

#BRCC2025ATN

ATN's Building Resilient Communities for Children

Virtual Conference

Conference Session Schedule as of 05/15/2025 – Subject to change

All times are Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) (UTC-4:00)

Monday, June 23, 2025

10:00 - 11:30 am Keynote - Dr. Bruce Perry

How Positive Patterns of Stress Create Resilience: Understanding the Difference between Adversity and Advantage

In this presentation, Dr. Perry will explore how patterns of stress can determine risk or resilience, and he will highlight the importance of structure, predictability and moderation of daily stress in building resilience. He will offer suggestions for how educators/parents/families can structure their day, work towards more meaningful interactions, be conscious of and work towards better self-regulation, and other similar points that will positively impact experiences and relationships.

12:00 – 1:15 pm Workshop Session 1

- **1A – Tools for the Tough Days: A Therapeutic Parenting Workshop**, Billy Kaplan, LCSW

In this workshop, you'll learn about Parenting in SPACE®—a framework designed to help you shift from traditional strategies to a therapeutic mindset. You'll gain a deeper understanding of your child's behaviors as emotional expressions rooted in their past experiences. You'll also learn how to offer Safety, Support, Structure, and Supervision, while staying Playful, Accepting, Curious, and Empathic.

By learning these tools, you'll feel more confident and connected—and more like the successful parent you want to be.

- **1B – Reducing Stress in Schools: A Principal's Perspective**, Mathew Portell, MEd
Schools are facing unprecedented levels of stress and anxiety among students and staff. This session will explore the interconnectedness of stress, trauma, and disconnection and offer practical strategies for fostering a sense of belonging and community within the school environment from a principal's perspective.
- **1C – The River of Cruelty Model: A Trauma-Responsive Approach**, Dorthy Halley, LMSW and Steve Halley, LSCSW

This presentation will provide an overview of the River of Cruelty Model, examining how cruelty is passed from person to person and generation to generation. Using an experiential approach, participants will learn the core principles of the "River of Cruelty Model" and examine the impact of trauma on an individual's life experiences.

- **1D – Creating Healing Communities: The Community Resiliency Model,**
Elaine Miller Karas, LCSW

The Community Resiliency Model (CRM), an evidence-based approach, will be presented to demonstrate how communities can build supportive systems that strengthen the well-being of children, teens, and their families during these unprecedented and uncertain times. CRM offers six wellness skills grounded in the understanding that stress and trauma elicit a biological response shared by all human beings.

This workshop will highlight how communities around the world have successfully integrated CRM into their wellness practices to foster resilience and collective healing.

- **1E – Building Parent-Child Connection through Attachment-Based Play,**
Dafna Lender, LCSW

The quickest and most powerful way to get to transformative moments with children is through play— meaning interactive, face-to-face, reciprocal, cooperative interactions that rely on movement, rhythm, touch, a prosodic voice, and eye contact. Children learn to regulate, connect and share joy with others through play. The more the child learns that it's pleasurable and safe to be completely caught up in a moment of shared joy or attention with another person, the deeper sense of connection. That is why facilitating safe, engaging play between children is so important for their overall development. This workshop will focus on the physiologic, nonverbal connection between parent or caring adult and child to improve the relationship. You will learn how to enhance regulation, connection, and joy between adult caregivers and children.

1:45 – 3:00 pm Workshop Session 2

- **2A - Understanding Neuro-Nurturing Leads to a More Resilient Community,**
Deb McNelis, MEd

In the earliest years of life, a child's brain is shaped by everyday experiences—building the foundation for lifelong learning, emotional well-being, physical health, feelings of self-worth and resilience. When entire communities understand Neuro-Nurturing—the simple, science-backed ways to support early brain development—children thrive, families strengthen, and the whole community benefits.

This presentation reveals how consistent, responsive and positive interactions in a child's early years promote stronger executive function skills, emotional regulation, problem-solving abilities, empathy, delayed gratification, planning and much more. It also explores how community-wide awareness and action lead to increased self-confidence, fewer behavioral challenges, improved mental and physical health, and a stronger future workforce.

You'll discover how sharing the elements of Neuro-Nurturing makes it easy and achievable for any community to gain incredibly valuable insights—helping more children receive the nurturing experiences they need beginning at birth.

Learn how your community can become stronger, more compassionate, and more resilient through nurturing the authentic self of every child.

- **2B - Trauma-informed Restorative Practice in Education: A Conversation with Margaret Thorsborne and Joe Brummer**, Margaret Thorsborne and Joe Brummer

Join us for a unique and inspiring session featuring Joe Brummer—author of *Becoming a Trauma-Informed Restorative School* and co-author of *Becoming a Trauma-Informed Restorative Educator*—as he interviews restorative justice pioneer Marg Thorsborne. With nearly 30 years of experience in the field, Marg offers powerful insights into what it truly means to create trauma-informed, restorative schools. Through a compelling recorded interview followed by a live Q&A with Joe, you'll gain a deeper understanding of how to move beyond outdated, compliance-based discipline models and embrace neuroscience-informed, compassionate approaches to education. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from two leading voices in the restorative movement and walk away with inspiration, clarity, and actionable ideas to transform your practice.

- **2C – Resilience in Rap: How Hip-Hop H.E.A.L.S.!**, Jaleel Abdul-Adil, PhD

Contemporary Rap music and related Hip-Hop culture comprise a diverse range of themes, messages, and exemplars that reflect and impact the lives of urban youth, families, and communities both in the U.S. and around the world. Careful critique, strategic selection, and specific usage of prosocial content identified within contemporary Rap/Hip-Hop can engage youth audiences (especially high-risk populations), enrich evidence-based practices, and inspire practical positive changes to reduce or prevent problems as well as inspire resiliency and health. This workshop will illustrate the role of Rap/Hip-Hop in trauma-informed youth violence prevention as outlined in the *Hip-Hop H.E.A.L.S.!* (**H**elping **E**veryone **A**chieve **L**iberation and **S**uccess) program for urban youth and communities, especially those exposed to gangs, guns, and other forms of intense interpersonal violence. Broader implications beyond Rap/Hip-Hop for musical arts-based approaches to enhance traditional clinical psychology techniques will also be discussed during the presentation.

- **2D - Community Response After a Mass Violence Incident: Creating and coordinating a response plan for your school, organization, or community**, Josh Novick, LPC

In this interactive discussion, trauma and school counselor, Josh Novick will focus on local and school-based responses to community mass violence incidents. Using personal experience from counseling students experiencing gun violence on the West Side of Chicago to the critical incident response to the July 4th parade shooting in Highland Park, combined with best practices and evidence-based techniques, this session will discuss immediate response protocols to an incident as well as the development of trauma-recovery centers and long-term resiliency efforts. The conversation will cover what to expect during a critical incident response including the vicarious trauma and impact on providers. Throughout the session, trauma-informed practices and assessments will be referenced. This presentation is ideal for counselors, social workers, psychologists, deans, school resource officers, and administrators.

- **2E – Neurotherapy and the Impact on the Scattered Mind: A brief introduction to neurotherapy and its significance in the healing of trauma,** Scott Kuenneke MS, LPC, BCN

In this presentation, Scott Kuenneke provides a brief introduction into quantitative electroencephalography (qEEG) brain mapping and neurofeedback explaining how the electrical side of the brain can be used to interpret and understand developmental trauma. He will talk about how the qEEG can be integrated into therapeutic practices to enhance acceptance. He then will dive into a case study involving a student struggling with developmental trauma, and the effects that neurofeedback had on the brain. The case study reviews biological data, as well as subjective and observational data

3:30 – 4:45 pm Workshop Session 3

- **3A - The Grief No One Talks About: Understanding Ambiguous Loss in Kinship Care,** Beth Tyson, MA

In this 75-minute experiential workshop, we'll explore the often-overlooked grief that lives in kinship care—ambiguous loss. Beyond traditional grief, this session sheds light on the chronic uncertainty children face: *Who am I living with? Will I see my parents again? Why did everything change?* These unanswered questions can quietly take root, showing up as anxiety, depression, or trauma responses.

We'll unpack how ambiguous loss uniquely affects kinship caregivers and the children they love, and offer trauma-informed, trust-based strategies to help kids name their grief, express emotions safely, and begin to heal. Whether you're a caregiver walking this path or a professional supporting these families, you'll gain practical tools to foster emotional safety and connection.

- **3B - The Heart of the Matter: Building and Healing within Trauma-Responsive Communities,** Matthew Bowerman, EdD

Educators will explore the foundations of trauma-responsive and trauma-informed care to foster safer, more supportive school communities. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the impacts of trauma on students and staff, while examining how trauma can shape behavior, engagement, and learning. The session includes practical, research-backed strategies to support students through a healing-centered lens, alongside tools to build relational trust and psychological safety across classrooms and teams. Educators will also engage in essential self-reflection and learn protective self-care practices that safeguard their own emotional well-being—because sustainable trauma-responsive work starts with resilient, supported adults. Whether you're a teacher, administrator, counselor, or support staff, this interactive session will leave you empowered to create environments where all members of your school community can thrive.

- **3C - Helping Youth and Caregivers Recover from Complex Trauma and Polyvictimization: The TARGET Approach to Developmental Trauma,** Julian Ford, PhD

In this session I will define developmental trauma as experiences of maltreatment, violence, or loss (i.e., complex trauma) that often involve multiple types of betrayal, exploitation, and

victimization (i.e., polyvictimization) and compromise children's core security and bonding with caregivers and other primary attachment figures. I will use case examples with films of therapy sessions (with actors portraying composite youths, to protect privacy and safety) to illustrate the how developmental trauma leads to of adaptive survival coping that is the result of automatic self-protective alterations the brain – but that comes at the cost of altering the youths' core psychosocial development in ways that can lead to involvement in the legal system. I will explain how the resultant alterations in core capacities for emotion regulation, behavioral self-control, trust in relationships, and identity development that result from survival coping can be understood in a non-pathologizing way using the Developmental Trauma Disorder (DTD) framework, as an alternative to labeling youth as “callous and unemotional” and sociopathic. Finally, I will describe, with therapy session films, how practical skills for emotion regulation and behavioral self-control from the Trauma Affect Regulation: Guide for Education and Therapy (TARGET©) program can enable youth and caregivers to recover from survival mode and restore healthy attachment and development.

- **3D - Creating Resilient Faith Communities of Belonging**, Rev. Dr. Sanghoon Yoo, MSW
This workshop focuses on how to create resilient faith communities that foster a sense of belonging through a trauma-informed care approach. Historically, there has been a significant divide between faith and science, as well as between clergy and mental health providers. This gap has hindered effective services for trauma healing and restoration. The presenter will explain how to integrate theological and scientific perspectives within the trauma-informed care framework, enhancing the coherence and confidence of faith-based trauma-informed practices and promoting cultural change. Participants will receive practical toolkits and strategies to engage faith communities, encouraging collaboration and partnership with various societal sectors. Additionally, the workshop will introduce six principles for building a community of belonging, drawn from the presenter's successful project experiences. These principles include 'connection before correction,' 'ventilation and validation,' and 'challenges, concerns, and celebrations.' Participants will explore the biblical and scientific importance of establishing safe relationships and how these principles contribute to creating culturally safe spaces, where resilience is strengthened by 'we all are in this together' rather than 'us and them.' The presenter will also offer several practical exercises, along with guiding tips for implementing the six principles, to help create resilient faith communities of belonging.
- **3E - Once Upon a Time: Using storytelling in therapy and parenting**, Jane Samuel, LMFT
Narrative therapy can be a door into the traumatized child's lived experience. Normalizing and validating stories have also been used to shift stuck patterns of thinking and increase understanding in adults working with children. Hear about existing children's literature addressing early adversity and learn how to use it to assist children in feeling seen, heard and understood. Where children's literature hasn't caught up, discover how to utilize your own internal storyteller to accomplish the same effect, including the tone, rate of speech, and rhythm in stories that are regulating—rather than lecturing—to children's ears.

5:30 – 7:00 pm Lifting the Veil on Adoption, Documentary Project,
Brigid O'Shaughnessy, LSW

25-year documentary theatre veteran, social worker, and adoptive mom, Brigid O'Shaughnessy, has gathered a team of brave storytellers and incredible professional actors to bring to life the true stories of both adoptees and adoptive mothers. The goal is to dispel adoption mythology, speak candidly about the challenging realities that adoptees and their families can face and spark awareness, compassion, resource sharing, and creative thinking about how to better support this community.

TRIGGER WARNING: This session portrays themes with adoption, grief, loss, and trauma. There will be support available if needed.

Tuesday, June 24, 2025

10:00 - 11:30 am Plenary Sessions - Workshop Session 4

- **4A - Changing How We See People Changes People,** Robyn Gobbel, MSW

“We come to know who we are through the eyes of the other.” Understanding the connection between the brain, nervous system, and behavior means we have an opportunity, perhaps an obligation, to change everything we thought we knew about why humans do what they do. Making sense out of our kid’s most baffling behavior invites compassion, curiosity, and ultimately healing- to ourselves and to them. Grounded in neuroscience yet embodied in relationship, changing how we see people is the most powerful intervention of all.

- **4B - Capturing Students’ Hearts...Even the Ones Who Push Your Buttons,** Jessica Sinarski, LPCMH

Perhaps like many educators you understand the power of relationship for bringing out the best in your students. But how do you reach the kids who seem closed off, resistant, or flat-out defiant? Let’s put strengths-based science into practice to break down barriers. Participants will walk away with concrete tools to build authentic connections, even with the toughest-to-reach kids. You are not a failure. “That kid” is not a lost cause. There’s hope.

- **4C - Trauma-Informed Care in Juvenile Justice: Challenges and Opportunities,** Keith Cruise, PhD

Trauma-informed care is frequently discussed as a best practice in meeting the needs of adolescents with justice system involvement and is offered as an organizing framework for service delivery that presents both challenges and opportunities. While trauma needs are high among many adolescents with justice system involvement, the benefits of trauma-specific treatments in supporting delinquency risk reduction are not well understood. Paradoxically, some adolescents who are identified as engaging in very serious aggression/violence have also experienced the highest levels of lifetime traumatic event exposures, associated trauma reactions, and mental health problems that warrant careful attention through screening, assessment, and intervention access. Using a trauma lens - and careful attention to the developmental impact of trauma - professionals working with youth and families can develop a

richer understanding of complex needs, outline potential paths for recovery, and support a collaborative approach to relationship building that can shift an adolescent's trajectory from reactivity to recovery.

- **4D - Creating Trauma Informed Healing Communities**, Becky Haas

Some of the greatest challenges faced by every city in our nation, have their roots in a common problem--the childhood trauma experienced by the individuals who are living there. Upon recognizing the connection between trauma and poor physical and social outcomes, communities have a responsibility to develop a plan to raise awareness about trauma by educating local partnerships and service providers on what trauma is and how to systematically identify it. This presentation provides compelling reasons why a community needs to understand trauma and how by using the practical steps of "Advocate, Educate, and Collaborate" you can create more resilient organizations and communities. This presentation includes lessons learned from Becky's pioneering work in NE TN as well as how she is supporting growing healthy communities now on a national level.

- **4E - Helping Kids Recover from Developmental Trauma: A Brain-based Approach**, Jon Baylin, PhD

Dr. Baylin will present his current Triple Trouble model of how extreme early life stress impacts brain development and then will present an integrative approach to helping children recover from having to dedicate their brain development to chronic mistrust and self defense. Dr. Baylin highlights 3 brain systems affected by early life stress to help mental health professionals understand the challenges involved in helping children literally change their brains and their minds about themselves, the trustworthiness of others, and hope for the future.

12:00 – 1:15 pm Workshop Session 5

- **5A - 6 Essentials of Therapeutic Parenting**, Ce Eshleman, LMFT

There are many ways to discuss therapeutic parenting--techniques, strategies, principles, blueprints and more. In this workshop Ce Eshelman, LMFT, Attachment and Trauma Specialist, shares 6 essential concepts that provide a foundation for therapeutic parenting. Using her own proven effective Love+ Therapeutic Parenting Model, Ce gives parents 6 tangible ways to be therapeutic without having to remember acronyms, roadmaps, or complicated details.

- **5B - How Our Brains Learn, Feel, Behave, and Socialize When There is Adversity and Trauma**, Lori DeSautels, PhD and Rob Beltz, MEd

In this session we will explore brain development through an educator's lens. We will learn how adversity and trauma affect the way we learn, behave, and perceive the world, addressing specific brain aligned strategies that regulate our nervous systems and help us to connect with one another. We will begin to understand that traditional discipline works the best for kids that need it the least and works the least for kids who need it the most. When we are dysregulated, our brains do not respond to words, lectures, consequences, or rewards. Relational discipline is not something we do to children, it is something we want to create within them

- **5C- The Martinsburg Initiative: A Trauma Sensitive Community Approach for Substance Use Prevention**, Margaret Kursey, MA

This session will present a model for community impact that focuses on a police, school, community, health, and education partnership to prevent substance use, build strong families, and empower the community. A cornerstone of the partnership is building a trauma informed community with trainings for educators, community members, health providers, and law enforcement, and that will be shared with examples that can be replicated in other communities across the country,

- **5D - Building Hope in our Communities**, Melissa Sadin, EdD

Hope science combines the research from the traumatology framework, adverse childhood experiences, and motivation theory. We now have strong evidence that has established a connection between hope and reducing the impact of adverse childhood experiences. Adults with a high hope score are more satisfied with life and report better overall health than adults with low hope. Children with high hope perform better in school. They demonstrate better attendance and higher academic achievement than children with low hope. The good news is that Hope can be learned!!! Community members in all capacities can grow hope in the people they serve. Join Dr. Sadin for this engaging workshop, where you will learn how to grow hope in yourself and in others.

- **5E - Supporting Youth Exposed to Bereavement and Traumatic Loss Using Evidence-Based Practices**, Julie Kaplow, PhD, ABPP

Although childhood trauma and bereavement commonly co-occur, each experience results in unique mental and behavioral health outcomes and each requires the use of specific practice elements. Using multidimensional grief theory as a foundation, this presentation will describe specific bereavement-related challenges that youth typically face after the death of a loved one (including under traumatic circumstances), how the intersection of trauma and bereavement can influence the course of treatment, and review evidence-based practice elements that can support grieving children and adolescents.

1:45 – 3:00 pm Workshop Session 6

- **6A - Trauma and Its Impact on Neurodivergent Individuals and How Caregivers Can Support and Help Them Be Successful**, Jennifer Abbanat

Neurodivergent individuals experience the world differently. As a result, families/caregivers may see “behaviors” that don’t make sense.

Neurodivergent individuals experience adversity and trauma, from many different environments simply from trying to exist in environments that may not be supporting their unique needs.

By understanding how their environments impact them, as well as how we, the caregivers can become more informed to understand their unique needs or why “they do something” that doesn’t make sense, we then can learn more successful and suitable ways to support them

that is meaningful and helpful. This is the path towards better balance and harmony in our families.

- **6B - Brain Based De-Escalation**, Megan Yoder, MS

Being able to de-escalate a student and/or adult is a crucial skill in today's classroom environment. We all have learned basic de-escalation skills but have you ever looked at it from a brain perspective? In this session, we will learn how to evaluate which part of the brain has been activated during a crisis and learn how to bring that portion of the brain back to reality all while keeping ourselves regulated as well.

- **6C - Beyond Self-Care: Supporting resilience among those exposed to secondary traumatic stress/vicarious trauma in the juvenile justice system**, Patricia Kerig, PhD

Although the call to implement trauma-informed practices in juvenile justice settings has been clearly sounded, less attention has been paid to the need to protect those carrying out this work from the potential risks of exposure to secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma, empathy fatigue, and moral injury. To address this gap, this workshop introduces participants to Resilience for Trauma-Informed Professionals (R-TIP; Kerig, 2019), an evidence-informed curriculum that has been developed to increase resilience to secondary traumatic stress exposure amongst judges and court staff, probation officers, attorneys, mental health providers, detention and residential facility workers, forensic examiners, teachers, and others who serve justice-involved youth. Going beyond individual self-care, the focus is on developing an STS-aware and mutually supportive social ecology in the workplace and identifying strategies to foster a culture that promotes resilience and compassion satisfaction. To accomplish these aims, the core principles of R-TIP target prevention, emotional awareness, affect regulation, meaning-making, self-efficacy, and resilience. Strategies are also introduced that allow organizations to prevent, monitor, and respond to STS reactions among staff members.

- **6D - Building Life Skills through Trauma-Informed, Community Mentorship**, Rebecca Britt, MA

In this session, we'll explore how consistent, trauma-informed mentorship can foster resilience and healing in children who have experienced foster care or early developmental trauma. Based on the Stable Moments model, which pairs youth with a dedicated mentor for weekly sessions over 10 months, this approach focuses on building trust through safe, predictable, and attuned relationships.

Mentors and youth co-create engaging, strengths-based sessions, and tailored to developmental needs, allowing children to practice life skills at their own pace. Using a color-coded framework, the program supports growth in six key areas: Self-Worth, Responsibility, Self-Regulation, Emotional Awareness, Healthy Relationships, and Independence.

Participants will walk away with tools for implementing or supporting trauma-informed mentorship programs, creative ideas for skill-building activities, and a framework for training mentors to become agents of healing.

- **6E - Helping Children Heal from Trauma and Adversity Through EMDR Therapy,**
Deb Wesselman, MS, LIMHP

Children with a history of attachment trauma often display challenging behaviors that can be overwhelming for parents and caregivers. These behaviors stem from adverse experiences that have been maladaptively stored in their memory networks. Past feelings and perceptions are easily triggered by everyday interactions in their current relationships, leading to rapid activation of the sympathetic nervous system or a shutdown response.

Participants will discover EMDR is an evidence-based therapy used globally to treat traumatic stress in both adults and children. It's endorsed by the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare, the World Health Organization, and other leading organizations worldwide. Participants will gain insight into how EMDR therapy stimulates the brain's natural information-processing system, helping traumatic memories resolve adaptively and freeing individuals from distressing emotions, thoughts, and triggers.

3:30 – 4:45 pm Workshop Session 7

- **7A - Eight Ways to Collaborate with your School to meet your child's needs,**
Melissa Sadin, EdD

Children with attachment and trauma-related challenges have unique needs that are often not met in school. All too often, communication between parents and school officials breaks down or becomes combative. Dr. Sadin raised a traumatized child and has served as a special education teacher, school administrator, and director of student services. She looks forward to sharing what she learned along the way with you! Participants of this engaging workshop will learn 8+ strategies for forming a positive and collaborative relationship with your child's school.

- **7B - Brain Breaks and Co-Regulation Strategies in Action: Trauma-Sensitive Tools for Thriving Students,** Ginger Healy, LCSW

This fast-paced, interactive session is packed with practical, ready-to-implement tools, games, and strategies to help create an emotionally safe classroom where students can thrive. If you understand the "why" behind trauma-sensitive, brain-based, and nervous system-focused schools and are now looking for the "what now?"—this session is for you. You'll walk away with a toolkit of fun and effective brain breaks, brain games, and co-regulation techniques that can be immediately applied to support student engagement, emotional regulation, and academic success.

Through these strategies, you'll not only address students' needs for emotional safety but also empower them to meet their full potential in the classroom. From quick energizers to calming and mindful grounding exercises, you'll experience a range of activities that promote both individual well-being and a strong, supportive classroom community. By the end of the session, you'll be ready to incorporate new, trauma-sensitive practices that foster an environment where every student feels safe, seen, and ready to learn.

- **7C - Know Better, Do Better: Incorporating Trauma Informed Practices in Volunteer Work**, Tracy Heisler, MA

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programs train and supervise community volunteers to act as advocates in court for children in the foster care system. One program in NJ has spent a decade embedding trauma-informed policies and practices in their advocacy work, providing parents, children, and community partners with a greater sense of safety, connection, and efficacy. This workshop looks at what this program learned, how they incorporated ACEs and PACEs into preservice and continuing education training, how that knowledge affected their policies and practices, and the improved outcomes for the families they serve with the implementation of these practices.

- **7D - The Community Resiliency Model for Early Childhood Professionals**, Jordan Murphy, CNP, PhD

The Community Resiliency Model (CRM), developed by the Trauma Resource Institute in Claremont, California, introduces a paradigm shift in how individuals understand their own responses to stress and trauma. The wellness skills are excellent for self-care and help to expand resiliency over time while also mitigating uncomfortable somatic symptoms such as pain, upset stomach or headaches. CRM includes six wellness skills: Tracking, Resourcing, Grounding, Gesturing, Help Now!, and Shift and Stay. Each skill offers a portal to sense into our nervous system and regulate our emotions during challenging moments.

The CRM Introduction lays the foundation for self-care using body-based wellness skills. Participants will learn about the neuroscience that informs CRM and will be invited to engage in light practice with 1-2 wellness skills. Presenters will discuss how to introduce CRM skills within diverse settings and while working with diverse populations. Evidence supporting the use of CRM in early childcare and learning settings will be highlighted.

- **7E - Understanding and Supporting Neurodivergent Children: A Trauma-Informed, Neurodiversity-Affirming Approach to Stress and Regulation in Clinical Practice**, Rebecca O'Neill, LPC, RPT-S

This workshop invites mental health professionals to explore a neurodiversity-affirming and trauma-informed approach to understanding stress behavior in autistic and other neurodivergent individuals. Using Shanker's Self-Reg Framework, we will reframe dysregulation not as willful misbehavior, but as a stress response rooted in neurobiological vulnerability. Participants will gain tools to recognize hidden stressors, decode stress behavior, and respond in ways that promote safety, regulation, and trust. The session will also examine the critical link between autism and trauma, highlighting how chronic stress impacts development, behavior, and mental health. Clinicians will deepen their understanding of how traditional behavioral approaches can fall short—and how to shift toward practices that truly support neurodivergent well-being. Through interactive activities and case-based discussion, attendees will learn practical strategies to co-regulate with clients, foster resilience, and create therapeutic relationships and environments that honor neurodivergent needs and strengths. Ideal for clinicians seeking to enhance their neurodiversity-affirming practice, this workshop provides both foundational knowledge and actionable tools to more effectively support regulation, connection, and healing in neurodivergent children and youth.

5:30 – 7:00 pm **Closing Session, Martin Simms**

How Clear is Your Diamond? Using Sports & Exercise to Build Sanctuary for Youth Facing Adversity, Martin Simms

What if sport wasn't just a game—but a gateway to healing? In this dynamic, cross-track session, Martin Simms, Founder of The DOPE Coach Academy, challenges participants to reimagine athletics as a secret ingredient to help you expand your trauma-informed sanctuary model.

Building upon his acclaimed talk *Transmuting Trauma to Triumph*, Martin introduces the DOPE Diamond, a powerful visual framework rooted in neuroscience, somatics, and relational health.

Designed to help those who care for youth who've experienced adversity, this framework helps improve emotional regulation, connection, and communication across every system—schools, youth justice, parenting, clinical, and community.

Attendees will explore how to use sports-based strategies to stabilize the nervous system, rebuild trust, and create environments where children feel safe enough to grow. Whether you're a Coach, school counselor, PE Teacher, a probation officer, a foster parent, or a therapist—this session will give you tools to transform your “field of play” into a field of healing.