

## **WORKSHOP BLOCK I: 10:30-11:45**

### **Resources to Help Children Thrive**

Jennifer Stein, Executive Director  
Kimberly Stewart-Lucas, Program Coordinator  
PCA Georgia

It takes parents, caregivers, and supportive RESOURCES to help children thrive. Parents are often in complex situations and need professional and community support. This workshop explores barriers to meeting families' basic needs and how to link families to resources and provide concrete support through FindHelp Georgia.

### **DFCS Updates & Practice Highlights**

Mary P. Havick, Deputy Commissioner, Child Welfare  
Dr. Shaun Johnson, Caregiver Support & Well-Being Director  
Georgia Division of Family & Children Services  
This workshop will feature current priorities for the Division and practice highlights for children in foster care.

### **Recognizing & Managing Secondary Traumatic Stress**

Debra Ross, CWTC Trainer, Child Welfare Training Collaborative  
Participants will increase their understanding of Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) and its impact. They will learn how to assess STS symptoms in themselves and others, explore factors that help protect them from the negative effects of STS, and discover strategies to use these protective factors to manage STS.

### **How to Build a Trauma Competent Organization**

Debi Grebenik, Ph.D., LCSW, Managing Director of Healing & Belonging, Alia  
This workshop will begin with building an understanding of the ramifications of trauma while identifying specific behaviors to notice and identify. Building blocks for creating a trauma competent organization include changing language, shifting mindsets, and initiating behavioral changes. Variables that create change readiness, plus an awareness of the barriers to the change process, can be used to create the scaffolding for building a trauma competent organization.

### **Appointed to Advocate: Strengthening Your Courtroom Presence**

Hon. Carolyn Altman, Judge, Paulding County Juvenile Court  
Learn to strengthen your in-court advocacy and presence through improving your written reports and in-court testimony. This workshop will include practical tips on how to testify and answer questions from judges and lawyers; introduce new information; make recommendations for services, placement, and permanency; and increase your credibility as a witness and advocate.

### **A Pathway to Success: Improving Education Outcomes for Youth in Foster Care**

Erica Davis Woods, LPC, Community Programs Director, Multi-Agency Alliance for Children

Caren Cloud, Legal and Policy Director, Georgia Appleseed Center for Law & Justice

Leia Williams, District Education Manager, DFCS/Education Programming, Assessment & Consultation Unit (EPAC)

David Meyers, Public Service Faculty, JW Fanning Institute for Leadership Development at the University of Georgia

As advocates, our best successes often occur when we identify and leverage accessible resources, remove existing barriers, and lift our collective voices to fill gaps on behalf of the youth we serve. Engage in this panel-style dialogue about education-related supports for youth experiencing foster care, as panelists share ways to navigate and connect the core programs and financial supports available for children and youth to achieve academic success.

### **Understanding Mental Health Evaluations, Diagnoses & Treatment**

Priscilla Faulkner, PsyD, Director, Southeastern Psychological Associates

## **WORKSHOP BLOCK II: 2:00-3:15**

### **Practical Empathy Strategies for Caring Professionals**

Dr. Kristin Moody, Empathy Researcher, Coach & Educator, Corcillum Coaching

In this interactive workshop, learn some of the science behind empathy and how it can help us connect with ourselves and others in ways that promote resilience and restoration.

### **Building a Year-Round Marketing or Awareness Campaign**

Michelle Geiger, Senior Director of Brand & Digital Marketing

National CASA/GAL Association for Children

Effectively managing a brand is essential for growing and developing partnerships, enhancing fundraising efforts, and building awareness. This workshop will provide an overview of the National CASA/GAL brand tools and share best practices for utilizing these tools and other elements to enhance marketing and brand management efforts to achieve your program's marketing and awareness-building goals. Attendees will gain an understanding of the planning involved in a campaign and actionable steps to execute a campaign.

### **Courageous Conversations**

Joy Ponder Bates, Recruitment & Training Coordinator

Ann Z. Mathis, Lead Advocacy Program Coordinator

Children's Voice: CASA

Participants attending this workshop will be introduced to initiating courageous conversations specifically around racial equity, diversity, and inclusion. This workshop is designed to acquaint individuals with a set of tools to engage, sustain, and deepen dialogues that will impact equity in advocacy with a goal of improving outcomes for children of color. This initial engagement with courageous conversation is designed to meet participants where they are and allow them an opportunity to practice skills learned during the workshop.

### **Parents Know "Best" - The Case for a Strong Parent/CASA Relationship**

Diana Rugh Johnson, Director, Court Improvement Program, Judicial Council of Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts

Emma Brown-Bernstein, Staff Attorney IV, Parent Attorney Division, Office of the Public Defender, Atlanta Judicial Circuit

This workshop will identify how a strong parent/CASA relationship can lead to a more robust and valuable "best interest" recommendation. Tips will be provided for initiating and building this vital relationship in order to formulate best interest recommendations that are based on the child's unique family history, needs, and experiences.

### **Meeting the Needs & Providing Advocacy for Children with Complex & Specialized Needs**

Audrey Brannen, Complex Care Coordinator

Hadley White, Care Coordination Treatment Unit, Therapeutic Support Specialist

Georgia Division of Family & Children Services

For children in foster care, unmet mental and behavioral needs often intersect with historical, complex trauma and the direct trauma of entering the system. In this workshop, learn how the Division defines complex care and how the complex care needs of youth in foster care at case and system levels are being addressed.. Learn tips for assisting in supporting the parents, caregivers, and systems involved in the care for a youth with complex needs. Most importantly, you will leave feeling empowered to advocate for children with complex and specialized needs, while maintaining positive relationships with the many parties involved.

### **Promise of Permanency**

Jerry Bruce, Director, Office of the Child Advocate

Angela Tyner, Advocacy Director, Georgia CASA

When the State removes children from their homes, there is an implied promise to effect permanency for them both timely and compassionately, and with as little trauma as possible. In this workshop, participants will discuss factors that should be considered in determining the most appropriate permanency goal for each child and family. For decades, federal policy has driven adoption as a preferred permanency option for children in foster care. Because of this, termination of parental rights and adoption has become the second most common permanency option in Georgia, outstripping less drastic outcomes. Relational permanency is often overlooked in the rush for the "more permanent" legal outcome. It may be time to re-think what permanency means for children in foster care.

### **Ask the Judges**

Hon. Ch  ferre Young, Juvenile Court Judge, Macon Judicial Circuit

Hon. Wayne Grannis, Judge, Cobb County Juvenile Court

Hon. Amber Patterson, Juvenile Court Judge, Cobb County Juvenile Court

Hon. Carolyn Altman, Judge, Paulding County Juvenile Court

Moderator: Hon. Amanda Heath, Augusta Judicial Circuit, Superior Court

This interactive workshop will give CASA volunteers the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with a panel of judges on issues of the law, process, procedure, and the philosophy of child welfare. Come prepared to ask questions about how decisions are made, the importance of volunteer advocacy, how CASA volunteers' reports and recommendations are used, how the law is interpreted, trending issues in child welfare, and how we can work together to ensure children and youth have safe, permanent homes. Please note that no specific cases can be discussed.

## **WORKSHOP BLOCK III: 3:35-4:50**

### **The State of Child Welfare**

Melissa Carter, Clinical Professor of Law & Executive Director, Barton Child Law & Policy Center, Emory Law School

Chris Hempfling, Principal, CGH Consulting

This interactive workshop will provide an update on the current state of Georgia's child welfare system, examining system performance against federal outcomes defined in law and policy. Child protection (safety) and foster care (permanency) data will be reviewed as the basis for discussion of agency priorities and local jurisdictional realities. An update from the past legislative session will be included, highlighting budgetary and statutory changes impacting child welfare practice.

### **Partnering with Dads**

Lori Davis, Training & Development Specialist, Georgia Division of Family & Children Services

This workshop focuses on the importance of fathers in children's lives, including strategies for engaging fathers and working successfully with fathers in a wide range of family situations and structures.

### **Authentic Youth Engagement with Georgia EmpowerMENT**

Anthony Stover, Youth Engagement Coordinator

Sarah Bess Hudson, Youth Engagement Administrator

Multi-Agency Alliance for Children

We all celebrate how critical youth engagement is within programs, practice, and even policy. How are we all approaching it? We invite you to come spend time in partnership with young leaders across a Georgia network, Georgia EmpowerMENT, who will reach and teach from their personal and professional perspectives on the foundation of Authentic Youth Engagement (AYE). Take away inspiration and encouragement to continue to enhance and expand AYE culture and practice within your role or agency/organization.

### **Inclusive & Equitable CASA Advocacy Practices for LGBTQ+ Youth & Families**

LaFayette Young, Training & Inclusion Specialist, Georgia CASA

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is a Georgia CASA value and guiding principle that creates a space for respect for all persons. The LGBTQ+ community experiences disparate outcomes related to sexual orientation and/or gender identity within the larger society and within systems. This workshop focuses on defining identities and contextualizing trends and outcomes related to education, mental health, and child welfare.

### **Be an Influencer: How Vigorous Case-level Advocacy Can Yield System Change**

Jerry Bruce, Director, Office of the Child Advocate

Angela Tyner, Advocacy Director, Georgia CASA

Bringing a sense of urgency and individualized attention to a child's situation sets CASA apart from other stakeholders in the courtroom. This workshop challenges participants to see the bigger picture and demonstrates how to use gathered information and advocacy skills to drive a case forward. Participants are encouraged to see that consistent case-level advocacy that is vigorous, informed, and objective sets forward system improvement.

### **Accountability Courts Workshop**

Hon. Alison Toller, Judge, Hall County Juvenile Court