

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation 15 Virtual Participatory Workshops



Conference Registration Instructions:

- **Registration is directly through each workshop's individual Teams link**
 - The virtual platform will be Microsoft Teams.
 - The Teams registration links are listed in the Conference Quick View Schedule and Registration Links section on pages 3, 4 and 5 of this program.
 - To enter a workshop, you will be required to register by entering your name, title, agency, city and email. Attendees should always **register and enter at least 10 minutes before the workshop start time in case troubleshooting is needed**. We cannot assist with troubleshooting after a workshop has started. Early registration is always appreciated to be able to view prospective participation.
 - You can register in advance, or you can register right before a workshop.
 - After you register, Teams will send an email with the workshop entry link.
 - **Save the email with the Teams link** to enter the workshop on its scheduled day. The email comes directly from Teams. We cannot replicate the email.
 - There is no password required. Anyone with the link can join.
- **All workshop hours are scheduled for Eastern Standard Time (EST).**
- **For all questions and troubleshooting, email Traffickingtraining@acs.nyc.gov**

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

2024 Conference Workshops at a Glance

Day	Date	Session	Time (EST)	Workshop Title
Th	11	AM	9:30 to 1	Understanding Child Trafficking; A Bio-Psycho-Social Perspective
F	12	AM	11 to 1	Post Traumatic Growth and Trauma Resolution
T	16	AM	10 to 12	Newton’s Law: Secondary Traumatic Stress
W	17	AM	10 to 1	Safety Planning WITH Trafficked Youth
Th	18	PM	2 to 4	Intersection of Human Trafficking and Substance Use Disorder
F	19	AM	11 to 1	Trauma-Informed Art Therapy for Kids
M	22	PM	2 to 4	Through the Eyes of a Child Abuse Physician: The Role of Health Care in Providing Services to Trafficked Youth
T	23	PM	2 to 4	Foreign National Trafficking in the United States
W	24	AM	11 to 12	“Take It Down” and Other NCMEC Tools to Prevent Further Victimization
Th	25	AM	10 to 12	Survivor Voices: The “Here for You” Credible Messengers Program - Video and Panel
F	26	AM	11 to 1	Working with LGBTQ+ Youth Who Have Experienced or Are At-Risk for Sex Trafficking
M	29	PM	2 to 4	Navigating Safe Spaces: A Journey of Belonging
T	30	AM	10 to 1	NYC’s Child Welfare Trafficking Policy and Screening Children for Sex Trafficking in ACS’ Child Trafficking Database (CTDB)
W	31	AM	10 to 12	Sextortion - The Global Pandemic
W	31	PM	1 to 4	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness: What You Need to Know

There are no CEUs or CLEs available for any of the workshops.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Conference Quick View Schedule with Registration Links:

1. Registration for each workshop is through the workshop's link below.
2. You must register separately for each workshop.
3. After you register, Teams will send an email with the link to enter the workshop.
4. If you register in advance, save the email with the link to be able to enter on the day of the workshop.
5. Consider pasting the Teams email or the workshop entry link into your e-calendar.

- Jan 11 (Thurs) from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm:
Understanding Child Trafficking: A Bio-Psycho-Social Perspective
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/d5ce57c1-aecc-4dc8-afe0-fe7726f7dd6d@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 12 (Fri) from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
Post Traumatic Growth and Trauma Resolution
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/e8b44ad2-6ec9-41dd-8eac-f64d8ee051e8@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 16 (Tues) from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm:
Newton's Law: Secondary Traumatic Stress
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/22239b6f-914f-4d3c-a877-47daf0130530@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 17 (Wed) from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm:
Safety Planning WITH Trafficked Youth
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/d563e3a5-a2e3-4261-a0e3-a79b72f58b4a@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 18 (Thurs) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm:
Intersection of Human Trafficking and Substance Use Disorder
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/52be6af0-1a22-446a-be52-8946b33210a0@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

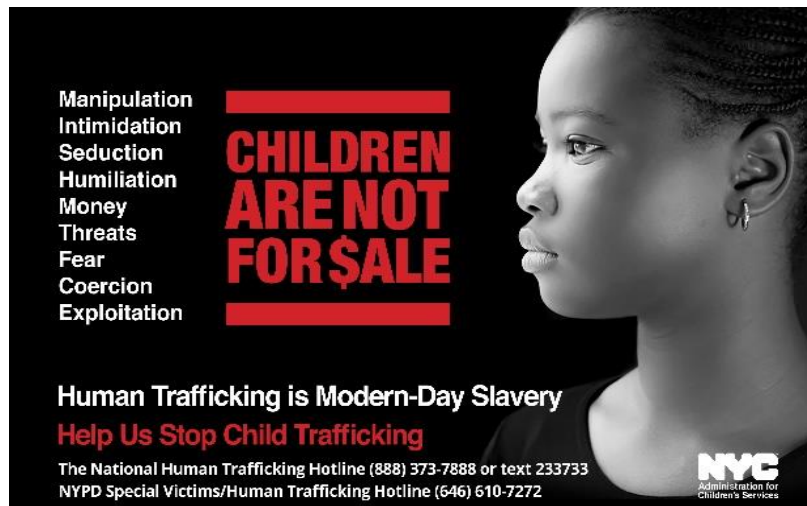
Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

- Jan 19 (Fri) from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm:
Trauma-Informed Art Therapy for Kids
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/5e20130d-040a-448b-9932-a044d8415199@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 22 (Mon) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm:
Through the Eyes of a Child Abuse Physician: The Role of Health Care in Providing Services to Trafficked Youth
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/40d89c13-32df-4854-8c38-644fc7f1fbfa@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 23 (Tues) from 2:00 pm to 4 pm:
Foreign National Trafficking in the United States
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/af28abdb-649c-4402-9377-91298f3451b5@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 24 (Wed) from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm:
Empowering Communities: Utilizing NCMEC's "Take It Down" Tool and Resources to Safeguard Youth
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/8f43ae69-859c-4375-abd9-757293987e52@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 25 (Thurs) from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Survivor Voices: The "Here for You" Credible Messengers Program - Video and Panel
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/5af9f117-7b5b-4a79-9d67-eeb8e00613a8@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 26 (Fri) from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm:
Working with LGBTQ+ Youth Who Have Experienced or Are At-Risk for Sex Trafficking
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/5d135ba1-a5ae-4b24-ae6f-ca39fe8e19cf@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 29 (Mon) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm:
Navigating Safe Spaces: A Journey of Belonging
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/1ff5f3e6-2463-423b-9194-d5250fa70682@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

- Jan 30 (Tues) from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm:
NYC’s Child Welfare Trafficking Policy and Screening Children for Sex Trafficking in ACS’ Child Trafficking Database (CTDB)
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/1884134f-edd8-41aa-bf55-945b4c812a06@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 31 (Wed) from 10:00 pm to 12:00 pm:
Sextortion - The Global Pandemic
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/debea403-c422-466e-bda5-abb9e6680bb2@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>
- Jan 31 (Wed) from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm:
Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness: What You Need to Know
Teams Registration Link: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/213d1d7f-f58c-4e04-a661-5d5c04bd5fcb@32f56fc7-5f81-4e22-a95b-15da66513bef>



2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Your printable calendar:

 Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy January 2024				
NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference: Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation				
Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.
8	9	10	11 <u>9:30 am:</u> Understanding Child Trafficking: A Bio-Psychosocial Perspective	12 <u>11:00 am:</u> Post Traumatic Growth and Trauma Resolution
15	16 <u>10:00 am:</u> Newton's Law: Secondary Traumatic Stress	17 <u>10:00 am:</u> Safety Planning <u>WITH</u> Trafficked Youth	18 <u>2:00 pm:</u> Intersection of Human Trafficking and Substance Use Disorder	19 <u>11:00 am:</u> Trauma-Informed Art Therapy for Kids
22 <u>2:00 pm:</u> Through the Eyes of a Child Abuse Physician: The Role of Health Care in Providing Services to Trafficked Youth	23 <u>2:00 pm</u> Foreign National Trafficking in the United States	24 <u>11:00 am:</u> Empowering Communities: Utilizing NCMC's "Take It Down" Tool and Resources to Safeguard Youth	25 <u>10:00 am:</u> Survivor Voices: The "Here for You" Credible Messengers Program - Video and Panel	26 <u>11:00 am:</u> Working with LGBTQ+ Youth Who Have Experienced or Are At-Risk for Sex Trafficking
29 <u>2:00 pm:</u> Navigating Safe Spaces: A Journey of Belonging	30 <u>10:00 am:</u> NYC's Child Welfare Trafficking Policy and Screening Children for Sex Trafficking in ACS' Child Trafficking Database (CTDB)	31 <u>10:00 am:</u> Sextortion - The Global Pandemic <u>1:00 pm</u> Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness: What You Need to Know		

Reminder: All workshops are scheduled for Eastern Standard Time (EST)

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Workshop Descriptions:

Jan 11 (Thursday) from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm EST:

Understanding Child Trafficking: A Bio-Psycho-Social Perspective

- **Selina Higgins, LCSW-R**, Executive Director, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy, NYC Administration for Children's Services

To understand trafficked children, you must first understand cognitive and social-emotional child development and the impact of trauma upon the developing psyche. This workshop will provide an extremely comprehensive view into the potential developmental etiology of child trafficking, beginning with cognitive development, infant attachment and behavioral learning influences. The attachment pattern developed between an infant and the primary caregiver can have extensive influence across the entire life cycle. The deficits and resultant needs that develop through early attachment can unconsciously impact upon subsequent relational and safety choices.

This workshop will demonstrate how the development of certain infant attachment experiences can lead to subsequent juvenile trafficking vulnerability, and how traffickers fulfill the inherent social-emotional deficits to trauma bond with and exploit youth. The presentation will proceed to the impact of trauma, teen cognitive and social-emotional development and learning, relational influences, media impact (advertisements, social media influencers, music videos), recruitment techniques, gaslighting, trauma bonding, and red flags and language affiliated with the commercial sex industry. The workshop concludes with engagement tips for work with trafficked and traumatized youth. PowerPoint, video clips, and recent media cases will be utilized to facilitate learning. This proprietary workshop has been provided at multiple national and regional conferences.

Jan 12 (Friday) from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm EST:

Post Traumatic Growth and Trauma Resolution

- **Marti MacGibbon, CADC-II, ACRPS, CAPMS**, President of Mentari Human Trafficking Survivor Empowerment Program, Inc., Human Trafficking Expert Consultant at the US Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, and Expert Consultant at the US Office for Victims of Crime.

Marti MacGibbon provides both clinical and experiential insights as she shares her unique expertise during this in-depth session in a way that only she can. Marti reveals her down-to earth personal recovery experience with candor and heartwarming humor to illustrate how trauma resolution in her own therapy set her on the path for post-traumatic growth. This session will discuss mindfulness practices, cognitive behavioral work, and cognitive reframing as tools for trauma resolution. Attendees will consider post-traumatic growth (PTG) within a bio-psycho-social-spiritual framework, and as a common and universal experience. So often, mental health professionals and service providers tend to focus on post-traumatic stress, while not embracing the opportunity to examine post-traumatic growth as both a process and an outcome. Benefits of PTG include seeing new possibilities, sparking positive changes in relationships, expanding coping tools and strategies, and deepening

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

appreciation for life itself. During this two-hour workshop, Marti also explores secondary and vicarious PTG in a refreshing new light.

“PTG can be experienced by an increased sense of self-reliance, a sense of strength and confidence, and a perception of self as survivor or victor rather than victim.” (Shakespeare, Finch, and Barrington, 2012.)

Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Explain how PTG is not the opposite of PTSD
- List examples of mindfulness practices as tools for managing trauma and PTSD
- Verbalize the impact of trauma on individuals with substance use issues and vice versa, and how trauma resolution and SUD recovery work together toward long-term positive outcomes for individuals and society
- Describe at least one scenario in which behavioral health professionals can facilitate post-traumatic growth and trauma resolution
- Acquire narrative skills and terms related to PTG (ex: stress-related growth)

Jan 16 (Tuesday) from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm EST: Newton’s Law: Secondary Traumatic Stress

- **Melissa Kaiser, LBSW**, MelKai Consulting, LLC.

Law enforcement, service providers, and medical responders experience sustained exposure to child maltreatment, sexual assaults, and human trafficking. The resulting effects can be devastating and include substance abuse, increased rates of suicide, marital distress, depression and anxiety, and decreased physical wellness.

This presentation will focus on learning more about our personal secondary traumatic stress (STS) and gaining tools to assess personal STS to improve our wellbeing. The presenter will differentiate between STS, compassion fatigue, burn out, moral injury, and post-traumatic stress disorder to assist attendees in better understanding the impact high-stress work environments have on us. Discussion regarding personal experiences, cultural changes within the workplace, and the normalization of STS and compassion fatigue will be a main priority during this session. The presenter will include various resilience strategies to assist attendees in self-care routines, which also ensures less turnover and better services provided to the victims they serve.

**January 11th is
National Human Trafficking Awareness Day
#Wearblueday**

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Jan 17 (Wednesday) from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm EST:

Safety Planning WITH Trafficked Youth

- **Dr. Ann Marie Pendleton, Psy.D.**, Clinical Director, Little Flower Children and Family Services
- **Jessie Boye-Doe, LCSW**, Vice President of Clinical and Mental Health Services, Good Shepherd Services
- **Selina Higgins, LCSW-R**, Executive Director, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy

Safety plans are integral to optimizing safety at every stage for survivors of trafficking and youth at-risk of sexual exploitation. Planning should occur regularly, relate to whether the survivor plans to leave or remain with the trafficker, and address multiple criteria. Since youth are the experts of their situations and experiences, they should always have an opportunity to be engaged directly in safety-planning. This workshop will discuss the importance of safety planning WITH youth and provide strategies to encourage them to take ownership of and participate in the development of their own personalized plans. The workshop will suggest dos and don'ts, discuss short-term versus long-term planning, and provide strategies to engage youth who may be reluctant to participate in planning. It will also provide an opportunity to practice individualized plan development through case scenarios and role play opportunities.

Jan 18 (Thursday) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST:

Intersection of Human Trafficking and Substance Abuse Disorder

- **Marti MacGibbon, CADC-II, ACRPS, CAPMS**, President of Mentari Human Trafficking Survivor Empowerment Program, Inc., Human Trafficking Expert Consultant at the US Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, and Expert Consultant at the US Office for Victims of Crime.

Marti MacGibbon, CADC-II, ACRPS, CAPMS, in an unparalleled perspective, provides candid in-depth clinical and experiential insight and expertise on interconnected, often-hidden aspects of human trafficking and substance use disorders. Attendees will examine and discuss the bi-directional relationship between trauma and addiction, how societal stigma and self-stigma play a powerful role in the vulnerability and the silence of victims, and why people with substance use issues so often do not disclose their chemical dependency or report being a victim of a crime. Marti provides summaries of federal and state cases of drug-facilitated human trafficking (HT) around the United States – both labor trafficking and sex trafficking – as well as examples of sex trafficking occurring in a treatment facility and labor trafficking in a court-mandated treatment facility. Attendees will learn best practice recommendations for trauma-informed care and tips on engagement with survivors. This presentation includes information about human trafficking, vulnerable populations, and facts vs. mistaken beliefs about both HT and SUD. Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

- List key facts (vs. misinformation) about human trafficking, key facts (vs. misinformation) about substance use disorders, and how societal stigma affects vulnerable populations
- Explain how and why some traffickers target detox centers and SUD treatment facilities
- Discuss detailed tactics of coercion used by perpetrators of drug-facilitated human trafficking
- Describe and illuminate how the bi-directional relationship between substance use issues and trauma increases vulnerability to being trafficked
- Review trauma-Informed best practice recommendations for engagement, prevention, and protection of vulnerable individuals and populations

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Jan 19 (Friday) from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm EST:

Trauma-Informed Art Therapy for Kids

- **Crystal Chen, ATR-BC, LCAT, LMHC-A**, Board Certified Licensed Creative Art Therapist, Eating Recovery Center of Washington, and Garden of Hope and Center for all Abilities, New York (virtual)

Art therapy provides clients with an alternative method of communication and understanding of oneself. The art work that one creates is a reflection of the self, which can be more intimate in nature but also less intrusive. This makes it effective when working with clients who have experienced trauma. In this workshop you will learn about how art therapy can be utilized to explore the depths of trauma in children and adults, explore the benefits of art therapy, and get to do your own self-care art therapy exercise led by Art Therapist Crystal Chen, ATR-BC, LCAT, LMHC-A. No art skills or knowledge is necessary to participate in the art therapy exercise. This is a hands-on workshop, so the following art supplies will make it fun and productive:

- 4 sheets of paper
- Scissors
- Pens/pencils
- Coloring utensils

Jan 22 (Monday) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST:

Through The Eyes of a Child Abuse Physician: The Role of Health Care in Providing Services to Trafficked Youth

- **Dr. Dana Kaplan, MD**, Director for Child Abuse and Neglect for the Department of Pediatrics at Staten Island University Hospital, Medical Director of the Staten Island Child Advocacy Center.

To effectively train providers in offering trauma-informed care to youth exposed to trafficking, a widely distributable virtual method is essential. Video examples of best practices through patient simulations may prove more effective in imparting these complex principles. This presentation will use a video simulation created by a group of child abuse pediatricians to deconstruct best practices in providing care for trafficked youth within the healthcare system.

Jan 23 (Tuesday) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST:

Foreign National Trafficking in the United States

- **Opal Singleton Hendershot**, President & CEO of Million Kids, Author, Instructor, Radio Host

Few people are aware of how individuals who are in the U.S. from a foreign country are vulnerable to both sex and labor exploitation. Some individuals arrive in the U.S. through work or student visas but then are lost in obscurity as they are forced to work long hours in businesses or illegal pot grows. In the past couple of years, we have also seen an increase in the number of individuals who have been smuggled into the country by organized crime and live in the shadows in fear of retaliation from a coyote. Many victims of sex and labor trafficking are unaccompanied minors (both male and female) who are forced into commercial sex forced labor and may be used to recruit others into a life of criminal activity.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

This two hour session will explore case studies involving young girls and guys and adult men and women who are brought in from China, Guatemala, Thailand, So. Korea, Mexico and are exploited in the most horrendous circumstances. Because so many people do not understand their culture and do not speak their languages, they are often exploited in plain sight. This session will discuss the many ways the exploitation takes place, the circumstances that impact victims so they don't ask for help, and how to recognize a potential situation of foreign national trafficking in the U.S. and how to intervene safely.

Jan 24 (Wednesday) from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm EST:

Empowering Communities: Utilizing NCMEC's "Take It Down" Tool and Resources to Safeguard Youth

- **Andy Komasinsky**, Outreach Manager, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

In an era where digital platforms play an increasingly integral role in the lives of our youth, it is imperative to equip ourselves with the knowledge and tools necessary to protect them from online threats. Join us for a comprehensive workshop, "NCMEC's 'Take It Down' Tool and Other Resources to Prevent Future Victimization of Youth," where we delve into the proactive measures available to safeguard our young generation from online exploitation.

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) has been at the forefront of initiatives aimed at ensuring the safety of children in the digital age. This workshop will spotlight NCMEC's groundbreaking "Take It Down" tool, an invaluable resource designed to combat the proliferation of explicit and harmful content involving minors across the internet. Participants will gain hands-on experience in utilizing this tool to effectively report and address concerning content, contributing to the larger effort to create a safer online environment for our youth.

Jan 25 (Thursday) from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm EST:

Survivor Voices: The "Here for You" Credible Messengers Program - Video and Panel

- **Melanie Thompson**, ACS Credible Messenger, Survivor, Speaker, Advocate
- **Princess Bey**, Producer/Director
- **Selina Higgins**, NYC Safe Harbour Coordinator/Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (Moderator)

NYC's Safe Harbour Program / ACS Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP) received NYS Office of Children and Family Services' Safe Harbour funding to sponsor a short film featuring (adult) former foster youth/trafficking survivors discussing child sex trafficking recruitment and disclosure. Topics include: (1) How no one ever expects to be recruited by an exploiter and what it feels like when one realizes that what you experienced was recruitment and not what you thought was a relationship, and (2) how incredibly difficult (but important) to disclose to someone else that you have been trafficked. The film has been developed to let youth know that they are not alone, that others have had the same difficult realizations and choices, and to model that it is okay to reach out for help (and explain where to obtain help).

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

This workshop will feature a viewing of the film, followed by a panel discussion lead by Selina Higgins, NYC Safe Harbour Coordinator, featuring Melanie Thompson, one of the Credible Messengers featured in the film and a nationally renowned trafficking advocate and survivor, and Princess Bey, a noted actor, and producer and director of the film.

Jan 26 (Friday) from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm EST:

Working with LGBTQ+ Youth Who Have Experienced or are At-Risk for Sex Trafficking

- **Steven Gordon**, Director of LGBTQAI+ Equity Strategies, NYC Administration for Children's Services
- **Selina Higgins, LCSW-R**, Executive Director, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy, NYC Administration for Children's Services
- **Clifton Robertson, LMSW**, Child Trafficking Specialist Residential Social Worker, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy, NYC Administration for Children's Services
- **Shereene McDermott-Green**, Child Trafficking Specialist Supervisor II, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy, NYC Administration for Children's Services
- **Shyla Eubanks**, MSW Candidate, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy

Co-developed by the Hetrick Martin Institute and the NYC Administration for Children's Services' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy and Office of LGBTQAI+ Equity Strategies, this curriculum will offer both awareness and practical guidance on how to identify and provide the necessary support and resources LGBTQ+ youth who have experienced trafficking or are at risk for trafficking. Participants will:

- Develop an understanding of what is child sex trafficking.
- Gain insight into the unique vulnerabilities faced by LGBTQ+ youth and the intersection with trafficking.
- Learn about trauma-informed approaches and their application in supporting sex trafficking survivors.
- Develop cultural competency and sensitivity to better understand and connect with LGBTQ+ trafficking survivors.
- Learn how to create safe and inclusive spaces where LGBTQ+ survivors can access the help they need.
- Learn about the NYC child welfare system's policies that support LGBTQ+ and trafficked youth.
- Learn about the primary resources within NYC's child welfare system (Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy and Office of LGBTQ+ Equities) that can assist with information, service referrals and other needed help.

****The Working with LGBTQ+ Youth Who Have Experienced or are At-Risk for Sex Trafficking curriculum was funded by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services through the 2023 NYC Safe Harbour Grant.****

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Jan 29 (Monday) from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm EST:

Navigating Safe Spaces: A Journey of Belonging

- **Melody J. Centeno, LMSW**, Founder and CEO, Foster Care Unplugged (FCUP)

Join us for an immersive workshop inspired by our latest film, "The Safe Space." In this thought-provoking session, we'll delve into the rich narrative of several young individuals living on one residential campus. Together, we'll explore the universal quest for the meaning of a safe space and the profound discovery of a sense of belonging.

Key Themes:

- **Exploring Identity:** Unpack the diverse stories and backgrounds of the characters in the film, and reflect on the impact of identity on our own sense of belonging.
- **Building Inclusive Environments:** Discuss the importance of fostering environments that allow individuals of all ages to feel safe, respected, and accepted.
- **Addressing Vulnerabilities:** Acknowledge the vulnerabilities faced by foster youth and their exposure to potential risks, including human trafficking.
- **Self-Reflection:** Engage in introspective exercises inspired by the characters' journeys to better understand our own needs for a safe space and connection.

Jan 30 (Tuesday) from 10:00 to 1:00 EST:

NYC's Child Welfare Trafficking Policy and Screening Children for Sex Trafficking in ACS' Child Trafficking Database (CTDB)

- **Selina Higgins, LCSW-R**, Executive Director, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy
- **Clifton Robertson, LMSW**, Child Trafficking Specialist Residential Social Worker, Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy

In September 2020, ACS released Policy and Procedure 2020/05: Identifying, Assessing, and Safety Planning with Child Sex and Labor Trafficking Victims, which articulates guidelines and procedures for ACS and provider agency staff in identifying children and youth for sex and/or labor trafficking, and for safety planning, coordinating with law enforcement, and making referrals for appropriate services. The Child Trafficking Database (CTDB) is the electronic mechanism that all ACS and provider agency staff must use to screen children for sex trafficking. This training will provide an overview of child trafficking, a description of the legislation that led to mandated sex trafficking screenings for children in the NYS and NYC child welfare systems, a detailed overview of the policy and a step by step walk through of CTDB screening procedures, including a hands-on demonstration of CTDB screenings. This training is a must for all NYC child welfare staff and any other professional who needs to understand ACS' trafficking policy and to perform the screenings correctly.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Jan 31 (Wednesday) from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm EST:

Sextortion – The Global Pandemic

- **Opal Singleton Hendershot**, President & CEO of Million Kids, Author, Instructor, Radio Host
- **Janelle Allbritton, MPH**, Stress Management, Suicide Prevention and Sextortion Expert

Sextortion is one of the fastest growing crimes in the world targeting both adults and young people. Sextortion is blackmail (sex + extortion) based on illicit photos, videos or live stream, or deep fake images. Our society often does not recognize the life changing impact on victims and their families. When adolescents are victims of sextortion, many make poor choices such as meeting up with the predator to negotiate the return of the images. In a recent trend of foreign national sextortion, the victims will panic and take their own lives.

The driving factors in the massive increase of sextortion cases are related to advanced technologies such as mass audience live streaming, artificial intelligence, global high speed internet and money transfers provided by most apps, chat rooms and video games. These types of rapid technology advances make it imperative that parents and advocates understand these technologies and this crime for effective prevention and intervention of online exploitation.

This presentation will explore the five primary ways predators and pedophiles access, groom, and exploit teens online. We will identify the solutions and strategies for bulletproofing our kids so they will not become victims, and more important become leaders for preventing sextortion in the next generation. We will discuss the psychological impact of each type of sextortion and how to identify when a child might be a victim. We will look at the most recent trend where young people panic and commit suicide rather than asking for help and most important how advocates and parents can intervene, report and assist victims of sextortion.

Jan 31 (Monday) from 1:00 to 4:00 EST:

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C):

Overview, Engagement Strategies and Resources

- **Dr. Deborah Ottenheimer, MD**, Director of Women's Health Services and interim associate Medical Director at the Gotham Health / Morrisania Diagnostic and Treatment Center
- **Danny Salim**, Deputy Director for Preventive Services, Arab-American Family Support Center
- **Dr. Mariama Diallo**, LCSW, DSW, Founder and Chair of the New York Coalition to End FGM/C

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injuries to the female genital organs for NON-MEDICAL REASONS. FGM is a violation of Human Rights and part of a continuum of gender-based violence. This training will discuss the types of FGM, tools used, false assumptions, highest risk cities, and physical and psychological consequences. It will also focus upon cultural awareness and effective strategies (Dos and Don'ts) to use in preventive engagement with families and in sensitive engagement with survivors. It will also highlight ACS' FGM@acs.nyc.gov e-mailbox where child welfare professions can obtain information, case guidance and resources from ACS' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Presenter Bios:

Bios provided by presenters have been listed alphabetically by first name.

[Andy Komasinski](#) serves as an Outreach Manager for The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's (NCMEC) from headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. Prior to joining the NCMEC family, Andy served as a law enforcement officer with the Papillion Police department in Nebraska for seven years. During her LE career she was the mental health liaison for the department and a trainer in a number of specialized areas. Prior to that, Andy spent 5 years establishing and running a school in Haiti while simultaneously working towards her masters' degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Missouri. Andy now channels her experience, training, and education background to share NCMEC's mission and resources to diverse professional audiences.

[Dr. Ann Marie Pendleton, Psy.D.](#) is a New York State Licensed Psychologist and Clinical Director at Little Flower Children and Family Services. She has worked in the NYS Care/Child Welfare setting since 2007 and specializes in trauma-informed evidence-based practices with a particular emphasis on partnering with children and families. Her training includes: Trauma-Focused CBT, The Sanctuary Model, Trauma-Focused Therapy, Play Therapy, CBT+, EMDR and PCIT. In 2008, Dr. Pendleton obtained her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from the Minnesota School of Professional Psychology. She obtained a B.A. in Music and Psychology from Gonzaga University in 2003.

Over the past 15 years, Dr. Pendleton has worked in and collaborated with multiple settings including residential centers, outpatient clinics, foster care, private practice, schools, law enforcement, hospitals, and nanny agencies. She has participated closely with the Office of Children and Family Services and NYS Department of Health surrounding practices and policies around children's Medicaid initiatives. Dr. Pendleton is a liaison with the New York State Office of Mental Health, and with the Administration for Children's Services' Mental Health Coordination Unit, Complex Case Committee, and Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy.

[Clifton Robertson, LMSW](#) is the Residential Child Trafficking Specialist with the ACS Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the State University of New York College at Old Westbury, and a Master of Social Work degree from Adelphi University. He is accredited as a Licensed Master Social Worker. As the Residential Child Trafficking Specialist, Clifton is the point person for the residential, group home, and foster care staff that support and provide services to trafficked youth and youth at-risk for trafficking. He also works directly with vulnerable youth, providing psychoeducational awareness, groupwork sessions which includes Dialectic Behavioral Therapy, Creative Arts in Psychotherapy, and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral therapy, and a variety of prevention strategies individualized as per each child's needs and strengths. In addition, he provides support, guidance, and training to NYC child welfare stakeholders. Clifton has over a decade of cumulative experience in the fields of mental health, developmentally disabled and other vulnerable populations.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Crystal Chen, ATR-BC, LCAT, LMHC is a board certified art therapist working at Eastside Counseling Center. Crystal Chen provides bilingual art therapy for individuals and groups that have behavior disorders, experienced trauma, or struggle with eating disorders. In addition, Crystal provides supervision for creative arts therapists. She is a women's rights advocate, having spoken at two United Nations NGO CSW conferences, at the 4th World Conference of Women's Shelter in Taiwan, and is a Pratt Taconic Fellow. With her Pratt Taconic Fellowship, she developed an art therapy program, known as Garden of Gems, a project that combines art therapy with jewelry making to provide a sense of community and economic empowerment for women at Garden of Hope.

Dr. Dana Kaplan, MD is the Director of Child Abuse and Neglect for the Department of Pediatrics at Staten Island University Hospital as well as the Associate Program Director for the Pediatrics Residency Training Program. She is also the Medical Director for the Staten Island Child Advocacy Center. She is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra-Northwell.

Dr. Kaplan serves as the Site Director for Staten Island University Hospital, Child Abuse Pediatrics Fellowship Training Program, Maimonides Medical Center/Infants and Children's Hospital of Brooklyn. She is also the Western Regional Director for the Northwell HEART Program.

Dr. Kaplan is board certified in General Pediatrics and Child Abuse Pediatrics, a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and a Member of the Ray E. Helfer Society. She is the current co-chair for the Helfer Human Trafficking Subcommittee as well as the co-chair and co-founder of the Helfer Solo Child Abuse Pediatrician (CAP) Special Interest Group. She is also co-founder and consultant for the CSTAT (child sex trafficking action team) through New York State AAP Chapter III.

Dr. Kaplan received her MD from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine and completed her residency in Pediatrics at New York University. Dr. Kaplan went on to complete her fellowship in Child Abuse Pediatrics at Hasbro Children's Hospital, The Warren Albert Medical School of Brown University. Dr. Kaplan's specific area of interest is in commercially sexually exploited youth. Dr. Kaplan has lectured both regionally and nationally and has published multiple chapters and articles on the subject of child abuse and human trafficking. Most recently, Dr. Kaplan was co-author of the 2023 AAP Clinical Report on "Exploitation, Labor and Trafficking of Children and Adolescents" in Pediatrics.

Danny Salim is the Deputy Director of Solution Based Casework at the Arab-American Family Support Center (AAFSC). Danny holds a Master's degree in Conflict Transformation from Eastern Mennonite University. He has vast experience in restorative justice, trauma healing and resilience, healing circles processes, women and youth empowerment, human rights, and culturally sensitive programming. Danny serves on several task forces and committees and leads the restorative justice work and cultural competency trainings for community-based organizations and government partners. He is passionate about examining sociopolitical experiences and systems that foster community development policy practice with a trauma-informed framework. Prior to joining AAFSC, Danny worked at several national and international organizations including Non-Violent Peace-Force and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). While at UNDP, he designed and developed the Conflict Prevention Community of Practice Team Works Platform (CP-CoP), an interactive forum for dialogue.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Dr. Deborah Ottenheimer, MD is currently the Director of Women's Health Services and interim associate Medical Director at the Gotham Health | Morrisania Diagnostic and Treatment Center in the South Bronx. The Women's Health service provides obstetric and gynecologic care to at risk women, including a large immigrant population composed primarily of women from the Caribbean, Central America, Bengal and West Africa. The focus of Dr. Ottenheimer's work is the development of culturally competent and linguistically appropriate women's health services with cross sectoral collaboration with other medical specialties and community organizations.

In addition to her clinical practice, Dr. Ottenheimer spends a significant portion of her professional time assisting asylum-seeking women who have suffered sexual and gender-based violence and other human rights violations. She is an active member of Physicians for Human Rights, and serves as faculty at the Human Rights Program at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, the Weil Cornell Clinic for Human Rights, and the CUNY School of Medicine Human Rights Collaborative aiding survivors of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), domestic violence, sexual violence and human trafficking in their applications for asylum. To date she has performed 125 forensic medical evaluations. She has published and lectured extensively on human rights violations against women, with a focus on FGM/C. She has also worked in Haiti, Rwanda, and Democratic Republic of Congo, helping to improve the health and lives of women in low resource settings.

Janelle Allbritton, MPH earned her master of public health degree from the school of public health at Loma Linda University (2000) and became keenly interested in social justice issues as they relate to public health policy (and vice versa). Her studies were based on the theory that a society's interest in resource allocation to protect the most vulnerable populations is a sensitive indicator of how robust, impactful, and socially just the overall public health system is. How effectively can policy, programs, and professionals assure that the most poor, the most sick, the youngest, and the oldest members of society do not suffer preventable premature death, disease, or disability? This question lies at the heart of her professional philosophy.

She studied and worked in South East Asia for over four years (Viet Nam, Thailand, India) and has seen first-hand the destruction caused by sex trafficking of women and children. As technology advances, we see increasingly sophisticated and numerous crimes against children. However, the same advances in technology have given us more effective tools to catch the predators.

Ms. Allbritton has been working in the area of stress management since 2005. In 2016 she pivoted to a focus on suicide prevention. After recently connecting with Opal Singleton, founder of MillionKids.org, Ms. Allbritton now works to prevent suicide of children being targeted with sextortion.

There is much work to be done.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Jessie Boye-Doe, LCSW is the Vice President of Clinical and Mental Health Services at Good Shepherd Services in New York City where she leads the agency's mental health initiatives and the Trauma Informed Practice team. A strong advocate for quality mental health care for all, Ms. Boye-Doe was formerly the Director of JCCA's Outpatient Behavioral Health and Center for Healing.

A clinical expert and leader in the field of mental health treatment, Ms. Boye-Doe has supervised and trained hundreds of clinicians who, in turn, have gone on to provide care for children in NYC who are. In addition to her therapy and advocacy on behalf of young people, Ms. Boye-Doe has helped various agencies become more trauma informed for both their staff, and participants. She has also developed cutting-edge clinical approaches to working with victims of trafficking, translating her comprehensive clinical expertise into modalities that address the underlying issues that make young people vulnerable to commercial exploitation. She has created training series that not only teach providers how to deliver innovative and trauma-informed mental health care, but also to prevent, identify, and treat child sexual abuse and exploitation. Ms. Boye-Doe also created workshops for young people, to help them identify the warning signs of sexual abuse and to address the issues that make them vulnerable to trafficking. In the past, Ms. Boye-Doe was the Director of the Child Sexual Abuse Response Team at the Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut, which is a nationally accredited child advocacy center. She was also a Victim Advocate at the Office of Victim Services in Stamford, CT and provided crisis and long-term counseling at the Kings County District Attorney's Office, where she developed, launched and ran the African Immigrant Victims of Violence Program. Ms. Boye-Doe earned her BA from Baruch College and her MSW from the Columbia School of Social Work.

Dr. Mariama Diallo is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) based in New York. She received her Masters of Science in Social Work (MSW) from Columbia University, and her DSW from Rutgers University. Currently, Dr. Diallo is an Adjunct Professor at Hunter College (NYC) and at The Montclair State University, in New Jersey. Dr. Diallo has over 20 years of experience in the field of gender-based violence, including Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C), Intimate Partner Violence, Early and Forced Marriage. Dr. Diallo provides trauma-informed individual and group therapy to survivors of gender-based violence. She has extensive experience in federal and State Advocacy for policy changes on behalf of survivors of FGM/C, which involved working closely with the U.S House of Representatives in connection with the "Girls Protection Act" that was signed into law by President Obama in 2013. In addition, Dr. Diallo worked closely with New York State Assembly woman, Amy Paulin in connection with State laws that protect victims of gender-based violence. Dr. Diallo conducts research studies, and develops curricula and other training materials; provides expert knowledge and testify in courts in the area of FGM/C, forced marriage, and domestic violence. She facilitates a leadership group training for African girls' survivors or at risk of experiencing gender violence. Dr. Diallo is the founder and Chair of the New York Coalition to end FGM/C; a member of the NYC Mayor's Office Advisory Board on FGM/C, where she is co-chairing the subcommittee on training and education; a recipient of the Global Woman Award from P.E.A.C.E Foundation in 2022; a member of the UN working group on Girls. Dr. Diallo was born in Guinea, and she started her career at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Department of Universal Values in Paris.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Marti MacGibbon, CADC-II, ACRPS, CAPMS is an internationally known author and an expert on trauma resolution and addiction. She's a humorous inspirational speaker, and a mental health professional who holds five professional certifications in addiction treatment. Marti is a Human Trafficking Expert Consultant to the US Dept. of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, and is an Expert Consultant to the US Office for Victims of Crime. She is co-author of the widely cited article published in the American Medical Association Journal of Ethics, Human Trafficking, Mental Illness, and Addiction: Avoiding Diagnostic Overshadowing (2017), and is a contributing author of the Springer Nature 2020 textbook, Medical Perspectives on Human Trafficking in Adolescents: A Case-Based Guide.

Few speakers have a personal comeback story as riveting and inspirational as Marti's. She has recovered from and triumphed over nightmare experiences such as being trafficked to Tokyo and held prisoner by Japanese organized crime, homelessness, domestic violence, childhood sexual assault/abuse, severe PTSD and hard-core drug addiction. Marti employed simple, effective strategies to transform her life, and shares them to motivate, encourage, and energize listeners to create positive changes in every area of their lives.

In addition to speaking to businesses, medical professionals and mental health professionals on overcoming adversity, empowerment, addiction recovery, and inspiration, Marti speaks on human trafficking, domestic violence, and other violence against women, and trains service providers. She has spoken at The 2023 United Nations World Day Against Trafficking in Persons Event (organized by UN Women), The 2021 UN Commission on the Status of Women, The Museum of Tolerance, The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, at colleges and universities, and even from the center of an MMA octagon at, "Fight Traffick," an anti-human trafficking cage-fighting event. She's been interviewed in Investor's Business Daily, Entrepreneur, and Glamour, on ABC-TV, CBS-TV, FOX-TV and numerous radio stations, and articles she wrote have appeared in over 150 corporate and trade magazines.

An advocate for victims and survivors, in 2015, Marti spoke at the White House, the State Department, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office for Victims of Crime, on mental health and policy advocacy. From 2012-2017, Ms. MacGibbon served on the Indiana Attorney General's state-wide anti-trafficking task force IPATH, Indiana Protection for Abused and Trafficked Humans. From 2013-2017, she developed curriculum for and taught a life skills class for women with trauma history in Marion County Jail. In 2014, she spoke to California State Legislature in support of new and successful legislation aimed at eradicating child sex trafficking.

Ms. MacGibbon is an engaged leader who served for two years on the Board of Directors at HEAL Trafficking, Inc. She currently serves as President of MENTARI Human Trafficking Survivor Empowerment Program in NY, NY, and on the Advisory Board at Justice At Last in San Francisco. Marti is a Speaker Trainer Consultant at the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Center.

From 2011 to 2019, Marti was founder, producer, and emcee of Laff-Aholics Standup Comedy Benefit for Recovery, an annual charity fundraiser in Indianapolis that features nationally headlining comedians. One hundred percent of the profits from the show went to transitional housing facilities in Indy that provide access to addiction treatment and mental health services for the recovery community's most vulnerable.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

The Indiana Addictions Issues Coalition (IAIC) honored Marti with the 2015 Indiana Lifetime Recovery Advocate Award, and the 2014 Recovery Advocate of the Year Award, for outstanding accomplishments in support of recovery, and her work in breaking away the stigma surrounding addiction, mental illness, and human trafficking.

Marti has performed at the world-famous Hollywood Improv and at the Comedy Store in Hollywood, and has traveled the U.S. as a professional standup comic. She is a member of the National Speakers Association, the Behavioral Health Association of Providers, the California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals (CCAPP), and the Indiana Counselor's Association on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Marti MacGibbon is author of two award-winning and critically acclaimed memoirs, *Never Give in to Fear: Laughing All the Way Up from Rock Bottom* and *Fierce, Funny, and Female*. *Fierce, Funny, and Female*, Marti's recent memoir, is winner of the Beverly Hills International Book Award, in Women's Issues, and winner of the National Indie Excellence Awards, in Women's Health. It is the winner of the 2018 Independent Press Award, in Humor and Women's Studies. In June 2018, the book was announced winner of the Foreword Book of the Year Awards, in both Humor and Women's Studies.

Melanie Thompson is the Outreach & Advocacy Coordinator at the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and is separately a speaker, activist, and leader in the global fight to end prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation. Trafficked and sold into prostitution in New York at the age of 12, she was later arrested and placed into foster care. She became an activist at age 14.

Ms. Thompson has testified before numerous legislatures about the need to pass strong anti-trafficking laws and ending the arrests of sex trafficked and prostituted children and people in the sex trade. Additionally, she is a consultant on prostitution, trafficking and foster care issues, and speaks avidly to the intersectionality of race, child welfare and other systems of oppression.

Melissa Kaiser, LBSW is an independent consultant in the anti-human trafficking field. She was the first Human Trafficking Navigator hired for Eastern North Dakota, contracted with the North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force. Melissa was employed with the Bureau of Criminal Investigations as their first Victim/Witness Specialist, and assisted in creating the integrated victim services and law enforcement program in ND. Melissa graduated with a bachelor's degree in social work from Minnesota State University Moorhead. She was a member of the North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force for six years, and during that time she was the vice chair of the Labor Trafficking Subcommittee. Melissa has been involved in additional committees and task forces specific to underserved populations, and is a trained facilitator in Compassion Fatigue, Green Dot, SHARP, GEMS, My Life My Choice, and Stand to Protect. She has additional training in Child Welfare, Pride and Safe Zone. Melissa is a board member for the Fargo Police Department's Badges of Unity program and was a nominee for the YWCA's Women of the Year 2020. She is a skilled facilitator working with groups within foster care systems, psychiatry and addiction patients, and human trafficking multi-disciplinary teams. She has experience in team supervision, protocol development, team development and maintenance, crisis management, public speaking, training development, prevention/education, advocacy, and case management. Melissa has trained over 11,000 professionals and students, and has trained at Dallas Crimes Against

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Children, GRIT, IHTSJ/GAHTS, NCPTF, Shared Hope/JuST and IAHTI conferences on the topics of human trafficking and secondary traumatic stress. Melissa assisted in creating a summer food service program for children in Fargo, ND, and studied abroad the social welfare system of Ireland. She currently lives in Clearwater, FL, and working nationally and internationally in the anti-human trafficking field. Melissa was born and raised in North Dakota.

Melody Joanne Centeno, LMSW is a remarkable individual who wears many hats. Not only is she a motivational speaker, public advocate, and psychodrama practitioner, but she's also an ABA therapist, talk show host, actress, film director, film editor, and producer.

Melody's passion for helping others led her to graduate from Adelphi University's School of Social Work, where she is recognized as a NYS Licensed Master Social Worker approved by the State Association of Social Work Boards. She now shares her expertise as an Adjunct Professor at Adelphi University's Field Education department, where she supervises undergraduate and graduate social work students. She also uses her SIFI certification and platform to supervise students at New York University.

As a former foster youth herself, Melody founded Foster Care Unplugged in 2016 with the goal of enriching the lives of children in care through the development of positive resiliency skills. Her personal experience has driven her to share her story around the world, empowering youth and enlightening professionals in the field about the importance of being culturally responsive within the culture of child welfare.

Melody's unique style of leadership is a result of her ability to model and teach through the lens of personal experience, merged with professional practice. Her passion for helping others, combined with her expertise and experience, make her an invaluable asset to the Foster Care Unplugged team and to the children and families they serve.

Melody Joanne Centeno, also known as "the Plug," is a role model to many and has made a lasting impression on those who have had the privilege of working with her. She is highly esteemed for her leadership qualities, ability to motivate, and her dedication to improving the lives of those around her.

Melody's goal is to inspire and educate individuals to become their best selves. She uses her platform as a motivational speaker, public advocate, and psychodrama practitioner to stimulate minds, stir hearts, and activate the will within people to achieve greatness.

When she is not working on community projects, Melody devotes her free time to developing her skills as an aspiring actress. Her daughter, Savannah Arielle Acree, is her greatest motivation in life, and she hopes to serve as a blueprint for her daughter and for other young people who look up to her as a role model.

Melody has an impressive portfolio of producing youth-focused projects that aim to empower and inspire young people. One of her notable projects is "Foster Care Unplugged: The Stage Play," which highlights the experiences of current and former foster care youth through theatrical performances. She has also produced short films featuring foster care youth, which shed light on their unique struggles and triumphs.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Foster Care Unplugged is not only dedicated to producing creative projects, but also to hosting annual events that foster a sense of community among young people. These events include a toy drive, a fashion show, and a basketball game with the NYPD.

Melody's dedication to supporting foster youth has expanded to include those who are at risk of being human trafficked. She co-created and facilitated the grant-funded "Mitigating Trauma Through Drama" group therapy model, which combines psychodrama techniques with human trafficking awareness to help mitigate the impact of trauma on young people's lives. Through her work, Melody has become a beacon of hope for many foster youth and vulnerable populations, providing them with the tools and support they need to thrive.

Opal Singleton Hendershot is the President and CEO of Million Kids, a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to keeping kids safe from predators. She is one of the leading voices for combating human trafficking, social media exploitation and the impact of advanced technologies on child sex crimes.

Million Kids serves as the Training and Outreach Coordinator for the Riverside County Anti Human Trafficking Task Force (RCAHT) and works with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department through a Department of Justice Grant. Opal has completed tens of thousands of hours of research over the past ten years on those subjects and dealt with real cases making her an expert on human trafficking crimes and online social media exploitation of minors.

With her expertise, Opal has educated and trained more than 500,000 government and individual leaders as the keynote speaker and workshop presenter on labor trafficking, adult and child sex trafficking, foreign national trafficking, gang trafficking, advanced technologies used in sex crimes, sextortion and social media exploitation, crypto currency and money laundering, the Dark Net and bulletproof hosting, and CSAM (child sexual abuse materials). She often appears on television and radio talk shows across the United States.

Opal is the author of two books. *Seduced: The Grooming of America's Teenagers* (2015) examines real cases to illustrate how predators use social media and online gaming to access, groom, recruit and exploit teenagers into sex trafficking, sextortion and exploitation. The second book, *Societal Shift: A World Without Borders... A Home Without Walls* (2019), takes a look at the impact of over six billion people coming together in ways never before experienced creating a momentous societal shift. Researchers say that 87% of teens sleep with their phone. A world without borders for our children is also a world without borders for pedophiles, predators, pimps, cartels and other organized criminals. That means while you are sleeping bad guys can access your children.

Opal is a lecturer and subject matter expert for the National Education Safety and Security Initiative in UCLA'S Center for Public Health and Disasters. Opal is also an Instructor at USC Price Safe Communities Institute and former co-instructor at the USC School of Social Work for the Los Angeles Police Department LEAD program and is an instructor at Los Angeles Fire Leadership Training Academy. Opal has completed the Robert Presley Institute of Criminal Investigation Instructor Course and served on the Peace Officers Standardized Training panel to develop the training curriculum on human trafficking for law enforcement in California.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Opal hosts a radio show on KTIE 590 AM called “Exploited: Crimes and Technology” every Saturday at 3:00 PM throughout Southern California. She also presents a regular Million Kids Insider Alert video and post for her subscribers featuring breaking news and expert case analysis.

Simply stated: Opal cares deeply about the safety of young people and their families.

Princess Bey is an award-winning screenwriter, director, producer and playwright. Adopted by her grandfather at the age of 7, She grew up to be a “troubled” youth, as a response to the many tribulations she faced growing up. However, she credits the arts for saving her life and providing an outlet for her to explore and release her inner hurt. Upon graduating from Stony Brook University in 2006, Princess began honing her craft and promised herself that she would always “pay it forward” and help other youth find their light via artistic expression.

Princess had the amazing opportunity of working with Foster Care Unplugged to write, direct and serve as the acting coach for Foster Care Unplugged: The Stage Play (Parts I and II), a series of productions sponsored by NYC foster care agencies and ACS, designed to help youth within the child welfare system share their stories with the world. She's also started a new program, 'Free is Me!', which teaches young adults to write original monologues and perform from the heart. Since producing and directing OCTPP/Safe Harbour sponsored Trafficking Credible Messenger film, she's directed a short documentary on sex trafficking titled "Can Oppression Be Liberation?", which raises awareness of the movement to fully decriminalize the sex trade in the United States.

Selina Higgins, MA, MSW, LCSW-R has been the inaugural Executive Director of the NYC Administration for Children's Services' Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy (OCTPP) since its creation in 2015 as the first office within a NYC public agency dedicated to trafficked and at-risk youth. OCTPP coordinates all aspects of policy and practice concerning children involved in human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, including identification, assessment, prevention, intervention, mitigation and service coordination for the entire NYC child welfare system. OCTPP also consults with and supports other City and community-based agencies, provides training for professionals and communities, facilitates a variety of trafficking awareness and prevention groupwork models for youth and administrates the NYC Safe Harbour Program, and a large-scale Child Trafficking Awareness Campaign. Originating with Selina as its only staffing, across the past nine years OCTPP has incrementally expanded to a talented team of eight clinical and administrative members.

Selina has worked in the field of child welfare for 30 years, beginning as a Child Protective Specialist investigating abuse and maltreatment reports, then rising to a variety of clinical and administrative roles. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW-R) with a Master of Arts in Forensic Psychology, a Master of Social Work, and post-graduate certifications in Infant-Parent Dyadic Therapy and Trauma Assessment, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (partial) and Social Work Administration. Additional training includes Play Therapy, and Suicide Prevention.

In addition to policy and procedure development, Selina is a huge believer in hands-on filling of identified gaps. She works directly with youth in providing therapeutic services through a wide variety of group work models (some self or co-designed). The trainings she has designed, presented and/or produced for OCTPP have

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

reached over 31,000 attendees since 2015. She is directly responsible for the creation, production and administration of:

- The annual NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference
- The annual NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Fall and Spring Training Series
- “Movin’ On”: The NYC Child Tattoo Eradication Project
- The “Here for You” Trafficked Youth Credible Messenger Program
- 40-Page Toolkit: Child Trafficking and What YOU Can Do About It: Tools for NYC Child Welfare Professionals
- The NYC Trafficking Prevention app (available free through Google and Apple)
- ACS’ first Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) Consultation Team

Selina was also integral to the development of the *Child Trafficking Database (CTDB)*, and the *CTDB E-Learning* animated electronic training.

Selina is an honorably discharged and decorated veteran of the United States Army. She has been an MSW Practicum Instructor for over 20 years. Publications include a variety of articles, the *Child Trafficking and What YOU Can Do About It: Tools for NYC Child Welfare Professionals* toolkit and co-authoring *Human Trafficking in the Foster Care System* for the Springer Nature 2020 textbook, *Medical Perspectives on Human Trafficking in Adolescents: A Case-Based Guide*. Presentations include international, national and regional conferences, including multiple original workshops at the International Association of Social Work with Groups’ annual symposiums and Shared Hope International’s Juvenile Sex Trafficking (JuST) conferences, the largest and most renowned annual conference on child sex trafficking in the United States. In 2020, the NYC’s Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender Based Violence honored Selina as an Advocate of New York City. In 2023, Selina provided expertise as a Program Advisor for Shared Hope International’s JuST Conference.

Shereene McDermott-Green, LMSW is the Supervisor, Level II with the ACS Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy. She has worked for the NYC Administration for Children’s Services for 17 years, beginning as a Child Protective Specialist investigating abuse and maltreatment reports. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences Interdisciplinary—Early Childhood, with minors in Sociology and African American Studies from The State University of New York at Buffalo, and a Master of Social Work degree from Adelphi University. She is accredited as a Licensed Master Social Worker. Shereene is responsible for extracting all of the data from the emails sent to the Child Trafficking Mailbox and from the Child Trafficking Database Federal Level Notifications and organizing the extracted data into a quarterly Excel mandated by the State. Shereene supervises 3 team members that work on a variety of data aggregation and administrative support projects. She also works directly with vulnerable youth, providing psychoeducational awareness, groupwork sessions which includes Dialectic Behavioral Therapy, Creative Arts in Psychotherapy, and Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and a variety of prevention strategies individualized as per each child’s needs and strengths. In addition, she provides support, guidance, and training to NYC child welfare stakeholders.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Shyla Eubanks is a Child Protective Specialist with ACS, where she works directly with children and families. She is pursuing her MSW degree at Fordham University. She is currently a MSW Intern with the Office of Child Trafficking Prevention and Policy at ACS. Shyla also facilitates Parenting Journey groups for caretakers with Child Welfare involvement. Shyla enjoys using her skills in social work to contribute to the agency and the families she serves.

Steven Gordon has over 18 years of government, nonprofit direct service, administrative, development, and technical assistance/capacity building experience. His areas of expertise include, but not limited to HIV/AIDS, youth development, homelessness, sexual and behavioral health, program development and implementation, grants management, race equity, social justice, community organizing, LGBTQAI+ equity, gender equity, and policy/advocacy. Currently, as the Director of LGBTQAI+ Equity Strategies at ACS, Steven leads the agency's LGBTQAI+ equity efforts. Steven's past professional experiences includes:

- Principle of Steven Gordon Consulting where his primary functions were development, fundraising, grant writing, technical assistance, and capacity building to private companies, nonprofits, hospitals/healthcare centers, and colleges/universities. Some of his clients include: Gershwin Lehman Group, Sage Publishing, Howard University, Vera Institute of Justice, Substance Abuse Mental and Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), etc.
- Executive Director of The Pride Network, a small Brooklyn based non-profit whose mission is to empower and support the next generation of LGBTQ Leadership through social justice education, workforce development and leadership training.
- Director of Drop-In for Ali Forney Center. There he managed a large program budget, 6 grant contracts, a team of staff, interns and consultants of over 20, and a very busy triage center for youth in crisis.

2024 NYC Child Trafficking Prevention Conference:

Evolving Safety Through Prevention, Intervention & Mitigation

Visit ACS'

Human Trafficking Prevention [Virtual Resource Fair](#) (link)

- for information, resources and downloads from local and national trafficking related expert agencies and programs
- to download our Awareness Campaign materials, available in 12 languages

Download our free NYC Trafficking Prevention App:

- Electronic version of *Child Trafficking and What YOU Can Do About It: A Toolkit for NYC Child Welfare Professionals*
- Policies, Training Handouts, Videos
- Posters, Brochures and Tattoo Removal Cards in 12 Languages



Visit our Webpages:

Preventing Youth Trafficking: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/acs/youth/traffickedyouth.page>

Resources for Professionals: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/child-trafficking/resources.page>

What to Do and Who to Contact: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/acs/youth/identify.page>



Help us stop child and adult trafficking.