



Autism & Motherhood

Experiences, Challenges,
and Positive Strategies

Leave No Autistic Mother Behind

A side event for the 12th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

3:00pm - 4:15pm, June 13, 2019; UN Conference Room 12

CART and International Sign Language interpretation provided

Abstract

This side-event will discuss, from both an academic and an experiential point of view—including through 2 panellists who would be speaking both as researchers and as autistic mothers - the experiences of autistic mothers in areas related to parenthood: pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period, self-perception of parenting strengths and weaknesses, communication with professionals in relation to one child, and the social experience of motherhood, including disclosing one's diagnosis of autism in parenting contexts. Furthermore, the issue of autistic mothers' experiences of interacting with child protective services will be discussed, particularly in view of the fact that mothers with Intellectual disabilities and mental health difficulties are at an increased risk of being targeted by said services, in comparison with neurotypical mothers.

Outcomes

This side-event aims to:

- (a) discuss strategies for reaching and meaningfully supporting autistic women, through appropriate interventions, policies and programmes, rooted in the UN CRPD model and in line with the targets of the SDGs;
- (b) investigate barriers women experience obtaining a diagnosis and the effect a late diagnosis has on their health, wellbeing and outcomes;
- (c) share examples of innovative ways to address shortcomings, such as in awareness, and service delivery models.

Message from Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malta to the United Nations

Moderator:

Hon. Anthony AGIUS DECELIS,

Junior Minister for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, Government of the Republic of Malta

Panellists:

Claire AZZOPARDI LANE,

Member, Autism Advisory Council - Malta; Head, Department of Disability Studies, Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta

Monique BLAKEMORE,

Researcher, Autism Aspergers Advocacy Australia (A4) - a member of the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)

Sarah CROCKFORD,

Researcher, Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge

Rhoda GARLAND,

Executive Director, Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) - Malta

Dena GASSNER,

Member, Board of Directors, The Arc - USA; Adjunct Professor, Towson University

Connie LAURIN-BOWIE

Executive Director, Inclusion International

Robert Venne

Social Affairs Officer, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)

Organisers:



DESA

Department of Social and Economic Affairs (UN DESA)



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA

With co-sponsors:

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO),

Autism Research Centre – University of Cambridge,

Inclusion International,

International Disability Alliance (IDA),

Autism Advisory Council – Malta,

Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) – Malta.



International
Disability
Alliance



CRPD



arc

Inclusion
international



Australian Federation of
Disability Organisations



Conference of
States Parties to the
Convention on the
**Rights of
Persons with
Disabilities**

United Nations Headquarters, New York

www.un.org/disabilities

#COSP #SDGs #GlobalGoals



United Nations | Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs

