a universe." Avoid blanket recommendations and encourage families to work with their physician.
- The brain-gut connection runs both ways. Stress affects the microbiome too, so supports that calm the nervous system (movement, sleep, consistent routines) also support gut health.
- Interventions range from gentle to intensive: diet, probiotics, prebiotics, symbiotics, antibiotics, and MTT. Diet is the easiest entry point, but sticking to it is the hardest part.
- Most store-bought probiotics come from milk-based environments, not the gut, and have short efficacy. They need to be taken consistently to have an effect.
- Families interested in current or future trials can join the waiting list at autism.asu.edu.

[Listen to Episode](#)

[Watch Episode on Youtube](#)

WHAT'S NEW



San Diego Welcomes the Fire-Rescue Team

The San Diego Fire-Rescue team stopped by one of our center, giving clients an up-close look at the trucks and a chance to meet the crew.



Clients were curious, excited, and fully engaged throughout the visit. A big thank you to our first responders for making it such a memorable day for our community.



Summer Tips for Parents Raising Autistic Children

Summertime often brings changes to routines and new experiences, which can be both exciting and challenging for children on the autism spectrum. Here are some practical and supportive tips to help you and your child enjoy the season:

- **Use Previews for New Experiences**
 - Before outings, preview locations with photos, videos, or virtual tours to familiarize your child with what they might see and do.
 - Practice the outing routine at home, like packing a bag or role-playing how to interact with others.
- **Pack a Summer "Toolkit"**
 - Bring items that help your child regulate, such as noise-canceling headphones, fidget toys, snacks, and a favorite comfort object.
 - Don't forget sunscreen and hats for outdoor activities to keep your child comfortable and safe from the sun.
- **Balance Structured and Free Play**
 - Plan a mix of structured activities, such as crafts or baking, and unstructured time where your child can relax and explore their interests.
 - Incorporate physical activities like swimming, yoga, or short walks to release energy and support motor development.
- **Create a Calm Down Space**
 - Summer may bring challenges, but celebrating small victories, like trying a new activity or staying calm in a busy setting, is important for building confidence.
 - Reward your child with praise and reinforcement, such as extra playtime or a favorite treat.

Small steps can make all the difference in creating a smooth, joyful season for your family!

Hear From Our DAS/BCBA: Ronata Morrison, BCBA | Fort Mill, SC

Ronata Morrison has spent what she jokingly calls "a super long time" in the field, though the official milestone is 2019, the year she became a BCBA. What started as a college job grew into a career she never looked back on. Originally from Columbia and now based in Fort Mill, she fills her time outside of work the way a lot of South Carolinians do: outdoors. Fishing, hiking, and time on the water top the list, usually with family along and the occasional girls-versus-boys competition. When she is not outside, she is traveling, shopping, or making time for a good brunch.

A Moment That Stood Out

Ask Ronata about a highlight, and she goes straight to her center's opening last October. The building filled with clients, families, and community members curious about what ABS Kids could offer. Seeing that many people who might need services walk through the door was the whole point. "Our team loves stuff like that," she said. It reflects something she has noticed about South Carolina more broadly: the community shows up, volunteers, and stays involved in ways that are not a given everywhere.

Meeting Families Where They Are

The most valuable part of our conversation was how Ronata builds trust with families who arrive uncertain about ABA. She sees the hesitation often. Parents come in having Googled the field and landed on outdated or one-sided information, sometimes picturing ABA as it looked decades ago rather than the practice it is today. Her center recently rolled out group parent trainings, and one of the first lessons focuses on exactly this: preparing for ABA services. The sessions have given her direct insight into what families were thinking before they started, and the answer is usually the same. They did not know what to expect.

Her approach is steady and direct:

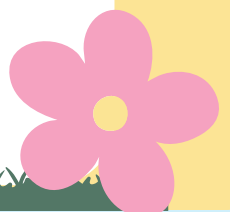
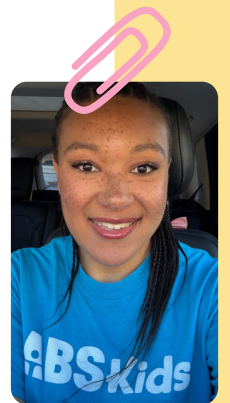
- Encourage families to step back from outdated online sources, which often reflect a single bad experience or practices from years ago.
- Walk them through how ABS Kids actually works, including what the team does not do. No withholding. No punishment.
- Open the floor for questions, inviting parents to name anything they have heard so it can be addressed honestly.

"I like to give them the floor. Is there anything you heard? Anything you want me to clear up? Just make them comfortable to hash those things out."

That openness is the foundation for everything that follows. When parents understand what is happening and trust that their child is safe, the work gets easier for everyone. It is a simple philosophy, but a powerful one, and it is the kind of approach that turns a hesitant first conversation into a lasting partnership.

What's Ahead

Next up for the Fort Mill team is a Summer Bash pool day in July, timed with the celebration of 15 years of ABS Kids. If the opening celebration was any indication, the community will show up for that one, too.





Wildomar Clinton Keith

My son started with ABS kids when he was three years old and now he is five so we've been with them for almost 2 years. When he first started, he needed a lot of help with transitions and other skills kids his age were already doing. Most recently, ABA has really helped him become more verbal, reduced tantrums and improve his social skills. We've seen so much progress, and now we're able to take him out in public more comfortably, which has been huge for our family. The staff at ABS Kids have been wonderful. The front desk team we see every day at drop off and pick up are always smiling, kind accommodating, and helpful with scheduling. Our BCBA, Stephanie, has been amazing to work with. She listens to my concerns, offers helpful suggestions for home, and collaborates closely with my son's school, so everyone stays on the same page. I also appreciate the environment at the center. They have different themed rooms and the kids rotate around with different staff and peers which helps prevent attachment to just one space or person. We've had a number of BT's over the years, some were a better fit than others, but I appreciate that when I provide feedback, the team truly listens and works to make things better. Overall, it's been a great experience and I would absolutely recommend ABS Kids if your child needs support. The sooner you get started the better.



Raleigh Health Park

We've had a wonderful experience with this ABA center. Our BCBA has been incredibly supportive, including attending IEP meetings and collaborating with the school to support our child's progress at home and in school. The team has been accommodating, communicative, and truly invested in our child's needs. Best ABA experience we've had in a long time.



Cottonwood Heights Highland

All I gotta say is the behavior technicians are amazing! My son has done so much improvement with ABS Kids and I really appreciate the work they put for my son! I'd recommend this spot especially the Cottonwood Heights location! Thanks to them my son speaks alot clearer and has been doing amazing with behavioral issues!

Smyrna Stonecrest



Rachel and Kyra have been a blessing. These two working with Bryson are the very best. I'm very pleased of his progress and I owe it all to them.



WHAT'S YOUR WOW

CHECK OUT OUR
WOW MOMENTS
FROM APRIL!

Jen Poccia

Today was my clients 3rd birthday and took this opportunity to dress up like her favorite...Ms.Rachel! She was so happy and kept smiling at me :)

These are the moments that make me so proud to work for ABS Kids and why every single WOW moments matter.



Estefania Luna

A WOW moment for me is seeing my three children—each in different age groups—interacting so naturally with children who have special needs. They don't see labels or differences; they simply see friends. What's even more beautiful is how they instinctively find ways to support and help one another. Moments like this remind me how powerful kindness, empathy, and inclusion truly are.



Barbara Watson

My kiddo just started with his new AAC device a couple of weeks ago. Today, he looked at me and he touched, "I'm happy" (several times) with the biggest smile on his face to me, that was a perfect WOW moment!



WOW FACTOR