

Session #	Session Title	Description	Speaker(s)
Key 1	Don't Doubt the Dream	Hang onto your chair... and your heart! Join singer/songwriter, recording artist and motivational storyteller Jerry Mills for a unique and unforgettable journey into the heart of the human experience. His dynamic style will inspire you and lead you to look deeper, to discover new understanding and awareness, and to rethink what you see when faced with the many challenges of living and learning with your child who has Williams syndrome.	Jerry Mills
W1-1	Collaboration is Key in Making an IEP Great	Learn how to write those great goals. Pull service people into centering around the academic goals while utilizing their expertise area to make more of an impact in the natural learning environment. Parents, service people and teachers can work together to achieve collaborative supports to address goals that make sense without causing a cut and paste day for our student.	Laura Chesser
W1-2	Music Strategies for WS	An interactive workshop to provide attendees with practical therapy tools, including music strategies targeting elementary-aged children, teen and young adults with WS. The session will help attendees understand music therapy and basic neuroscience as it relates to music perception and WS, various service delivery models and practical strategies and tools that can be applied by parents at home.	Angela Neve; Julie Guy
W1-3	Gastrointestinal Issues in Williams Syndrome	Gastrointestinal issues are common in Williams syndrome. Dr. Levinson will provide an overview of the issues, as well as symptoms and effective treatments.	Martin Levinson, MD
W1-4	Special Needs Trusts (SNT) – Why Every Family Needs One	What is a SNT? Who needs one? What can happen if you don't have one?	Parisa Weiss, Esq.
W1-5	Dancing with Williams Syndrome	A panel of siblings, grandparents and special relatives will talk about supporting the special individual with WS in their lives.	PANEL; Tarane Sondoozi, Moderator
W2-2	Beyond Decoding: Reading for Meaning	Far too often, we pay much attention to teaching decoding of words, and stop teaching reading once that basic skill is achieved. Reading involves much more than decoding, and there are many avenues to move individuals with WS from basic decoding to reading for comprehension (and even pleasure)!	Carol Comfort, Ph.D.
W2-3	Blood Pressure Problems, Bladder Problems, Kidney Disease in Williams Syndrome	A discussion of the different kidney issues that people with Williams Syndrome may encounter, and potential strategies for management will be discussed.	Elizabeth Ingulli, MD
W2-4	Anesthesia Concerns in Williams Syndrome	Administering anesthesia is worrisome for parents of individuals with WS. Dr. Haring will provide the details we need to have for our son or daughter's doctors, and the reasons why every surgery for an individual with WS must be treated very seriously.	Nancy Haring, MD
W2-5	How to Teach Stranger Safety Skills	This session will focus on teaching parents ways to work with their children to increase stranger safety. Research findings related to social behaviors and social vulnerability will be discussed as well as the methods and findings from two research trainings that focused on teaching young adults with various disabilities to respond appropriately to lures from strangers. Parents will be provided practical ways to adapt the study strategies to teach their own children to respond appropriately, and the challenges unique to the social behaviors of individuals with Williams syndrome will be addressed. Parents will leave this session with research-based strategies to teach their children the vital lesson of stranger safety skills.	Marisa Fisher, Ph.D.

W2-6	The Business of Show Business: Could your Child be a Future Star?	Does your child have the attributes needed to be an actor or model - something many people with WS seem to come by naturally. Parents will be walked through the process of preparing their loved one with WS to be found for acting and modeling gigs when casting directors come looking. There are not a lot of roles yet, but there is no chance of getting to be considered for them if the talent can't be easily found	Gail Williamson
Key2	Don't Get Hit By a Car When Playing Bingo on a Deserted Island	If life seems like a bottomless pit of worries, it's time to rise to the surface. Reality is often a lot brighter than we perceive it. We can't control everything in life, but Cea will help us put things in perspective.	Cea Cohen-Elliott
Th1-1	Medical Strategies for Preventing Possible Complications of WS	There are standard recommendations for maintaining health of all children, but there are additional recommendations for Williams syndrome. Drs. Morris & Pober will discuss medical "best practices" for those with Williams syndrome.	Colleen Morris, MD & Barbara Pober, MD
Th1-2	Funding Sources for An Independent Life	When our children become adults and are ready to move out of our homes, finding the funds to support options that aren't state run can be difficult. This session will discuss both federal and state funding options you may know about, and SSI, as well as several types of housing options that are appropriate for individuals with WS.	Laura Chesser & Terry Monkaba, MBA
Th 1-3	Post- Secondary & Life Skills Programs for Adults with WS	The number of post-secondary & transition programs for individuals with WS is growing every year. This panel presentation will provide general information from several different types of program options. Each of the programs will also be exhibiting on Wednesday & Thursday, providing opportunities for families to get additional questions answered.	PANEL
Th 1-4	Is it a Behavior Problem or an Accommodation Problem?	Many teachers simply don't know the answer to this question. The presenters will discuss the various clues that students with WS provide to help parents and professionals get to the "root" of the problem so that the right strategies can be employed to diminish or eliminate the behavior.	Karen Levine Ph.D., Robin Pegg, M.Ed, COTA/L, ATP
Th 1-5	Finding the Voice Within	We often refer to our intuition as a "gut feeling" or a sense of "knowing." We all have that special voice within us that keeps us connected to our heart's journey thru emotional struggles or life's challenges. Let's take time out to explore that voice and LISTEN.	Cea Cohen-Elliott
Th 2-1	Insights from Japan for Williams Syndrome	Two super positive mothers, with the support of specialists in health & wellness, music, and linguistics will provide wisdom from Japan that enhances and advances the lives and welfare of those with WS.	Mitsukoh Yamaguchi & Atsuko Inayama, et al.
Th 2-3	Assisted-Living Options	There are a growing number of programs and assisted-living housing models where adults with WS can flourish. Providers from three of the best models as well as a service provider who works to support individuals in these and other environments will discuss what these programs look like and how similar models can be developed throughout the country.	PANEL
Th 2-3	Cardiovascular Disease in Williams Syndrome: What Everyone Needs to Know	The session will cover the various cardiovascular manifestations seen in patients with Williams syndrome including structural and electrophysiologic issues. Increased rates of sudden death, will be discussed as well. Attendees will be given an update on ongoing research in the area of cardiovascular disease in these patients, which will include future areas for further research	Tom Collins II, MD
Th 2-4	Building a Life of Choice Together: Advocating for Children & Supporting Adults	Continuing to dream with high expectations is often difficult following a diagnosis of WS, and all the people who begin to try to make your child "fit" into a specific mold. This session will help you understand the importance of maintaining those dreams for your child and understanding how to achieve them. The dreams may have to be flexible, but there is no reason for them to die.	Laura Chesser & Terry Monkaba, MBA
Th 2-5	ADHD in Williams Syndrome	Dr. Mishek will discuss ADHD from all angles – how to recognize it, its prevalence in the Williams syndrome community and both medical and behavioral treatments.	Deborah Mishek, MD

Th3-1	Utilizing Assistive Technology to Help Students Access “Grade Appropriate” Curriculum	Whether students with WS are being included in classrooms with their peers, or are taught in specialized classrooms, they have the right (and the need!) to access the general ed. curriculum for their age group. This session will discuss how with assistive technology components and classroom accommodations, students with WS can be successfully exposed to, and master grade appropriate curriculum in many academic areas.	Robin Pegg, M.Ed. COTA, ATP; Erin Cunningham; Jennifer Thorsland, OTR; Rebecca Scheibe, OTR
Th 3-2	Cardiovascular Treatment for Adults with WS	Dr. Lin will address the cardiovascular changes in adults with WS and the best ways to meet the cardiac needs of adults with WS as they age.	Jeannette Lin, MD
Th 3-3	Behavior: Challenges & Strategies Around Common Behavior Problems	Many kids with WS have a range of behavior challenges, some associated specifically with WS and some that are just part of being a kid but may be amplified or more difficult to treat due to factors related to WS. In this workshop some common behavior challenges and strategies will be discussed. The majority of the workshop will be a “Question and Answer” session around behavioral challenges, including ways to think through figuring out good strategies to try.	Karen Levine, Ph.D .
Th 3-4	The Life Centered Education Curriculum (LCE): Helping Adults Gain Skills for a Productive Life	The LCE curriculum provides in-depth coverage on life skills in three critical domains of adult living: daily living skills, self-determination and interpersonal skills, and employment skills. Ruth Mikulski will discuss the curriculum components and it’s proven success for young adults with Williams syndrome at the Berkshire Hills Music Academy.	Ruth Mikulski, MA
Th 3-5	Community Enrichment is Crucial!	There are all types of community enrichment, and they can make a huge difference in your son or daughter’s life at every age. Join us to speak to some of the national groups and how individuals with WS make a difference for them just as they do for our kids.	PANEL
Th 3-6	Social Skills and Social Media: A Natural Way to Increase Literacy Skills	Dr. Arroyo, is an expert in digital literacies and digital rhetoric. She is also a former special-education teacher. She and her students have created groundbreaking videos and Dr. Arroyo’s is considered to be at the top of this burgeoning field. (Her biggest compliment comes from her young son who tells people that his mom is writing a book about YouTube!)	Sarah Arroyo, Ph.D. ; Carol Comfort, Ph.D.
F1-1	Internet Safety & Cyber Bullying	for their child/student. However, self-care is OFTEN over looked, leading to burnout and exhaustion. This presentation will	Lorrie Belinsky, Peter Houlis
F1-2	Understanding the Sensory-motor Pathways in Williams Syndrome	help you acknowledge, appreciate and care for the super-hero within you.	Sarah Lohse-Moonier
F1-3	Homeschooling for the Student with WS	Is homeschooling a viable option for a child with WS? Is it the right option for you? Where do you go to find the right curriculum, maintain needed therapies and socialization, and how can you insure that your son or daughter is getting the education they need.	Verna Hornbaker, DeEtta Petcher
F1-4	My Independent Life	Adults with Williams syndrome living in a variety of assisted and independent living options will talk about where they live, and what they do, as well as what they like about it, and what they don’t. And most importantly, why it’s the right choice for them.	PANEL Terry Monkaba, Moderator
F1-5	Tell Your Story	This session will provide a template that can be used to effectively tell your story- recounting your journey as you explain WS to schools, colleges, community organizations etc.	Michelle Self, Ph.D.
KEY 4	I Know You Think You Understood What You Thought I Said	Whether it’s one-on-one, in a classroom setting, or an important meeting, humor can give you a serious advantage. Want to convey information? Do you need to deal with an unpleasant situation? Do your circumstances call for negotiation? Join Karyn Buxman for the opportunity to laugh and to learn how to ramp up the effectiveness of your communication and reap the rewards.	Karyn Buxman
S1-1	Ask the Experts	The most experienced WS experts in America will address your medical questions. No question is “too silly” or “off limits”. If you have the question, chances are good that someone else in the audience does too.	Barbara Pober, MD, Colleen Morris MD, Takara Stanley, MD

S1-2	Assistive Technology for the Acquisition of Activities of Daily Living	Danielle and Karen will provide lessons from the Berkshire Hills Music Academy where students with WS are utilizing a variety of AT tools for everything from banking and budgeting to cooking and even showering.	Danielle Kelly and Karen Morison
S1-3	Beautiful Smiles - How to Prevent and Treat Oral Health Problems	Cavity prevention strategies, importance of regular pediatric dental care, and how the incorporation of dental care in infancy and childhood builds the foundation for maximum oral health into adulthood will be discussed by a high risk obstetrician and pediatric dentist.	Renee Samelson, MD, MPH; Konita Wilks, D.D.S.; Peter Nguyen, DDS & Esther E. Kim, DMD, MPH
S1-4	Negotiating Difficult Conversations and Getting What You Want	This interactive workshop will provide the necessary framework for determining what it is that you want for the success of your son or daughter in school and how to achieve it.	Diane Loiewski, M.Ed, CLAD
S1-5	S1-5 Treating Fears and Phobias in WS	It is very common for people with Williams syndrome to have fears especially around certain environmental sounds (e.g., vacuum cleaner; alarms; thunder) as well as upcoming events especially medically related. These fears can be intense and can spread to fear of related activities and of anticipating the feared events occurring. This workshop will present a systematic approach to helping the individuals with WS to diminish the intensity of the fears, through a combination of gradual exposure/systematic desensitization to different components of the fear trigger, pairing this with pleasurable activity. This approach can be used by parents, teachers, therapists, or others involved in the individual's care, together with the individual with WS.	Karen Levine, Ph.D.
S2-1	Language and Cognition	Dr. Mervis will review the development stages for language and cognition in those with WS. She will also discuss which testing instruments are best for those with WS, why assessment is important, and what you should hope to get out of having your child assessed, whether by the school or by someone else.	Carolyn Mervis, Ph.D.
S2-2	Heart to Heart - 1001 Ways to be Romantic!	Are there really 1001 ways to be romantic?? Yes there are. And we know this because the author has numbered them in his 3-million-copy bestseller, "1001 Ways to be Romantic." Greg Godek is here to share as many of those ways as he can in one hour. Oprah, Donahue and Leno have all featured Greg's #1 selling book; the Boston Herald said it was, "Worth memorizing"; and the book has been described as "A handbook for men—A godsend to women." (And yes, his wife says he does practice what he preaches!) Be prepared to take notes, laugh and learn, from "America's Romance Coach."	Greg Godek
S2-3	Limited Conservatorship; Special Needs Trusts & Other Options	Limited Conservatorships are set up to assist developmentally disabled adults who are unable to provide for all their personal needs. Find out when a Limited Conservatorship is appropriate, what alternatives are available, what powers the conservator can request, what the duties of a conservator are, when proceedings can begin for a child, and the role of the Regional Center. Details of Special Needs Trusts will also be covered. If you missed Wednesday's session you will want to join us for this one!	Lisa Golshani, Esq.
S2-4	Life Stories and the Resources That Can Help Along the Way	We all have story to tell... bottom line we need to be advocates for our kids every step of the way. Learn some great questions to ask, and keep asking. Know the resources that are available, and that you are never alone in the process (although it may feel that way sometimes). It's a long Journey.	Linda Brown
S2-5	Educational Planning	Planning your child's education is more than just being concerned about each annual IEP or 504. It's about planning for your child to live the life that they (and you) imagine for them - whatever that might be. This session will provide some ideas for planning your child's ENTIRE educational experience.	Terry Monkaba, MBA & Robin Pegg, M.Ed, COTA/L, ATP

S3-1	Understanding the Genetics of Williams Syndrome	Learn the basics of inheritance and gene deletions so you can better understand the causes of WS. The session will discuss the genetic testing available today, how genes are expressed and the link between protein synthesis and common WS symptoms.	Sarah Lohse-Moonier
S3-2	Teaching Individuals with WS How to Reduce Stress	This session will introduce mindfulness based stress reduction applied to individuals with WS. A review of the research findings of a pilot study intervention conducted at Vanderbilt University in 2012 showing improvements in reducing stress and levels of anxiety among a group of young adults with WS. Parents and caregivers will be taught how to implement simple yet effective mindfulness based stress reduction techniques including seated meditation, deep breathing, Qigong yoga, and lessons on incorporating mindfulness into everyday life. Active group participation is encouraged.	Nancy Miodrag, Ph.D.
S3-3	Endocrine Issues in WS	The different endocrine issues that people with Williams syndrome may encounter, including growth and puberty, blood sugar control and diabetes, high calcium and bone health, abnormalities in thyroid labs, and changes in body fat distribution will be discussed, as well as potential strategies for management.	Takara Stanley, MD
S3-4	Medical & Mental Health for Adults with Williams Syndrome	There are new medical and mental health risks, as our children become adults. High blood pressure, diabetes, gastrointestinal complications etc., are all possibilities. In addition we are receiving a growing number of reports from parents that their once happy-go-lucky child is now grouchy, depressed, increasingly anxious and suffering from mood swings. This session will discuss all of these possibilities as well as what we should do and where we can go to help insure that our young adults and adults with WS have the best care and a great chance for a happy and productive adulthood.	Barbara Pober, MD & Gail Sheeks, MD
S3-5	Assistive Technology - The Parent Perspective	A panel of parents who have seen a marked difference in their child's access to curriculum and mastery of skills, will discuss the changes, both in the classroom and in their child's ability to become a better "Citizen of the World."	PANEL