Rett Syndrome (RTT) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that primarily affects girls. This debilitating syndrome includes symptoms of autism, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's, epilepsy, and anxiety disorders...all in one child.

Symptoms begin to appear at about 6 to 18 months of age after a period of apparently normal early development. Regression follows, causing loss of speech, motor control & functional hand use. Stereotyped hand movements such as hand washing, become apparent. Other problems may include:

- Autonomic instability and sleep disturbances
- Autistic behaviors and sensory issues
- Impaired cardiac, circulatory and digestive functions
- Parkinsonian tremors
- Many varieties of seizures, often untreatable
- Anxiety
- Apraxia
- Dystonia
- Orthopedic problems including scoliosis and osteopenia

RTT can present with a range of disability from mild to severe.

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This all-day session, featuring nationally known experts in Rett syndrome, is designed for both parents and professionals. Speakers will describe recent developments in research and provide an update on issues related to lifespan, prognosis, along with information on related medical conditions common in girls with Rett syndrome. Sessions on communication and literacy will discuss evidence-based strategies on how to increase interaction and communication potential in this population. Classroom teachers, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and other educational and medical specialists will learn valuable information that will assist their work with girls with Rett syndrome. Family members will gain valuable insight on strategies they can use with their girls, and can share with professionals who help care for their daughters.
Speakers

Theresa Bartolotta, Ph.D., CCC-SLP is Dean of the School of Health Sciences at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. She has more than 30 years of clinical experience as a speech-language pathologist specializing in individuals with significant communication challenges, including autism and Rett Syndrome (RTT). Her research and publications concern communication skills and training in Rett Syndrome. She is part of an international group working to develop guidelines for communication assessment and intervention for individuals with Rett.

Aleksandra Djukic, MD, PhD is Professor of Neurology, a diplomat of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and Director of the Center for Rett Syndrome at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Montefiore. Dr. Djukic created and leads the RE-TT (Rett Education-Transforming Teaching) group addressing educational issues.

Steven Kaminsky, PhD is Chief Science Officer of the International Rett Syndrome Foundation (rettsyndrome.org). He came to the Foundation after serving 11 years as the Vice President of Research for the Uniformed Services of the Health Sciences. During his presence, the research programs grew to the highest levels in the school’s history. As CSO, Dr. Kaminsky oversees rettsyndrome.org’s research portfolio, which integrates elements of basic, translational and clinical research.

Patricia A. Remshifski PhD CCC-SLP is an Assistant Professor at Monmouth University. A speech-language pathologist with over 20 years of clinical experience, she specializes in swallowing disorders with a special interest in swallowing and communication abilities in girls with Rett syndrome.

Elaine Williams, M.A., CCC-SLP is a communication specialist at The Tri-State Rett Syndrome Center working in partnership with Dr. Aleksandra Djukic, M.D., PhD. training therapy teams and helping them develop AAC programs for children with Rett Syndrome. Ms. Williams also works privately through Williams Speech and Language Pathology PLLC. where she is an AAC specialist for children with Rett Syndrome both nationally and internationally.

Presenter disclosure statements are provided on the Rett Syndrome website, www.njrsa.org