WOW Factor

EVERY LANGUAGE COUNTS

In September, we celebrated the many ways people connect. Empowering Differences Week brought **Hispanic Heritage Month** and **International Day of Sign Languages** together, and our teams showed up with stories, traditions, and a shared reminder of what matters most in this work. Whether it's **Spanish, English, ASL,** or the words, gestures, and devices our kids use to be heard, every language counts. This month's recap highlights the people and moments that made that message real.

Words | Signs | Gestures | Devices | Connection

HONORING THE SACRIFICES THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE

For Hispanic Heritage Month, we heard from Dani D, a BCBA in California, and who talk about family, heritage, and the path that led her to this work.

WHAT DOES YOUR HERITAGE MEAN TO YOU?

To me, Hispanic heritage means taking advantage of the opportunities my parents sacrifices made possible. As a **first-generation Mexican American,** I recognize the resources available to me, including the ability to further my education and become a BCBA. I see my education and career as a way to honor my parents while giving back to my local community.

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Who in your family or community shaped who you are today?

My mother. She is kind, hilarious, and intelligent, and she uses those qualities to make a difference in our everyday lives. Her strength and compassion shaped the person I have become, and she continues to inspire me every day.

Thank you, Dani, for sharing your story and for bringing that same heart to the families you serve every day.



Dani D. with her mom

What do you wish more people understood about Hispanic Heritage Month?

I wish more people understood the sacrifices many Hispanic families make to **create better opportunities** for their children and loved ones. Leaving behind familiar places and communities is a difficult decision, but it is often driven by **hope, love,** and the desire to build a brighter future for the next generation. I am grateful for those who came before me and the opportunities they helped create.

CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

October Upcoming Events

October 1
Spooktacular Halloween Bash
Salt Lake City, UT

October 3
Kidtoberfest
Greenville, SC

October 3
60th Diamond Anniversary Gala
San Diego, CA

October 3
BuildStrong
Charlotte, NC

October 3
Charlotte Kids Fest
Charlotte, NC

October 6
ABA Education Night
Raleigh, NC

October 6
Senseory-Friendly Trunk or Treat
Amercian Fork, UT

October 7
Future Achievers Preschool Open House
San Diego, CA

October 7
Senseory-Friendly Halloween Bash
Kaysville, UT

October 8-9
NCIMHA Annual Meeting
Wilmington, NC

October 8-9
Fall Candy Festival
Bountiful, UT

October 8-9
Trunk or Treat
Springfiels, TN

October 10
Triangle Run Walk For Autism
Raleigh, NC

October 10
Vista Fall Festival
Ivins, Ut

October 11
Friendly Trunk and Treat
Clover, SC

October 13-16
CASP Convention 2026
Universal City, CA

October 17
Fort Mill Fall Festival
Fort Mill, SC

October 17
Sensory-Friendly Morning
Rock Hill, SC

October 21
Trunk-or-Treat
Greensboro, NC

October 21
BuildStrong
Rock Hill, SC

October 21
Halloween Festival
Riverdale, UT

October 22
Concord Fall Crawl
Concord, NC

October 22
Fall'o'ween Festival
Provo, UT

October 22
Riverwalk Fall Crawl
Rock Hill, SC

October 25
Hallowwen in Huntersville
Hunterville, NC

October 22
Winston-Salem Fall Crawl
Winston-Salem, NC

October 21
Raleigh Fall Crawl
Raleigh, NC

October 21
Trunk-or-Treat at Halton Village
Greenville, SC

Visit **abskids.com/events** to discover upcoming events near you.

Event Highlights



Run for Kids Sake - Greenville, SC



United for Every Child-Inclusion and the Pyramid Model in Action



Autism Tee Off - Ogden, UT

Stronger Together: Our Community Partners

No family should have to find support alone. This month, we shared a guide to the local organizations partnering with our ABA therapy centers in California, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Utah, a starting point for support groups, events, and more places for kids to learn, play, and belong.

Thank you to every partner who shows up for our families.

EMPOWERING DIFFERENCES WEEK LOOKING BACK



5 DAYS • 1 WEEK • MANY WAYS TO BELONG

For five days in September, our ABA therapy centers, in-home teams, and departments slowed down to learn about each other. Here's what each day gave us.

MONDAY

This Is DEIB

We started by getting to know each other. Our teams met the new DEIB Committee, the group leading how ABS Kids celebrates every culture, language, and way of being.

TUESDAY

Think Twice Tuesday

We got curious about ourselves. Our teams took a closer look at the everyday blind spots we all carry, because seeing past them helps us see every child and family clearly.

WEDNESDAY

International Day of Sign Languages

We celebrated every way kids communicate. One client signed "break." Another taught their therapist the alphabet. One family made sign their primary way to communicate. **Help, more, all done, please, thank you.** The signs our kids use most became the week's shared language.

THURSDAY

Belong Day

We celebrated being one team. Centers showed up in ABS Kids gear, Campus Park and Bountiful gathered around potluck tables, and our teams shared the client progress they're proudest of.

FRIDAY

Culture Swap Friday

A taste of the cultures that make up our team.

- 🇲🇽 Mexico: pozole, tamales, Day of the Dead
- 🇵🇷 Puerto Rico: "Echa pa' lante"
- 🇧🇷 Brazil: "saudade"
- 🇵🇭 Philippines: "kain tayo"
- 🇳🇬 Nigeria: egusi soup
- 🇨🇻 Cape Verde: cachupa
- 🇿🇼 Zimbabwe: "monkey's wedding"
- 🇰🇪 Kenya: chapati
- 🇮🇪 Ireland: "Céad míle fáilte"
- 🏴 Scotland: shortbread
- 🇺🇸 United States: Hoppin' John, gumbo

What stays with us!

DEIB at ABS Kids

This week showed that our differences aren't something to work around. They make our teams stronger and our care better, and every family we serve feels that. Let's keep this going all year long.



WOW AROUND OUR CENTERS

COMMUNITY EDITION

SODA FLOATS + TEAM SPIRIT

Camino Del Rio Center - San Deigo, CA



The Camino Del Rio team wrapped up **Empowering Differences Week** with soda floats, smiles, and great vibes. Cheers to a week full of connection and team spirit.





COOKOUT + APPRECIATION

David Taylor Center - Charlotte, NC

The David Taylor Center team celebrated the week with a cookout. Everyone brought a dish to share, and Operations Manager Adrian took over the grill.





As one teammate put it, y'all are what's really "poppin'" at DTC.



BELONGING SPOTTED

Shout-out to the Bountiful Center, Utah Team



Nicole and the Bountiful team celebrated **Empowering Differences Week** together, and she said it best:

"As a center, we all feel we have a special place. We feel like we belong and are appreciated."

When our teams feel they belong, that feeling reaches every child and family who walks through our doors. **Thank you,** Nicole, for leading a team that makes everyone feel at home.

More WOW Ahead

Hearing From Our DAS/BCBA: Hannah M.

BCBA and Director of ABA Services | Park Center and Greta's Way, Kernersville, NC



Meet Hannah

Hannah grew up in the small town of Whitsett, NC. Today she's a wife and a mom to a 10-year-old son, and her house stays busy with two corgis, Magnolia and Nova, a senior rescue dog her husband brought home in April, and a cat. "I am not a cat person," she says. "I just love *my* cat."

Finding ABA

Hannah always loved working with kids. When her nephew was diagnosed with autism, she started learning everything she could, and that path led her to ABA. After earning her degree in sociology and criminal psychology at Salem College, she knew she wanted a master's but wasn't sure in what. She was accepted to Wake Forest University for counseling but chose a different direction and started at ABS Kids as a BT.

She grew from **BT to RBT to LRBT, then to BCBA, and now DAS.** She loves learning and taking on new challenges, so each step felt like the natural next one.

Hannah's teaching style

"Truthfully, I feel like my teaching style is based on what other people need from me."

Whether she's with a client or supporting the BCBAs she oversees, Hannah adjusts how she gives feedback, corrects, and approaches each situation to fit the person in front of her. In her words, "I try to be whatever they need in that moment."



What is a WOW moment that stayed with you?

Hannah says there are too many to count, but time with clients has always been where she finds fulfillment. She has watched kids arrive with no **functional communication** and later tell her "stop."

One moment stays with her. While supporting a BCBA at another center, she saw a client who had been on her own caseload more than a year earlier. The client doesn't always make eye contact and connects with only a few people, but within minutes she was back to doing the things she used to do with Hannah.

"Feeling as if she remembered me and I had an impact on her life, even though I haven't been a part of her everyday life for so long."

EST. 2011 15 ANNIVERSARY | ABS Kids

ABS Kids

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

Taylorsville West 4700

My Son has been going to ABS Kids for six months now, and we have seen amazing growth in behavior, language, and social skills. He loves going to ABS Kids; the RBTs are all fantastic! Our BCBAs, Alex and Teresa, have been Amazing and have helped my son learn to share, communicate his " no, " and identify his feelings and the feelings of others.

Mi hijo lleva 6 meses asistiendo a ABS Kids, y hemos visto un crecimiento increíble en su conducta, su lenguaje y sus habilidades sociales. ¡Le encanta ir a ABS Kids y todos los RBTs son fantásticos! Nuestras BCBAs, Alex y Teresa, han sido increíbles y han ayudado a mi hijo a aprender a compartir, a comunicar su "no" y a identificar sus sentimientos y los de los demás.

Temecula Madison

They were very sweet and kind and explained step by step of what they were doing. All staff members welcomed us with smiles.

Fueron muy dulces y amables, y nos explicaron paso a paso lo que estaban haciendo. Todo el personal nos recibió con una sonrisa.

Nashville Lebanon

I love the service that my grandson is receiving and the whole staff is amazing.

Me encanta el servicio que está recibiendo mi nieto, y todo el personal es increíble.

Winston Salem North Point

My son has been at ABS Kids on North Point for almost two years now. We've had a truly great experience. I've been able to see great improvements in my son's behaviors, speech and socialization. The relationships he's created with his therapist have been amazing to see. His behavioral analyst, Sara, has been a crucial part of my son's growth. Collaborating with her to form plans of improvement and growth for my son has been easy and extremely beneficial for our family. We've been able to use those skills in our home setting because of these monthly meetings, and as we collaborate altogether have seen great improvements. Truly grateful for this team and their genuine care for my son.

Mi hijo lleva casi 2 años en ABS Kids de North Point, y hemos tenido una experiencia verdaderamente excelente. He visto grandes mejoras en su conducta, su habla y su socialización. Ha sido increíble ver la relación que ha creado con su terapeuta. Su analista de conducta, Sara, ha sido una parte fundamental de su crecimiento. Colaborar con ella para crear planes de mejora y crecimiento para mi hijo ha sido fácil y muy beneficioso para nuestra familia. Gracias a estas reuniones mensuales, hemos podido usar esas habilidades en casa, y al trabajar todos juntos hemos visto grandes mejoras. Estoy verdaderamente agradecida con este equipo por el cariño genuino que le tienen a mi hijo.

WHAT'S YOUR WOW

CHECK OUT OUR WOW MOMENTS FROM SEPTEMBER



Susana L.

On just her second day of potty training, one of our kiddos had a big breakthrough. She told her mom she needed to go, walked to the bathroom on her own, and used the toilet successfully. Her family celebrated at home, and so did we. It was a proud step forward in both communication and independence.

Harumi Martinez.

When I started with my client, he was nonverbal and had a hard time telling us what he wanted. We taught him a few basic signs, like "all done," "more," and "eat." One day a timer went off for a less-preferred activity, and I expected a tough moment. Instead, he signed "more" to ask for more time. He was still upset, but now he had a way to tell us. Over time he learned more signs and the hard moments became less frequent. A year later, he's speaking!

Megan Rasmussen.

As a parent, I know every child grows at their own pace. My two kids are less than a year apart, and I've learned to celebrate each one's milestones instead of holding them to the same standard. My oldest is very verbal but has the toughest moments. Together we built a system: she signs "help," and she knows I'll be right there to help her calm down. Afterward, she can use her words to talk through what she felt.

Small moments add up to big progress. Thank you to the families who let us be part of these milestones.

WOW FACTOR