

## **Session Descriptions**

### **Keynote: 9:15am-10:15am (Ballroom)**

#### **Rediscovering the Beauty Within**

*Sasha Joseph Neulinger, Speaker, Filmmaker & Survivor*

*Director, "Rewind / Co-Founder, Step 1 Films / Founder & President, Voice For The Kids*

Sasha Joseph Neulinger will share his autobiographical story about his journey surviving multi-generational child sexual abuse. In this presentation, Sasha utilizes photos, childhood drawings, home video and archival news footage as immersive aids to invite the audience on his journey from child victim to adult survivor. Covering the abuse, family dynamics, childhood therapy, the prosecution process, and how he got to where he currently is today, Sasha's presentation is as educational as it is inspirational.

### **Breakout Workshop Session I: 10:30am-12:00pm**

#### **Core Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Awareness – Identifying Children: A Collaborative Approach**

*Eric Nation, Lt. & Stacey Read, BA, MSW / National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children*

*Room: Commons (lobby level)*

Ignored, abused, and abandoned – these are some of the chronic conditions experienced by children raised in environments where there is substance abuse or illegal drug use, manufacturing, cultivation and distribution. Drug endangered children are part of a very large, and growing population of children whose lives have been seriously and negatively impacted by dangerous drugs. Thousands of these children across our country go unnoticed and do not receive the necessary care and treatment to heal from these abusive environments. If ignored and left unsupported these children continue to be victims caught in a cycle of drug abuse. The primary challenge with illegal substance abuse and drug endangered children is in aligning the agencies and systems responsible for preventing, intervening, and treating these issues to increase the chances of better outcomes.

Through the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (National DEC), the drug endangered children mission focuses on the formation of multidisciplinary partnerships that take advantage of existing agency personnel, resources, and responsibilities and coordinates their mutual interests and duties to meet the specific needs of these children. The focus on these children's needs extends throughout the entire process until the child is in a permanent, safe and positive functioning environment. This session looks at overcoming the challenges in aligning the agencies and systems responsible for preventing, intervening, and treating these issues to change the trajectories of the lives of drug endangered children and break multi-generational cycles of abuse and neglect.

#### **So You Can Identify a Victim of Commercial Sexual Exploitation, Now What? How Your Multidisciplinary Team Can Effectively Engage with Youth Who Are Being Exploited**

*Rachel Niemiec, MSN, FNP-BC, SANE & Amanda Fowle, JD, Plymouth County DA's Office*

*Room: Ashland*

To date, conference workshops highlighting the provision of care to victims of the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) have focused largely on identification and reporting of these crimes. Implementing new policies and being open to fully utilizing the creativity and resources of all MDT

members is an important step towards successfully handling these cases. Multidisciplinary teams must also adjust their measures of success to improve outcomes for the commercially sexually exploited youth we serve. This workshop aims to combine the perspectives of seasoned prosecutor of sex crimes and a Pediatric Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner who is also a survivor of commercial sexual exploitation, as they share the lessons they have learned and valuable insights into how to successfully engage with and ultimately support victims of CSEC. They will utilize interactive case examples, survivor vignettes, and suggestions for application to various disciplines interacting with at-risk or exploited youth.

**Understanding the Neurobiology of Acute Traumatic Events: From the Brain to Behavior**

*Hilary Hodgdon, PhD / The Trauma Center*

*Room: Middlesex*

This training session is designed for a range of professionals who work with survivors of trauma including mental health professionals, advocates, law enforcement officers, and prosecutors. The content of this training includes; functions of brain areas that are involved in responding to traumatic events; how the brain and body respond to traumatic events; the influence of traumatic events on memory processes; and common emotional and behavioral responses to trauma. Distressing symptoms and behaviors will be re-framed to emphasize how individuals adapt to and survive overwhelming stress.

**Turn Up the Beat: The Use of Music in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**

*Jessica Griffin, PsyD, Child Trauma Training Center & Jessica Wozniak, PsyD, Baystate Medical Center*

*Room: Wayland*

Using music in TF-CBT can strengthen the therapeutic relationship, foster engagement, and assist youth in proceeding through treatment components. Children and adolescents who are hesitant to engage in treatment and those who avoid directly discussing anxiety-provoking memories may be more comfortable expressing themselves through music. By introducing this medium into TF-CBT, clinicians can incorporate platforms in which youth are more comfortable thereby improving treatment outcomes. Young children to adolescents, youth with complex trauma histories, and youth who struggle to engage in treatment benefit from the integration of music.

**It's Elementary: Legal Options for Sexual Assault Survivors in Primary and Secondary School**

*Katrina Eberly, JD & Eleni Kalmoukos, JD / Victim Rights Law Center*

*Room: Carlisle*

This workshop will go through the legal options available to sexual assault survivors in the pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade setting and will discuss those options available in the immediate aftermath of an assault and long after the assault.

### **Plenary Session: 1:15pm-2:15pm (Ballroom)**

*Jenn Abelson, Investigative Reporter and Author*

Jenn Abelson is an investigative reporter for The Washington Post and co-author of the memoir, "I Have the Right To: A High School Survivor's Story of Sexual Assault, Justice, and Hope," by Chessy Prout. In 2014, Chessy was a freshman at St. Paul's School, a prestigious boarding school in New Hampshire, when a senior boy sexually assaulted her as part of a ritualized game of conquest. Chessy broke her silence in 2016 to help other survivors know they are not alone, and they have the right to have their voices heard.

Jenn joined The Washington Post in 2019 after working as an investigative reporter for the Boston Globe Spotlight Team. Her investigations have exposed sexual assault at prep schools in New England, sexual harassment at ESPN, and sexual misconduct in the modeling industry. In 2015, she was named a Pulitzer Prize finalist for her work with the Spotlight Team on "Shadow Campus," a series about dangerous off-campus college housing.

### **Breakout Workshop Session II: 2:30pm-4:00pm**

#### **The DEC Approach - Moving from Awareness to Action**

*Eric Nation, Lt. & Stacey Read, BA, MSW / National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children*  
Room: *Commons*

This training by the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (DEC) focuses on how to implement the DEC Approach which is a comprehensive strategy based on a common vision, collaboration that is on-going between various disciplines and agencies, and on-going changes in practice. This DEC Approach has proven to be effective in improving the likelihood of better outcomes for drug endangered children. This training provides insights about how various practitioners—including child welfare professionals, law enforcement officers, court/judicial professionals, prosecutors, probation/parole, medical personnel, educators and treatment providers—are in a position to identify, protect, and serve drug endangered children and their families.

The trainers discuss the identification of risks to drug endangered children and what all disciplines can look for when collecting evidence and information on drug endangered children. The trainers utilize pictures and video of real DEC scenarios to assist professionals in understanding what to look for regarding the "life of the child." The training includes trainer led discussions and hands on exercises to demonstrate how implementing collaboration enhances the likelihood of better outcomes for drug endangered children.

#### **CAC Response to Children with Problematic Sexual Behaviors – New York's Perspective**

*Renee Roman, LMSW / START Children's Center*  
Room: *Ashland*

Problematic sexual behavior is a phrase that has replaced many of the old words to describe children up to the age of 18 who have engaged in sexual behavior with another child. Through presentation and group discussion this workshop will address reasons for changing the language and what is meant by

‘problematic sexual behavior.’ In addition, this presentation will focus on the evidence based/evidence informed treatment model from Oklahoma University. The presentation will discuss the components of treatment and inform the audience about the training for this model and what is needed to achieve fidelity. Finally, the presentation will discuss the roll-out of this treatment model in New York State. The successes and lessons learned will be highlighted. The presentation will end discussing the next steps for New York State. The trainer will leave time for questions and discussion at the end of the presentation.

**Complex Trauma in Children: Influence on the Brain, Body, and Behavior**

*Hilary Hodgdon, PhD / The Trauma Center*

*Room: Middlesex*

This training session is designed for a range of professionals who work with survivors of trauma including mental health professionals, advocates, law enforcement officers, and prosecutors. The content of this training includes the impact of trauma on the brain; the definition of complex trauma; ways that complex trauma influences development; and behavioral manifestations of complex trauma.

**Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Considerations for Children in Foster Care**

*Heather Forkey, MD, UMASS Foster Care Evaluation Services / Roann Vecchia, LSWA,  
Department of Children & Families / Courtney Sans, JD, Worcester County District Attorney's Office /  
Jessica Berry, JD, MSW, Children's Law Center of MA / Charity Bell, MPA, DMH & Foster Parent*

*Room: Wayland*

Multidisciplinary teams will learn about important considerations for working with children in foster care, from a variety of perspectives, including that of a pediatrician working with children in foster care, child protective services, prosecutor, a foster parent, and an attorney representing children involved in the child welfare system. By the end of the workshop, attendees will be able to identify health care issues of children in foster care and better understand perspectives of child protection and of foster parents.

**Collecting Minimal Facts**

*Anthony DeVincenzo, MA / Northeast Regional Children's Advocacy Center*

*Room: Carlisle*

The initial response to a child's disclosure of abuse is critical to the child's ability to recover from the trauma, as well as to the ensuing investigation. This workshop will explore the importance of the initial response to a child victim and the collection of minimal facts. During the workshop, we will examine when and how to conduct minimal facts and the appropriate steps necessary to gather basic information for the investigation. Participants will learn to evaluate and assess child abuse cases after collecting minimal facts and know when to engage the services of children's advocacy centers and multidisciplinary teams in their community