



## Teachers' Corner

### Promoting Upstander Behavior to Address Bullying in Schools



**Kim W. Fisher**  
University of Illinois



**Juliet E. Hart Barnett**  
Arizona State University



**Stanley H. Zucker**  
Arizona State University



**Natasha O'Connell**  
Arizona State University



**Kimberlee Franco**  
Arizona State University

There is growing awareness of the negative and long-term consequences associated with bullying (Houchins, Oakes, & Johnson, 2016). Bullying involves repeated harmful actions toward an individual or group, usually reflects a power imbalance in social relationships, and occurs through physical (e.g., punching, kicking, scratching), verbal (e.g., name-calling, taunting, and negative and threatening comments, phone calls, or e-mails), and relational (e.g., spreading false rumors, excluding from a group, or sharing personal information) means (Pister, 2014). The impact of childhood bullying includes lowered self-esteem, heightened anxiety, depression, fear, school refusal, isolation, and suicide (Espelage & Swearer, 2008; Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010).

Students with disabilities both experience and perpetrate higher rates of bullying than their typical peers (Rose, Monda-Amaya, & Espelage, 2011). In fact, some estimates suggest nearly two to four times as many students with disabilities are targets of bullying as are typical peers (Hartley, Bauman, Nixon, & Davis 2015). For instance, youth with autism spectrum disorder are more likely to be verbally and physically bullied relative to typical peers (Wainscot, Naylor, Sutcliffe, & Williams, 2008). Recent research indicates students' with disabilities isolation from or embeddedness within peer networks may perpetuate or halt bullying incidences (Rodkin, Espelage, & Hanish, 2015). As such, bullying prevention programs should recognize the vulnerability of students with disabilities and embed anti-bullying instruction within individualized education programs (thebullyingproject.org).

Given the relational nature of bullying (Rodkin et al., 2015), prevention researchers found utilizing interventions targeting the bystander are more successful in decreasing bullying instances (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). More specifically, the term 'upstander' is used in these interventions to recognize participants in the bullying dynamic who take action to stop bullying (Padgett & Notar, 2013). In fact, researchers found targeting bystanders and giving them tools and support to become upstanders should be an integral component of bullying interventions (Dunn, 2010). Teachers can utilize the following 5 steps to address bullying and encourage upstander behavior:

**Step 1: Recognize bullying behavior.** Help students develop an awareness of bullying and an understanding of its core elements. Bullying has the following three components: (a) an imbalance of power between the bully and the victim, (b) intentionality, and (c) repetition (see <https://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/index.html>). An imbalance of power can be explained to students as one individual possessing more power in a situation than another. For example, if one student is more popular than another, he/she has more social influence than the other. Intention does not refer to the intention of the bully to bully someone, but rather the intention of the bully to act regardless of the consequences to the victim. For example, if a student were to trip another student on purpose, that reflects intention whether or not the student tripped them with the intention of bullying. Repetition refers to recurrence of an action or event and indicates an act is not accidental, such as in repeated teasing or isolating behaviors (Polanin, Espelage, & Pigott, 2012).

**Step 2: Define bullying as an emergency.** Once students accurately identify a bullying situation, the next step is to define the instance as an emergency. In order to help upstanders

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## President's Message

Jordan Shurr



This month marks nearly halfway through my term as president of the Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities. Here are a few things that I've immensely enjoyed thus far: the DADD division conference in January, participation in the CEC international convention in February, our first online quarterly board meeting, reviewing our division bylaws, and planning for our summer board meeting. As I've mentioned before, our annual DADD division conference continues to be a success for disseminating current research and best practice in the field, providing opportunities for professional networking, as well as for bolstering the financial health of our division. As for the annual CEC convention, while the new timing of the event required some adjustment to our typical routines, DADD was very well represented and provided a strong array of timely, applicable, and well-attended sessions. In April, the board gathered for our first online board meeting, marking our second gathering of the year. This meeting was a great opportunity for us to continue our planning and work toward retaining and growing the relevance and reach of DADD. In an effort to streamline our governing processes and ease the transition for new board members onto our team, I tasked a small group of board members to extensively review our division bylaws and procedures and recommend changes to the board and ultimately to the membership for consideration. This task should be completed near the end of 2018. Keep an eye out for communication on our recommendations moving forward. On a final note of past and current happenings, I have enjoyed working with our board on plans for the upcoming summer board meeting in July. In addition to dedicated time for our division work, we are very much looking forward to combining this meeting with a promotional event on behalf of DADD. My next report will detail our efforts, as well as the outcomes of this new and exciting endeavor.

So, here we are in the middle. And here at the halfway point I see many exciting things still on the horizon for the year, including increased membership participation, committee and board innovations, board member elections, and our final two board meetings of 2018. For me, one of the most exciting things that continue to happen this year is an increase in membership interest and involvement in DADD. This has included first time conference attendees, division publication authors, and division committee joiners. This new influx, in addition to the already sizeable group of dedicated members who commit their time and expertise to the division, is reason enough for optimism. Additionally, the board and division committees continue to dream up new ways to engage and support the field of education for students with autism, intellectual disability, and other developmental disabilities. This includes outreach to those who work with this population but have not yet heard of the division, and our strong network of professionals and supports. With summer, comes DADD board member nominations and elections. As is always the case, it is heartening to see a slate of dedicated future board members that will infuse the board with their expertise and energy. And finally, I look forward to the work ahead. As you well know, we have a very talented, intelligent, and hard-working board. I look forward to these next two board meetings ahead, and the time in between, as we continue to push the division to new heights and directions to best serve our members and our field at large.

So, those are my thoughts. What are yours? What are you looking forward to in the division? What have you enjoyed about DADD in 2018? If you are so inspired—send us a note!

DADD on facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/30670869128/>

DADD on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/cecdadd>

My email: [shurr.jordan@gmail.com](mailto:shurr.jordan@gmail.com)

Sincerely,  
Jordan Shurr, *President*

## Executive Director's Corner

Teresa Taber Doughty



I don't know about you, but I'm angry! As I write this article less than two weeks following the most recent school shooting (Parkland, FL), I am just MAD that this tragedy has occurred again! I am mad that we even have to think about this in the context of schools and children! I have signed petitions, called my legislators, listened to lawmakers propose arming teachers and building fortresses around our schools and, I continue to watch the endless debate about protecting Second Amendment rights. Seriously? I am furious!

Deep breath . . .

No doubt, the violence that continues to befall our schools and communities will have lasting effects on children, teachers,

parents, school administrators, first responders, trauma doctors, and many others. And those effects are not limited to those who were immediately involved. As an educator who prepares future teachers and school administrators, I have to sadly ask the question, "How are we preparing our education professionals to handle school violence and the next school shooting?" DANG! That just makes me mad!

Breathe . . .

Following an article in the Chronicle of Higher Education (February 21, 2018), "After a mass shooting, education programs confront a question, 'Am I obligated to take a bullet for my students?'" (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/After-a-Mass-Shooting/242601>), I began thinking about how we are preparing our educators to face the realities of today's schools. What conversations have we had to prepare them for teaching in a building that may become the target of a shooter? Are they prepared to offer emotional support to their students even

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when a shooting happens in other schools? What about their own mental and emotional well-being?

And, how are we preparing our special education professionals to support our students who may not understand what is happening? How do we prepare them to protect students in the moment, as well as meet the social and emotional needs following tragedy? How might a single special educator protect and evacuate his or her students from a school building when there may be an active shooter? I have no answer.

I absolutely hate that we even have to think about these questions. But sadly, it is our reality. Thus, I continue to seek resources to share with my students so that they may be prepared for any situation as a teacher. Many resources offer thoughts and tips for managing the social and emotional impact of tragedies, violence, and death that students may encounter or watch on the news. I've listed a few resources here:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/ptsd-factsheet.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/15/learning/lesson-plans/resources-for-talking-and-teaching-about-the-school-shooting-in-florida.html>

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/helping-students-trauma-tragedy-grief-resources>

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collections/teaching-content/resources-responding-violence-and-tragedy/>

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/tragedy-grief-resources-education>

[http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_admin/admin/admin198.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin198.shtml)

My hope is that we never have to experience this kind of violence in our schools and communities. Unfortunately, our reality is that it has become almost commonplace. Thus, we must be ready to protect and support not only the physical well-being of our students, but also their social and emotional needs both during and following a crisis. This includes the needs of not only our students, but those of our teachers and school administrators as well.

## DADD Awards Presented at the 2018 DADD Annual Conference

At this year's DADD General Business meeting, several extraordinary individuals received awards. This year, in a switch from tradition, the DADD General Business meet-

ing was held at the DADD annual conference in Clearwater, Florida. Following are the awards and award winners for 2018:

The **Teacher of the Year Award** was given to Alison Gass, an educator in Hutto, Texas. A teacher for over 15 years, Ms. Gass was described as a mentor for new teachers and an incredibly kind teacher. Her work with her students has fostered independence and growth from her support and skilled instruction.



professional development for teachers of learners with ASD and giftedness.

The **Research Award** was given to Dr. Kevin Ayres, *University of Georgia*, for his years of contributions to the field. Dr. Ayres' work has focused on, among other areas, the use of video technology to teach learners with intellectual disabilities.



The **Para-educator Award** was presented to Sandra Michelle Jiles, a para-educator in North Carolina. Ms. Jiles was described as someone who "truly concerned for the physical, mental, and—most importantly—the emotional well-being of her students." Her classroom teacher described her as a true co-teacher in the classroom.



The **Burton Blatt Humanitarian Award** is given to someone who has been a leader and advocate for many years in the area of intellectual disabilities. This year's recipient was Dr. Diane Browder, *University of North Carolina, Charlotte*. Dr. Browder has shaped the field of special education in incredible ways, from assisting with the deinstitutionalization movement through job training for individuals with ASD to the development of methods for alternate assessment for learners with the most significant support needs.

The **Tom E. C. Smith Early Career Award** is given to someone who is in the beginning of his or her career and showing promise in contributing greatly to the field. This year's winner was Dr. Melissa Spence, *California Lutheran University*, whose research focuses on improving outcomes for learners with ASD, including providing



## Students' Corner

### Thinking Critically About the Interventions We Use or Recommend



**Cary Trump**  
*Doctoral Student*  
*University of Georgia*



**Autumn Eyre**  
*Doctoral Student*  
*University of Washington*

Whether you are a doctoral student coaching teachers or learning to become one, it's important that we help pre-service teachers learn how to systematically select evidence-based interventions. As students and educators, we are often inundated with many "new and improved" and "top of the line" interventions and products that claim to be research-based. For those of you becoming an educator or working with teachers, it's important to remember that we must think critically about what interventions we choose to implement in classrooms.

#### Navigating the World of Resources

When choosing interventions and resources, a growing number of teachers are turning to computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools which include forums, social media, discussion groups, blogging, and emails (Cain, Giraud, Stedman, & Adams, 2012). Couple this with an overwhelming number of journal articles and online resources (i.e., Teachers Pay Teachers,

Pinterest, etc.), it's not surprising that educators turn to suggestions from colleagues, parents, or the online world of various do-it-yourself websites.

Although earnest in their intentions, individuals supporting teachers such as doctoral students, administrators, colleagues, and parents of students might not have the time, or know how to critically examine the claims made by the intervention or product's proponents. Unfortunately, unsubstantiated claims and pseudoscience might find their way into classrooms and take time away from best practices.

#### The Challenge

Travers (2017) outlined four reasons educators might try unproven methods including curiosity, compassion, desperation, and fear. All of the reasons listed seem genuine and derive from a sincere desire to help the students we serve. Curiously wondering whether or not a new intervention will help more than a current intervention, the desire to try anything to help the student, wanting to try something new after other unsuccessful interventions, and worrying refusing an intervention that might produce positive results are valid reasons to want to try new interventions.

#### Step-by-step Approach to Thinking Critically

When it comes to choosing interventions to use with students who have disabilities, Travers (2017) suggests using a 5-step process for thinking critically about interventions we use as teachers or recommend to pre-service educators.

#### Show Me the Data!

Whether using these five suggested steps or another critical thinking strategy, most important is that we (or teach pre-service teachers how to) rely on student data to guide the decision-making process. Regardless of the intervention we choose or suggest pre-service teachers implement, baseline data and

**Table 1. Critically Analyzing the Evidence**

Steps	Considerations
1. Consider the source of the claim	Is the source reputable (e.g., university, government agency, peer-reviewed journal)? Does primary support for the intervention involve anecdotes or testimonials?
2. Examine biases	Is the source biased (e.g., potential financial gain)?
3. Check for red flags of pseudoscience	Did the authors provide procedures? Does the claim reject known evidence?
4. Assess errors in reasoning	Is the absence of evidence treated as evidence (e.g., no evidence that the claim is untrue, so it must be true)?
5. Consider the type and amount of scientific evidence	Do systematic reviews and meta-analysis data support the claim?

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data throughout instruction should inform whether we continue the intervention. Charlton et al. (2013) put it best when they wrote, ". . . The practitioner must balance individualized treatment with data-based decision making. As professionals investigate treatments that will be most effective for each clinical context, they must live by the mantra, 'show me the data!'"

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## Editor's Note

**Chris Denning**

I'm excited to have completed my first issue as editor of *DADD Express* and look forward to working with the division in this role. Thanks to Ginevra Courtade for helping me through the process and answering many questions.

I hope you all enjoyed the highlights and photos from the DADD 19th International Conference in Clearwater! Join the fun and scholarship at our 20th International Conference in Maui, HI. Please note the call for nominations. We are looking for qualified applicants to fill the Vice-President, Secretary, At-Large Member, and Student Representative positions.

Interested in writing for *DADD Express*? We are soliciting articles for: Teachers' Corner, and our EBP and Legal Briefs sections. If you would like to contribute, please contact me with ideas or questions ([christopher.denning@umb.edu](mailto:christopher.denning@umb.edu)).

Enjoy your summer!

## Call for Nominations

DADD is seeking motivated and experienced individuals from the DADD membership for upcoming vacancies on the Board of Directors. Leadership experience and experience with DADD committees and/or Board of Directors is preferred.

Nominees must be (a) members at the time of nomination and throughout their term of office, (b) willing to participate for their entire term of office, (c) willing to serve as a chair of a committee as needed, and (d) willing to attend the annual DADD Conference and CEC Convention. Nominations are requested for the following positions:

### Vice-President (4 year term: Vice-President, President-Elect, President, and Past-President)

The Vice-President acts in the place of the President-Elect with his or her authority in case of absence or disability of the president-elect and shall act in the place of the president with his or her authority in case of absence or disability of both the president and the president-elect. He or she also serves as the division's representative for advance program planning for the Annual Convention, which will take place during his or her term as President-Elect, and serves as co-chair with the president-elect of future special conferences sponsored by the division.

### Secretary (3 year term)

The Secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings of the business meetings of the annual convention, the meetings of the Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and such correspondence as is necessary for the promotion of this organization. The secretary will also have responsibilities related to the awards committee.

### At-Large Member (3 year term)

Nominees for the At-Large Member position may reside in any region of the country. This member will represent DADD membership and have responsibilities related to information-sharing, recruitment, monitoring and development. Specific responsibilities may include: support regional conference development activities; support and assist in developing new subdivisions; help monitor and provide support for subdivisions; assist in membership recruitment and retention and act as membership liaison to the Board of Directors; and serve on topical committees such as knowledge and skills, diversity, and practitioner engagement.

### Student Representative (1-2 year term, contingent upon his or her being a full-time student during that year of office)

The Student Representative will: attend the meetings of the DADD Board of Directors; encourage the Division to appoint students to committees; maintain communication with the SCEC liaison at CEC; submit information regarding students to the newsletter editor for publication in the *DADD Express*; attend the SCEC Board meeting at the annual convention and maintain communications with student liaisons of other divisions.

The 2019 DADD call for nominations application package will be sent to membership no later than June 1, 2018 with a deadline for submitting applications set as June 30, 2018. All nominations must be members of CEC-DADD. The nominations application package will include information on the responsibilities associated with positions as well as a hyperlink for the online application form. Watch for online voting in early August. Results of the elections will be available in early September.

# Call for Papers



*20<sup>th</sup> International Conference on  
Autism, Intellectual Disability &  
Developmental Disabilities*

*Research-Informed  
Practice*

*January 16-18, 2019  
Kanaapali Beach, Maui*

*CEC's Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD),  
welcomes the submission of proposals for innovative and  
engaging presentations that link research to practice within  
the following or related topical areas:*

- ◆ *Academic Skills*
- ◆ *Assistive & Adaptive Technology*
- ◆ *Life Skills*
- ◆ *Sexuality*
- ◆ *Mental Health*
- ◆ *Post-secondary Initiatives*
- ◆ *Behavior*
- ◆ *Social Skills*
- ◆ *Evidence-based Practices*
- ◆ *Self-determination*
- ◆ *Transition*
- ◆ *Assessment*

*Proposals may only be submitted online through Cvent's abstract  
management system. To access the weblink and submit a proposal,  
please visit DADD's website, [www.daddcec.org](http://www.daddcec.org).*

***Proposal Submission Deadline: June 1, 2018***

*For further information, please contact Cindy Perras, DADD's  
Conference Co-ordinator, at [cindy.perras@gmail.com](mailto:cindy.perras@gmail.com).*

# 2018 DADD Conference Highlights

This past January, 400 delegates, presenters, and exhibitors participated in DADD's 19th International Conference on Autism, Intellectual Disability, & Developmental Disabilities in Clearwater Beach, Florida!

Highlights from the 3-day conference include:

**Focused Training:** Pre-conference training institutes on *Ethical and Supervising Considerations When Working with School-based Teams* and *Using Current and Emerging Assistive Technologies to Enhance Outcomes for Students with ASD and/or Intellectual Disability: Practical Training for Educators*.



**Political Pulse:** Senator Andy Gardiner's opening keynote address touched on recent legislative advocacy and initiatives that are positively impacting the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities. In his eloquent address, Senator Gardiner brought a personal perspective to his political advocacy. (see photo)



**Self-advocate Voice:** Robert Pio Hajjar, self-advocate, inspirational speaker and author, provided the closing keynote address, *I Can, YOU Can*. Robert's energizing, humorous and insightful presentation provided a high note to the closing of the conference. (see photo)

**Literary Excellence:** The recipients of the Dolly Gray Children's Literature Award (presented bi-annually) included, *The Girl Who Thought in Pictures: The Story of Dr.*

*Temple Grandin*, written by Julia Finley Mosca, and *The Someday Birds*, written by Sally J. Pla. Congratulations to both authors! <http://www.dollygrayaward.com/home/2018-award-winners>



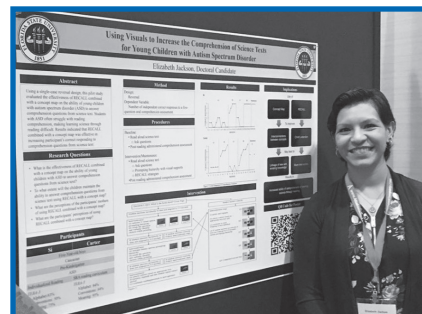
**Networking Opportunities:** Conference participants enjoyed interacting with researchers and colleagues at the three poster presentation sessions (93 posters in total), one on each day of the conference, and at the President's Reception. Additionally, DADD hosted an Early Career Lunch and a Student Lunch. (see photos)

**Continuing Education:** DADD provides Professional Development Hours (PDHs) and BACB-approved continuing education sessions; BCBA conference participants received BACB CEUs at no additional cost!

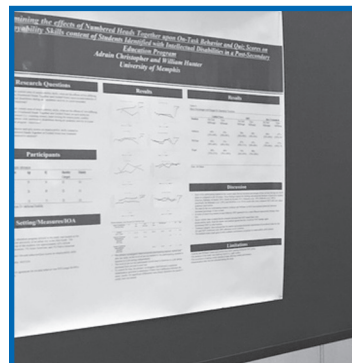
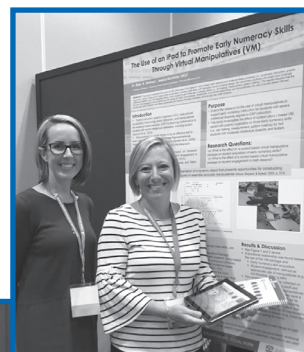
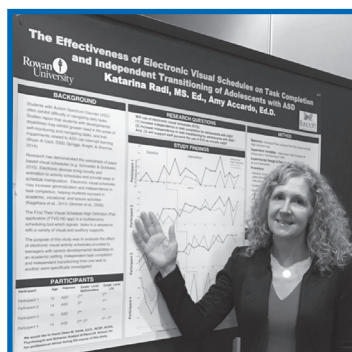
**DADD Membership Outreach:** The 2018 conference marked the first time that the Annual General Business Meeting and DADD Committee Meetings occurred during the Division's annual conference. Additionally, the program included a DADD strand of focused and topical sessions.

## Student Poster Presentation Award:

Congratulations to Elizabeth Jackson, who received the Student Poster Presentation Award for her presentation, "Using visuals to increase the comprehension of science texts for young children with ASD." Elizabeth is a doctoral student at Florida State University. (see photo)



For additional highlights on the 2018 Conference, please check out DADD's website, <http://daddcec.org/Home.aspx> and/or contact Cindy Perras, DADD Conference Coordinator, [cindy.perras@gmail.com](mailto:cindy.perras@gmail.com).



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view a bullying situation as an emergency, teachers can create a classroom community where bullying is not accepted. Additionally, students can practice empathy towards victims through role play and by reflecting on bullying's negative impact. Teachers can facilitate perspective taking by describing the negative impacts of bullying on student victims (e.g., depression, sadness, isolation) to help them understand the seriousness of bullying (Baker & Donnelly, 2001).

**Step 3: Encourage students to be a change agent (thebullyproject.org).** Once students designate a bullying situation as an emergency, they can decide to change the situation and help. It is important to teach students about the qualities of upstanders, including that they take action, leverage their social status to not fear what others think, assume personal responsibility, know how to intervene, understand the risks to the victim by a failure to act, and advocate on behalf of the target of a bully. Teachers can emphasize that upstanders do not need to be asked by the victim, another peer, or teacher to intervene. Research suggests that teachers can promote this trait by actively and tangibly recognizing students when they act outside the norm in a positive manner (Dunn, 2010).

**Step 4: Feel competent enough to engage.** Once an upstander decides to help, they must have the skills to intervene (Dunn, 2010). General and special education teachers can collaborate to embed instruction in social skills training (Meadan & Monda-Amaya, 2008) or school-wide PBIS systems and provide repeated opportunities to practice these skills (Rose et al., 2011). In their discussions of real, historical examples of people standing up for others, teachers should use language such as "heroic," and emphasize that even children can be heroes by standing up for others (thebullyproject.org).

**Step 5: Decide to engage.** When upstanders feel competent in their ability, the last step is intervening and doing what they can to stop bullying (Dunn, 2010). Teachers can help upstanders understand appropriate interventions including helping the victim escape the situation, telling a teacher about the incident, using humor to diffuse the situation and/or distract the bully, or informing the bully that he or she should stop treating the victim in an unfair way.

For example, teachers can train upstanders with specific language to diffuse bullying situations. Teachers and schools can also create a school climate where bullying is not tolerated and inclusion and disability are part of school diversity policies (Espelage, 2012). Finally, teachers can help students visualize social networks in the school, consider which students are embedded in groups and which are not, and identify students who are isolated and at risk for bullying. Teachers can support upstanders as they work to create a community of friends around students being bullied, reducing their potential for isolation and ensuring connection to others, thereby increasing their safety (Espelage & Swearer, 2008). Embedding bullying prevention within a social emotional learning curriculum and school-wide PBIS can also increase the diverse network of upstanders within a school.

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