

# SHEMA KOLAINU, LEADER IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION, PRESENTS SUCCESSFUL AUTISM WORKSHOP

*Topics on AAC: Augmentative and Alternative Communication*

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, March 28, 2018

/EINPresswire.com/ -- NEW YORK, NY, March 28, 2018 -- Shema Kolainu - Hear Our Voices conducted another successful Autism workshop at Touro College in Manhattan. Speech Therapist Sara Goldstein, M.S.Ed, CCC-SLP, TSSLD hosted a discussion on a therapy method called Augmentative and Alternative Communication, also known as AAC. The event was well attended by parents of children who have ASD, speech language pathologists, therapists, teachers, students, and caregivers. Ms. Goldstein is a professional in-house therapist at Shema Kolainu and works with verbally challenged students on an everyday basis. Her presentation focused on unique communication strategies for assisting children when verbal speech is not possible.

Ms. Goldstein outlined evidence-based sources to support the use of AAC and detailed which individuals may benefit from this type of therapy. She also described how to program and use AAC tablet devices, such as iPads. These devices have special programs that allow information to be exchanged between nonverbal children and their caregiver. There are specific functions and visual graphic buttons a child may use to communicate their needs and wants using these devices which are extremely helpful. Think: using an emoji that easily and precisely expresses what you'd like to say without using text.



Speech Therapist Sara Goldstein, M.S.Ed, CCC-SLP, TSSLD



AAC Workshop Attendees

But for certain individuals, it may be more beneficial to not use technology at all. Dr. Albert Mehrabian, best known for his publications on the relative importance of verbal and nonverbal messages, wrote in his book "Silent Messages" that only 7% of our messages are conveyed through actual words. In a technology obsessed culture, we compulsively check our smartphones and lose touch with the importance of social cues and physical communication. During the presentation, the importance of these nonverbal methods was emphasized as the most essential way to exchange information which includes pointing, body language, or using facial gestures.

Ms. Goldstein was able to provide many personal examples of her experiences working with children on the spectrum which clearly illustrated the range of need for AAC. As the workshop concluded she conducted a group activity using communication boards. By guiding this hands-on experience, the group practiced an important technique used when a child may only be able to say a few words. Participants provided individual feedback on how this experience changed their perspective of restricted communication.

Shema Kolainu- Hear Our Voices, hosts the Free Autism Workshop Series throughout the year. They are a great opportunity to gain knowledge from some of the best resources in the field of Autism. The NYC Council Autism Initiative Funding make these events possible and free of charge to the public. The next workshop will be held on April 24th, featuring "Yoga and Physical Activity Strategies for Children with Autism and Developmental Delays" by Dr. Gruber, MEd, PhD, BCBA-D, Lic. BA.

For more information or to sign up for a free workshop, please visit our website at: [SKHOV.org](http://SKHOV.org) or contact [info@skhov.org](mailto:info@skhov.org) to register.

Shema Kolainu - Hear our Voices, is a school and center for Autism, an educational organization dedicated to the support and education of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and a leader in the field of special needs education. Shema Kolainu is one of the sponsors of the ICare4Autism International Conference: Genes, Technology, and Clinical Care, to be held in November.

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