

25th Annual CAFAF Conference

October 23-24, 2020

Virtual on the zoom platform

Registrations required to receive zoom links



CAFAF
CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE OF
FOSTER & ADOPTIVE FAMILIES



Christopher Scott, Co-Founder and Program Director for SUN Scholars Inc., A non-profit organization dedicated to supporting former foster and adopted youth throughout their college career.

Schedule of Events

Friday and Saturday
October 23 -24, 2020

9:45 a.m.

Welcome

10 a.m.-11:15 a.m.

Keynote and Plenary

11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Workshop A

12:45 p.m.-1:45 p.m.

Lunch break

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Workshop B

3:00 p.m.

Adjourn

3 Module Credits Per Day

CAFAF STAFF

Margaret Doherty

Executive Director

Diane Orlando

Program Director-Support and Advocacy

Vanessa Williamson

Program Director-Intake, Outreach and Training

Jennifer Bellamy **Torrington Area Liaison**

Sheree Breeden **Bridgeport Area Liaison**

Rochelle Calendar **Kid Hero Program Assistant**

Brian Candelora **Middletown Area Liaison**

Debra Candelora **Meriden Area Liaison**

Emily Churchill **Willimantic Area Liaison**

Catherine Davis **Outreach Coordinator**

Jinnel D'Hereaux **Training Program Coordinator**

Schelita Fleming **Norwalk/Stamford Area Liaison**

Melissa Lombardo **Executive Administrative Assistant**

Renee Lavalley **Norwich Area Liaison**

Joseph Montalvo **Milford Area Liaison**

Kyle Ohlund **Manchester Area Liaison**

Lisa Ortiz **Hartford Area Liaison**

Raymond Ortiz **Kid Hero Program Assistant**

Sheyla Ortiz-Caraballo **New Britain Area Liaison**

Dora Poma **Danbury Area Liaison**

Jennifer Rivera **Pre-Licensing Retention Specialist**

Marian Russo **New Haven Area Liaison**

Wendy Sander **Peer Network Coordinator**

Emilio Vargas **Waterbury Area Liaison**



CAFAF Board

Garrett Gizowski **President**

Cathy Gentile-Doyle **Vice President**

Mike Burns **Treasurer/Secretary**

Amy Kennedy **Director**

Jeffrey Cheney **Director**

Latisha Brown **Director**

Friday October 23, 2020
Workshop A
11:30 a.m.– 12:45 p.m.

Ginger Katz and Carlos Reinoso Jr. Sarah Gannon, MAAT	Courage to Speak© - Parenting Through the Drug Epidemic and Beyond Sex Ed and Healthy Relationships for Parents: Real Life. Real Talk.®
Trooper Kate Cummings	Social Media Awareness and Internet Safety Resources
Jessica S. McLawhon, MAEd,	Growing Up With Addiction, There is Hope!
Nicole Kowal, M.S.	Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning/Gender Non-Conforming and Transgender (LGBQ/GNCT) Youth
Alex Perfetto	Life Experiences, Impactful Moments, and how to use them as Turning Points in Recovery

Friday October 23, 2020
Workshop B
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sarah Gannon, MAAT	Sex Ed and Healthy Relationships for Parents: Real Life. Real Talk.®
Attorney Jeffrey Forte	Special Education Advocacy for Foster Parents
Candyce Scott, MA, LPC, Suzanne Schweiter, M.S., and Kerry Kincy, MA,	Counseling Inmates and Their Loved Ones
Amy D. Blank, Tutor Doctor and Dr. Brian Adams from The Brain Institute of America	I Can't Get My Work Done and Help Someone Else! - Distance Learning with Executive Functioning Skill Deficits
Lindsey Jones, BA In Women's and Gender Studies Rachal Conley, BA In Psychology and Criminal Behavior	Foster Parents of LGBTQ+ Youth

Saturday October 24, 2020

Workshop A

11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Candyce Scott, MA, LPC,
Suzanne Schweiter, M.S., and
Kerry Kincy, MA,

Counseling Inmates and Their Loved Ones.

Amy D. Blank, Tutor Doctor and
Dr. Brian Adams from The Brain Institute of
America

I Can't Get My Work Done and Help Someone Else! - Distance Learning with
Executive Functioning Skill Deficits.

Patricia A. Ciccone, C.A.G.S., L.P.C. and
Jo Ann Freiberg, Ph.D.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)/Toxic Stress/Trauma

Lois "Mimi" Stevens, CTBF

Process & Express Feelings for Healthy Body & Mind

Lindsey Jones, BA
In Women's and Gender Studies

Child Sexual Abuse Training Module

Marco Stanley (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

Join Rise Be Presents "The Warmline"

Saturday October 24, 2020

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Restorative Practices

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Magic Button Mindfulness for Kids (and their adults)

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Special Education Advocacy for Foster Parents

A legal overview of special education law to empower foster parents to be part of their foster child's education support.

Attorney Jeffrey Forte (Crisis Intervention)

Courage to Speak© - Parenting Through the Drug Epidemic and Beyond

This workshop provides drug prevention education skills and information on how to keep children safe from drug use and other risky behaviors and helps parents navigate the difficult challenges of raising youth during these challenging times.

Part 1, Founder of the Courage to Speak Foundation, Ginger Katz will share her family story of a mother's promise to her son Ian to do everything in her power to prevent another family from losing their child to drug addiction. Ms. Katz helps audiences understand effective ways of communication and connecting to children to encourage healthy, drug free lifestyles.

Part 2, delivered by Carlos Reinoso, Manager of CCAR who discusses: why kids use drugs, helping children handle stress and difficult emotions, teaching children drug refusal skills, and understanding the signs of drug use, and how to intervene if use is expected. The program outcomes have shown significant increases in parent's knowledge and understanding of drug use and how to prevent it in their homes.

Ginger Katz and Carlos Reinoso Jr. (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

Sex Ed and Healthy Relationships for Parents: Real Life. Real Talk. ®

RLRT® provides valuable information, ideas, opportunities for dialogue, and tools/skills parents can use to help their children make responsible and sexually healthy decisions. The program highlights the important role that parents play as the primary sexuality educators of their own children and emphasizes that honest, open communication in families has important benefits. Many parents and guardians need assistance to build their comfort and skill level to open and maintain positive communication with their children and they aren't always comfortable providing that information. As the primary sexuality educator of your child, it's important to remember that communication about sexuality and relationships is an ongoing process that can support your child's health. Participants will learn ways to increase open, honest, age-appropriate and balanced talk about sexuality and relationships.

Sarah Gannon, MAAT (Crisis Intervention)

Social Media Awareness and Internet Safety Resources

This presentation will cover current social media trends seen across Connecticut and discuss problematic adolescent's behavior associated with apps and platforms. We will outline current Connecticut laws regarding sexting and internet crimes. Parents and caregivers will receive a variety of free resources to keep their families safe online.

Trooper Kate Cummings (Crisis Intervention)

Growing Up With Addiction, There is Hope!

Countless children grow up in homes with family members battling addiction. What exactly is addiction? How are these children affected? What can we do to support these children? Where can children find hope? These questions will be answered in this workshop.

Jessica S. McLawhon, MAEd, NBCT Assistant Professor, Gateway Community College (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning/Gender Non-Conforming and Transgender (LGBQ/GNCT) Youth

This presentation will provide an introduction and overview of some of the definitions & pronouns adults working with youth who identify on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Questioning/Gender Non-conforming, Transgender (LGBQ/GNCT) spectrums may use. Focus will be given to the discussion of the SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression) Data Collection initiative CT participates in, which will include an explanation of the data collected within the state and nationwide. An overview of risk factors bringing LGBQ/GNCT youth into the juvenile system will be outlined along with pathways into foster care and homelessness. Best practices to increase inclusivity, along with CT resources available, will also be discussed.

Nicole Kowal, M.S. (Crisis Intervention)

Life Experiences, Impactful Moments, and How to Use Them as Turning Points in Recovery

This workshop looks at your life experiences, memorable, impactful moments and reflect on them. Being able to self reflect on those scenarios. What was beneficial about them, what stood out, what worked, what didn't and how can you apply that to facing a similar scenario that may come up. Also, tying in those impactful moments and how they can be used moving forward. A lot of things people can use as motivation and drive can come from negativity, positivity, anger, to prove others wrong, to get back on track and continue on your recovery journey.

Alex Perfetto (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

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Sarah Gannon, MAAT Massachusetts Room (Crisis Intervention)

Counseling Inmates and Their Loved Ones.

This workshop will provide the history and current problems we are facing in today's society. Topics that will be discussed will be children of incarcerated parents, incarcerated fathers, incarcerated mothers, and family members who are impacted when a loved one is incarcerated.

Candyce Scott, MA, LPC, Suzanne Schweiter, M.S., School Psychologist and Educational Evaluator, and Kerry Kincy, MA, Community Psychology (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

I Can't Get My Work Done and Help Someone Else! - Distance Learning with Executive Functioning Skill Deficits.

Are you working from home? Are you having difficulty completing your work, while helping someone else do the same? Do you need help determining how your Learning Style plays a role in these tasks? If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes", we can help! Discover ways to organize your day, plan, prioritize, and maintain focus while completing tasks, and maintain focus in the face of adversity. The role brain chemistry plays in this will also be explored.

Amy D. Blank, Tutor Doctor and Dr. Brian Adams from The Brain Institute of America (Crisis Intervention)

Foster Parents of LGBTQ+ Youth

Participants will learn about specific challenges to communicating with and earning the trust of LGBTQ+ youth. The importance of using appropriate pronouns, as well as the differences between sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression will be explained. Tips for maintaining healthy boundaries and demonstrating consent while supporting youth in exploring and expressing their identities will also be explored. In addition, attendees will learn specific vulnerabilities to child sexual abuse and human trafficking faced by LGBTQ+ youth, and how to respond to a disclosure of child sexual abuse or sexual assault. There will be an opportunity for questions and discussions, and resources for community support and continued learning will be provided.

Lindsey Jones Bachelor of Arts In Women's and Gender Studies

Rachal Conley Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Criminal Behavior (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

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Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)/Toxic Stress/Trauma

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are the largest public health crisis to be identified in the past thirty years. Traumatic childhood experiences (toxic stress/trauma) impacts a child's daily life in the home, in school and the community. Even when children are too young to remember the events (neglect, physical/emotional/sexual abuse, abandonment, violence, etc.), the body never "forgets." Childhood adversity affects a child's ability to learn and behave in productive ways by changing brain chemistry and architecture and thus impacts their ability to learn and behave "normally" in schools. All too often, children who are experiencing trauma, neglect and abuse in their homes and communities are identified as having "special needs," such as ADHD, when in fact it is the trauma/toxic stress in their lives that is causing the misbehavior. Educators need to be keenly aware of this body of research and practical school-based remedies in order to mitigate the impact of toxic stress (ACEs) on successful child cognitive and emotional development, including impulsivity and misbehavior. In this workshop, the critically important information about this life- and practice-changing body of research, including ACEs and the ACEs Scale, will be introduced and the solution strategies will be presented.

Patricia A. Ciccone, C.A.G.S., L.P.C. and Jo Ann Freiberg, Ph.D. of School Climate Consultants, LLC (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

Process & Express Feelings for Healthy Body & Mind

Contrary to popular belief, science repeatedly demonstrates that chronic stressful feelings are at the core of most illness and disease. In this workshop, you will discover the chain of biological events that turns painful feelings into poor mental and physical health. Then learn how to reverse this domino effect, using intentional deep breathing to identify and process feelings, followed by a proven formula for communicating feelings and setting healthy boundaries.

Lois "Mimi" Stevens, CTBF (Crisis Intervention)

Child Sexual Abuse Training Module

Participants will learn about the continuum of sexual violence, specifically child sexual abuse. The training will cover risk factors, including the ways a child's intersecting identities and demographics may put them at an increased risk of sexual assault. Attendees will also learn some behavioral and physical signs that a child in their care may be a survivor of child sexual abuse, as well as how to respond thoughtfully and compassionately to a child's disclosure of sexual abuse. Participants will also learn how to create safe spaces in their homes. Opportunity for questions and discussion will be included, and resources for community support and continued learning will be provided.

Lindsey Jones Bachelor of Arts In Women's and Gender Studies (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

Join Rise Be Presents "The Warmline"

The Statewide Young Adult Warmline is a phone-based peer support line. Staff connect callers to community resources, motivate young people to move forward in life, and inspire their peers to live a life of self-defined purpose.

Marco Stanley (Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

Saturday October 24, 2020

Workshop B

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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Amy D. Blank, Tutor Doctor and Dr. Brian Adams from The Brain Institute of America (Crisis Intervention)

Restorative Practices

This session on Restorative Practices provides an overview of what it means to work restoratively rather than punitively. This is accomplished by focusing not on rules broken and punitive consequences but rather on the harms done and providing appropriate restorative consequences and the systems that are necessary to repair and support strong relationships among all family and/or school community members (children and adults). Working restoratively is a social/relational rather than a behaviorist model. Embracing restorative practices is not a program but rather a way of thinking, being and operating in the day-to-day. This workshop includes concrete and practical strategies for establishing the appropriate home, classroom and/or school-based routines as well as solving problems and conflicts when they arise.

Patricia A. Ciccone, C.A.G.S., L.P.C. and Jo Ann Freiberg, Ph.D. of School Climate Consultants, LLC

(Trauma and Crisis Intervention)

"Magic Button Mindfulness" for Kids (and their adults)

Mindfulness is wonderful but getting upset kids to sit still is tricky. What if there was a "magic button" that let you tap into the wisdom of mindfulness AND reduce painful feelings in just a few seconds? There are actually 11 Magic Buttons! At this stress-relieving workshop, open-minded participants will experience the phenomenon on the spot. You will also discover the presenter's storybook, designed to teach this evidence-based strategy in elementary schools, at home, or on the job.

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