

# 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Prevent Child Abuse Illinois Statewide Conference

## Prevention In Partnership:

### EMPOWERING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES



**October 17-18, 2024**  
**BOS Center**  
**Springfield, IL**

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**Learn More!**

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# 2024 Conference Schedule at a Glance

## Thursday, October 17th

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Registration, Continental  
Breakfast & Resource Tables

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Welcome & Plenary Speaker

LT Christina Meredith  
“The Difference of One”

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Break

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Workshop Series A  
6 Breakout Sessions

12:00 p.m. – 12:15 p.m. Break

12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Annual Friend of Children  
Award Luncheon

1:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Break

1:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Workshop Series B  
6 Breakout Sessions

3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. Break

3:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Workshop Series C  
6 Breakout Sessions

## Friday, October 18th

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Registration, Continental  
Breakfast & Resource Tables

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Plenary Speaker

Chan M Hellman, PhD  
“The Science and Power of Hope”

10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Break

10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Workshop Series D  
6 Breakout Sessions

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Break

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. GFWC Basket Raffle  
Closing Plenary Speaker

Linal Harris  
“Clarity in Crisis: Navigating  
Uncertainty with Vision”

## Featured Plenary Sessions

### LT Christina Meredith

Christina Meredith Foundation

*The Difference of One*

Thursday, October 17, 9:00 a.m.



Overcoming adversity and unseemly impossible odds takes hard work, faith, and determination. The power of one person that believes in another is the difference maker in a person’s life. Children and young people can break the generational cycle of poverty and abuse. All they need is the belief in themselves and the power of one!



### Chan M Hellman, PhD

Professor, Hope Research Center

University of Oklahoma

*The Science and Power of Hope*

Friday, October 18, 8:30 a.m.

Hope is the belief the future will be better and we have a role to play in pursuing our goals. Hope has emerged as a top protective factor associated with well-being for children, adults, and families. This presentation will discuss the science of Hope as a psychological strength in our ability to cope with adversity and traumatic experiences. This presentation will summarize over 15 years of the presenter’s research supporting that hope predicts positive outcomes, hope buffers the effects of adversity, and hope can be nurtured and sustained.

### Linal Harris

Founder and President

Insights 4 Life

*Clarity in Crisis: Navigating*

*Uncertainty with Vision*

Friday, October 18, 11:30 a.m.



Explore how visionary leadership can transform uncertainty into a powerful force for achieving the goal of preventing child abuse. This workshop will equip you with the tools to create a clear and compelling vision, confidently navigate challenges, and lead with purpose and compassion.

# Workshop Schedule

Key: ++ Home Visiting Track

◇◇ ACEs Track

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## Thursday, October 17, 2024

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### Session A: 10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

#### A-1 “Holistic Advocacy: Working the Intersection of Domestic Violence and Child Wellbeing”

**Chloé McMurray**, Chief Capacity Building Officer, Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Because domestic violence is present in 30 to 60% of child welfare caseloads nationally and is one of the three most common circumstances present in the lives of families coming into state care, domestic violence cases in the child welfare system are some of the most complex and difficult cases for child welfare workers to navigate. Despite these facts, partnerships between child welfare services and domestic violence programs have not shown up until recent years.

#### A-2 “Combating Child Abuse with CANVA”

**Stephanie Jewett**, Director of Community Education and Training, McLean County Children’s Advocacy Center

Have you ever wondered how you can take your agency’s social media presence or branding to the next level with little to no budget? I’m going to show you how! This workshop will teach you how to use Canva, a graphic design platform that allows you to create professional-looking graphics presentations, and other visual content without any design experience.

#### A-3 “Moving Prevention Forward: An Equity-Centered Approach”

**Jessie Heckenmueller, M.S.W. (she/her)**, Digital Engagement Manager, Child Welfare Information Gateway

**Gabriel Foley, B.S. (he/him)**, Knowledge Management Specialist, Child Welfare Information Gateway

This workshop will equip participants at all levels to move child abuse and neglect prevention efforts forward while also considering disproportionality and disparity in child welfare. We will share key concepts, starting with the necessity of centering equity in efforts to support child and family well-being, and pair them with examples at the practitioner and macro levels.

#### ◇◇ A-4 “Be A Good Mom: The Unique Experiences of Mothers Impacted by Addiction”

**Megan Ragan, LCSW**, Southern Illinois Resource and Advocacy Center

“I want to be a good mom”--- heavy words reflecting a deep desire of parents all over the world. But what happens when being a “good mom” doesn’t come naturally? What happens when a person’s motherhood is overshadowed by challenges such as substance misuse, mental health, and addiction? This workshop will dive into the unique experiences of mothers impacted by addiction and trauma, and discuss how societal definitions and expectations specific to motherhood can often create barriers to treatment and recovery.

#### ++ A-5 “Both Sides of the Door: Learning from Home Visitors and Doulas Who Have Been Participants”

**Dara Williamson, Bridget Lally and Jess Jobe**, Start Early HFI/Doula Team Members

This workshop is a facilitated conversation with home visitors and doulas who have previously participated in a home visiting program. We’ll learn from their lived experience more about the family’s perspective and how home visiting programs can partner more effectively with families.

#### ++ A-6 “Empowering Families through Parenting and Caregiving Education.”

**Katharine Bensinger**, Founder and CEO, ParenTeach Institute  
**Stephanie Starr**, Director of Education, ParenTeach Institute

Our target audience is child welfare staff, home visitors, educators, medical practitioners, and social workers/counselors. We cover why positive caregiving education is critical and introduce ParentABLE’s 6.5-hour positive parenting and caregiving unit. Participants will view portions of ParentABLE, hear facilitator feedback, and leave with a clear understanding of the course content, an appreciation of the evidence that supports the need for positive parenting and caregiver education, and how to offer ParentABLE.

### Session B: 1:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

#### B-1 “A New Approach to Child Abuse Prevention: Public Health, Partnership, and Well-Being”

**Melissa Box, LCSW, MPH**, Family First Prevention Administrator, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

The state of Illinois has a long history of public and private partnership to support community initiatives focused on the prevention of child abuse and neglect. But how much of what we call “prevention” actually prevents child abuse and neglect? This presentation will outline current DCFS prevention programs, including community-based services and concrete supports. The implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act, its successes, challenges, and current data, will also be discussed. Future plans, including how attendees can have a voice as stakeholders in statewide plans and implementation, will be presented. Collaboration across sectors, across state agencies, and across communities will be highlighted as central to all of these efforts.

#### B-2 “Fatherhood Coalitions—a Game-Changer for Fatherhood Programming in Illinois?”

**Earl L. Kloppmann**, Program Manager, Advancing Fathers Program, Brightpoint

After years of frustration about developing father support groups, The Parents Care & Share program attempted a new approach to fatherhood programming—getting the community involved and aligned around fatherhood first. The result was way beyond their expectations! They are convinced the model they are developing during an initial three-year pilot could be the game changer for greater effectiveness in fatherhood service delivery that Illinois needs.

#### ◇◇ B-3 “Advancing Health Equity in Sexual Violence”

**Kasey Pryer (she/her)**, ICASA Prevention Coordinator, Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault

**Corrin McWhirter (she/her)**, ICASA Chief Operating Officer, Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Health equity is the current buzz word in prevention, but it is not new. The core ideas are the roots of sexual violence prevention. Join Kasey and Corrin from the Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault to strip down the jargon, deepen understanding, and develop tangible action to incorporate health equity into sexual violence prevention. This session is tailored for professionals, educators, and community leaders committed to creating safer, more inclusive environments.

**B Session Information Continued on Next Page**

# Workshop Schedule

Key: ++ Home Visiting Track    ♦♦ ACEs Track

## Thursday, October 17, 2024

### Session B: 1:45 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

#### B-4 “Engaging Clients in a Telehealth World”

Taylor Birch, LCSW, Centerstone

Karla Schulte, LPC, MA, Centerstone

Centerstone’s Flourish program has experienced success with implementing a parenting program via telehealth which expands access for underserved and rural communities. This interactive presentation will include strategies for client engagement, program structure, and the benefits of wrap around services. Attendees will leave feeling more confident about the value of telehealth services and the importance of access to these services in rural communities.

#### ++ B-5 “Community Collaboration: Serving our Waitlisted EI Children”

Anni Reinking, Ed.D., Vice President of Prevention Services, Children’s Home Association of Illinois

Sarah Ziemba, MA, CCC-SLP, CEO, Shine Therapy Services

A community partnership between a long-term home visiting agency and an EI Provider agency has proven successful for reaching children on the early intervention waitlist. Come hear about an innovative collaboration that has provided support to families, children, and home visiting staff in Central Illinois. Learn about how the collaboration started, how it is going, and the plans for future success to serve children in our community who need it most – the children on the EI waitlists.

#### ++ B-6 “Empowering Glitter Brains”

Megan Ragan, LCSW, Southern Illinois Resource and Advocacy Center

“Empowering Glitter Brains” highlights the benefits of neurodiversity, celebrating unique cognitive strengths in children. This presentation explores strategies for fostering inclusive environments, promoting resilience, and supporting neurodivergent children through tailored educational approaches. Attendees will gain insights into practical techniques to empower neurodiverse children, enhancing their growth and development in both academic and social settings.

### Session C: 3:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### C-1 “Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Medical Perspective”

Claudia Plumer, APRN, SANE-P, Pediatric Resource Center

Amanda Thomison, Child Protection Specialist, Pediatric Resource Center

This workshop will provide an overview of the medical perspective of sexual exploitation of children, with an emphasis on the medical and social work team-based model to provide trauma-informed care for the child and family.



#### C-2 “Combating Child Abuse with CANVA” (repeat session)

Stephanie Jewett, Director of Community Education and Training, McLean County Children’s Advocacy Center

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#### C-3 “Moving Prevention Forward: An Equity-Centered Approach” (repeat session)

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#### ♦♦ C-4 “Positive Childhood Experiences”

Gary Pate, Senior Trainer, YouthCare

A lot of attention and research has focused on the impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, in recent years. Understanding the negative impact on a child’s overall development and even into adulthood is important, but equally important is understanding what can be done to prevent or mitigate the effects of ACEs. This training will offer learners an introduction to Positive Childhood Experiences (PCE’s) and how they can implement strategies to improve outcomes for children and families.

#### ++ C-5 “Trauma-Informed Approaches in Home Visiting: NEAR@Home”

Karen Williams, Technical Assistance and Training Specialist, Start Early

Elaine Duensing, MA, LPC, Senior Program Advisor, Start Early

Hannah Jones-Lewis, LCSW, National Home Visiting Manager, Start Early

Research shows there are higher rates of adversity and trauma exposure for participants in child protective services and home visiting programs compared to the general population. Home visiting programs have a unique opportunity to provide safe, effective and respectful discussions with families about trauma and adversity in early childhood. This session will focus on foundations of trauma-informed practice, how trauma-informed practice fits within the home visiting field, and will share a bit about one innovative program: NEAR@Home, which is a framework that uses trauma-informed practices in home visiting.

#### ++ C-6 “Perinatal Mood Disorder Support & Prevention”

Rachel Chruszczyk, Southern Region Prevention Specialist, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois

This workshop provides comprehensive insights into perinatal mood disorders, their impact on individuals and families, and effective prevention and community care strategies. Learn about early identification, screening tools, and the role of professionals and support networks in fostering resilience to promote perinatal mental health and to provide vital support for affected individuals.

# Workshop Schedule

Key: ++ Home Visiting Track    ◇◇ ACEs Track

## Friday, October 18, 2024

### Session D: 10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

#### D-1 “Navigating the Nexus: Supporting Transitional Aged Youth”

**Brittany Watson, CRSS, MHP**, *President of SWSA, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, School of Social Work*

“Navigating the Nexus” explores critical strategies for aiding youth in their transition to adulthood. The presentation includes a personal vignette and timeline based on lived experiences featuring work from my published manuscript. We will also examine comprehensive data on trauma experiences and complex trauma in youth aged 14-25, and consider several supportive methods to enhance our approach and systems of care when serving youth of this demographic.

#### D-2 “Addressing Children’s Grief within a “Circle of Care”

**Nancy Phillips**, *Program Coordinator, Illinois Family Resource Center*

With the escalation of drug overdoses and opioid issues, along with an increase of children being removed from the home due to substance misuse, a sense of grief is increasing for our young children and teens. As a result, Family Resource Center is working on a year-long project, the Circle of Care, for children. Learn about Circle of Care within organizations, communities, schools, and faith-based groups. Be a part of the statewide efforts to build grief management for youth within a Circle of Care!

#### D-3 “LGBTQ+ Inclusion: Where do I even begin?”

**Shannon Green**, *Healthy Families Program Coordinator, Shawnee Health*

This workshop will review basic concepts and terminology related to LGBTQ+ issues in early childhood and home visiting settings. Participants will have the opportunity to think together, ask questions, explore ideas, reflect on concerns and fears, and foster optimism for creating inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ people in all aspects of our work.

#### ◇◇ D-4 “Family Human Trafficking and the Connection to Drug Endangered Children”

**Liesl Wingert, BS, MHA**, *Program Coordinator, East Region - SIU School of Medicine-Center for Rural Health and Social Service Department*

Family human trafficking is the hidden process of exchanging a family member for goods, substances, rent, services, money, or status within the community. Roughly 90% of trafficking actually begins in the home, with over 80% of family trafficking revolving around illegal drugs. Familial trafficking is more easily hidden, especially in rural areas, and often begins with the smallest of children in the home, thus causing a unique psychological crisis of trauma that extends into adulthood. This workshop will delve into this topic in detail.

#### ++ D-5 “Parent Engagement & Addressing Disparities in Home Visiting”

**Abby Snow, LSW**, *Center for Prevention Research and Development*

**Tuyen Bui, Ph.D., MSW**, *Center for Prevention Research and Development*

The workshop will cover ideas from the 2023 IDHS-DEC Home Visiting Staff survey completed by the home visiting workforce. The survey results will be used to share home visitor’s tools for parent engagement and learn elements of addressing disparities. The audience will also have the opportunity to collaborate with staff in the room to discuss practical steps at the agency level.

#### ++ D-6 “The Impact of Doula Home Visiting on Maternal and Infant Health”

**Chastity Mays, M.S.Ed., CD(DONA)**, *Hathor Doula Services and The Little Resource Center Carbondale*

The workshop will discuss a home-visiting model that incorporates doulas into the intervention team, demonstrates improvements in childbirth preparation, breastfeeding initiation, safe sleep practices, and early car-seat use. Growing evidence shows that childhood home-visiting programs for socially and economically vulnerable families can have impacts in multiple areas, including maternal and child health, parenting, child development, and family economic self-sufficiency.

Seating in conference workshops will be on a first-come, first-served basis. When room maximums are reached, conference attendees will be asked to select a different workshop for that series. Meeting room temperatures may vary; please dress in layers.

You don’t want to miss this lineup of amazing speakers, resource tables, networking opportunities, and more!  
[Register today.](#)

## Who should attend?

Social workers, home visitors, teachers, healthcare providers, administrators, law enforcement, court personnel, mental health professionals, domestic violence specialists, prevention workers, substance abuse counselors, parents, adoptive and foster parents and anyone who works with or cares about children and families.

## Fees

The conference registration fee is **\$249** if prepaid registration is received by **September 13, 2024**. After September 13, the conference registration fee is **\$279**. Space is limited, so early registration is advised.

## Refunds

Requests for refunds made in writing prior to **September 13, 2024** will be subject to a **\$50** processing fee. No refunds will be given after **September 13, 2024**. In the event that the conference is moved to a virtual format, a partial refund will be issued if applicable.

## DCFS

A limited number of DCFS prepaid conference registrations are available for staff, foster caregivers and adoptive parents. DCFS staff, foster caregivers and adoptive parents who wish to register for the PCA Illinois Conference should go to <https://www.rsvpbook.com/2024ILPCA>

After the conference, DCFS staff should submit any applicable travel expenses on their travel voucher. Please note that the DCFS Training Unit will award only DCFS clock hours for this conference.

## Lodging

All conference events will be held in Springfield, Illinois at the BOS Center, 1 Convention Center Plaza Springfield, IL 62701. Special room rates are available for the conference until **October 2, 2024**. Ask for the Prevent Child Abuse Illinois room block. Book hotel rooms online [here](#), or call 1 217-544-8800

## Parking

Parking is available at the President Abraham Lincoln Springfield / BOS Center for \$1/hr or \$7/day with **NO** in and out privileges.



## CEUs

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for Social Workers, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors, and Marriage and Family Therapists will be available for conference participants through Northern Illinois University. Early Intervention, Domestic Violence, and Gateways Registry-Verified Conference credit will also be available for eligible attendees.

All eligible participants will receive a certificate with CEUs awarded for attendance. 9.25 contact hours will be awarded for the entire conference. Thursday is 5.25 contact hours, and Friday is 4 contact hours. There is no charge for CEUs.

To be awarded CEUs for the conference you must complete and submit the conference participation tracking form. Incomplete or illegible forms will not be awarded conference credit. There will be no exceptions. Some continuing education credits require additional information and evaluations from participants. Tracking forms and complete instructions will be available at the conference registration desk.

# THANK YOU TO OUR CONFERENCE SPONSORS!

Illinois Department of Children & Family Services  
Illinois Department of Human Services / Division  
of Early Childhood  
GFWC Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs  
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# Prevention In Partnership:

## EMPOWERING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

30th Annual Prevent Child Abuse Illinois Statewide Conference

October 17 - 18, 2024

BOS Center

1 Convention Center Plaza, Springfield, Illinois 62701

Conference Registration Form - Event #19979



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Name Title

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Address City/State/Zip

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Agency/Company

**Check appropriate payment:**

- Check - Made payable to NIU
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**Registration Fee:**     \$249 (by 09/13/24)  
    \$279 (after 09/13/24)

\*Agency/Organization FEIN# \_\_\_\_\_  
(Required if using Voucher or PO.)

**Required for credit card registrations:**

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Credit Card Number Expiration Date

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Cardholder's Name as it appears on the card Signature

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Credit Card Billing Address City/State/Zip

*Please note: Credit card charges will appear as NIU Outreach, DeKalb, IL.*

Requests for refunds made in writing prior to Sept. 13, 2024 will be subject to a \$50 processing fee. **No refunds will be given after Sept. 13, 2024.**

**A limited number of DCFS prepaid PCA Illinois Conference registrations will be available for staff, foster caregivers and adoptive parents. DCFS staff who have supervisory approval to register for the PCA Illinois Conference should follow the instructions on the D-net.**

Conference and registration questions can be directed to Tammy Queen at 217-522-1129 or email [tqueen@pcaillinois.org](mailto:tqueen@pcaillinois.org)

For more information, visit our website [www.preventchildabuseillinois.org](http://www.preventchildabuseillinois.org)

**Online Registration is available!**  
**Credit Card Only**  
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