



Youth at Risk
A Program of
Pathways for Children



Pathways for Children
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Passing the Baton: Youth at Risk (YAR) Conference Partnership Transfers from Salem State University to Pathways for Children

Gloucester, MA – The YAR Conference Planning Committee has announced Pathways for Children as their new partner for the Youth at Risk (YAR) conference. This event is the region's only annual all-day conference for professionals who work with at-risk youth. The mission of YAR is to support communities of professionals serving children, youth and families, and to provide them with affordable continuing education, collaborative networking and self-care opportunities. The YAR conference is geared toward individuals working with and caring for youth in a variety of settings—family, community, school, religious, healthcare, human service, recreational and legal. Since its beginning, YAR has been run primarily by a committee of volunteers who are leaders in the fields represented above.

"On behalf of the Youth at Risk Conference Committee I would like to express our gratitude to co-founders Kathy Moriconi, Mike Duda and the Essex County Community Foundation for their foresight in launching YAR 20 years ago. The growth of the conference is evidence of the importance of bringing helping professionals together to learn from and support each other. We also extend our appreciation to Salem State University for partnering with us since 2015. We are excited to join the Pathways for Children team. Together we are committed to furthering YAR's mission of providing professional development, networking opportunities and support to providers serving youth at risk, especially as they work tirelessly during this complicated time. We look forward to expressing our passion for serving youth and their families with our colleagues at YAR 2021!" –Jane Truesdell Ellis, YAR Committee Chair

The Essex County Community Foundation established the YAR conference in 2000 as a response to the need for increased collaboration and coordination among the many providers of services to at-risk youth in and around Essex County. From 2000 to 2015, the conference was conducted in partnership with Essex County Community Foundation and held at Endicott College. In 2015, the coordinating partnership transferred to Salem State University and shortly thereafter the conference was relocated to the Salem State campus. "We here at Salem State University were so pleased to have been able to partner directly with the Youth at Risk conference since 2015, and to host the event on our campus for three years. As YAR moves into the next stage of its organizational journey, we look forward to ways in which SSU might continue to be engaged with the important work undertaken at future YAR conferences, bringing to bear a shared commitment to the professional development of those who serve some of our

most vulnerable in society.” -David J. Silva, Provost and Academic Vice President at Salem State University

The mission of Pathways for Children is to serve the best interests of infant through adolescent children and their families – whether disadvantaged by circumstance or in search of opportunity – by delivering the empowering gift of quality educational, social development and support services that strengthen the family unit and the community. Headquartered in Gloucester, MA, the agency serves 14 North Shore communities. Pathways will be able to ensure the 20-year history of this conference carries on into the future. In addition to supporting at-risk families, Pathways will also have the opportunity to support the professionals working with at-risk families. “I am so pleased that Pathways is able to enter into a partnership with the Youth at Risk Committee thus assuring that this high quality, sought after conference will continue its evolution well into the future. I have had the pleasure of participating in the conference from the beginning when Mike Duda and Kathy Moriconi brought the concept of a county-wide, youth-focused gathering to fruition. The growth since then is staggering and the opportunities for training and networking the conference offers are unparalleled in the region. As the CEO of Pathways, and a true fan of Mike, I feel a special pride that our organization is able to sponsor the opportunity YAR offers to the hundreds of participants each year.”- Sue Todd, Pathways for Children

For more information about the 2021 conference, contact yar@pw4c.org.