



# Selective Mutism Association Annual Conference Call for Papers September 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Boston, MA

## **Program Overview**

The Selective Mutism Association is excited to announce our annual conference designed to disseminate new and beneficial evidence-based information about many aspects of selective mutism (SM). Our in-person conference, cosponsored by the Boston Child Study Center and the Boston University Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders (CARD), will take place in downtown Boston, MA and will offer innovative content, share advancements in the assessment and treatment of SM, and connect with a wide audience of participants.

The conference aims to increase public awareness and understanding of SM. We invite oral session presentations and poster presentations that address all aspects of SM, including, but not limited to, practical applications and advances in assessment and treatment, SM in the schools for all audiences, issues of diversity, co-occurring disorders, incorporating technology in treatment, exploration of related factors (e.g. well-being), and strategies for caregivers, teens, and adults with SM. Special consideration will be given to presentations that are derived from empirical evidence, that incorporate generalization of gains to real world settings, and that address strategies to support and encourage individuals with SM.

Presentations submitted, but not accepted, for oral presentations may be considered for poster presentations.

**Target Audience:** The target audience includes caregivers and relatives of individuals with selective mutism, mental health professionals, speech and language pathologists, other allied health professionals, educators, and individuals with SM (ages 17 and up).

**Conference Format:** This conference will be primarily conducted live and in-person; however, select talks will be recorded and available for later viewing. SMA will offer this limited virtual option (“recording bundle”) for separate purchase for those who are not able to come in-person. ***Please note, presentations on the individuals with SM track will only be offered via the pre-recorded virtual format.*** All presenters submitting talks for the caregiver and professional track must be prepared to attend and register for the in-person conference in Boston. Please note: SMA plans to rotate in-person annual conferences with fully virtual conferences.

## **Keynote Address**

### **Practical Approaches to Treating Youth Anxiety: Bridging Research and Treatment, Philip Kendall, Ph.D., ABPP**

Philip C. Kendall, Ph.D., ABPP was raised in Merrick, New York and currently resides in Ardmore, Pennsylvania where he and his deceased spouse, Sue, raised their two sons, Mark and Reed. Dr. Kendall is an avid NY Times crossword puzzler and plays basketball twice a week. He enjoys yardwork and the opportunity to spend time in the ocean and with his family.

Dr. Kendall’s undergraduate education was completed at Old Dominion University and his doctorate in clinical psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University. Dr. Kendall interned at the Palo Alto VA hospital. In 1977 he took his first academic appointment in the Department of Psychology at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Kendall relocated to Direct the Clinical Program at Temple University, in Philadelphia. Soon after relocating to Temple, Dr. Kendall opened the Child and Adolescent Anxiety Disorders Clinic (CAADC), which has been in operation as a research-clinical service for 40 years.

Dr. Kendall is currently Distinguished University Professor at Temple University and Laura H. Carnell Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Temple University. His CV includes over 25 books, treatment manuals and workbooks, and with over 800 scholarly publications, most in our field’s leading journals. Throughout his work, Dr. Kendall has applied rigorous experimental designs, and with his prolific scholarly writing on clinical research methodology, he has elevated the work of other psychologists seeking to evaluate treatment methods.

One of his treatment programs (e.g., Coping Cat) has been translated into numerous languages. Dr. Kendall was among the very first to emphasize and articulate the critical importance of applying developmental science to treatment development, and to ensure clinical methods were compatible with children’s cognitive and socio-emotional competencies. After other scholars reviewed the literature, Coping Cat was subsequently given the elite designation of an “empirically supported treatment.”

Dr. Kendall has had over 35 years of uninterrupted grant support from various agencies (e.g., NIMH; NICHD; MacArthur). He placed among an elite handful of the “Most Highly-Cited” individuals in all of the social and medical sciences (top 1%). His recent H Index is 163.

Dr. Kendall has garnered numerous awards. He won the inaugural Research Recognition Award from the Anxiety Disorders Association of America, was awarded the Aaron T. Beck Award for “Significant and Enduring Contributions,” and was honored by the Society for the Science of Clinical Psychology with their Lawrence H. Cohen Outstanding Mentor Award, both in 2019. He was honored by ABCT, an association in which he has been active his entire career, with their Career/Lifetime Achievement Award and by APA with the 2025 Award for Distinguished Scientific Applications of Psychology.

Dr. Kendall is a clinical scientist, teacher/mentor, and leader. He is known for encouraging rigorous methodology (studies with “methodological niceties”), creative and integrative approaches to mental health services (e.g., the use of youth workbooks as part of mental health services), and commitment to graduate mentoring (proud of his many former graduate students who have gone forth and done great work). An active folder on his desktop is a list of former students and their current affiliation.

### **Date and Location**

The conference will begin **on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> and conclude on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026**. Specific times of the conference will be determined in June 2026. All presenters submitting to the caregiver and professional talks must register for and attend the in person conference in Boston. Only presenters submitting talks for the individual track are not required to attend the in person conference.

The conference will take place at the following venue:

Hilton Boston Park Plaza  
50 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116

### **Abstract and Submission Details**

The conference includes three tracks for oral session presentations:

- 1) Professional track
- 2) Caregiver track
- 3) Individuals with SM track

Potential presenters may submit to any track but should designate preference. Please note that all presenters who are speaking live during the in-person program are required to register for the conference in advance; day-of registration is not permitted for presenters.

**Additional abstract submission information:**

- All abstracts must be received by *midnight PST May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026*. All submissions are peer-reviewed and acceptance is based on the quality of the presentation and its relevance to the conference. Notification of acceptance to presenters will be via email by early June 2026.
- Abstracts must include contact information, name, credentials and biography for each author presenting and must identify the primary author. Please include all information in the submission. Submissions will be unable to be reviewed if they are incomplete.
- Abstracts should be no more than 500 words.
- Abstracts must be submitted through the [Call for Papers submission form](#).
- Abstracts must indicate preference for consideration for the professional, caregiver, and/or the individuals with SM track.

**Types of Oral Presentation Submissions:**

**Focused Address** - These 60 minute sessions consist of presentations based on a focused topic, although more than one individual may present within that specific topic. Typically, these sessions are lecture format and address the specific target audience (i.e., professional, caregiver, individuals with SM).

**Workshops** - These 60 minute sessions promote evidence-based clinical skills and hands on training and application of such skills. May be introductory and moderate level skill. You will be asked to specify the primary target audience.

**Clinical Round Tables** - These 60 minute sessions include informed discussions (or debates) on a current and/or significant clinical topic. These are organized by one moderator and include between three and five panelists for discussion (may have a range of viewpoints for debate). You will be asked to specify the primary target audience.

**Symposia** - These 60 minute sessions typically are data driven, examining the findings of clinical trials or a compilation of empirical papers based on a similar issue (e.g., minority status and anxiety). These sessions have one chair, one discussant, and 3-4 papers being reviewed. There may be 3-5 presentations.

**Poster Sessions** - Brief research or clinical demonstrations to highlight the results of smaller studies, student projects, or provide information of interest to the community.

## **Acceptance Criteria**

All abstracts will be reviewed blindly by a review board composed of SMA member professionals, individuals with histories of SM, and caregivers. Reviews conducted by caregivers and individuals with SM histories will be limited to readability and interest level, not scientific merit. These blinded scores will constitute the primary acceptance criteria, though final presentation selections are made at the discretion of the SMA Board of Directors. Additional factors to be considered in the final selection include the balance and variety of the content for all tracks, the evidence-base for proposed topics, as well as diversity of program and organizational representation. Presentations may be invited if a particular topic of interest to conference registrants is lacking in the submission process.

Questions? Please email [info@selectivemutism.org](mailto:info@selectivemutism.org).