

Session Descriptions

Wednesday, May 4

Registration — 9:00 - 10:00am

Welcome & Opening Remarks — 10:00 - 10:15am



Keynote — 10:15-11:45am

Just Look Up! 5 life-saving phrases EVERY human needs to hear — Joe Beckman

- Combining humor, authenticity, heart, and soul, international speaker Joe Beckman shares five specific phrases he believes all humans need to hear...especially today. The result is a refreshing, authentic, and down-to-earth approach to finding self-worth (Love YOU), resilience (Push Through), confidence (Fail On), joy (Yeah Toast!), and maybe most importantly, human connection (Just Look Up).

Lunch — 12:00-1:00pm

Breakout A — 1:15-2:45pm - Exhibitors Open

The Tools — Joe Beckman: Based off Joe's book, Just Look Up, "The Tools" is a nuts and bolts workshop that will equip Principals with SEL-based tools around personal growth, leadership development, and creating a positive school culture. Participants will walk out with fresh ideas, practical resources, and inspiring videos ("the tools!") they can immediately use with their staff, students, and larger school community. Bring a pen, bring a notebook, and bring a folder... you're going to be walking away with some "tools!"

Instilling Hope & Resiliency in Youth: Suicide Prevention — Julia Hebenstreit, J.D., Katie Zimmerman: Suicide is the second leading cause of death for 10–34-year-olds in the United States. It is a very real public health problem which impacts individuals from every walk of life, but it is also preventable. In this session, you will learn certain suicide statistics in relation to the youth population on both a state and national level, be informed of risk factors and warning signs associated with suicide, and how to help youth if you notice any of the warning signs. You will also learn different ways you can instill hope through positive coping mechanisms, protective factors, and calming strategies. In this presentation we will also discuss The Kim Foundation's partnership with the Department for Health & Human Services Division of Behavioral Health as we have been facilitating the development of a statewide suicide prevention plan. These efforts have included and will continue to include every corner of Nebraska, and focus on providing hope, effective strategies, and useful resources to anyone who is interested in saving lives from suicide. During this presentation you will learn how you can play a role in the implementation of the plan throughout the state. Participants will also have the opportunity to sign up for a free digital suicide prevention toolkit, and we will send it to participants upon completing the session.

Family Feud-Restorative Justice Style — Michele Lueders, Dan Bechtol, Charles A. Lieske: If you know a little something about restorative practices and the efforts Nebraska has been engaged in related to restorative justice, join us as one of the contestants in our interactive game show! We also need a great studio audience who wants to learn more about restorative practices and how Nebraska is leading the pack in this area. Through Restorative Justice practices, youth work to gain an understanding of the impact of their behavior and accept responsibility for their actions. In addition, family, individuals supporting the family team, and community members can help the youth express remorse and take action to repair damage, this can aide the youth in becoming a valued member of the community. Come experience how to put Restorative Justice into practice through this fun and informative format!

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CYA (Check Your Assumptions) about Juvenile Justice Youth — Tami Soper: (CYA) Check Your Assumptions is an interactive group workshop focused on exploring and dismantling common group-based biases about youth in the juvenile justice system. Adapted from a strategy utilized by the Anti-Defamation League, the proposed presentation will provide information and tools focused upon explicit and implicit bias, racial and ethnic disparity, and special populations (e.g., social class, gender, orientation, etc.).

Break — 2:45-3:00pm - Exhibitors Open

Breakout B — 3:00-4:30pm

Instilling Hope & Resiliency in Youth: Suicide Prevention — Julia Hebenstreit, J.D., Katie Zimmerman: Suicide is the second leading cause of death for 10–34-year-olds in the United States. It is a very real public health problem which impacts individuals from every walk of life, but it is also preventable. In this session, you will learn certain suicide statistics in relation to the youth population on both a state and national level, be informed of risk factors and warning signs associated with suicide, and how to help youth if you notice any of the warning signs. You will also learn different ways you can instill hope through positive coping mechanisms, protective factors, and calming strategies. In this presentation we will also discuss The Kim Foundation's partnership with the Department for Health & Human Services Division of Behavioral Health as we have been facilitating the development of a statewide suicide prevention plan. These efforts have included and will continue to include every corner of Nebraska, and focus on providing hope, effective strategies, and useful resources to anyone who is interested in saving lives from suicide. During this presentation you will learn how you can play a role in the implementation of the plan throughout the state. Participants will also have the opportunity to sign up for a free digital suicide prevention toolkit, and we will send it to participants upon completing the session.

I'm Just a Kid: Simple Plan to Gain Knowledge and Application of Adolescent Brain Development within Youth Justice — Martin Jensen, MaKayla Parriott, Michelle Lindhart: This session includes a Simple Plan that will educate and enhance your skills to apply adolescent development and positive youth approaches. When put into practice, these approaches can significantly impact re-offending and improve behavioral outcomes for youth in the justice system. By the end of this workshop participants will acquire knowledge in the 5 areas of adolescent behavior and development and learn how each area impacts roles within the youth justice system. Understanding the 5 areas of development increases the capacity to understand youth perspective, monitor bias, educate others, and aid youth in development.

Family Feud-Restorative Justice Style — Michele Lueders, Dan Bechtol, Charles A. Lieske: If you know a little something about restorative practices and the efforts Nebraska has been engaged in related to restorative justice, join us as one of the contestants in our interactive game show! We also need a great studio audience who wants to learn more about restorative practices and how Nebraska is leading the pack in this area. Through Restorative Justice practices, youth work to gain an understanding of the impact of their behavior and accept responsibility for their actions. In addition, family, individuals supporting the family team, and community members can help the youth express remorse and take action to repair damage, this can aide the youth in becoming a valued member of the community. Come experience how to put Restorative Justice into practice through this fun and informative format!

The Interaction of Special Education in Juvenile Law — Lauren Micek Vargas, Elizabeth Eynon Kokrda: **Approved for 1.5 hours of Ethics Continuing Education.** Education law is not well understood by many of us who are in a position to advocate for youth in the juvenile justice system. This even includes, lawyers, judges, and school staff, especially special education. For families, it can be daunting. This session aims to broaden a general understanding of special education law and how to appropriately incorporate it into various aspects of juvenile practice. In this session practitioners will receive an introduction to special education issues arising in general representation of students and families and teach them how to identify education barriers and incorporate special education rights into juvenile proceedings.

Diversion Meeting — 4:30-6:00pm

Thursday, May 5 - Youth Day

Registration — 8:00 - 9:00am - Exhibitors Open

Welcome & Opening Remarks — 9:00 - 9:05am



Keynote — 9:05-10:15am

Double Edged Sword: Service Provision and Youth Outcomes — Cyntoia Brown-Long -

In her keynote, Author and Advocate Cyntoia Brown-Long will discuss her journey from the “school to the streets”. By detailing her trajectory from being excluded in the classroom to silenced in the courtroom and ultimately exploited on the streets, Long provides valuable insight in the effort to change outcomes for at-risk youth. Her message of hope and resilience serves to remind us that through the support of consistent, healthy relationships and access to tools and opportunities, there is no such thing as an incorrigible youth.

Break — 10:15-10:30am - Exhibitors Open

Breakout C — 10:30-11:45am

You Have Options: Learning to Advocate for Yourself — Cyntoia Brown-Long: This youth breakout session will discuss the importance of educating yourself on policies, procedures, and organizational structures while in the custody of the juvenile justice system or youth services. Cyntoia will teach the youth different strategies to communicate their needs effectively even in the face of unfair circumstances. She will share some of her own experiences where this proved helpful.

Trauma-Informed Care in a Residential Program: Research Findings & Implications for Juvenile Justice — Patrick Tyler, PhD, LIMHP, LPC: Research has shown that youth who receive treatment services in residential programs have high rates of exposure to traumatic events prior to care. Residential programs have been criticized for replicating the punishing and coercive environments youth experienced prior to treatment and for producing poor outcomes with these youth. To improve services for youth in residential programs, trauma-informed care has been recommended. In this session, participants will 1) gain an understanding of the elements of trauma-informed care; 2) learn about research findings on trauma exposure and symptoms and how these impacted treatment needs and outcomes for youth in a residential program; 3) learn about effective strategies for youth with high trauma symptoms and how these strategies generalize to youth in other settings; 4) participate in a discussion on how participants can apply these findings to their everyday work; and 5) explore potential challenges implementing trauma-informed care principles within the juvenile justice system.

Session Descriptions

Thursday, May 5 - Youth Day

Where There is Smoke There is Fire: Or Is There? Vaping and Teens — Kenneth Zoucha, MD, Laura Schutte-Lundy: The most recent Monitoring the Future (MTF) shows that the rate of nicotine use utilizing electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) have skyrocketed over the last 3 years. In 2019, the prevalence of past month nicotine vaping was more than 1 in 4 students in 12th grade; 1 in 5 in 10th grade, and 1 in 10 in eighth grade. These products introduce the highly addictive chemical nicotine to young people and their developing brains. Prevention is key to this public health crisis. However, there are many teens already addicted to nicotine, but can't stop. As providers who care for adolescents, we are in a position to offer medical therapies and therapy approaches to help our adolescent patients. This learning experience will give providers the tools to provide treatment for teens with nicotine addiction and understand the medical therapies that are available.

An Examination of Chronic Absences among Nebraska Youth — Dr. Julie Garman, Dr. Anne Hobbs, Denise Kracl, Sarah Steele, M.A.: Excessive absenteeism has long term effects on youth, schools, and society. The effects of falling behind academically place students at higher risk for dropping out of school, employment issues, and financial consequences. In this session, you will learn about the risk factors and barriers that contribute to excessive absenteeism, which include a myriad of internal and external factors such as racial and economic inequalities, as well as mental health and disabilities. You will learn about disproportionality in rates of school absence in Nebraska and how you can contribute to efforts to improve school attendance. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about assessment tools programs can use to improve upon the individualization of services for youth and gain insight into opportunities to use interdisciplinary approaches that maximize program and community resources (community programs, clinicians, etc.) to improve youth attendance.

Awards Luncheon — 12:00 - 1:00pm

During lunch service, the 2022 NJJA awards will be presented. These awards are: the Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association Scholarship Award, the Evelyn E. Labode Service to Youth Award, the NJJA Commitment to Excellence in Leadership Award, and the Spirit of Youth Award.

Thursday, May 5 - Youth Day

Breakout D — 1:30-2:45pm

Menu for Authentic Youth Engagement — Shelby Rice, Hannah Burdess: Workshop will include an interactive discussion on how to authentically engage with youth and young adults. Hannah Burdess will provide her personal experience of how she was authentically engaged while working with DHHS. A young adult panel will also offer their insight on their past experiences and what they would like to see in the future. Hannah and the panel can offer suggestions on how your organization and community can implement youth and young adult engagement. We would like this session to be discussion based and inspire attendees to apply these strategies in their professional and personal experiences.

Cultural Responsivity and its Impact on Meeting the Mental/Behavioral Health Needs of At-Risk, System Involved Youth — Dr. Abby Carbaugh, Dr. Megan Davidson, Kim Hawekotte, J.D., Dr. Donna Stewart: In Douglas County, we have seen that a large portion of youth entering and exiting detention have serious and unmet behavioral health needs that require a coordinated continuum of care to fully meet their needs. During 2020, approximately 85% of youth detained in the Douglas County Youth Center (DCYC) were youth of color. This disparity is important, given the general issues related to mental health stigma in communities of color, and the effect it has on at-risk and system-involved youth and families. During this session we will discuss these factors and explore how current projects implemented by Douglas County are working to disrupt the link between behavioral health concerns and future juvenile justice system involvement.

Trauma Informed Representation: How the Roles of GAL and Defense Counsel Can Empower Youth — Laurel Johnson, Michelle Paxton: Come explore how the role of Guardian ad Litem (GAL) and Defense Attorney not only legally represent youth, but can also empower them. The presenters will discuss GAL/attorney practicing in Juvenile Court guidelines and standards per the Nebraska Supreme Court, and why meeting these standards are essential for ensuring youth voices are heard and considered in the decision making processes that govern their lives. They will also discuss how representation with a trauma informed lens is critical when working with most of the population involved in law violations and status offenses.

Are You Really Leading or Are You Just Taking a Walk? — Monica Miles-Steffens, Michele Lueders: There is an old proverb that says, "If you think you are leading and no one else is following you, then you are only taking a walk." Leading, regardless of title or position, nearly always involves developing a team to achieve desired results. However, developing and sustaining effective teams continues to be a stumbling block. This interactive session will engage participants in thought-provoking activities, leaving them with tangible tools to develop and lead their teams.

Break — 2:45-3:00pm - Exhibitors Open

Breakout E — 3:00-4:15pm

Menu for Authentic Youth Engagement — Shelby Rice, Hannah Burdess: Workshop will include an interactive discussion on how to authentically engage with youth and young adults. Hannah Burdess will provide her personal experience of how she was authentically engaged while working with DHHS. A young adult panel will also offer their insight on their past experiences and what they would like to see in the future. Hannah and the panel can offer suggestions on how your organization and community can implement youth and young adult engagement. We would like this session to be discussion based and inspire attendees to apply these strategies in their professional and personal experiences.

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Drug Endangered Children Awareness: What Professionals Need to Know — Eric Nation, Stacey Read: Thousands of children across our country go unidentified, and therefore do not receive necessary care and treatment to heal from the negative impacts of parental or caregiver's substance misuse. The presenters will help participants gain awareness about drug endangered children and the risks they face, as well as understand the many opportunities to identify these youth living in dangerous drug environments. Participants will then learn how to apply a multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach, incorporating unique and often limited resources within a community to better care for drug endangered children.

The Impact of Brain Injuries on Justice Involved Youth — Peggy Reisher, Dennis Marks: A lifetime history of brain injury can result in impairments in physical, emotional, and/or cognitive functioning. Individuals living with brain injury often experience difficulties such as: *Problems reading social cues or regulating emotion and behavior can make a person appear intolerant or belligerent. *Having trouble with organizing or initiating daily activities as the result of impaired executive functioning is easily misinterpreted as a lack of motivation or laziness. *Failing to remember instructions or rules may be interpreted as non-compliance. The session will discuss the impact of brain injury in the juvenile justice system. Presenters will provide an overview of brain injury signs and symptoms, the prevalence of brain injury in justice involved youth, and simple tools and strategies you and the justice-involved youth can utilize to minimize the effects of brain injury once it is identified through a screening process.

Are You Really Leading or Are You Just Taking a Walk? — Monica Miles-Steffens, Michele Lueders: There is an old proverb that says, "If you think you are leading and no one else is following you, then you are only taking a walk." Leading, regardless of title or position, nearly always involves developing a team to achieve desired results. However, developing and sustaining effective teams continues to be a stumbling block. This interactive session will engage participants in thought-provoking activities, leaving them with tangible tools to develop and lead their teams.

Youth Call to Action — 3:00-4:30pm (Youth Only)

Networking Reception — 4:30-6:30pm - Exhibitors Open, Music Bingo with Prizes!

Session Descriptions

Friday, May 6

Registration — 8:00 - 8:30am - Exhibits open

Keynote — 8:30 - 9:45am



Sacrificing Safety: Considering the Cost of Overlooking Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Justice Systems — Adolphus Graves

This session will introduce strategies of identifying and addressing disparities in juvenile justice systems that when overlooked can significantly jeopardize traditional community safety efforts. This session will also provide solution-focused options for implementing procedures of identifying youth with behavioral health conditions and/or substance abuse disorders at the earliest point of court contact. Attendees will explore ways to develop a continuum of intervention and service delivery strategies to include community-based service integration prior to, and following periods of, formal court supervision. Attendees will be challenged to engage in reflective analysis of existing practices within their local areas to determine points of contact along the juvenile justice spectrum where racial and ethnic disparities may be present. Simplified approaches of researching and assessing data will be offered with an emphasis on enhancing the collective impact capacity of collaborative community partners while simultaneously preserving precious fiscal resources. Participants will leave with action plans to initiate steps towards harnessing, building and activating aligned efforts of stakeholders in maximizing sustainably safer communities.

Break — 9:45-10:00am - Exhibitors Open

Keynote Continued — 10:00am - 12:00pm

Closing — 12:00pm - 12:15pm
