



## 2024 Conference Agenda

### TUESDAY, APRIL 2 – DAY 1

7:15 am – 8:15 am **Check-In and Breakfast**

7:45 am – 8:00 am **Music by Burke High School Chamber Orchestra**

8:00 am – 8:15 am **Welcome and Announcements**

Presentation of Colors by Burke High School Army JROTC Cadets

Star Spangled Banner performed by Burke High School Chamber Orchestra

8:15 am – 9:15 am **Plenary Presentation**

*The Power of Connections, Hope, and Resilience*

**Speaker:** [Lisa A. Utterback](#)

**Presentation Description:** Every child deserves the opportunity to live their best life. Positive relationships matter. Children need advocates and role models who are invested in their well-being. When children connect with adults who see their potential, those relationships foster hope by building resilience and teaching goal setting.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe the impact of positive relationships in the lives of young people
2. Foster hope
3. Articulate how relationships inspire resilience

9:15 am – 9:30 am **Break**

9:30 am – 10:45 am **Morning Breakout Sessions I**

*Creating Space: How to Leverage Youth Voices in Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Awareness Efforts*

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speakers:** [Julie Hebenstreit](#)

**Presentation Description:** As a community-driven nonprofit specializing in suicide prevention and mental health awareness, The Kim Foundation has created youth-oriented prevention strategies and initiatives to better protect the youth in the greater Omaha area. This session details the process and results of a community-concentrated effort to leverage youth voices in suicide prevention and mental health awareness efforts.

**Objectives:**

1. Implement effective strategies to leverage youth voices in professional practices
2. Engage in effective community-wide youth suicide prevention efforts
3. Apply at least two youth-led prevention strategies into their work with youth and families

*Lessons from a Mental Health Co-Responder*

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speaker:** [Shelley Pool, M.Ed., LMHP, CCTP](#)

**Presentation Description:** Many law enforcement agencies across the country are implementing Mental Health Co-Responders as a way to better respond to the crisis calls in the community. This collaboration between law enforcement and mental health providers requires both groups to understand each other's expertise and contributions to a crisis call. Both parties learn from each other. Participants in this session will learn from the experiences of a mental health co-responder working in the Omaha Police Department. Shelley will share both what she has learned by doing the work alongside law enforcement and how she believes she has impacted law officers.

**Objectives:**

1. Apply best practice strategies to effectively approach individuals in crisis
2. List practical choices to elicit cooperative behaviors from individuals in crisis
3. Collaborate with other crisis response professionals, each of whom has unique responsibilities in the situation

***Cultivating Safety: Understanding Common Misconceptions of Youth Behavior and Practicing Trauma-Informed Responding***

*Repeats in the Morning Breakout Sessions II*

**Speaker:** [Dr. Cambria Corsi](#)

**Presentation Description:** Participants will review common behaviors which may indicate an individual is experiencing a trauma response. There are frequent misconceptions about the functions of these behaviors. Often caregivers inadvertently punish these behaviors. Participants will explore trauma-informed ways to respond to youth in crisis to ensure they feel seen, heard, and safe.

**Objectives:**

1. Identify common signs that an individual is experiencing a trauma response
2. Implement strategies to address the misconceptions that lead to inadvertently punishing youth who are experiencing a trauma response
3. Apply appropriate, trauma-informed strategies to respond to youth in crisis and cultivate safety

***Showing Up for LGBT+ Youth***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speaker:** [Cole Urh, PsyD, LMHP, pLP](#)

**Presentation Description:** Youth who are members of the LGBTQIA+ community often feel misunderstood by adult caregivers. Participants will explore risk and protective factors for this population. In order to communicate more effectively with these individuals, participants will learn and practice specific communication skills and microskills they can use in their work with young people.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe the risk and protective factors associated with the LGBTQIA+ population of young people
2. Implement specific communication skills and microskills to enhance your work with young people in this community
3. Incorporate appropriate vocabulary into your communication with LGBTQIA+ youth

***The Spirit of the Child: Caring for the Spiritual Needs of Children***

*Repeats in the Morning Breakout Sessions II*

**Speaker:** [Yulia Kazakova](#)

**Presentation Description:** Yulia will use her experience as a hospital-based chaplain to discuss children's spirituality. She will define spirituality and its importance in coping with

traumas such as illness, grief, and hospitalization. She will cover the role of pediatric chaplains and their role in working with children and their caregivers.

**Objectives:**

1. Define spirituality and its role in coping with traumas such as illness and grief
2. Discover how children express their spiritual needs
3. Articulate how caregivers and other professionals can meet the spiritual needs of children who are experiencing trauma

***Ally or Accomplice - How to Support Marginalized and Minoritized Students***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speaker:** [Vern Davis-Showell](#)

**Presentation Description:** Participants will delve into the nuances of supporting students of color, understanding the challenges they face, and gaining practical insights into becoming effective advocates. Participants will hear key concepts and strategies to empower educators and other stakeholders in creating an equitable and welcoming learning space. Participants will gain valuable insights into the complexities of supporting marginalized and minoritized students, and access surveys that will help them to assess their current practices.

**Objectives:**

1. Contrast an ally and an accomplice, as it pertains to working with children of color
2. Become a proactive and intentional advocate
3. Implement a reflective cycle to assess, challenge, consider, practice, and build capacity

***Emotional Survival Part I***

*Part II available in Morning Breakout Sessions II*

**Speaker:** [Chief Robert White](#)

**Presentation Description:** This session, open to law enforcement professionals only, will review the short- and long-term effects of law enforcement on the personal and professional lives of the officers. Chief White will teach law enforcement professionals behavioral strategies to inoculate against loss of idealism and inappropriate behavior patterns.

**Objectives:**

1. Identify the sources of career stress unique to law enforcement
2. Describe the impact of their career on their personal and professional lives
3. Practice strategies to ensure emotional survival

***Support After Systems***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speaker:** [Emily Boardman, MSW](#) and [Shelby Wolf, BSW](#)

**Presentation Description:** Project Everlast works with youth and families to connect them with community resources to improve youth's opportunities and networks. Kids who are involved in systems of care have unique needs. These needs change based on their age and situation. In this session, hear from experts in the field and a panel of young people with lived experience.

**Objectives:**

1. Identify specific strategies to engage youth from this demographic
2. Adopt ways to create trusting relationships with systems-involved youth
3. Use the lived experiences of young people to inform your work practices

10:45 am – 11:00 am **Break**

11:00 am – 12:15 pm **Morning Breakout Sessions II**

***When a Child Takes it Back: Dealing with Recantation in Child Sexual Abuse***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speakers:** [Colleen Brazil, MSW, LIMHP](#), [Dara Delehant, JD](#), [Machaela Hackendahl, MS, LIMHP](#) and [Joanna Halbur](#)

**Presentation Description:** This training offers participants education in prosecuting cases of child sexual assault when a child recants at some point in the case. Often complex, the presentation will provide insight into the dynamics of these cases and offer strategies to overcome the challenges associated with investigation and prosecution of these cases.

**Objectives:**

1. Explore the unique dynamics of child sexual abuse cases and reasons for recantation utilizing research in the field
2. Identify strategies to manage a recantation during investigation or prior to prosecution of these cases
3. Describe the trial strategy and the use of the forensic interviewer to address recantation during a trial

### ***Understanding and Responding to Trafficking of Minors***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speakers:** [Katie Hansen](#), [Taylor Newton](#) and [Sgt Brett Schrage](#)

**Presentation Description:** Join Project Harmony's Anti-Trafficking Youth Services staff and Omaha Police Department for an overview of trafficking in our community. Hear about the collaboration between these teams over the past 3 years to interrupt the cycles of trauma for these youth.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe the Anti-Trafficking and Missing Youth Services (ATYS/MYS) Programs
2. Distinguish the dynamics of trafficking of minors
3. Recognize the signs of trafficking of minors
4. Assess how to respond

### ***Thinking Outside the Box to Prove Trafficking and Exploitation Cases***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speakers:** [Kelli Ceraolo](#) and [Danielle Fliam](#)

**Presentation Description:** In this session, hear from two experienced professionals working in the prosecution of trafficking and exploitation cases. These cases present unique hurdles that investigators and prosecutors must navigate. The presenters will discuss how different agencies work together to corroborate and prosecute cases of trafficking and exploitation involving youth.

**Objectives:**

5. Identify common hurdles in the investigation and litigation of trafficking and exploitation cases
6. Apply strategies to guide evidence collection and litigation
7. Describe strategies by which organizations collaborate effectively

### ***Children, Teens and Screens: Why The Shift From Control to Connection Is Key to Mental Health***

*Session does not repeat*

**Speaker:** [Erin Walsh](#)

**Presentation Description:** There is escalating concern about the impact of technology on child and adolescent mental health. It's tempting to respond with an ever-growing list of "places you shouldn't go and things you shouldn't do." Yet evidence indicates that this approach is not only insufficient given the complexity of young people's digital lives but that it can amplify risk. Combining science, warmth, and humor, Erin Walsh will facilitate an

exploration of the relationship-based approach to digital wellbeing that children and youth need to thrive.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe how “screen time” has changed over the last decade and become familiar with children’s current media habits and behaviors
2. Evaluate the relationship between screen time and child and adolescent mental health and wellbeing
3. Explain adult mediation strategies and their impact on exposure to risk and risk behaviors
4. Identify strategies associated with successful parental/adult mediation that are developmentally appropriate for young children through adolescence

***Emotional Survival Part II***

**Speaker:** [Chief Robert White](#)

**Presentation Description:** This session, open to law enforcement professionals only, will review the short- and long-term effects of law enforcement on the personal and professional lives of the officers. Chief White will teach law enforcement professionals behavioral strategies to inoculate against loss of idealism and inappropriate behavior patterns.

**Objectives:**

1. Identify the sources of career stress unique to law enforcement
2. Describe the impact of their career on their personal and professional lives
3. Practice strategies to ensure emotional survival

***Nurturing Hope for Career Well-being***

*Repeats on Day 2*

**Speakers:** [Liz Bartels](#) and [Jonathan Davis](#)

**Presentation Description:** Professionals working in the world of child welfare encounter high levels of stress that can take a toll on personal well-being. Hope is the belief that a bright future is possible, and you have a role in making it happen. Participants will learn to define hope, assess their own levels of hope, and apply strategies to nurture hope in their professional work. This will result in higher levels of job satisfaction and greater effectiveness in your work with youth and families.

**Objectives:**

1. Apply the concepts of hope science to avoid burnout and ensure career well-being
2. Implement specific strategies to nurture hope in their work
3. Define hope and its application to career satisfaction

12:15 pm – 1:30 pm

**Lunch Break**

**Optional Lunch & Learn**

***It Takes All of Us: A Conversation About Ending the Sexual Exploitation of Children***

**Speaker:** [Michele Bang](#)

**Presentation Description:** The staff at Project Harmony need the help of our community to develop programming, tools, and supports by which we can end the sexual exploitation of children in our community. In this lunchtime session, Michele Bang, the Deputy Director of Project Harmony will share some of what we are learning about this topic through our Anti-Trafficking Youth Services Program and will ask you to weigh in on compelling questions that can help us better understand and address this complex issue. Your professional knowledge and experience is key to solving this issue in our community. Participants will respond to key questions through our Whova conference app, so come with the app pre-loaded on your phone or device.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe the Project Harmony Anti-Trafficking Youth Services program and how/when to refer concerns
2. Contribute professional knowledge and experience to help in the development of a community response to the topic
3. Invest in the ongoing efforts to address the issue of trafficking

1:30 pm – 2:45 pm

**Afternoon Breakout Sessions**

2:45 pm – 3:00 pm

**Break**

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

**Plenary Presentation**

*Connected: How to Show Up For Young People in the Digital Age*

**Speaker:** [Erin Walsh](#)

**Presentation Description:** Adolescence is a time of big transformation – both neurologically and technologically. Erin Walsh will connect the dots between the science of the adolescent brain and the risks and rewards unleashed by their expanding digital worlds. You will leave with a better understanding of when technology meets the developmental needs of teens, when it doesn't, and what adults can do about it.

**Objectives:**

1. Explain how specific media habits can strengthen or undermine adolescent mental health and well-being
2. Describe major developmental changes in the adolescent brain that sensitize adolescents to the effects of social media and technology
3. Activate major protective factors for adolescents in this digital age

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3 – DAY 2**

7:30 am – 8:15 am

**Networking and Breakfast**

8:15 am – 9:45 am

**Morning Breakout Sessions I** (beginning with announcements)

*Helping Children with Disabilities Tell Their Stories*

*Session does not repeat*

**Speaker:** [Staci Whitney, LMSW](#)

**Presentation Description:** Professionals involved in the investigation of abuse and neglect will advance their understanding of basic communication techniques that are reliable, legally defensible, effective, and accommodating for children with disabilities who are alleged victims of abuse or neglect. Participants will learn about biases and assumptions related to investigating cases involving child victims or witnesses with disabilities, abuse dynamics, pre-interview considerations, question types, and other information on eliciting reliable information from children with disabilities.

**Objectives:**

1. Challenge common biases related to child victims with disabilities
2. Discuss pre-interview considerations for cases involving child victims and witnesses with disabilities
3. Identify accommodations, adaptations, and considerations for communicating with children with disabilities

*One Family's Journey*

*Repeats in the Morning Breakout Sessions II*

**Speaker:** [Julie Delkamiller, Ed.D.](#)

**Presentation Description:** This session will explore the lived experience of a family navigating the traumatic events related to the sexual abuse of a middle school child by a trusted adult. This presentation will illustrate the manipulation process, describe the collaborative supports by professionals at Project Harmony in the family's healing, and celebrate the strengths that have emerged in the youth and family.

**Objectives:**

1. Discover how one child was influenced by manipulative behaviors of a trusted adult
2. Describe the ways the services of a child advocacy center supported the youth and family
3. Identify ways in which organizations can promote safety and prevention through policies

***Just Ask the Question: Balancing Expectations in a Child's Forensic Interview***

*Repeats in the Morning Breakout Sessions II*

**Speakers:** [Dani Cordle, LCSW](#) and [Janessa Michaelis, PLMHP](#)

**Presentation Description:** A child's developmental capabilities can present challenges when specific information is needed within the investigation. Investigative parties must understand the child's ability to talk about events, recall memories, and provide certain details. This information can subsequently be used to consider alternative techniques to gather necessary information during the forensic interview. Hear from two forensic interviewers about the challenges and opportunities to gather critical details from a wide array of children.

**Objectives:**

1. Articulate how the child's developmental levels impact his or her ability to provide information essential to the investigation
2. Describe the impact trauma may have on a child's ability to talk about memories and recall information
3. Choose strategies based upon the developmental level of the child and the unique investigative needs of each case
4. Identify strategies to meet investigative multidisciplinary teams' needs

***You Are More Than Your Job***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speakers:** [Cathy Hudson, MD, FAAP](#) and [Lizzie Hudson](#)

**Presentation Description:** Join this session for an open and honest discussion with a dynamic mother-daughter duo who work in two areas of child welfare - pediatric medicine and advocacy. Hear them share their lived experiences, ups, downs, and everything in-between. Explore how culture and field of practice impact work-life balance for both the speakers and the audience.

**Objectives:**

1. Engage in a candid exploration of the lived experiences of working in child welfare
2. Explore how cultural background and systemic factors influence work-life balance within the realm of child welfare
3. Discover practical strategies to enhance personal resilience within your own work context

***Survivor Voice: Implementing Survivors' Perspectives in DV cases in the Juvenile Court System***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speakers:** [Judge Chad M. Brown](#), [Elizabeth Straham](#) and [Heather Werthmann](#)

**Presentation Description:** This training will highlight how Douglas County Court incorporates survivor voice, the perspective of the non-offending caregivers, into domestic violence cases.

Hear the panel describe the importance of looking at cases through a domestic violence-informed lens, an overview of 1184 multidisciplinary teams, how to partner with the survivor during MDT case reviews, and how to implement domestic violence-informed treatment plans into court orders.

**Objectives:** Respond to the impact that domestic violence has on families within the child welfare system by:

1. Referring to and participating in the staffing of 1184 multidisciplinary teams for such cases
2. Implementing survivor voice into the case reviews
3. Incorporating domestic violence-informed treatment plans into court orders

### ***Fostering Attachment—The Good, Bad and Ugly Truths about Healing Trauma***

*Session does not repeat*

**Speakers:** [Dr. Anne Hobbs](#) and [Laura Opfer](#)

**Presentation Description:** Healing trauma and caring for children with attachment challenges is hard and messy. Examine the foster and adoptive parent experience while exploring the root causes of attachment issues and share practical strategies foster parents and supportive professionals can utilize to help support children and youth as they form healthy attachments.

**Objectives:**

1. Identify the prevalence of attachment disorder
2. Describe the root causes and challenges presented by this disorder
3. Support both the caregiver and child through this journey

9:45 am – 10:00 am

**Break**

10:00 am – 11:15 am

**Morning Breakout Sessions II**

### ***Abuse Prevention in Sport***

*Session does not repeat*

**Speakers:** [Patrick Caldwell](#) and [Brian E. Tomlinson](#)

**Presentation Description:** Learners will gain an understanding of the U.S. Center for SafeSport and its approach to preventing misconduct and abuse within the context of Sport. Presenters will highlight the Center's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) that are a requirement for organizations within the Center's jurisdiction. Speakers will offer guidance for others looking to implement safety measures in their programs. If children in your life are in athletic programs, this session will teach you what to look for in quality athletic programs.

**Objectives:**

1. Understand the work of the U.S. Center for SafeSport
2. Articulate the key elements of effective abuse prevention policy in athletic organizations
3. Discover resources you can use in your work with young athletes to prevent, recognize, and respond to concerning behaviors and abuse

### ***What to Do When Kids Run From Care***

*Session does not repeat*

**Speakers:** [Angie Howard, LCSW](#) and [McKayla LaBorde, M.S., M.A. Ed.](#)

**Presentation Description:** In this session, participants will learn from professionals working in schools to address the problem of kids eloping from care. The strategies used within school settings can be generalized for other settings and implemented by any who work with kids. This session will teach strategies used to assess behaviors and safety plan.



**Objectives:**

1. Implement a safety planning process that relies on the information gathered from an effective behavior assessment
2. Generalize the strategies used within a school special education environment to other applicable settings
3. Use appropriate techniques when responding to a child attempting to or leaving care

***Nurturing Hope for Career Well-being***

**Speakers:** [Liz Bartels](#) and [Jonathan Davis](#)

**Presentation Description:** Professionals working in the world of child welfare encounter high levels of stress that can take a toll on personal well-being. Hope is the belief that a bright future is possible, and you have a role in making it happen. Participants will learn to define hope, assess their own levels of hope, and apply strategies to nurture hope in their professional work. This will result in higher levels of job satisfaction and greater effectiveness in your work with youth and families.

**Objectives:**

1. Apply the concepts of hope science to avoid burnout and ensure career well-being
2. Implement specific strategies to nurture hope in their work
3. Define hope and its application to career satisfaction

***The Black Woman/Child: Exploring Adulthood and the Intersections of Child Welfare and Domestic Violence Survivorship***

*Repeats in the Afternoon Breakout Sessions*

**Speaker:** [Ayana Wallace Vieux](#)

**Presentation Description:** This session explores the lived experiences of Black women and girl survivors as they navigate the child welfare and social services systems. It examines the impacts of adulthood on Black girls and women and explores how implicit bias shapes lifelong experiences with bias. The session unpacks strategies for how we can better support Black survivors, reframe narratives about Black women and families, and advocate for changing the status quo.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe the intersections of identity, culture, and violence in Black survivors' lives
2. Identify best practices for supporting survivors
3. Reframe narratives about Black women and families

11:30 am – 1:00 pm

**Keynote Luncheon**

**Speaker:** [John Walsh](#)

1:15 pm – 2:30 pm

**Afternoon Breakout Sessions**

***Response and Resolution to Abuse in Sport***

**Speakers:** [Patrick Caldwell](#) and [Brian E. Tomlinson](#)

**Presentation Description:** This session will highlight the work of the U.S. Center for SafeSport and the Response and Resolution process it employees when there are concerns of abuse or misconduct within its jurisdiction. This can include investigations into these matters and subsequent sanctions. Participants will also hear how the Center collaborates with child advocacy professionals during this process.

**Objectives:**

1. Describe the work done by the U.S. Center for SafeSport
2. Engage the Center in local cases when appropriate

3. Explain how the Center collaborates with other agencies at local, regional, and national levels

***Working Together: How CACs and MDTs Can Best Serve Children with Disabilities***

**Speaker:** [Staci Whitney, LMSW](#)

**Presentation Description:** Children with disabilities experience disproportionately higher rates of abuse and neglect. Professionals involved in these cases must understand and employ best practices for accommodating children with disabilities. These practices can be applied before, during, and after the interview to ensure best meet the needs of all stakeholders. Participants will evaluate policies and practices to ensure they are best serving child victims and witnesses with disabilities.

**Objectives:**

1. Identify common biases regarding investigating cases with children with disabilities
2. Describe the adaptations and considerations for accommodating children with disabilities in CAC settings
3. Implement pre-interview considerations for cases involving child victims and witnesses with disabilities

***Roadmap for Collaboration: Effective Practices for Collaborating with Schools***

**Speaker:** [Mandy Farwell, LCSW](#) and [McKayla LaBorde, M.S., M.A. Ed.](#)

**Presentation Description:** In order to collaborate effectively professionals must understand the unique perspective and parameters that each professional brings to the work. In this session, participants will learn about the perspective educators bring by evaluating school policies and practices. Learn how topics such as school privacy laws, special education, and educational rights impact the collaboration.

**Objectives:**

1. Investigate the policies and procedures that drive the collaboration from the school perspective
2. Avoid common pitfalls that often derail the collaboration
3. Apply best practice strategies to streamline communication between school professionals and other members of the team

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm

**Break**

2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

**Plenary Presentation**

***Building Hope in the Work Ahead***

**Speaker:** [Dr. Scott Butler](#)

**Presentation Description:** Over 2000 research studies show that hope is the #1 predictor of future well-being outcomes. Hope is essential to building thriving youth and families. Hope is skill based. It can be taught and practiced. One of the best ways to build hope in our clients, is to surround them with hopeful case professionals and community members. Participants will learn about how hope science and strategies you can use to build hope in yourself and others. Some of the speakers from the past few days will share their wisdom and experiences to inspire you to remain hopeful as you leave this year’s Speaking of Children Conference.

**Objectives:**

1. Define hope
2. Articulate the relationship between one's hopefulness and client outcomes
3. Apply strategies to build hope in oneself and others

3:45 pm – 4:00 pm

**Closing Remarks**