

15th Annual Permanency Conference

Wednesday, Apr 28

10:15 AM - 11:45 PM

Opening Session: 35 Years of Serving Families

Four Valuable Lessons Learned from Children, Families, and the Professionals Who Serve them

Pat O'Brien

Executive Director, Adoptive & Foster Family Coalition of New York

Looking back on a long career recruiting permanent families for teens and young adults in foster and the families we develop for them, Pat will be sharing four valuable lessons that he has learned from those very youth, their families, and the professionals who serve them. Participants will leave with a fresh perspective on and seeing the importance of self-exploration, patience, understanding, kindness, and empathy, as well as the knowledge that no youth should leave foster care without a sense of having a permanent parent.

Wednesday, Apr 28

01:15 PM - 02:45 PM

Disrupting Disruption

Exploring the Role of Attachment in Family Stability

Clinical

John Sobraske

Adoption Psychotherapist, Trainer, and Consultant, Adoption Center of Upstate New York

Attachment should, like fetal alcohol and autism, be classified as a spectrum disorder. Attachment can be challenging for children whose first bonds were disrupted and often complicated by drug and alcohol exposure, neglect, abuse, and flux of families. Their 'disorder' is normal and reasonable given what they have been through. This workshop will break down the essentials of attachment, incorporating important research on mother-child bonding from 20th Century Britain and current neuropsychology rarely presented at adoption conferences. By building a better model to understand the head and heart of such children, we can understand what is happening inside them and ...

Wednesday, Apr 28

03:00 PM - 04:00 PM

Transitioning from Residential to Family

Clinical

Dr. Gregory Manning

Trainer, Keynote Speaker, and Consultant

The goal for all Youth in foster care is for them to safely live in a permanent family home. For some Youth, this is compromised because of the combined social, emotional, and behavioral impairments they struggle with and the challenges experienced by the family in effectively addressing these impairments. This leads these Youth to be removed from the family home and placed in residential treatment. This conversation will focus on identifying and addressing the wide range of challenging social, emotional, and behavioral issues that impact youth as they prepare to transition from residential treatment back into a family. These issues ...

Thursday, Apr 29

09:00 AM - 10:00 PM

Engaging Parents

The Importance of Parent Voice & The Power of Hope

Clinical

Jennifer Behnam

President, Bridging Resources and Individuals Together for Excellence (BRITE) Consulting Services, LLC

This session will focus on the importance of engaging caregivers and hearing their stories as a critical tool in supporting and achieving permanency. Parents, like children, need strong, positive connections and support in order to heal from their trauma and increase their overall well-being. Loving and supporting parents, as much as we do children served, is an underutilized tool that needs to be enhanced and increased. This session will also address the power of listening and understanding the parents' story in creating connection and providing hope. It will discuss hope as a strategy to assist parents as they navigate the ...

Thursday, Apr 29

10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

Ethics Surrounding Telehealth Part 1

Ethics

Dr. Jeff Ashby

Professor, Department of Counseling and Psychological Services at Georgia State University

Ongoing clinical practice often contributes to a kind of ethical "drift". In addition, the need to use telehealth presents new ethical challenges. Using case examples, discussion, and lecture, participants in this workshop will consider how the ethical codes apply to the practical world of counseling and telehealth. Special emphasis will be placed on developing professionals' understanding of decision-making processes used in arriving at ethical courses of action in the context of a changing world.

Thursday, Apr 29

01:15 PM - 02:45 PM

Ethics Surrounding Telehealth Part 2

Ethics

Dr. Jeff Ashby

Professor, Department of Counseling and Psychological Services at Georgia State University

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Thursday, Apr 29

03:00 PM - 04:00 PM

The Art of Process

Effective Communication with Older Youth

Bill Benson

Coordinator and Program Supervisor, Alabama Department of Human Resources Independent Living Program

Life is all about the actions and steps we take to achieve a particular end. Life is about Process. When it comes to helping youth successfully leave foster care, there are creative skills or an Art to communicating effectively. This webinar will guide you in learning some practical tips in expressing yourself to youth in a way where they not only understand but connect to what is being said to them. We will also look at techniques for helping youth to process through how they see and hear what is said to them as well as look at barriers to ...

Friday, Apr 30

09:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Supporting Children's Educational Needs During a Pandemic and Beyond

Sue Badeau

Professional Trainer and Motivational Speaker

We are living in unprecedented times as the realities of the Covid-19 pandemic continue to be felt across our communities. Many schools remain closed, while others are operating on a "hybrid" schedule. In either case, many parents are expected to oversee and support their child's education with greater intensity and fewer tools than ever. How do families support virtual and in-person learning while also supporting their child's social and emotional needs at times like this? In addition, parents often need to advocate across multiple systems to ensure the child gets an educational plan that fully meets their best interests. This ...

Friday, Apr 30

10:15 AM - 11:45 AM

Closing Session: Rising Above the Scars

One Child's Nightmare, One Woman's Miraculous Awakening

Dr. Johnetta McSwain

Speaker, Author, Consultant, Behavior Specialist

RISING ABOVE THE SCARS: One Child's Nightmare, One Woman's Miraculous Awakening is the true account of Johnetta McSwain's triumphant life story. Born to an alcoholic mother and an absent father, the odds were unceremoniously stacked against her even as she drew her first breath. With wit, charm, and wisdom, Dr. McSwain aids to empower and inspire individuals to move from hopelessness to hope by sharing her enthralling journey of overcoming the chains of brutal childhood abuse, trauma, and living a life of self-destruction.