



Thank you for your interest in providing media coverage about our work. To contact us about arranging an interview, you can email us at press@awnnetwork.org. You can find our logo and images related to our work, including staff photos, in [this zip file](#).

About Us:

AWN is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit. We are committed to disability justice, gender & racial equity, neurodiversity & trans liberation with a focus on transformative and restorative justice in disability spaces.

Website: <https://awnnetwork.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/awnnetwork.org/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/awn_network/

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/awnnetwork>

Mastodon: <https://publicgood.social/@Awnnetwork>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@autisticwomennonbinarynetw6091>

Our Mission

The mission of Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network (AWN) is to provide community support, and resources for Autistic women, girls, transfeminine and transmasculine nonbinary people, trans people of all genders, Two Spirit people, and all people of marginalized genders or of no gender. AWN is committed to recognizing and celebrating diversity and the many intersectional experiences in our community.

Our Community

AWN recognizes and affirms all people's gender identities and expressions, as well as choices about disclosure, transition, and keeping your identity private.

Our Goal

Our goal is to dispel stereotypes and misinformation which cause unnecessary fears surrounding an autism diagnosis. We are committed to sharing information which works to build acceptance and understanding of disability.

Our Leadership:

You can read the bios of our board, staff, and consultants here:

<https://awnnetwork.org/directory/>

Our executive director is **Sharon daVanport**.

Abridged bio: **Sharon daVanport** is a disability justice advocate, speaker, and educator who serves as the founding executive director of the Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network (AWN). Sharon's work encompasses several aspects of the wider and cross-disability justice movement, including a focus on restorative and transformative justice, and strengthening leadership and partnerships through collective capacity and horizontal organizing practices. Sharon is passionate about access to sexual and reproductive health care, support and advocacy for victims and survivors of intimate partner violence, gender diversity and racial equity in disability rights organizations.

Full bio: <https://awnnetwork.org/directory/sharon-davanport/>

Terminology:

We use identity-first language, i.e. "autistic person" or "disabled person, instead of "person with autism" or "person with a disability."

We do not use "functioning labels," i.e. "low functioning" or "high functioning" as we consider them ableist. Instead we use language describing the unique access needs of each person.

We do not hyphenate "nonbinary." We use the acronym LGBTQIAP+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual, pansexual, +) or the terms "trans and queer" when referring to people with marginalized gender identities and sexual orientations, including nonbinary people.

Our logo ([included in this zip file](#))



Logo Image Description: large pink "a" with a teal winged spoonie butterfly and our url: awnnetwork dot org.

We oppose Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and shock aversives:

We are opposed to all forms of Applied Behavioral Analysis, aka “ABA” and consider it abusive. We’re also opposed to the use of electric shock aversives to control autistic and disabled people’s behavior and are part of the #StopTheShock movement. We have several blog posts explaining why:

Harms of ABA:

<https://awnnetwork.org/my-thoughts-on-aba/>

<https://awnnetwork.org/have-some-aba-or-else/>

<https://awnnetwork.org/aba-providers-making-fun-autistic-people/>

#StopTheShock:

<https://awnnetwork.org/stoptheshock-why-we-should-all-support-andres-law-in-new-york/>

Guiding Principles: Transformative and Restorative Justice

AWN believes that our disability justice work is incomplete if we are not committed to transformative and restorative justice within our organization and in our communities. Transformative and restorative justice are distinct frameworks that help inform our approach to harm, accountability, growth, and liberation. [Read Our Guiding Principles](#)

Guiding Principles Infographic ([in zip file](#)):



Our Resources:

AWN creates welcome packets for those new to the autistic community, and we do not differentiate between people who receive a medical diagnosis vs those who are self-diagnosed. We believe autism resources must be created by autistic people themselves. Our packets for parents of newly diagnosed autistic children provide advice from autistic people about how they wish they had been treated. We also provide Spanish and Plain Language Versions. The “AWN Welcome Packets for newly diagnosed adults & parents of newly diagnosed children” can be found at <https://awnnetwork.org/resource-library/> in addition to other resources.

We also create other resources specific to autistic people with marginalized identities, including autistic people of color and autistic trans people. One resource we're particularly proud about is [“Before You Go: Know Your Rights & What to Expect at the Doctor and in the Hospital: Tips and advice \(life hacks!\) for autistic trans people about finding and going to doctors”](#)

Book: Sincerely Your Autistic Child [Beacon Press Books]:

In March 2021 we published the book [“Sincerely, Your Autistic Child: What People on the Autism Spectrum Wish Their Parents Knew About Growing Up, Acceptance, and Identity”](#) with Beacon Press.

It featured stories by autistic women, trans, and nonbinary people about their experiences navigating the world while autistic, and tips for autism acceptance. Many of our staff contributed, including it being edited by our executive director Sharon daVanport, and our Equity, Justice & Representation consultant Morénike Giwa Onaiwu.

As a review from Beacon Press wrote, “From childhood and education to culture, gender identity, and sexuality, this anthology tackles the everyday joys and challenges of growing up while honestly addressing the emotional needs, sensitivity, and vibrancy of autistic kids, youth, and young adults.”

Liberating Webinars:

Another of our most popular offerings are our online panel discussions which are part of our #LiberatingWebinars series. People here from leaders of the autistic and disability justice communities on various topics. Topics we've especially focused on are reproductive justice and eugenics, prison abolition and decarceration, LGBTQ rights, and algorithmic bias/ableism built into AI systems. Recordings of many of them can be found at <https://awnnetwork.org/webinars>, which is continually updated.

Here are four recordings of Liberating Webinars Panels:

[How do we survive to thrive?: Forced Sterilization, Eugenics, Disability](#)

[Disability Justice & Crip Technoscience: Racism & Ableism in AI & the Future of Technology](#)

[Celebrating Pride & Organizing Communities in Disability, Gender, Queerness](#)

[Abolition, Deinstitutionalization, and Decarceration in the Pandemic](#)