

Thirty-fourth Annual IUN Forum on Child Abuse & Neglect

Fathering: Challenges and Solutions

Friday, April 19, 2024 ~ 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM (Central Time)
Bergland Auditorium ~ Indiana University Northwest

The Planning Committee regrets that it is necessary to charge a \$10 fee, payable by credit card only, for this year's forum. A box lunch will be provided for all registrants. For those for whom such a fee would be difficult (especially students, foster parents, and direct service workers), some scholarships are available. To apply, email your request to iunforum@gmail.com. Please include your name, job title and organization, preferred workshops, sandwich option (turkey, ham, roast beef, or veggie), and whether you need CEU's.

DCS Workers: DO NOT REGISTER with the link below. Please contact your supervisor or Kathryn Malone at DCS for registration information.

REGISTRATION LINK: <https://iunforum.wufoo.com/forms/2024-iun-forum-registration/>

8:15 – 9:00 Pre-Registrant Sign In/On-Site Registration / Networking – Coffee and pastries available

9:00 Welcome and Introductions –

9:15 Keynote Address – Dr. Clinton Boyd, Jr. Fathering Through Pain: Resilience, Redemption, and Reconciliation

10:45-12:00 -- Workshop Session I

- 1. Dr. Clinton Boyd, Jr.** – Connecting the Dots: Building Effective Community Partnerships to Serve Fathers
- 2. Judge Thomas Stefaniak and DCS Director Twan Stokes** – Lake County DCS and Juvenile Court Issues: Update
- 3. Dr. Amanda Zelechowski** – Implementing the Neurosequential Model in Northwest Indiana
- 4. Ellis Dumas, Jeff Wittman, and Douglas Weinberg** – Public Policy Advocacy: Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

12:00-1:00 PM – Lunch and Networking

1:00- 2:15 PM -- Workshop Session II

- 5. Natalie Lukich** – LGBTQIA+ Issues for Children and Families
- 6. Kevin Elkins and Ryan Sweeney** – The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)
- 7. Wendy Hensley, Jeff Wittman, Ellen Hennessy-Harstadt, and Sarah Johnson** – The Framework Project: Planning for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention
- 8. Sophia Arshad and Tony Burrell** – NWI's Immigrants: Legal and Social Services Issues
- 9. Beth Rechlicz** – The Lake County Family Recovery Center

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM – Closing plenary

Program Notes ~ Thirty-fourth Annual IUN Forum on Child Abuse and Neglect
Fathering: Challenges and Approaches to Solutions

Keynote Summary

Informed by life lessons, Dr. Boyd's keynote address will shed light on the unique forms of trauma experienced by fathers, the resilience demonstrated by fathers in overcoming the traumatic events of their lives, the need for fathers to redeem themselves and atone for past wrongdoings, and the reconciliation process fathers must undergo before entering into peace with themselves and coming to a place of harmony with their loved ones. Dr. Boyd's keynote address will ultimately discuss how and why embracing fathers, especially Black fathers, is vital to the health of our communities.



Dr. Clinton Boyd, Jr. is the Executive Director of Fathers, Families, & Healthy Communities (FFHC), a Chicago-based organization providing culturally tailored programming to Black fathers. With a passion for strengthening Black families, Dr. Boyd works directly with Black fathers to advance practices and policies that value them as assets to their children, families, and communities. As a scholar-practitioner, Dr. Boyd has co-authored several articles, book chapters, and policy reports on his work with Black fathers.

Dr. Boyd resides in Chicago, IL, and is the father of two children, whom he calls his “greatest life achievements.” With his ambitious and fighting spirit, Dr. Boyd’s life motto is: “Speak the truth even when it is bitter.”

Dr. Boyd received a Bachelor of Arts from Concordia University Chicago, a Master of Arts from DePaul University, and a Ph.D. from Georgia State University. Dr. Boyd completed his postdoctoral training at the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity at Duke University. He is also a Researcher at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and a Prevent Child Abuse America National Board Member.

MORNING WORKSHOPS – 10:45 AM – 12:00 NOON

Workshop #1: Connecting the Dots: Building Effective Community Partnerships to Serve Fathers

Presenter: Dr. Clinton Boyd, Jr.

Session: Morning – 10:45 AM – 12:00 Noon

Summary

Drawing on his experience as executive director of the Chicago-based nonprofit organization, Fathers, Families and Healthy Communities (FFHC) and his research on strengthening father engagement in responsible fatherhood and related programs, Dr. Boyd will describe, in detail, how to develop and employ strategies to maximize fathers' connections with their communities. The workshop will address how to overcome the numerous barriers faced by programs wishing to engage fathers, and how to keep fathers engaged and connected to the community services they need.

Workshop Objectives

- Participants will understand why it is important to engage fathers in human service programming, how to engage them, and how to keep them engaged.
- Participants will learn how to get fathers to accept the services that they may not think they need and may be too proud to accept.
- Participants will understand and be able to apply specific program strategies to maximize fathers' connections with their communities and community partner organizations.

Presenter

Dr. Clinton Boyd, Jr. is the Executive Director of Fathers, Families, & Healthy Communities (FFHC), a Chicago-based organization providing culturally tailored programming to Black fathers. With a passion for strengthening Black families, Dr. Boyd works directly with Black fathers to advance practices and policies that value them as assets to their children, families, and communities. As a scholar-practitioner, Dr. Boyd has co-authored several articles, book chapters, and policy reports on his work with Black fathers. Dr. Boyd is a Researcher at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and a Prevent Child Abuse America National Board Member.

Workshop #2: Lake County DCS and Juvenile Court Issues: Update
Presenters: Judge Thomas Stefaniak and DCS Director Twan Stokes
Session: Morning – 10:45 AM – 12:00 Noon

Summary

This session provides an opportunity to meet with, and ask questions of, the Director of the Lake County office of the Department of Child Services and the senior judge of the Juvenile Division of the Lake County Superior Court. Ms. Stokes and Judge Stefaniak will review recent issues and trends in child welfare problems, services, policies, and practices in Lake County. Discussion topics include parental involvement in child welfare decision-making, the relative roles and effectiveness of foster parenting, kinship care and residential care, and recent developments in the provision of prevention, post-intervention, and other services.

Workshop Objectives

- Participants will receive an update on state policies.
- Participants will learn how to advocate for underserved groups.
- Participants will receive information on how to access local and state resources.

Presenters

Twan Stokes (MSW – Indiana University Northwest) is Region 1 Director (Lake County) of the Indiana Department of Child Services. Ms. Stokes began her career with DCS as a Family Case Manager. She also served as a Practice Consultant and Supervisor and as deputy director of the Lake County office before assuming her present position. Ms. Stokes is a “Journey” Fellow and has served as an adjunct professor for the IU Northwest School of Social Work. Among her trainings is a YouTube video entitled "Increasing Kinship Placements to Expedite Permanency for Children of Color" for the Minority Professional Leadership Development Program at AdoptUSKids.

Judge Stefaniak (J.D., Valparaiso University) is Senior Juvenile Court Judge for the Lake County Superior Court. In this position, he administers the court charged with adjudicating a wide variety of child and family legal matters in the County. Appointed to the Superior Court in 2001, Judge Stefaniak transferred to the Juvenile Division in May of 2013 and has served as Chief Judge since that time. Before his appointment to the Superior Court, he served as the (elected) Hammond City Judge (1995-2001).

Workshop #3: Implementing the Neuro-sequential Model in Northwest Indiana

Presenter: Dr. Amanda Zelechoski

Session: Morning – 10:45 – 12:00 Noon

Summary

The Neurosequential Model is an evidence-based framework that brings a developmentally sensitive, neurobiological, and trauma-informed approach to clinical problem-solving. Developed by renowned psychiatrist and neuroscientist, Dr. Bruce Perry, the Neurosequential Model has been adapted and implemented in a variety of contexts, including mental health clinics, schools, juvenile justice systems, youth sports organizations, and child welfare programs. This workshop will present an overview of the Neurosequential Model and the ways it is currently being implemented throughout Northwest Indiana, through a grant-funded collaboration between Purdue University Northwest and the Neurosequential Network. Join us to learn how your organization can get involved in this and additional systemic capacity-building initiatives to address adverse childhood experiences in our community.

Workshop Objectives:

At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify the core components of the Neurosequential Model
- Recognize the diverse range of contexts in which the Neurosequential Model has been adapted and implemented.
- Understand the specific ways in which the Neurosequential Model is currently being implemented in Northwest Indiana
- Identify opportunities for potential collaboration and involvement with ongoing trauma-informed community and capacity-building efforts underway at Purdue Northwest

Presenter

Dr. Amanda Zelechoski (zell-uh-husky) is a licensed clinical and forensic psychologist and attorney, specializing in trauma. In addition to serving as Professor of Psychology and Director of Clinical Training at Purdue University Northwest, she is currently the principal investigator or co-investigator on several trauma-informed capacity-building and implementation projects for child-serving systems (e.g., juvenile justice, pediatric primary care, outpatient mental health, and K-12 education), supported by over \$3.6M in grant funding.

Workshop #4: Public Policy Advocacy: Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

Presenters: Douglas Weinberg, Ellis Dumas, and Jeff Wittman

Session: Morning – 10:45 – 12:00 Noon

Summary

This session addresses the issues associated with becoming engaged in advocacy to prevent child abuse and neglect. Topics include: What public policy issues are critical for the prevention of child abuse and neglect? How do the legislative (and administrative) policy processes work for these issues? Who are the state and federal representatives for this area and how can they be reached? And how can participants join with others to become effective advocates for children and families?

Workshop Objectives

- Participants will understand and be able to enumerate the various public policy areas that prevention experts consider relevant for child abuse and neglect prevention policy (e.g., the importance of concrete support for families).
- Participants will understand the basics of the legislative process at the state and federal levels and learn the names of some key players in the policy process.
- Participants will learn how and when to contact their elected representatives about key policy issues and how to become engaged with others in the policy process.

Presenters

Douglas Weinberg has more than 20 years of experience in the child welfare field in Florida, Indiana, and Nebraska characterized by his passion for community-based child abuse & neglect prevention. As Director of the Nebraska Department of Children and Family Services, he spearheaded the expansion of existing and new prevention efforts in the state. These initiatives included Bring Up Nebraska, a community-based collaborative response program engaging local communities in child abuse & neglect prevention, and CarePortal, an effective and efficient means of connecting the needs of vulnerable children and families with the local church community. Since retiring and returning home to Indiana, he has been active in child abuse and neglect prevention projects. He currently serves as the chairman of the Board of the Indiana Kids First Trust Fund.

Ellis Dumas is well-known to regular IUN forum attendees. He currently serves as chief of staff for Gary Mayor Eddie Melton. Previously, he worked as Regional Director at the Lake County office of the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) having advanced from his original position as a Family Case Manager. Before beginning his work for the City of Gary, he was Vice President of Programs and Outcomes for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Northwest Indiana.

Jeffrey Wittman (MBA, Educational Leadership, Indiana State University) is Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Indiana (PCAIN). Before serving as Director, Jeff was Prevention Programs manager for PCAIN responsible for supporting over 40 local prevention councils around the state. Prior to his work with PCAIN, he worked as a School Social Work and Foster Youth Specialist with the Indiana Department of Education. He has spent three decades advocating on behalf of children and families in positions across the social service and mental health spectrum.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS – 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Workshop#5: LGBTQAI+ Issues for Children and Families

Presenter: Natalie Lukich and panel

Session: Afternoon – 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Summary

Natalie Lukich leads a panel of volunteers in a discussion of a variety of issues related to sexual/gender identity. Topics include common problems faced by families, best practices for working with families, updated language on these matters, and safe places to ask questions about sexual/gender identity.

Workshop Objectives

- Attendees will learn about best practices in the field and gain information about the LGBTQAI + population including the correct definitions and terms.
- Attendees will be introduced to public policies that support families and individuals in the LGBTQAI+ community.
- Attendees will gain knowledge about support groups and organizations and be able to identify safe places for group and individual support.
- Attendees will learn how to advocate for LGBTQAI + families, and individuals.

Presenter

Veteran Forum presenter Natalie Lukich returns this year to lead a panel of volunteers discussing various issues related to sexual/gender identity. Lukich, LMHC (M.S. Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Purdue University Northwest) is LGBTQ Program Coordinator and Supervisor of Resource Family Support at Crown Counseling Services in Crown Point, Indiana. She is founder and co-facilitator of an affirming support group, Pride Initiative, which provides support and education for the families, friends, and allies of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning community. She is a trainer for the Department of Child Services and other social service organizations on issues related to LGBTQ youth. Topics include common problems faced by families, best practices for working with families, updated language on these matters, and safe places to ask questions about sexual/gender identity.

Workshop #6: The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

Presenters: Kevin Elkins and Ryan Sweeney

Session: Afternoon – 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Summary

This workshop will provide an overview of the Lake County Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative was designed to support the Annie E. Casey Foundation's vision that all youth involved in the juvenile justice system have opportunities to develop into healthy, productive adults. JDAI is now the largest juvenile justice system improvement initiative in the United States.

Workshop Objectives

- Attendees will learn the latest research on the effects of detention on juveniles.
- Attendees will understand the foundation for the creation of the Lake County's JDAI and related initiatives.
- Attendees will discuss the use of grant funding in youth programming in and out of the Lake County Juvenile Center.

Presenters

Kevin Elkins has been an employee of the Lake County Juvenile Court for the past 29 years. Kevin has worked as a Detention Officer, Placement Probation Officer, Probation Supervisor, Deputy Chief of Juvenile Probation, and his current position as Chief of Juvenile Probation for the past four years. Kevin has helped to develop some of the Juvenile Court's Community outreach programs such as the Flower Farm, Clothing give-away Room, Food Box Donations, and vocational programs. Kevin believes in the *old adage* of "It Takes a Village" and strives every day to make the NWI community a better place for all. Kevin has a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in public affairs from Indiana University Northwest.

Ryan Sweeney has been an Intake Probation Officer working at the Lake County Juvenile Center for over 20 years. He has also been serving as one of Lake County's Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) coordinators for the past 3 years. He has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Ball State University.

Workshop #7: The Framework Project: Planning for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention
Presenters: Wendy Hensley, Jeff Wittman, Ellen Hennessy-Harstadt, and Sarah Johnson
Session: Afternoon – 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Summary

This session provides an overview and update of the local Framework Projects in Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties -- efforts to review and plan for child abuse and neglect prevention in local communities. Following guidelines for the statewide effort and with a significant community engagement process, Framework Projects use a collective impact approach to create a community action plan to prevent child abuse and neglect in local communities.

Workshop Objectives

- Attendees will understand the difference between child abuse and child neglect.
- Attendees will gain knowledge of local and state child abuse and neglect prevention community action plans.
- Attendees will become familiar with child abuse and neglect prevention resources available in the community.

Presenters

Wendy Hensley (MPA, IU Northwest) is Senior Director / Programs and Partnerships for Mental Health America of Northwest Indiana (MHANWI). She has over 15 years of experience in management and program development focused on building strong communities, thriving families, and children who are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. She earned a Master of Public Affairs from Indiana University Northwest, with a concentration in Human Services, and is a certified trainer in Continuous Quality Improvement.

Jeffrey Wittman (MBA, Educational Leadership, Indiana State University) is Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Indiana (PCAIN). Before serving as Director, Jeff was Prevention Programs manager for PCAIN responsible for supporting over 40 local prevention councils around the state. Prior to his work with PCAIN, he worked as a School Social Work and Foster Youth Specialist with the Indiana Department of Education. He has spent three decades advocating on behalf of children and families in positions across the social service and mental health spectrum.

Ellen Hennessy-Harstadt has been a member of the Board of Prevent Child Abuse Lake County (PCALC) since 2015 and currently serves as the Board President. She is presently working with other community partners on Lake County's Framework Project, a planning effort focused on encouraging and helping communities to support struggling families to ensure that their children thrive. She has a master's degree in Parent-Child Nursing and a Doctorate in Nursing Practice from Valparaiso University. She has taught Nursing at Indiana University Northwest and worked as a Pediatric Nurse and a Family Nurse Practitioner.

Sarah Johnson is Prevention Councils Director at Dunebrook, Inc. in Michigan City, Indiana. She oversees the Child Abuse Prevention Councils in La Porte and Porter Counties and is currently working on their Framework Projects. She previously worked as a Family Support Specialist at Dunebrook and as a community organizer with Organized and United Residents of Michigan City (OUR MC). She holds a BA degree in Psychology and Religious Studies from Indiana University Indianapolis, and an MSW specializing in Community Organizing from the University of Michigan.

Workshop #8: Northwest Indiana Immigrants
Presenters: Sophia Arshad and Anthony Burrell
Session: Afternoon – 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Summary

This session features two experienced legal and social services providers and advocates for immigrants and the undocumented. Topics for 2024 include the legal issues facing immigrants and their possible solutions; changes in laws, policies, and practices that affect documented and undocumented immigrants; the services needed by immigrants; and the resources available to help them.

Workshop Objectives

- Attendees will learn the definition of undocumented people and immigrants and be introduced to policies and best practices that impact them.
- Attendees will understand the social injustices surrounding undocumented people and immigrants in the region and state.
- Attendees will be able to identify available resources within local communities for supporting undocumented persons and immigrants and learn about the costs of supporting them.
- Attendees will gain a better understanding of how the state benefits financially from having undocumented workers and immigrants present.

Presenters

Sophia Arshad (J.D., Valparaiso University) is the managing partner of the law firm, Arshad, Pangere, and Warring LLP. She is licensed to practice in state and federal courts, focusing on a variety of issues including estate planning, probate, family law, immigration matters, and citizenship. As part of her graduate work in law, attorney Arshad earned a joint Master of Arts degree in Psychological Foundations. She has taught immigration law and labor and employment law at Davenport University.

Anthony Burrell (M.A., Psychology, Walden; BS, Psychology, IU Bloomington) is Founder and Executive Director of the Chicagoland Immigrant Welcome Network based in Hammond Indiana (2014 – present). His organization provides hosting and orientation programs for refugee and asylum-seeking families, a US Justice Department certified legal clinic for immigrants, and a special program serving Syrian refugee children and families. He has been an accredited US Department of Justice Legal Representative since 2015. His training credentials include speaking engagements for the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.

Workshop #9: The Lake County Family Recovery Center

Presenter: Beth Rechlicz

Session: Afternoon – 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Summary:

The Lake County Family Recovery Court (FRC) is a program designed to assist families with substance abuse issues to achieve lasting sobriety. It serves families whose child(ren) are involved with the Department of Child Services (DCS) through a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) case. FRC helps parents by providing specialized support services promoting recovery and encouraging healthy lifestyle choices.

Workshop Objectives

- Attendees will learn the “steps to sobriety” approach used by the Family Recovery Center.
- Attendees will be able to differentiate between different types of substance use and abuse.
- Attendees will learn about supportive community services that promote recovery from problems of substance use and abuse.

Presenter

Beth L. Rechlicz, MSW, is the deputy chief probation officer in the Lake County Superior Court -- Juvenile Division. She served as a family recovery court coordinator for three years before being promoted to deputy chief. Beth Rechlicz is a 1994 graduate of Valparaiso Law School.

IUN Forum Partners

- ~ Prevent Child Abuse Lake County (PCALC) ~
 - ~ Mental Health America of Northwest Indiana ~
 - ~ Service League of Northwest Indiana ~
 - ~ The Villages ~
 - ~ Early Learning Partnership of Northwest Indiana
 - ~ Indiana Department of Child Services ~
 - ~ IUN School of Public and Environmental Affairs ~
 - ~ IUN School of Social Work ~
 - ~ Calumet College of St. Joseph ~
 - ~ Geminus Community Partners ~
 - ~ The Indiana Kids First Trust Fund ~
 - ~ The Lake County CASA Program ~
 - ~ Dunebrook, Inc. ~
 - ~ IUN Center for Urban and Regional Excellence ~
 - Prevent Child Abuse Indiana ~
-

Event Notes ~ Thirty-fourth Annual IUN Forum on Child Abuse and Neglect

The Planning Committee regrets that it is necessary to charge a \$10 fee, payable by credit card only, for this year's forum. A box lunch will be provided for all registrants. For those for whom such a fee would be difficult (especially students, foster parents, and direct service workers), some scholarships are available. To apply, email your request to iunforum@gmail.com. Please include your name, job title and organization, preferred workshops, sandwich option (turkey, ham, roast beef, or veggie), and whether you need CEU's.

DCS Workers: DO NOT REGISTER with the link below. Please contact your supervisor or Kathryn Malone at DCS for registration information.

REGISTRATION LINK: <https://iunforum.wufoo.com/forms/2024-iun-forum-registration/>

You will receive confirmation of your registration and payment by return email. This is your "ticket" to the Forum.

The IU School of Social Work will **provide continuing education units (CEU'S) for licensed social workers**. A CEU sign-up sheet will be available in each plenary and workshop session for social workers to complete with their *licensure number and signature*. If a sign-in sheet is not available, please ask a student volunteer for help locating a CEU sheet. Turn in completed CEU sign-in sheets to the **CEU** table located outside the Bergland Auditorium in the Savannah Center—the site of the closing plenary. Participants will receive CEU certificates via email. Certificates of participation will be provided for those who need a record of attendance but who do not need CEU units.

Walk-ins at the forum are always welcome, but pre-registration is preferred so that we can properly allocate space to workshops. The opening and closing plenary sessions will be held in Bergland Auditorium in the Savannah Center (SC on the campus map). Some workshops will be held in the nearby Hawthorn Hall (HH).

Free Parking: The usual parking permits will NOT be required at IUN for this event. Parking and building locations can be found on the campus map -- <https://www.iun.edu/parking/map/index.htm>

Free Wi-fi: The University will provide Guest Wi-fi services.

Vendors: This year the number of vendor display spaces at the forum will be limited. Applications for spaces (one 6-foot table) will be accepted first from forum co-sponsor agencies (until April 5). After April 5, spaces will be available to other organizations with close connections to the purposes of the forum. The deadline for vendor applications is April 15. To apply for vendor space, contact The Villages offices at 219-762-3465. You may also call The Villages office for any questions about registration.