

How You Are “*Making a Difference*”**In the Lives of Vulnerable Youth**

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Tuesday, November 27, 2018, proved to be a remarkable day, as over 190 SESP, Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Caregivers, Professionals, and Educators braved their way through the early morning traffic to attend the 7th Annual “*Making a Difference*” Conference held at the Best Western in Marlborough, MA. Exhibitors began arriving as early as 6:30am, with attendees following at 7:00am!

As the morning registration progressed, the buzz of excitement was felt in the air. We were greeted and welcomed by the Federation, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as well as the Department of Children and Families. Each offering their perspectives on the work that you do and giving thanks for all that you offer the students that you work with.

The Keynote, was presented by Susan Cole, the Director of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI), a joint project of Massachusetts Advocate for Children and Harvard Law School. The presentation titled Special Education and Trauma Sensitivity was outstanding and informative, and reinforcing how trauma impacts the student’s ability to learn in the classroom. It was an honor to have Susan be with us.

The workshops were innovative and varied. One attendee commented,

“I am a new SESP (assigned a student in August of 2018) and I found ALL the speakers and workshops to be informative, relevant, and inspiring.” J.S.

And presenters were delighted to have the opportunity to meet and see the work that you are doing as well. “I enjoyed the exposure to your work, and I was encouraged to have made several connections in the room. Thank you again!” K.B.

It is my hope that everyone was inspired and invigorated by the opportunity to come together and celebrate the amazing work that you do. Thank you again. A reminder that if you didn’t have a chance yet to fill out the survey, it is still available on the app! You may also access the presenter’s PowerPoints on the app!

We look forward to seeing everyone again at next years “*Making a Difference*” Conference 2019. A save the date will be sent soon.