

# Julie Hornok

Plano, Texas

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Julie has over seventeen years of special needs industry experience as a parent, non-profit founder, educational program creator, event planner, behavioral program facilitator, global interviewer, and award-winning author.

After living through some of the toughest autism has to offer and talking with thousands of special needs parents all over the world, Julie connects with all types of audiences through heartwarming and humorous stories. Listeners will leave inspired to find grace, acceptance and strength in their own lives.

Julie loves to craft unique experiences to meet the individual needs of each audience.

### Some popular topics she addresses include:

**“Finding Strength in Your Story”** – Created for anyone going through difficult times, Julie addresses this topic with both delicacy and humor; sharing heartfelt stories from not only her own life, but from parents all around the world. Listeners are given three keys to walk through their grief, tap into their strength, and move forward in their own lives feeling a lightness that can only be described as hope. This topic provides listeners with the emotional support they have been longing for.

**“Unlocking Your Empathy”** – Created for disability providers, Julie shares her personal experience with parenting autism and insights pulled together from interviewing inspirational families from all over the world. She has audiences laughing and crying as they develop a deeper understanding for what special needs parents go through, while being inspired to use their own personal challenges for good.

**“Where’s God in Disability?”** – Created for an audience unfamiliar with the world of disability, Julie shares her personal story of raising her autistic daughter and stories from parents she interviewed all over the world for her book, *United in Autism: Finding Strength Inside the Spectrum*. Listeners experience a behind-closed-door view into this mysterious disorder, gain insights on how to interact with these families in their community, and unlock the beauty God reveals through disability. Listeners also have the opportunity to ask questions in a safe, non-judgmental space.

### Some of the outlets she has been featured in/on:

Focus on the Family Broadcast

iHeart Radio

Chicken Soup for the Soul Podcast

Autism Live

Parenting Special Needs Magazine Podcast

Autism Live

Newsy

CW33 TV

Plano Star Courier

Autism Parenting Magazine

Marriage.com

Autism Helper Podcast

## PAST SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Julie speaks for a variety of businesses, non-profits, churches, conferences, and educational systems. Some of the places she has spoken:

DFW Autism Conference – Hurst, TX	Orange Conference - Atlanta, GA
Autism Speaks – Dallas, TX	Men’s Service League – Plano, TX
National Autism Association – Philadelphia, PA	Frisco ISD – Frisco, TX
Therapy & Beyond – Carrollton, TX	Region 10 ESC – Richardson, TX
Finding Cooper’s Voice – Saint Paul, MN	Carpenter Middle School – Plano, TX
F.A.C.E.S. – Houston, TX	Autism Tulsa – Tulsa, OK
Frisco Bible Church – Frisco, TX	Families Together - Moscow, ID
LifePath Early Childhood Intervention – Plano, TX	Autism Society – Denver, CO
Autism Oklahoma - Oklahoma City, OK	Hunter’s Glen Baptist Church – Plano, TX
FEAT-NT – Fort Worth, TX	Hope for Three - Houston, TX
Blue Sprig - Grapevine, TX	AUsome Moms -Dallas, TX
Spring Creek Church – Garland, TX	Behavioral Innovations – McKinney, TX
LifePoint Church – Plano, TX	FBC Women’s Renew – Frisco, TX

## PRAISE FOR JULIE’S PRESENTATIONS

*“Julie’s hilarious outlook, words of encouragement and real-life stories made this an entertaining, relatable and truly memorable event for so many parents and caregivers. It was a delight to work with and get to know Julie. She is a shining light in a world of darkness and denial.”*

Darla Farmer, Hope for Three

*“Julie is a relatable, down-to-earth, and winsome speaker! She has an amazing way of connecting with her audience as she shares stories and wisdom that are beautifully framed with her great sense of humor and authentic transparency.”*

Jennifer Bryant, Director of Women’s Ministry, Frisco Bible Church

*“In the last five years it’s been just my son and I most days, and I have no real friends, much less any who understand my struggles... I walked away feeling like the journey I am on with my son was just a little less impossible.” C. VanAtta, Special Needs Mom*

*“I was really excited to have Julie come to our MOPS group but I had no idea what we were in for. She was amazing! She left our moms feeling like they are not only the ones facing major parenting struggles and gave us simple biblical tools in facing them. Her honest testimony was not only refreshing but empowering.” Jennifer Nicholson, Spring Creek Church*

*“Julie has a passion for the special needs community and it shows. She knows how to inspire parents while making them laugh and sends them home feeling hopeful. We can’t wait until her next book so she can speak again!” Michelle Doan, Therapy & Beyond*

*“Julie’s presentation was very touching and heartwarming! She was honest, real, and genuine. Hearing about her life experiences helped open my eyes to see what a parent of a child with Autism goes through, and that there is so much hope and light in their journey!”*

Karla Alambar, LifePath Systems ECS

## **JULIE'S EXPERIENCE**

### **Labeled & Loved, Co-Founder**

*07/2020- Present*

- Collaborating in creating and implementing engaging, high-quality in-person and online non-profit programs and events
- Fundraising

### **United in Autism, Founder**

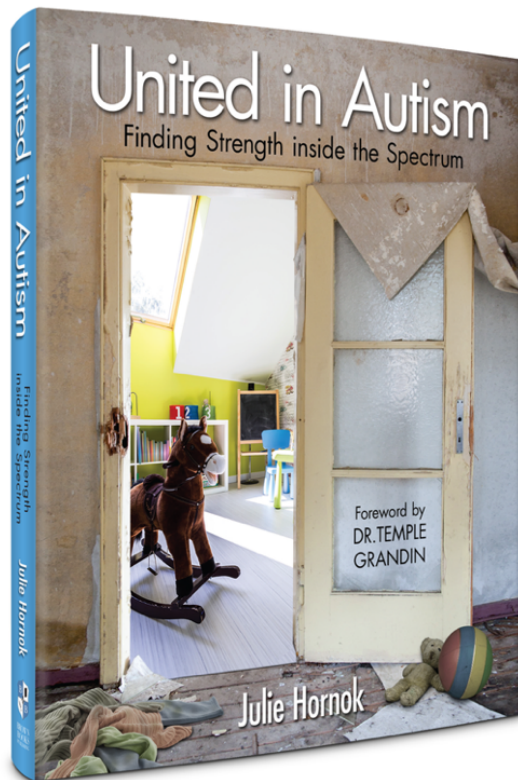
*10/2017 – 07/2020*

- Spearheading all non-profit operations in bringing free emotional support events to special needs moms across the country

### **Freelance Writer**

*01/2009 - Present*

- Crafting pieces reflecting the hard, heartwarming and humorous in living with autism
- Published in Yahoo!, TODAY Parents, Scary Mommy, The Mighty, *Parenting Special Needs Magazine*, *Autism Parenting Magazine*, *Exceptional Needs Today Magazine*, *That's Inappropriate*, AutismSpot, multiple *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books, and many more
- Regular Blogger for The National Autism Association (2018-2019)
- Authored *United in Autism: Finding Strength Inside the Spectrum* (foreword by Dr. Temple Grandin)



### **Bible-Based Programs Creator and Director**

*04/2010 – Present*

- Created curriculum and implemented Bible-based, hands-on *God's Girls Program* for girls 7-10 years old
- Created program/training and matched families in the *Partnering with Special Needs Family Program* to enable families at Stonebriar Community Church to support special needs families on a 1:1 basis
- Created curriculum and implemented Bible-based, hands-on *W.H.Y. M.E. Program* for special needs siblings ages 7-13 at Stonebriar Community Church
- Created curriculum and implemented Bible-based, hands-on *Mirroring His Image: A Workshop on Discovering Your Self-Worth in Christ* for pre-teen girls at Stonebriar Community Church
- Created curriculum and implemented Bible-based yoga flow classes as a registered RYT-200 for adults, teens and children

### **National Autism Association of North Texas, Vice-President**

*02/2010 – 09/2020*

- Planning, promoting and implementing special events and speaking engagements
- Parent support
- Researching, obtaining, writing and formatting relevant news stories on autism for a quarterly newsletter

### **Special Needs Event Planner**

*06/2010 – Present*

- Raise funds, plan and implement customized events for special needs families in a variety of settings with various non-profit organizations

### **Autism Parent Support**

*06/2006 – Present*

- Supporting and encouraging parents in their journey with autism through e-mail, phone and in-person
- Helping identify their children's key deficits and strengths
- Providing information and resources proven to be beneficial in addressing specific needs
- Moderating an online parent support group (Warrior Moms & Dads) focusing on treatments for autism

### **Special and Gifted Education, Plano ISD Campus Representative & Special Events Planner**

*08/2007-06/2017*

- Planning, scheduling special needs buddies and implementing yearly district-wide Special Needs Talent Show
- Planning, scheduling volunteers and implementing "Experience the Awareness" event for students and teachers
- Serving as a liaison between Plano ISD SAGE and school campuses
- Communicating information to and encouraging parents of special needs and gifted children

### **Intensive Behavioral Therapy Home Program for Daughter with Autism**

*01/2005 – 01/2013*

- In-depth research on causes of and treatments for autism, including behavioral therapies, relationship interventions, and biomedical treatments
- Providing optimal conditions for skill development by organizing and structuring home environment to address different developmental needs
- Interviewing various providers to ensure service delivery based on the child's and family needs
- Coordinating a team of professionals to implement therapy
- Implementing behavioral therapy (ABA, Floortime and Social Thinking), speech and occupational therapy when the child was not with a therapist
- Training professionals how to best implement therapy for the child
- Corresponding and maintaining positive relationships with teachers, therapists and consultants



Julie with her inspiration...her daughter Lizzie.