

2021 Virtual STAR-Center Conference

Conference Agenda

May 14, 2021

Via Zoom

8:00 A.M. LOG ONTO ZOOM

8:30 to 11:30 A.M. CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

KEYNOTES

“Suicide and Suicidal Behavior in Black Youth”

Tami D. Benton, MD, Psychiatrist and Chief, The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Frederick Allen Endowed Professor of Psychiatry, The Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania

There will be a brief break between Keynotes

“Next Time We’ll Be Ready: What’s Wrong with School Crisis Preparation Today”

*Mary Margaret Kerr, EdD
Professor of Health and Human Development, University of Pittsburgh*

11:30 A.M. LUNCH (On Your Own)

12:45 P.M. SKILL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS - GROUP 1

2:00 P.M. BREAK

2:15 P.M. SKILL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS – GROUP 2

3:30 P.M. ADJOURNMENT

STAR-Center is funded by an appropriation from the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The University of Pittsburgh is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Keynote Address: “Suicide and Suicidal Behavior in Black Youth”

**Tami D. Benton, MD, Psychiatrist and Chief, The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia,
Frederick Allen Endowed Professor of Psychiatry, The Perelman School of Medicine at
the University of Pennsylvania**

This presentation will focus upon emerging data about Black youth suicide and exosomal factors contributing to its rise among black youth. Existing evidence about risk and protective factors, interventions and future directions for research will be presented.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Recognize the shifting suicide trends for suicide among minoritized populations, specifically for Black youth
2. Recognize risk factors for suicide among Black youth
3. Discuss existing evidence about suicide risks and interventions for Black Youth

Keynote Address: “Next Time We’ll Be Ready: What’s Wrong with School Crisis Preparation Today”

Mary Margaret Kerr, EdD, Professor of Health and Human Development, University of Pittsburgh

This presentation offers a practical look at evidence-informed strategies for crisis team preparation and training in school settings. Specifically, we review a) risky oversights in pre-service educator preparation programs, b) missteps in convening crisis teams, c) failures in crisis team training, and d) school-based practices for addressing these critical problems.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Assess their school crisis team’s composition, preparation, training, and refresher training
2. Identify challenges in convening, preparing, and training school crisis teams
3. Identify evidence-informed strategies and resources to overcome these challenges

SKILL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Please note that participants will select two workshops – one from Group 1 and one from Group 2.

GROUP #1 - 12:45 – 2:00 p.m.

A. Workshop Title: Treating Childhood Traumatic Grief with a COVID-19 Focus (*Intermediate*)

(This workshop is offered in Group 2 as Workshop F)

Judith Cohen, MD, Professor of Psychiatry, Medical Director, AGH Center for Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents, Allegheny Health Network and Drexel University College of Medicine

More than 300,000 Americans have died from COVID-19, with many additional “excess deaths” also associated with the pandemic. Youth may develop childhood traumatic grief (CTG) due to pandemic-specific traumatic aspects of these deaths. This presentation will describe the application of Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) for COVID-19-related CTG for youth and their surviving caregivers.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Describe 3 circumstances of a loved one’s death specific to the COVID-19 pandemic that may increase youth risk of developing Childhood Traumatic Grief (CTG)
2. Describe the TF-CBT PRACTICE components and grief-focused components
3. Identify where to access material about CTG related to COVID-19

B. Workshop Title: Traversing the Transition to College: Assisting Students with Mental Health Concerns. (*Intermediate*)

Kym Jordan Simmons, Ph.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Carnegie Mellon University

This presentation will provide an overview of the state of mental health services on college campuses, shifts in counseling center services during the COVID pandemic, ways to examine the mental health services being offered, and concrete tasks to help prepare students and caregivers prior to the launch to college.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Describe common developmental themes for students launching to college
2. Discuss ways to examine mental health services offered by a college or university
3. Identify concrete steps to preparing for the transition to college

C. Workshop Title: Suicidality among Transgender Youth: An Introduction to the Health Sciences Literature and Recommendations for Validating Care (*Introductory*)

Brian Thoma, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Pittsburgh, UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital

This workshop will provide clinicians with: (1) an introduction to transgender identities among teenagers, (2) an overview of the research literature describing suicidality among transgender adolescents, and (3) an in-depth discussion of how treatment providers can interact with transgender clients to foster a validating and accepting environment.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Define what it means to have a gender minority, or transgender identity
2. Describe current research evidence documenting elevated rates of suicidality among transgender youth, including which subgroups could have the highest risk for engaging in suicidal behavior
3. Demonstrate foundational knowledge of gender minority identities to provide validating care to transgender clients

D. Workshop Title: Self-Care and Mindfulness in the School (Intermediate)

Sara Goodyear, MsEd, LPC, NCC, STAR-Center, and A.W. Beattie Career Center

This session will provide school and community professionals with a variety of self-care and mindfulness strategies to utilize on an individual, classroom, and school-wide level. Highlighted will be teaching coping skills techniques and ways to present the concept of self-care and mindfulness in a meaningful manner to secondary students.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Identify practical coping strategies and mindfulness techniques that can be applied with secondary students
2. Identify ways to present coping strategies and mindfulness on an individual and classroom basis in a meaningful manner
3. Discuss options for normalizing mental health awareness on a systemic, school-wide level

E. Workshop Title: Social Determinants and their Impact on Childhood Mental Health (Introductory)

Paula Marie Powe, M.D., Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Medical Director, Matilda Theiss Early Childhood and School-Based Behavioral Health Center, UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital

This presentation will discuss social determinants of mental health and ways that they contribute to early childhood adversity, toxic stress, and clinical outcomes. Resilience, protective factors, and considerations for policy change will also be reviewed.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Define social determinants of mental health
2. Explain how toxic stress and early childhood adversity can affect people throughout their lifetimes
3. Discuss how a range of social risk and protective factors contribute to mental health outcomes.

BREAK – 2:00 to 2:15 p.m.

GROUP #2 - 2:15-3:30 p.m.

F. Workshop Title: Treating Childhood Traumatic Grief with a COVID-19 Focus (*Intermediate*)

(This workshop was offered in Group 1 as Workshop A)

Judith Cohen, MD, Professor of Psychiatry, Medical Director, AGH Center for Traumatic Stress in Children and Adolescents, Allegheny Health Network and Drexel University College of Medicine

More than 300,000 Americans have died from COVID-19, with many additional “excess deaths” also associated with the pandemic. Youth may develop childhood traumatic grief (CTG) due to pandemic-specific traumatic aspects of these deaths. This presentation will describe the application of Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) for COVID-19-related CTG for youth and their surviving caregivers.

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G. Workshop Title: Autism Spectrum Disorders in Children and Adolescents: Assessment and Treatment Considerations for the School Setting. (*Introductory*)

Benjamin L. Handen, Ph.D., BCBA-D, Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder have social and communication deficits along with stereotyped interests and behaviors. Many have co-morbid disorders such as ADHD and anxiety. This session provides an overview of autism and comorbid disorders, followed by discussion of specific tools and strategies for working with this population.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Identify the characteristics of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and common comorbid disorders
2. Discuss interventions and accommodations for children and adolescents with ASD and comorbid externalizing disorders (e.g., ADHD, ODD)
3. Explain interventions and accommodations for children and adolescents with ASD and comorbid internalizing disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression)

H. Workshop Title: Approaching Social Anxiety: Leading an Exposure-Based Group (*Intermediate*)

- **Christina Kirsch, Psy.D., Licensed Psychologist, Center for Pediatric Neuropsychology**
- **Kelsey Johnson, LPC, NCC, Behavioral Health Therapist, STAR-Center, UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital**

This presentation will review the application of exposure-based interventions as a group treatment for social anxiety in adolescents. Special attention will be given to relevant skill development, the logistics of identifying, planning, and conducting exposures, engaging parents in exposures, and challenging patterns of family dynamics that may reinforce avoidant behaviors.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Apply a distress tolerance coping model to reduce patterns of behavioral avoidance in socially anxious teenagers
2. Identify, construct, and execute exposures for socially anxious teenagers
3. Coach parents in implementing community-based exposures to promote generalization of skills and reduce the reinforcement of avoidant behaviors

I. Workshop Title: Identifying and Responding to Cybervictimization among Adolescents (*Introductory*)

- **Candice Biernesser, Ph.D., LCSW, Postdoctoral Scholar, University of Pittsburgh**
- **Karla Joyce-Good, LSW, MSW, UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital**

Cyberbullying is a growing concern among young people with reports of cyberbullying doubling over the past decade. Youth who are cyberbullied are approximately twice as likely to exhibit suicidal thoughts and behaviors. This presentation will offer practical guidance for understanding and responding to cyberbullying among adolescents.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. Discuss current research focused on youth cybervictimization and its association with suicidal risk
2. Explain how to respond to reports of cybervictimization among youth
3. Identify practical resources relating to youth cybervictimization for mental health clinicians and educators

J. Workshop Title: Provider Well-Being: We Need Not Always Be Heroes (*Introductory*)

Sansea L. Jacobson, MD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, STAR-Center, Program Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Training, Western Psychiatric Hospital, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center

Wellness is an unspoken shared responsibility between patient and provider; now even more poignant during the COVID-19 pandemic. This session will guide the audience to a better understanding of how to conceptualize and approach our own well-being and its impact on our personal and professional identities.

At the completion of this session, participants should be able to:

1. List three potential negative outcomes related to unaddressed burnout in mental health care providers
2. Describe our current research understanding of the relationship between burnout, depression, and suicide
3. Name at least one method or resource that could help promote resilience and/or support the mental health of providers within your work setting

For additional information regarding presenters or presentations, please go to www.starcenter.pitt.edu, or contact Jamey Covaleski @ covaleskijj@upmc.edu.