

Session Descriptions

Keynote Session: 9:15am-10:45am (Ballroom)

I AM JANE DOE: Child Sex Trafficking and the Legal Battle Against Backpage.com

Mary Mazzio, Writer/Director/Producer, I AM JANE DOE

Jessica Soto, Associate, Ropes & Gray LLP

Keynote speakers Mary Mazzio, Writer/Director/Producer of the critically acclaimed documentary film, *I AM JANE DOE*, and Jessica Soto, Ropes & Gray Associate featured in the film, will discuss the legal battle several mothers across the country are waging on behalf of their middle school daughters who were trafficked for commercial sex on Backpage.com – including several right here in Massachusetts. Called “a powerful call to action,” and “a viscerally emotional case,” *I AM JANE DOE* captured not only the attention of film critics, but the popular press as well, providing a remarkable opportunity for culture shift, impact, and awareness, particularly with respect to the under-reported crime of child sex trafficking. The film has catalyzed extraordinary activity and sparked investigative reporting, a federal criminal probe of Backpage executives, several new lawsuits, and new federal legislation.

Mary Mazzio and Jessica Soto will discuss the issue of online child sex trafficking, the lawsuit brought on behalf of survivors against Backpage.com, the making of the film, and the advocacy and prevention that has followed. They keynote will feature clips from *I AM JANE DOE* and its companion film, *I AM LITTLE RED*, an animated short aimed at children most at-risk for sex trafficking (e.g. foster-care, runaway, LBGTQ, homeless, and adopted children), with the goal of prevention and awareness.

Breakout Workshop Session I: 11:00am-12:30pm

Following the Evidence in the Commercial Sexual Exploitation Forensic Interview

Julie Kenniston, MSW, LISW, National Criminal Justice Training Center / Fox Valley Technical College

Room: Ashland

As law enforcement agencies and other youth serving professionals begin to better identify youth at risk of exploitation, many referrals are being made for these youth to be interviewed. The CAC model provides many benefits in serving these youth, but there are also some considerations that are being overlooked. Trained, experienced forensic interviewers have expanded the types of cases that are seen for interviews and many skills cross over. Although there has been much training on the dynamics of exploitation, there are some key issues to address in the forensic interview that are different from the traditional types of cases seen in CACs. This presentation will compare and contrast exploitation cases with typical cases seen in CACs and offer suggestions on topic strategies unique to commercial sexual exploitation cases.

Doing What Works: Overview of Evidence-based Treatments and Innovations in Children’s Advocacy Centers

Kelly Kinnish, Ph.D., Georgia Center for Child Advocacy

Room: Commons (lobby level)

Evidence-based mental health treatments (EBTs) are a requirement for CAC accreditation, but effective implementation and sustainability in Children’s Advocacy Centers is often challenging. This workshop will provide an overview of EBTs and the rationale for their use, as well as a brief description of EBTs most commonly employed in CACs (TF-CBT, CFTSI, AF-CBT, PSB-CBT, etc.). There will be a particular focus on considerations for selecting EBTs for use in a CAC or by community partner providers, innovations of EBTs to address special populations, strategies for overcoming barriers to implementation and sustainability commonly experienced in CACs, and resources to support such efforts.

When to Make a Mountain Out of a Mole Hill: The Significance of Sentinel Injuries

Sasha Svendsen, MD, UMass Memorial Medical Center

Room: Wayland

This workshop will review the definition of sentinel injuries, injuries that are perceived to be “minor,” and discuss their significance in the context of child abuse. The workshop will address the learning needs of a multidisciplinary audience that includes medical providers, law enforcement agents, social workers and community partners, and engage all partners in active discussion and Q+A. Participants will learn how to recognize sentinel injuries, identify common concerning patterns of injuries, review the role of medical evaluation when abuse is a concern, and describe a strategy to engage medical providers as a resource in helping to keep children safe.

Research Collaboration on the Prosecution of Child Sexual Abuse: Challenges and Outcomes

Stephanie Block, Ph.D, UMass Lowell and Linda M. Williams, Ph.D, Wellesley Centers for Women

Room: Middlesex

There is a growing body of research examining the criminal prosecution of child sexual abuse (CSA). However, there are significant methodological and ethical challenges in the conduct of this research. One key component of success is assuring that the efforts involve close research-practitioner collaboration. This is critical to frame research questions, acquire access to confidential case records and trial evidence, understand the prosecutorial decision making and outcomes, and reliably code, analyze, and interpret the data so it is useful to the field. This session will address how we approached such obstacles and will discuss the findings of this collaborative research.

This research, funded by the National Institute of Justice, takes a child development and justice system approach to understand prosecution and the obstacles leading to high attrition rates in 500 CSA cases from four counties in one state. This case study design captures multiple models of prosecutorial response to CSA in real-world context, and we identify concerns with victim competency, credibility, cooperation, and evidentiary issues. We discuss the methodological and ethical challenges of this type of research. Findings suggest many barriers to prosecution and we review the current collaborative approach to making recommendations designed to change outcomes for children.

Supporting Immigrant Survivors of Sexual Assault in Uncertain Times

Hema Sarang-Sieminski, JD, Victim Rights Law Center

** This workshop will repeat in the morning and afternoon sessions **

Room: Carlisle

In this workshop geared towards advocates for survivors, we will review forms of relief available for immigrant survivors of sexual violence including U Visas, T Visas, VAWA Self-Petitions, SIJ Status and Asylum. Given the escalation of immigration enforcement efforts against immigrant communities, we will incorporate discussion of approaching immigration concerns during holistic intake, best practices for safety planning with immigrant survivors, and advocacy strategies when working with local law enforcement. This workshop will be presented through the lens of working with minor survivors who are either undocumented themselves or have family members who are undocumented and will include a case scenario.

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Plenary Session: 1:00pm-2:00pm (Ballroom)

Making the CAC Voice Heard at the National Level

Denise Edwards, MPP, Director of Government Affairs, National Children's Alliance

The National Children's Alliance (NCA) works to empower local communities to serve child victims of abuse.

Ms. Edwards will discuss NCA's role in advocating for legislation to better protect against child abuse and provide trauma informed care for children exposed to violence, and bringing national attention to child abuse and exploitation to ensure agencies have the support and resources they need to serve victims.

Concrete examples of NCA's advocacy will be shared, including the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, Victims of Crime Act funding, and most recently, the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA) / Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act of 2017 (FOSTA) to amend Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. Finally, Ms. Edwards will share NCA's current legislative priorities and what you can do to affect change on the local, and national level.

Breakout Workshop II: 2:00pm-3:00pm

Technology, Child Pornography, and Trafficking

Christopher Kelly, JD, Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General

Room: Ashland

This workshop covers what multidisciplinary team members and investigators need to know about digital evidence (including apps, websites, and social networking platforms) and which should be the primary focus during an investigation. Participants will learn important steps in the investigation of technology-facilitated child exploitation, including child pornography and trafficking, what specific information should be obtained from apps, websites, and social media platforms in this type of investigation, and which professionals should be collecting that information.

Mental Health Services Response to the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children:

Trauma-focused, Evidence-based Treatment and Provider Training

Kelly Kinnish, Ph.D, Georgia Center for Child Advocacy

Room: Commons (lobby level)

The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children is a severe and complex form of child sexual abuse that represents a particular challenge for mental health professionals. This workshop will describe Project Intersect, an initiative of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network specifically focused on the applications of trauma-focused treatment (TF-CBT) with commercially sexually exploited children and their families, as well as the training of a network of mental health providers in Georgia to serve CSEC clients. The workshop will describe specific treatment and training approaches, strategies for building on existing CAC resources and capacities, and client- and provider-level outcome data.

Vicarious Trauma and Building Resiliency in Child Abuse Organizations

Michele Mullen, MSW, LCSW. and Sue Ascione, MS, Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center

Room: Middlesex

This workshop addresses the emotional, mental, and physical toll that is often imposed on those in helping professions. Professionals will evaluate their resilience and learn strategies to combat compassion fatigue and burnout. Participants will learn how to define vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout; review concrete strategies for child abuse professionals to strengthen resilience; and learn how to build a Vicarious Trauma Toolkit for your organization.

Global Approach to Pediatric Sexual Assault Evidence Collection: Bridging Care and Analysis

Michelle Levasseur, MS, Massachusetts State Police Crime Laboratory

Rachel Niemiec, MSN, FNP-BC, Pedi SANE

Room: Wayland

This workshop will examine the Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program in Massachusetts. The attendees will be educated about the history of the program as well as the Massachusetts Pediatric Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit. During the workshop there will be a practical discussion on the parameters of evidence collection and options available for maximizing forensic evidence recovery and the role of both the Children's Advocacy Center and the State Police Crime Lab in the collection and examination of the forensic evidence. Various case studies, including both pediatric and adult/adolescent cases will be presented, highlighting the process of a case from evidence collection, to the forensic lab, to the CAC and beyond.

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