

# Potomac Association of Cooperative Teachers Inc.



September 2025

Fall Newsletter

[www.PACTeachers.org](http://www.PACTeachers.org)

## Letter from the President

Greetings PACT members,

In 2024-25, PACT presented several workshops that hopefully helped either reinforce your belief in or expand your trust in play as the primary vehicle in early childhood development. For our 2025-26 Fall workshops, we are going to take a deep dive into the pool of neuro-divergence.

Carol Kranowitz, author of The Out-of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Processing Differences, will talk with us about children's sensory needs and how we can set up our classrooms and routines to meet those needs. In addition, clinical psychologist Andrea Howard, Ph.D, the Diagnostic Program Director at Pathways by Behavioral Framework, will help us understand what neuro-divergence might look like and how to talk with families about it.

And don't forget, as an added bonus to your PACT membership this year, we are presenting several conversations with behavioral therapist and family whisperer Sally Neuberger. Sally has already led two great sessions with us on separation anxiety and relationship building. We will be announcing the date for the next conversation with Sally very soon.

I look forward to seeing you all as we work to deepen our knowledge and gain strategies which can be shared and employed by us and our member families in our shared journey as trusted partners in their child's first educational experience.

(James) Scott Mitchell  
PACT President  
[Presidentpact4@gmail.com](mailto:Presidentpact4@gmail.com)

## \*\*\*\*\* Professional Developmental Days: Thursday, October 23 & Wednesday, October 29

PACT is pleased to offer two virtual workshops this Fall 2025: *"Nurturing Neurodiversity in Preschoolers: Practical Tools for Real Impact"* by Andrea Howard, Ph.D and *"Sensory Processing Differences (SPD): What Out-of-Sync Children Want their Teacher to Know"* by Carol Kranowitz(CWO-163307).

We have scheduling options for your convenience; sessions will be held **Thursday, October 23 from 3-5 PM and 7-9 PM, and Wednesday, October 29 from 3-5 PM and 7-9 PM**. You may choose to attend both of the 3-5 PM sessions, both of the 7-9 PM sessions, or both sessions on a single date! See below for more details about the workshops content and presenters.

## Workshops Content Descriptions:

*"Nurturing Neurodiversity in Preschoolers: Practical Tools for Real Impact"* by Andrea Howard, Ph.D  
Thursday, October 23 **3pm to 5pm** OR Wednesday, October 29-**7pm to 9pm**

**Description:** This presentation aims to provide education for preschool teachers and staff in working effectively with children with Autism and their families. Major areas of focus include learning the symptoms of Autism, identifying effective classroom accommodations, meeting the needs of children with developmental differences alongside their typically developing peers and building partnerships with families to improve impact.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Participants will identify symptoms of Autism as they present in preschool-age children.
2. Participants will identify at least three accommodations that can be used in the preschool classroom setting to meet the needs of diverse learners.
3. Participants will learn key skills in sharing developmental concerns with parents to ensure that children receive adequate support across settings.

**"Sensory Processing Differences (SPD): What Out-of-Sync Children Want their Teacher to Know" by Carol Kranowitz**

Thursday, October 23-**7pm to 9pm** OR Wednesday, October 29-**3pm to 5pm**

**Description:** "Out-of-sync" children with sensory challenges may be bewildered by the world as well as bewildering to their grown-ups. This presentation will review the ways Sensory Processing Differences play out, describe how kids strive to get – or to get away from – certain sensory stimuli, and offer fun and functional strategies to help children get in sync. *1 COK/Curriculum, 1 COK/Child Development*

### Presenters' Biography

**Andrea Howard, Ph.D.**, is a licensed clinical psychologist and the Diagnostic Program Director at Pathways by Behavioral Framework, a diagnostic clinic that provides comprehensive psychological evaluations for individuals ages 1 to 21. Dr. Howard is licensed as a psychologist in Maryland and the District of Columbia and is PSYPACT-approved to provide services to clients in many other states, including Virginia. Dr. Howard specializes in the diagnosis of Autism and other developmental disabilities, working closely with families to provide access to supports within home, community, and educational settings. Dr. Howard received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Cincinnati. She completed her pre-doctoral internship at the Pittsburgh Psychology Internship Consortium before relocating to the DC Metro area to complete her postdoctoral work in public charter schools, Early Head Start centers, and private practice. Dr. Howard's work is heavily influenced by her training in applied behavior analysis, cognitive behavioral therapy, and the work of diagnosis as child advocacy. She has had a distinguished career in school and child-clinical psychology across environments, including early childhood centers, schools, pediatric hospitals, and private clinics. Her research has focused on using functional assessment to increase the effectiveness of self-management interventions, as well as using self-monitoring to improve classroom behavior for children with emotional and behavioral disorders. Dr. Howard previously taught within the Behavior Analysis program at the University of Cincinnati and served as a practicum supervisor for graduate students in clinical psychology programs for several years prior to her employment at Behavioral Framework. Dr. Howard joined the team at Behavioral Framework in the spring of 2022 to lead Pathways by Behavioral Framework. In her role, Dr. Howard completes diagnostic evaluations, provides supervision of graduate-level trainees, and oversees the growth of the department. In addition, Dr. Howard provides community-based training to parents, school staff, and psychologists in her mission of educating others about best practices for meeting the needs of children with Autism.

**Carol Kranowitz**, when she was the music and movement teacher at St. Columba's Nursery School in Washington, DC, Carol observed many "out-of-sync" children with Sensory Processing Differences (SPD). To help these children participate in ordinary experiences, she learned to identify their sensory challenges and steer them into early intervention. To help their parents and teachers "get it" about SPD, Carol has given hundreds of presentations. The seminal book in her "Sync" series is "The Out-of-Sync Child: Recognizing and Coping with Sensory Processing Differences." Her mission is to empower families and educators to incorporate joyful sensory-motor experiences into the daily life of every child.

## Credit Hours and Core of Knowledge Area

Members who attend the **full two-hour session** of either workshop this Fall 2025 will receive 2 Core of Knowledge credit hours.

## Registration

Registration and payment can be completed [HERE](#). Please sign up individually to ensure your email is recorded. Registration and Payment are due by **Thursday, October 16**. By completing the Fall PDD registration, you are also receiving a membership to PACT for the 2025-2026 school year and will have access to our Spring Professional Developmental Days.

## Access to the Zoom Link for Fall Professional Development Days

A Zoom link will be e-mailed to registered members 24 hours prior to each session. Please join your training session at least 15-20 minutes early to check audio/video, sign in, and hear announcements from PACT.

## Assessments and Evaluations

Members will be asked to complete a content assessment and presenter evaluation of the virtual course via a Google form. The link will be e-mailed to participants following the PDD and should be completed within 24 hours. **\*\*Requirements by MSDE also stipulate members from MD must pass the assessment with a score of 70% or higher.**

## Certificates

In accordance with MSDE regulations, **participants MUST attend the full two-hour virtual presentation** and complete a content assessment along with a presenter evaluation before receiving their certificate. Further details about completing the assessment will be covered at the pre-PDD business meeting. Personalized certificates will be emailed within 2 weeks of each Professional Development Day.

## Membership (New or Renewing)

Join PACT (or renew your membership!) by completing the online form [HERE](#). Current members are eligible to attend one or both virtual Professional Development Days in the Fall 2025 and the in-person Professional Development Day in the Spring 2026. The membership fee for the 2025-2026 school year is \$50 (\$51.50 with a PayPal fee).

## Award for Devoted Service in Early Childhood Education

The PACT Award for Devoted Service in Early Childhood Education is bestowed annually on early childhood professional(s) who have made special contributions to a particular parent cooperative preschool or to the parent cooperative preschool model. All nominees must be members of PACT. Now is the time to recognize those individuals. Fill out the [2025-2026 PACT Award Nomination form](#) to nominate your staff member for recognition. **Nominations are due by March 5, 2026.** PACT members are encouraged to notify their boards of this award, but if you do not feel comfortable doing that, please feel free to forward a point of contact to [pactawards@gmail.com](mailto:pactawards@gmail.com) and we will notify them for you! Thank you for recognizing the achievements of your nominee!

## Hall of Fame

The PACT Board established a PACT Hall of Fame in 2016 to recognize members who have given exemplary service in the field of Early Childhood Education. The following are the members who have been inducted to date:

**Janise Allyn-Smith** - Teacher/Director, Silver Spring N.S., PACT Board member (2017)

**Jennifer DeBernardis** - Teacher, Silver Spring N.S., PACT Board member (2018)

**Annette Fitzpatrick** - Director (retired), CCUMC Preschool, PACT Board member (2018)

**Edie Mossberg** - Director, Glenbrook N.S., Board member, ECE Consultant (2019)

**Bernadine Occhiuzzo** - Director/Teacher, Cedar Lane N.S. (2019)

**Nancy Renner** - Director, Fort Hunt Preschool (2020)

**Helene Segal-Turner** - Director, Kensington N.S., PACT Board member (2018)

Cindy Walsh - Director (retired) CCPC Weekday N.S., PACT Board member (2018)  
Fran Warthen - Director, Suburban N.S. (2018)  
Angie Zeidenberg - Teacher, Bannockburn N.S. (2019)

\*\*\*\*\*

### Join the PACT Board!

The PACT Board is run by dedicated volunteer early childhood educators. There are still some open positions, so we need members to step forward! Please check the list below and contact Scott Mitchell if you are interested in joining our team. Information about Board positions can be found in PACT's By-Laws on the website [www.PACTteachers.org](http://www.PACTteachers.org).

### The Proposed 2025-2026 Board Members

#### President

[James Scott Mitchell](#) Silver Spring Nursery School, MD

#### V.P. Programming

[Bernadine Occhiuzzo](#) Cedar Lane Nursery School, MD

[Doreen Bunten](#) Cedar Lane Nursery School, MD

#### V.P. Membership

[Ellen Griffin](#) Cedar Lane Nursery School, MD

#### Secretary

[Rebecca Brunson](#) Silver Spring Nursery School, MD

#### Co-Treasurers

[Janise Allyn-Smith](#) Silver Spring Nursery School, MD

[Kristin Wasserzug](#) Spring Knolls Cooperative Preschool, MD

#### Logistics & Hospitality

VA - [Joan Morales](#) Spring Knolls, MD

MD - [Meghan Ufko](#) Rockville Community Nursery School, MD

#### Professional Development Day Administration

[Jessie Auten](#) Providence Nursery School, VA

Joanna Lazzaro Silver Spring Nursery School MD

#### Exhibits/Resource Table -

Celeste Raker-Dillen Silver Spring Nursery School MD

#### Assessments and Evaluations

[Emily Ederer](#) Silver Spring Day School, MD

#### Legislative Contact

MD - [Ylla Bishop](#) Silver Spring Day School, MD

DC - **OPEN**

VA - **OPEN**

#### Google Groups

[Magdalena Barry](#) Sleepy Hollow Preschool, VA

#### Web Master & Newsletter Editor

[Meredith Savage-Myers](#) Ashton Christian Preschool, MD

#### Past Co-Presidents

[Bernadine Occhiuzzo](#) Cedar Lane N.S., MD

[Ellen Griffin](#) Cedar Lane N.S., MD

\*\*\*\*\*

## Job Postings

Looking for a new teaching position in the Washington, DC area? PACT posts job openings on the website. Check the postings out [HERE](#). Directors wishing to post job openings should e-mail details to [Meredith Savage-Myers](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

## Google Groups

**PACT members' Google group:** To stay up-to date on PACT information, the google group is open to current PACT members. To join this Google group, send an e-mail to [vpmembershappact@gmail.com](mailto:vpmembershappact@gmail.com).

**Directors' Google group:** Share resources, ideas, and training opportunities by joining the PACT Directors listserv. PACT membership is not required. To join the Directors' Google group, send an e-mail to [James Scott Mitchell](#).

We hope you are having a great start to your school year!

