



VAHSA Virtual Directors' Council Agenda

June 23-25, 2020



Tuesday, June 23, 2020

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| 9:00 – 9:15 am | Welcome, Introductions, & Icebreaker, led by Dawn Ault |
| 9:15 – 11:30 am <i>(Break 10:15 - 10:30)</i> | Trauma & Resilience Workshop #1 <i>John Richardson-Lauve, Child Savers</i> Trauma is a burden that too many of our young people have to deal with. Our childcare professionals also have their own experiences of trauma. And COVID-19 has created a shared trauma for all of us. Understanding how trauma impacts the brain and behavior will help us understand better how to help ourselves and support others. We will learn about the biological, social, and emotional aspects of how trauma expresses itself across ages and experiences. |
| 11:30 am – 1:00 pm | Lunch – Stretch Break |
| 1:00 – 3:00 pm | The Current Head Start Landscape, Tommy Style! <i>Tommy Sheridan, Senior Director of Governing Affairs, NHSA</i> Back by popular demand every year, Tommy will provide NHSA updates, especially in light of COVID-19, with time for Q & A etc. |
| 3:00 – 3:15 pm | Closing, wrap up Day 1 in preparation for tomorrow, led by Dawn Ault |
| 3:15 – 3:30 pm | Conclude your day or regroup for 3:30 Virtual Happy Hour |
| 3:30 – 4:30 pm | Optional Virtual Happy Hour: Social time with colleagues on Zoom, making the best of it! Change your Zoom background to the beach, grab your favorite beverage or appetizer, and let's relax together. As we know, some of our best times together are off the record! |

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

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| 9:00 – 9:15 am | Welcome Back Introductions, Scholarship announcements, led by Dawn Ault |
| 9:15 – 11:30 am <i>(Break 10:15 - 10:30)</i> | Trauma & Resilience Workshop #2 <i>John Richardson-Lauve, Child Savers</i> Resilience is the medicine we prescribe when an individual has experienced trauma. Understanding how to effectively help is essential to overcoming. We will unpack elements of resilience and how we can effectively apply them in our relationships with the children we serve, our staff, our families, and ourselves. |



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| 11:30 am – 1:00 pm | Lunch – Stretch Break |
| 1:00 – 3:00 pm | <p>Trauma & Resilience Workshop #3</p> <p><i>John Richardson-Lauve, Child Savers</i></p> <p>Application of resilience-based practices is essential in the early childhood classroom. We will focus on the implementation of these practices in practical and innovative ways for our classrooms and our lives.</p> |
| 3:00 – 3:15 pm | Conclude the day, questions & parking lot preparation for tomorrow |

Thursday, June 25, 2020

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| 9:00 – 10:00 am | <p>Trauma & Resilience Workshop #4</p> <p><i>John Richardson-Lauve, Child Savers</i></p> <p>Our lives change based on what we do with what we know. Knowing these elements of trauma-informed care and resiliency-based practices, we will discuss the “what's next” and the opportunities for change.</p> |
| 10:00 – 10:15 am | Stretch/Bathroom Break |
| 10:15 – 11:30 am | <p>Regional Office Updates</p> <p><i>Kathleen Pathan, Supervisory Program Specialist, Office of Head Start (invited)</i></p> <p>Head Start State Collaboration Office Updates</p> <p><i>Taundwa Jeffries, HSSCO Director</i></p> <p>Virginia Head Start Updates & Conference Conclusion</p> <p><i>Dawn Ault, Executive Director, VAHSA</i></p> |



Virginia Head Start Association

Trauma Workshop Description:

Childhood trauma impacts the success of individuals in our community. The revolutionary Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study and subsequent research teaches us about chronic toxic stress and its burdens. This impacts both physical and mental health. As those who work with and care about children, youth, and adults in our community, it is imperative that we partner with consumers and families to heal.

One of the first steps in this solution is assuring a trauma informed foundation for all direct care staff in behavioral health and social services, their system leaders, supervisors, teachers and educators, and all those who care for and about children. In a comprehensive approach, anyone touching the lives of a person who may have been touched by trauma needs to understand the basic principles of the impact of trauma and the hope of building individual and community resilience.

The Trauma and Resilience Basics Course provides participants with an understanding and skill base in the five following areas:

- 1. Trauma- The Most Basic Public Health Issue:** Participants will learn about Adverse Childhood Experiences and the impact on youth and adult mental and physical wellness.
- 2. Trauma- The Impact on the Brain:** Participants will learn the upstairs/downstairs brain model and basic interventions for consumers who are in “survival mode.”
- 3. Trauma- The Impact on At-Risk Behaviors:** Participants will learn how to respond to the NEED rather than reacting to the BEHAVIOR and create effective responses to promote trauma healing, minimize re-traumatization, and increase positive behaviors.
- 4. Resilience- Building Individual Resilience into Everyday Action:** Participants will learn to promote self-regulation, positive self-identity, and co-regulation skills that are specific to the population they serve. Specific resilience-building strategies will be explored in depth.
- 5. Resilience- Building Community Resilience:** Participants will learn the Virtuous Cycle, the foundations for building Trauma Informed Communities, and the collective impact models of resilience that improve population health outcomes.

Target Audience: Virginia Head Start directors and leadership



Virginia Head Start Association

The Case for Trauma-Informed Care:

One out of four children in the United States will experience some sort of trauma by the age of 4.¹ Trauma creates changes to our biology, our genetics and epigenetics, our behavior, and ultimately a myriad of lifetime health outcomes. Individuals who have experienced chronic toxic stress have challenges across educational attainment, employment, healthy relationships, adherence to laws and social norms, and mental health. As the number of traumatic events experienced during childhood increases, the risk for the health problems in adulthood increases, including depression, alcoholism, drug abuse, suicide attempts, heart and liver diseases, pregnancy problems, high stress, uncontrollable anger, and family, financial, and job problems.²

Bessel van der Kolk writes:

“When you have a persistent sense of heartbreak and gutwrench, the physical sensations become intolerable and we will do anything to make those feelings disappear. And that is really the origin of what happens in human pathology. People take drugs to make it disappear, and they cut themselves to make it disappear, and they starve themselves to make it disappear, and they have sex with anyone who comes along to make it disappear and once you have these horrible sensations in your body, you’ll do anything to make it go away.”³

Because of the experience of trauma, we need new ways to address problems. People who have experienced immense hurt are not motivated by our traditional behaviorist responses and discipline practices. Looking through a trauma-informed lens allows us to have effective interventions to help individuals reach their full potential. Providing trauma-informed services allows individuals to tell their stories but not be defined by them. A trauma-informed workforce is one that is resilient to manage their own stories as well as to cope with the vicarious trauma that is inherent in human services and helping professions.

A trauma-informed organization is one that takes a growth-oriented mindset to focus across a wide array of domains, including policy, workforce development, governance, physical environment, and quality assurance, applying trauma-informed concepts and strategies. When we build a system that is willing to address problems in new ways and looks to the true needs of an individual rather than simply reacting to manifest behavior, we are able to craft interventions that truly promote healing, growth, and success.

¹ Briggs-Gowan, M. J., Ford, J. D., Fraleigh, L., McCarthy, K., & Carter, A. S. (2010). Prevalence of exposure to potentially traumatic events in a healthy birth cohort of very young children in the northeastern United States. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 23*, 725–733.

² Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (http://www.samhsa.gov/children/social_media_apr2011.asp)

³ Van der Kolk, B. A. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. New York: Viking.