



American Board of Stuttering, Cluttering & Fluency Disorders

2026 Annual Conference:
Expanding Clinical Perspectives in Stuttering, Cluttering and
Atypical Disfluency

12:00 pm - 5:30 pm June 7 & 8 via Zoom

Conference Description: This year's interactive online conference will bring together leading presenters from across the United States and internationally to share current research and clinical perspectives in stuttering, cluttering, and atypical disfluency. Sessions will explore a range of topics, including the multifactorial Mini-KIDS approach for children, the clinical implications of how stuttering intersects with language and executive functioning across the lifespan, current evidence supporting stuttering as a neurodevelopmental disorder, affective and cognitive components of stuttering and cluttering, stutter-affirming approaches to speech change, and therapy for word-final disfluencies. A cluttering panel will further deepen understanding of lived experience. Presentations will emphasize clinical decision-making and a deeper understanding of underlying processes, supporting holistic, individualized, and client-centered care.

This intermediate-level course is designed to support clinicians in expanding their clinical critical thinking and strengthening their ability to provide evidence-based care for children and adults who stutter, clutter, or experience other fluency differences.

ASHA CEUs: The American Board of Stuttering, Cluttering, and Fluency Disorders will submit your CEU hours to ASHA within 45 days of the conference. In order to complete the course and get a certificate, participants must:

1. Attend each session in full to claim credit (attendance tracked via Zoom for live participants and the LMS for recorded sessions). While partial credit is available for the conference as a whole, credit may not be claimed for individual sessions that are not fully attended.
2. Complete the learning assessment and overall event survey by **June 21, 2026 at 5:00 PM EDT**. This form will also include the option to opt in for ASHA CEU reporting, if desired.



ASHA CE
APPROVED PROVIDER

**American Board of Stuttering,
Cluttering, and Fluency
Disorders**

Intermediate Level

1.0 ASHA CEUs

Registration fees:

\$190.00 for Professionals

\$150.00 for BCS-SCF who are serving as mentors to active candidates for board certification.

\$50.00 for Parents and Other Attendees who are not SLPs, including graduate students.

Time Ordered Agenda:**Sunday June 7, 2026**

12:00-2:00 pm EDT – Taster Mini-KIDS. Short description, 'teasing' clinical reasoning and discussion. Working directly with stuttering behavior of (very) young children (2-6 years). - Waelkens Veerle Liesje & Tommy Olsen

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm EDT – An Overview and Demonstration of Structured Awareness Therapy for Word-Final Disfluency (SAT-WFD)- Samantha Wasilus

3:00 - 3:30pm EDT - Break

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm EDT – Putting It All Together: Targeting Affective and Cognitive Factors in Cluttering Intervention- Dr. Isabella Reichel, Ed.D, CCC-SLP/A, BCS-SCF

4:30 pm - 5:30 pm EDT – The lived experience of cluttering: Panel discussion- Dr. Kathleen Scaler Scott

**The panel will only be offered live and will not be recorded.*

Monday June 8, 2026

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm EDT – Why does my child stutter? Current insights from neuroscience- Dr. Soo-Eun Chang

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm EDT – Applications of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy for Stuttering- Dr. Heather Grossman

2:00 - 3:00 pm EDT Stutter Affirming Speech Change- Dr. Christopher Constantino

3:00 - 3:30pm EDT - Break

3:30 - 4:30 pm EDT – Considering Executive Functioning and Language Skills in Therapy For Children Who Stutter: Why it Matters - Shelby Potts & Rita Thurman

4:30 -5:30 pm EDT – Language and stuttering: updates for 2026- Nan Bernstein Ratner

Taster Mini-KIDS. Short description, 'teasing' clinical reasoning and discussion. Working directly with stuttering behavior of (very) young children (2-6 years). Waelkens Veerle Liesje & Tommy Olsen
(Sunday June 7, 2026 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm EDT)

Session Description: Mini-KIDS is a specific multifactorial approach to empower parents and (very) young children in daring to stutter and being able to stutter. Parents act as an important model for their child. The direct aspect of empowering children to modify the moment of stuttering is not contradictory to allowing the stuttering and daring to stutter. This paradox will be tackled during the webinar. You will be invited to build up your own clinical reasoning and reference framework.

Content Disclosure: This session will exclusively focus on the Mini-KIDS approach. Other approaches will only be discussed in a limited manner

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the philosophy of Mini-KIDS
2. Describe the structure, the phases and the outcomes of Mini-KIDS
3. Describe 'basic' clinical reasoning about indication to work with Mini-KIDS (for whom, why and when)

Waelkens Veerle Liesje graduated in 1989 in Speech and language therapy and Audiology (Artevelde University of Applied Sciences in Ghent, Belgium). She specialised in assessment and treatment of stuttering at the same Artevelde University of Applied Sciences and has since attended workshops by several authorities in the field of fluency disorders. For 17 years Veerle worked in a multidisciplinary center with children who stutter and have other comorbid problems. She works as a lecturer in Speech, Stuttering and Language at Artevelde University of Applied Sciences in Ghent and as staff member of ESS (European Stuttering Specialization). Veerle is a Certified European Stuttering Specialist. Since 2005, besides teaching, she runs a private practice where she focuses on screening, diagnosis and treatment of stuttering, cluttering and different questions for help that effect the clients self-esteem, social aspects of communication (dysphasia, dyspraxia, speech anxiety,...). She is also the co-ordinator of a team of therapists that consults, counsels, trains and supports family-members and other communication-partners (Individual counselling and parental group sessions, program for teachers). Acts as a facilitator of and takes part in several intervention groups according to the 'Incident method'. The intervention focuses on fluency. She is author of books (Mini-KIDS, direct therapy for young children who stutter (2-6 years) published in 2018 and revised in December 2025; a Dutch book on childhood Apraxia of speech published in 2017 and revised in 2022 ('Spraakontwikkelingsdyspraxie, het watervalmodel in de praktijk.' bij ACCO, Leuven - Den Haag) Veerle is co-investigator in 'TreatpaCS' (Treatment for preschool age children who stutter: Protocol of a randomised, non-inferiority parallel group pragmatic trial with Mini-KIDS, social cognitive behaviour treatment and the Lidcombe Program—TreatPaCS, protocol published in July 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0304212>) Leclercq A-L, Waelkens V, Roelant E, Allegaert M, Verhaegen I, Claes K, et al. (2024) Treatment for preschool age children who stutter: Protocol of a randomised, non-inferiority parallel group pragmatic trial with Mini-KIDS, social cognitive behaviour treatment and the Lidcombe Program—TreatPaCS. PLoS ONE 19(7): e0304212. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0304212>

Disclosures: Contracted research (TreatPaCS), Lector Artevelde University of Applied Sciences, European Stuttering Specialization, author of Mini-KIDS, direct therapy for young children who stutter (2-6 years)

published in 2018, 2025. Presenter received an honorarium from ABSCF for this presentation. ABSCF has also waived the conference registration fee for the presenter.

Tommy Olsen is a European Stuttering Specialist and a person who stutters. Tommy provides treatment for all age groups in his private practice in Oslo, Norway.

Disclosures: Presenter received an honorarium from ABSCF for this presentation. ABSCF has also waived the conference registration fee for the presenter.

An Overview and Demonstration of Structured Awareness Therapy for Word-Final Disfluency (SAT-WFD) - Samantha Wasilus

(Sunday June 7, 2026 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm EDT)

Session Description: Word-final disfluency (WFD), also known as word-final repetition, end-word repetition and echo dysphemia, often takes the form of a final rhyme-repetition involving a whole or partial syllable (for example, lock-ock, brother-er, ca-ake). While WFD has been reported and analyzed among children described as both allistic and autistic, there is little published guidance for effective treatments. The speaker will present pilot therapy data for 20+ children who successfully completed short-term therapy to reduce WFD using Structured Awareness Therapy for Word-Final Disfluency (SAT-WFD). She demonstrates therapy procedures through video samples. Therapy description, along with data to support positive, functional, long-term outcomes of reduction or elimination of WFD, can inform needed research and guide clinicians charged with treating WFD among children on their caseloads.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Differentiate word-final disfluency (WFD) from disfluencies observed in developmental stuttering
2. Describe desired outcomes of Structured Awareness Therapy for Word-Final Disfluency (SAT-WFD) and differentiate these outcomes from those associated with developmental stuttering.
3. Describe a treatment strategy found to be effective in reducing WFD through SAT-WFD.

Samantha Wasilus is a speech language pathologist at Sisskin Stuttering Center and also works for Prince George's County Public Schools. She is a Board-Certified Specialist in Stuttering, Cluttering and other fluency disorders and currently services on the board to support education and advocacy. She earned her masters degree in Speech Language Pathology at the University of Maryland-College Park. Samantha has taught the Stuttering course at The George Washington University, presented at National Stuttering Association conferences, state conferences, and in-services for school-based speech language pathologists. She specializes in Avoidance Reduction Therapy and has provided training both nationally and internationally. Her research projects include investigation and therapy for word-final disfluencies, co-creating a therapy program, Structured Awareness Therapy for Word-final Disfluency.

Disclosures: Samantha is a salaried employee of Prince Georges County Public Schools, MD and receives compensation from Sisskin Stuttering Center, PLLC. She is a board member of the American Board of Stuttering, Cluttering, and Fluency Disorders. ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

Putting It All Together: Targeting Affective and Cognitive Factors in Cluttering Intervention- Dr. Isabella Reichel, Ed.D, CCC-SLP/A, BCS-SCF (Sunday June 7, 2026 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm EDT)

Session Description: Despite over two centuries of clinical investigation, the affective and cognitive aspects of cluttering remain underrepresented in research, with a historical focus on speech and language characteristics rather than on the lived experiences of people with cluttering. New evidence indicates that individuals who clutter often report anxiety, reduced confidence, frustration, avoidance, and/or elevated somatic symptoms, resulting in negative well-being. Recent qualitative studies also suggest consistent themes of misunderstanding, reduced self-image, and participation restrictions across social, educational, and occupational contexts. New findings further reveal that cognitive-behavioral, emotional intelligence, and mindfulness approaches reduce negative beliefs and emotional reactivity. This presentation integrates recent empirical findings in the affective and cognitive domains of cluttering into clinical and practical strategies for a holistic, participation-based cluttering intervention.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the symptoms of phonological and syntactic cluttering and how such symptoms can be accompanied by affective and cognitive characteristics, such as anxiety, reduced self- image, social avoidance, frustration, and their impact on overall well-being.
2. Discuss how affective and cognitive factors of cluttering contribute to social, educational, and occupational restriction in participation.
3. Apply practical strategies to support holistic, participation-based intervention for individuals who clutter.

Dr. Isabella Reichel is a professor in the Graduate Speech-Language Pathology Program at Touro University, New York. She is an ASHA Fellow, a recipient of the Deso Weiss Award, and the Chair of the International Representatives Committee of the International Cluttering Association. She co-authored two books on cluttering, and her articles and chapters on stuttering, cluttering, and stigma related to fluency disorders have been published nationally and internationally.

Disclosures: Isabella receives royalties for books that will be mentioned during this presentation. ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

The lived experience of cluttering: Panel discussion- Kathleen Scaler Scott (Sunday June 7, 2026 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm EDT)

*This session will only be offered live and will not be recorded.

Session Description: This workshop will feature a panel discussion with teens and adults who clutter or clutter and stutter. The workshop will be a moderated panel and those who clutter or clutter and stutter will respond to questions from the moderators and audience about their experiences. Topics covered will include daily communication experiences, differences between management of cluttering vs. stuttering, disclosure, and preferences for strategies and listener responses.

Learning Outcomes:

1. State two communication experiences of a person who clutters or clutters and stutters
2. State two perspectives on panel member preferences for listener responses.
3. State two panel member perspectives on disclosure of cluttering.

Kathleen Scaler Scott is a practicing speech-language pathologist, Board Certified Specialist in

Stuttering, Cluttering and Fluency, and Professor of Speech-Language Pathology at Misericordia University in Dallas, PA. She has been a practicing clinician for over 30 years in hospital, school, and private practice settings. Dr. Scaler Scott received the Deso Weiss Award for Excellence in the field of cluttering and the Professional of the Year Award from the National Stuttering Association. She was the first Coordinator of the International Cluttering Association. Dr. Scaler Scott has conducted and published quantitative and qualitative research studies in the areas of cluttering, atypical disfluency, and fluency and concomitant disorders.

Disclosures: Kathleen is a co-founder and co-host of a podcast Cluttering Conversations, a free podcast that features interviews with people who clutter. ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

Why does my child stutter? Current insights from neuroscience Dr. Soo-Eun Chang

(Monday June 8, 2026 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm EDT)

Session Description: This talk will dispel common myths and misconceptions about stuttering and present current evidence supporting stuttering as a neurodevelopmental disorder. The talk will discuss why studying children is essential, the unique challenges and opportunities of pediatric neuroimaging, and what is known about brain differences near stuttering onset and in children with persistent stuttering—along with implications for persistence versus recovery. The presentation will conclude by synthesizing what these findings suggest about the biological bases of stuttering, how clinicians can apply this knowledge in practice, and what key questions should guide future research and intervention development.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Discuss common misconceptions about stuttering and conceptualize stuttering as a neurodevelopmental condition
2. List at least two neural circuits that have been found to differ during brain development between children who stutter and peers who do not stutter
3. Describe how clinicians can use knowledge on the updated research findings in clinical practice, such as to provide a scientific explanation to parents on the biological bases of stuttering

Soo-Eun Chang, Ph.D., CCC-SLP is a Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan and Director of the Speech Neurophysiology Lab. Dr. Chang's research program focuses on advancing our understanding of the functional neuroanatomical mechanisms supporting speech motor control, and neural bases of developmental stuttering.

Disclosures: ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

Applications of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy for Stuttering- Dr. Heather Grossman

(Monday June 8, 2026 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm EDT)

Session Description: The philosophy and applications of Rational Emotive Behavior therapy (REBT) were originally conceived by Albert Ellis in the 1950's. It is considered the original presentation of a cognitive based therapy approach. The framework is based on the idea that people are disturbed, not by events themselves, but by their unique perceptions and core beliefs about those events. REBT helps PWS reframe unhelpful core beliefs about stuttering, which allows them to stay regulated and grounded in the body and mind, allowing for successful functioning and agency as a communicator.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the principles of REBT for stuttering.
2. Guide clients in examining core beliefs that contribute to tense and avoidant stuttering behaviors.
3. Guide clients in data collection to support the identification and disputation of unhelpful or irrational beliefs about stuttering.

Dr. Heather Grossman was among the initial cadre of specialists in fluency disorders and has worked with PWS across the lifespan for over 35 years. She has been the Executive Director of the American Institute for Stuttering in NY for over 15 years. Her research has focused on the phenomenon of voluntary stuttering and she presented at many national and international conferences. She is proud to be a devoted volunteer within the self-help stuttering community.

Disclosures: ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

Stutter Affirming Speech Change- Dr. Christopher Constantino
(Monday June 8, 2026 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm EDT)

Session Description: People who stutter often speak with great mental and physical effort. This effort stems partly from the feeling of loss of control that is at the core of stuttering and partly from the speaker's attempts to avoid this same feeling of loss of control. Therapies that focus on fluency have been criticized for increasing these attempts to avoid stuttering, feeding into the pattern of effort and struggle. This talk will focus on how we can decrease effort by, instead, focusing on affirming stuttering. I hope to show that speech change and stuttering acceptance are not contradictory but complimentary.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Apply stuttering affirming principles to their own therapy practice
2. Contrast reactions to stuttering that move toward and embrace stuttering with those that move away from and reject stuttering
3. Examine ways to help a client change their speech in ways that affirm stuttering

Dr. Christopher Constantino studies how the lived experience of stuttering interacts with culture and society. He is interested in the subjective experience of stuttering, specifically how stuttering feels to the speaker. He hopes to improve the stuttering experience by helping people who stutter develop more robust stuttering identities and by developing therapies that make the experience of stuttering more joyful. He takes a stutter positive approach in his work, asking what do people who stutter and those around us gain from our stuttering?

Disclosures: ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

Considering Executive Functioning and Language Skills in Therapy For Children Who Stutter: Why it Matters - Shelby Potts & Rita Thurman
(Monday June 8, 2026 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm EDT)

Session Description: Current research has shown that children who stutter (CWS) may be vulnerable to executive functioning and language processing or organizational differences. This session builds on the momentum in current stuttering research that is shifting from focusing only on speech motor function to one that considers the interactions with language and executive functioning processes. Evidence supports a bidirectional relationship between executive functioning and language. Children who stutter may show vulnerabilities in both areas. This session will review current research and demonstrate practical,

engaging therapy approaches that integrate executive functioning and language support within a stutter-affirming framework to achieve individualized, functional outcomes.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe the various components of executive functioning (EF), how this relates to language skills and stuttering
2. Identify EF and language goals to target in therapy for children who stutter
3. Utilize motivating activities in therapy that address goals

Shelby Potts M.S. CCC-SLP, BCS-SCF is a speech-language pathologist working in private practice in Raleigh, NC. She is a person who stutters. Her practice, Oak City Speech and Language Therapy, focuses on the holistic evaluation and treatment of children, teens, and adults who stutter, clutter, and/or have other fluency differences. She has presented workshops on stuttering at both a state, national and international conferences. She is a Board Certified Specialist in Stuttering, Cluttering and Fluency Disorders and serves as Vice Chair on the Executive Board of the American Board of Stuttering, Cluttering and Fluency Disorders. In addition to her clinical work, Shelby is passionate about reading, needlepointing, and fostering dogs for a local rescue.

Disclosures: Shelby serves as Vice Chair on the American Board of Stuttering, Cluttering, and Fluency Disorders. ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

Rita Thurman has worked in schools and clinical settings in Utah, Idaho, Illinois, Montana, Virginia and South/North Carolina. Her practice focuses on the evaluation and treatment of children, teens and adults who stutter. She is a Board Certified Specialist in Stuttering, Cluttering and Fluency Disorders and served as Chair on the Executive Board of the American Board of Stuttering, Cluttering and Fluency Disorders. Ms. Thurman was awarded the NC Clinical Achievement Award in 2012, the NSA SLP of the year in 2015 and the NSA Chapter of the year in 2021--for her work to improve services for children/adults who stutter. Ms. Thurman has presented workshops on stuttering at both a state, national and international level. She has participated in the International Stuttering Awareness Day on-line conference and contributed a chapter in the book: Stuttering--Inspirational Stories, Professional Wisdom. She is a NSA Adult Chapter leader.

Disclosures: Rita is a chapter leader for the National Stuttering Association. ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.

Language and stuttering: updates for 2026- Nan Bernstein Ratner

(Monday June 8, 2026 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm EDT)

Session Description: This session will continue and update concepts from a popular session held last year that explores how stuttering intersects with language skills, behaviors and tasks, across the lifespan. Primary emphasis will be on those relationships most relevant to clinical practice with children who stutter.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Articulate research findings that identify language processing and production profiles in people who stutter

2. Discuss how basic research findings may apply to clinical assessment of children who stutter
3. Discuss how basic research findings may alter current recommendations for preschool children who stutter.

Nan Bernstein Ratner is Distinguished University Professor, University of Maryland. An ASHA Fellow and Honors recipient, her work has also been recognized by Fellowship in the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the IFA/WSCO Distinguished Researcher award. She conducts research and publishes frequently in the areas of stuttering and language development/disorder.

Disclosures: Dr. Nan Bernstein Ratner will discuss some of her own research funded by the NIH National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD). She will also reference research reported in the *Handbook on Stuttering*(Plural Publishing), co-authored with Shelley Brundage and the late Oliver Bloodstein, for which she receives royalties. ABSCF has waived the conference fees for this presenter.