

THE 3RD GLOBAL AUTISM CONVENTION



Autism in the Global South: Culture, Community, and Neurodiversity



21st - 25th January, 2026

**St. John's Auditorium, St. John's National Academy of Health Sciences,
John Nagar, Koramangala, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560034, India**

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www.globalautismconvention.com



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 1

Wednesday, 21st January 2026

REGISTRATION



8.00 AM - 9.00 AM



Exhibition Hall

Time	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium	Lecture Hall 1	Nursing Auditorium
9.00 AM - 11.00 AM	WORKSHOP 1 USING AAC IN THERAPY SETTINGS SPEAKERS: Dr. Shoba S Meera, Ms. Anjana Sathyabodha	WORKSHOP 2 FEEDING AND EATING DISORDERS IN AUTISTIC INDIVIDUALS SPEAKERS: Dr. S. M Manohari, Dr. Avinash Kamath, Dr. Swetha Madhuri Chikkala			
10.00 AM - 1.00 PM			ACT 1 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 1) FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS FACILITATORS: Dr. Shankar K, Dr. Vinay Kumar, Dr. Bhagyavathi MENTOR: Dr. Varghese P Punnoose		
11.15 AM - 1.15 PM	WORKSHOP 3 MANAGING CO-OCCURRING ANXIETY IN AUTISM SPEAKERS: Dr. Satya Raj, Dr. Jigyansa Ipsita Patnaik, Dr. Velprashanth Venkatesan				WORKSHOP 4 PLAY WITH PURPOSE: THERAPEUTIC PLAY AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN AUTISM SPEAKERS: Ms. Priya Sandeep, Ms. Soumya Koduvalli, Ms. Kannika Iyengar



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Time	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium	Lecture Hall 1	Nursing Auditorium
1.15 PM - 2.00 PM					Lunch Break
2.00 PM - 5.00 PM					
	ACT 2 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 2) FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS FACILITATORS: Dr. Gayathri Rajan, Dr. Rachna George MENTOR: Dr. Alka A. Subramanyam	ACT 3 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 3) FOR NURSING PROFESSIONALS FACILITATORS: Dr. Nelia Mathew, Dr. Rajalakshmi Ramu MENTOR: Dr. Satya Raj	ACT 4 (AUTISM COMMUNITY TRAINING TRACK 4) FOR PRIMARY CARE PRACTITIONERS & PEDIATRICIANS FACILITATORS: Dr. Shivangi Mehta, Dr. Prasanna Kumar N, Dr. Kashmire Badbade MENTOR: Dr. Smita Deshpande	WORKSHOP 5 ASSESSMENT IN AUTISM: TOOLS, ADAPTATIONS, AND REPORTS SPEAKERS: Dr. Sai Kirthi Kamath, Dr. Meghana Vijayanand	WORKSHOP 6 ADDRESSING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS & TEACHING ADAPTIVE SKILLS SPEAKERS: Ms. Kavitha Kamath, Ms. Anupama Ramesh

GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22nd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 1		ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 2		
9.00 AM - 9.45 AM		KEYNOTE: AUTISM IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND NEURODIVERSITY SPEAKER : Dr. Shoba Srinath CHAIR: Dr. Vijaya Raman			



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GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22nd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
9.45 AM- 10.30 AM		Inauguration			
10.30 AM - 10.45 AM		Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing			
10.45 AM - 11.30 AM		<p>KEYNOTE: EARLY COMMUNICATION MATTERS: HOW EARLY AND WHAT MATTERS</p> <p>SPEAKER: Dr. Prathibha Karanth</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Shoba Srinath</p>			
11.40 AM - 1.10 PM		<p>SYMPOSIUM: SETTING UP AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE</p> <p>SPEAKERS : Ms. Jo Chopra, Dr. Koyeli Sengupta</p> <p>CHAIR: Ms. Ruby Singh, Ms. Suchita Somashekaraiah</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING AUTISM WITH CO-OCCURRING ADHD</p> <p>SPEAKERS : Dr. Chhitij Srivastava, Dr. Rachna George</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. S.M Manohari, Dr. Lakshmi Shiva</p>		
1.10 PM - 2.00 PM		Lunch Break and E-Poster Viewing			



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22nd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
2.00 PM - 3.30 PM		<p>LIVE DEMONSTRATION SESSION: THE FIRST CONVERSATION: SHARING AN AUTISM DIAGNOSIS WITH THE PARENT(S) (INTERACTIVE ROLE-PLAY + PANEL)</p> <p>MODERATOR Dr. Satish C Girimaji</p> <p>PANELISTS: Dr. Samiksha Sahu, Dr. Varghese P Punnoose, Dr. M Thomas Kishore, Dr. Vanitha Rao</p>			
3.30 PM - 4.00 PM		<p>Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing</p>			
4.00 PM - 5.00 PM		<p>SYMPOSIUM: NEURODIVERGENT WORKFORCE INCLUSION: BEYOND TOKENISM</p> <p>SPEAKERS : Mr. G Vijaya Raghavan, Ms. Swati Vellal, Ms. Alina Alam</p> <p>CHAIR: Ms. Sarbani Mallick, Ms. Suman John</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: FROM PRACTICE TO PUBLICATION: HOW AUTISM PRACTITIONERS CAN CONDUCT AND SHARE RESEARCH</p> <p>SPEAKERS : Dr. Naresh Nebhinani, Dr. Eesha Sharma</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Denis Xavier, Dr. Rajesh Sagar</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: WHAT CAUSES AUTISM? GENETIC, COGNITIVE AND NEUROBIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES</p> <p>SPEAKERS : Dr. Matthew Belmonte, Dr. Meenakshi Bhat</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Satish C Girimaji</p>	



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 2

Thursday, 22nd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
5.15 PM - 6.30 PM		<p>OPEN HOUSE: SPEAKING FOR OURSELVES: VOICES OF AUTISTIC SELF-ADVOCATES AND LIVED EXPERIENCES</p> <p>DISCUSSANTS: Ms. Alice Mamaga Akosua Amoako, Ms. Betsy Selvam, Mr. Pranav Kumar Rajagopal, Ms. Asha Sreedhar, MODERATOR: Ms. Mugdha Kalra</p>	<p>HUMAN LIBRARY: MENTAL HEALTH OF PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH AUTISM</p> <p>DISCUSSANTS: Ms. Sita Krishnamurthy, Dr. Keerthana Thattavarthi, Dr. Alka A. Subramanyam, Ms. Shoba Sundar FACILITATOR: Dr. Arun Kishore</p>		



GAC DAY 3

Friday, 23rd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 3		ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 4		
9.00 AM - 9.45 AM		<p>KEYNOTE: NEURODIVERSITY WITHOUT BORDERS: INNOVATIONS SHAPING AUTISM CARE GLOBALLY</p> <p>SPEAKER: Dr. Valsamma Eapen CHAIR: Dr. Lonnie Zwaigenbaum</p>			



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 3

Friday, 23rd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
9.45 AM - 10.30 AM		<p>KEYNOTE: COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES IN RESOURCE-CONSTRAINED SETTINGS</p> <p>SPEAKER: Dr. Naoufel Gaddour</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Ammar Albanna, Dr. Satya Raj</p>			
10.30 PM-11.00 AM		<p>Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing</p>			
11.00 AM - 11.45 AM		<p>KEYNOTE: DISABILITY CERTIFICATION/ UDID CERTIFICATION-UNIFORMITY AND STANDARDIZATION: BANE OR BOON?</p> <p>SPEAKER: Dr. Alka A. Subramanyam</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Rajesh Sagar</p>			
11.00 AM - 12.30 PM			<p>SYMPOSIUM: ELECTRIC PATHWAYS, EMERGING POSSIBILITIES: NEUROMODULATION IN AUTISM</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Nishant Goyal, Dr. Sreeraj V S</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. G.R.K Sarma, Dr. Kasturi S</p>		



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 3

Friday, 23rd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
12.30 PM-1.30 PM		Lunch Break and E-Poster Viewing			
1.30 PM - 3.00 PM		<p>THE FUTURE WE WANT FOR AUTISTIC ADULTS (2035)</p> <p>IN CONVERSATION WITH: Ms. Merry Barua, Mr. G Vijaya Raghavan</p> <p>HOSTED BY: Dr. Henal Shah</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: MEDICAL COMORBIDITIES IN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Minal V Kekatpure, Dr. Nelia Mathew</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Swarnarekha Bhat, Dr. Nandini Mundkur</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: DIGITAL TOOLS & AI BASED INTERVENTIONS</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Ms. Alice Mamaga Akosua Amoako, Dr. Matthew Belmonte Dr. Suresh Sundaram, Dr. Sridhar Bodapati,</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Shyam Rajagopalan</p>	
3.10 PM - 4.45 PM		<p>SYMPOSIUM: UNDERSTANDING GENDER DYSPHORIA IN AUTISTIC YOUTH</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr Henal Shah, Dr. Porpavai Kasiannan</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Nandita De Sousa</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: DESIGNING SENSORY-FRIENDLY PUBLIC SPACES FOR AUTISM INCLUSION</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Ms. Gita Balakrishnan, Mr. Joseph Bedford</p> <p>CHAIR: Mr. G Vijaya Raghavan, Mr. Ravi Ranganathan</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: COMPETENCY-BASED MEDICAL EDUCATION IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS FOR INDIAN MEDICAL GRADUATES AND POSTGRADUATES</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Kiran Kumar, Dr. H R Vinay, Dr. M Kishor</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Rajesh Sagar, Dr. Prarthana Karumbaiah K</p>	<p>ASK ME ANYTHING: FINANCIAL PLANNING AND LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN AND TEENS WITH AUTISM</p> <p>INTERACTIVE Q & A</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Mr. Sameer Tandon, Mr. Gopinathan Ramakrishnan</p> <p>MODERATOR: Dr. Raghavendra Kumar</p>
4.45 PM - 5.00 PM	Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing				



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 3

Friday, 23rd January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall	UOH Auditorium
5.00 PM - 6.00 PM		<p>PANEL DISCUSSION: BEYOND THE BIOMEDICAL: CAM, AYUSH AND YOGA-BASED APPROACHES IN AUTISM CARE</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Madhuri Vaidyeswar, Dr. Pallavi Priyam, Dr. Koyeli Sengupta, Dr. Sindhu Shankar S</p> <p>FACILITATOR: Dr. Hiral Kotadia</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: DESIGNING AN ARTS-BASED CURRICULUM FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Ms. Bela Joshi, Ms. Akshayee Shetty</p> <p>CHAIR: Ms. Gayathri Rajan</p>		<p>HUMAN LIBRARY: INCLUSIVEDUNIYA SIB-TALKS</p> <p>HOSTED BY: Ms. Pooja Sharma, Ms. Charuvi Dembla</p> <p>DISCUSSANTS: Mr. Hemanth Marur, Ms. Dhanya P Nayak, Mr. B Praveen Karthik, Ms. Raksha VM</p>
6.05 PM-7.00 PM		<p>ROUND TABLE: ACADEMIC CHALLENGES AND CLASSROOM SOLUTIONS</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Ms. Saritha Alexander, Dr. Rajani Padmanabhan, Dr. Rita James, Dr. Rosa Hoekstra, Ms. Neetu P</p> <p>FACILITATOR: Dr. Nandita De Sousa</p>	<p>PANEL DISCUSSION: PARENTING ON THE SPECTRUM: JOURNEYS, STRATEGIES, AND SHARED WISDOM</p> <p>PANELISTS: Dr. Sunita Maleku Amatya, Ms. Mary Chaitanya, Ms. Mugdha Kalra, Ms. Prachi Deo</p> <p>MODERATOR: Ms. Deepa Bhat Nair</p>		
7.00 PM	<p>Cultural Program and Dinner</p>				



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 4

Saturday, 24th January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall
8.00 AM - 9.00 AM	ORAL PRESENTATIONS SESSION 5			
9.00 AM - 9.45 AM		<p>KEYNOTE: UNDERSTANDING AUTISM IN GIRLS AND WOMEN</p> <p>SPEAKER: Dr. Porpavai Kasiannan</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Henal Shah, Dr. Harshini Manohar</p>		
9.45 AM - 10.30 AM		<p>KEYNOTE: CO-CREATING WITH PATIENTS AND COMMUNITIES: DRIVING INNOVATION IN AUTISM CARE</p> <p>SPEAKER: Dr. Ammar Albanna</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Naoufel Gaddour Dr. Naresh Nebhinani</p>		
10.30 AM - 11.00 AM		<p>Coffee Break and E-Poster Viewing</p>		
11.00 AM - 12.00 PM		<p>PLENARY: PERSPECTIVES ON ACHIEVING TIMELY AND NEURO-AFFIRMATIVE AUTISM DIAGNOSES.</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Lonnie Zwaigenbaum, Dr. Nandita De Sousa</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Matthew Belmonte</p>		



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 4

Saturday, 24th January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall
11.00 AM - 12.30 PM			<p>SYMPOSIUM: AUTISM AND BULLYING: BUILDING SAFE PEER RELATIONSHIPS IN SCHOOLS</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Ms. Sony Gill, Ms. Chitra Solomon, Ms. Betsy Selvam</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Rajendra K.M</p>	
12.30 PM - 1.30 PM		<p>Lunch Break and E-Poster Viewing</p>		
1.30 PM - 2.15 PM		<p>KEYNOTE: PHARMACOTHERAPY IN AUTISM: WHAT WE KNOW, WHAT WE DO, AND WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE</p> <p>SPEAKER: Dr. Paramala Santosh</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. John Vijay Sagar, Dr. Nishant Goyal</p>		
1.30 PM - 3.00 PM			<p>SYMPOSIUM: SEXUALITY & PUBERTY IN ADOLESCENTS WITH AUTISM: WHAT FAMILIES NEED TO KNOW</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Venkata Lakshmi, Ms. Aarti C Rajaratnam</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Sangeeta Saksena</p>	



SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 4

Saturday, 24th January 2026

Time	Lecture Hall 1	St. John's Main Auditorium	Cardinal Gracias Hall	Annexe 3 Hall
3.10 PM - 4.40 PM		<p>ANSWERING THE "WHAT AFTER ME?" QUESTION: THE UHURU MODEL</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Gitanjali G Govindrajan, Ms. Yashaswini Gupta, Ms. Palak Chanana</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Sunita Maleku Amatya, Dr Priyanka Nambiar</p>	<p>SYMPOSIUM: PSYCHOTHERAPY IN AUTISM: STRATEGIES FOR ADOLESCENTS WITH PSYCHIATRIC COMORBIDITIES</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Sowmya Bhaskaran, Dr. Lakshmi Shiva</p> <p>CHAIR: Dr. Uttara Chari Dr. Sweta Sheth</p>	<p>STORY CIRCLES: GRANDPARENT JOURNEYS IN AUTISM</p> <p>HOSTED BY: Dr. Mathew Varghese</p> <p>DISCUSSANTS: Mr. K. Satya Prasad, Dr. G. Aruna, Mr. V. Raghunathan</p>
4.50 PM - 5.50 PM		<p>ROUND TABLE: AUTISM ACROSS CULTURES: GLOBAL LESSONS FROM FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> <p>SPEAKERS: Dr. Rosa Hoekstra, Ms. Alice Mamaga Akosua Amoako, Dr. Naoufel Gaddour, Dr. Ammar Albanna, Dr. Harshini Manohar</p> <p>MODERATOR: Dr Henal Shah</p>		





SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

GAC DAY 5 Sunday, 25th January 2026

Time

St. John's Main Auditorium

PLENARY: AUTISM AND CHILD SAFETY: IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ABUSE

9:00 AM-
9:45 AM

SPEAKERS:
Dr. Shaibya Saldanha, Dr. Keerthana Thatavarthi

CHAIR:
Dr. Satya Raj

9:45 AM -
10:45 AM

KEYNOTE: FROM BENCH TO VILLAGE: THE CMC VELLORE MODEL IN AUTISM SERVICE INNOVATION

SPEAKER:
Dr. Paul Russell
CHAIR:
Dr. Shoba Srinath

10:45 AM -
11:00 AM

Coffee Break

11:00 AM-
12:00 PM

CLOSING CONVERSATION: THE ST. JOHN'S MODEL FOR AUTISM CARE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

SPEAKERS:
Dr. Vijaya Raman, Dr. Suhas Chandran
CHAIR:
Dr. Paul Russell, Dr. Lonnie Zwaigenbaum

12:00 PM -
1:00 PM

Valedictory

- Lessons from GAC 2026 and the path ahead
- Award Distribution

KINDLY NOTE:

The scientific agenda is subject to some changes based on logistical or other unforeseen challenges.



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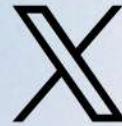
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