

18TH ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE

# A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO CHILD MALTREATMENT

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APRIL 23-24, 2025  
FARGO, ND



RED RIVER  
**CHILDREN'S**  
ADVOCACY CENTER





# OUR MISSION

To facilitate healing and justice for victims of sexual and physical abuse, neglect, and exploitation and to engage the community to protect and support children.

This conference is made possible by our generous donors, support, and grants from different organizations, including:



Backed by  
**National Children's Alliance®**  
Accredited Member



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation





# CONFERENCE INFORMATION



## Who Should Attend

### Multi-Disciplinary Service Providers

- Advocates
- Child Protection/Social Services
- Forensic Interviewers
- Law Enforcement
- Parole & Probation
- Prosecution/Attorneys
- Judges
- Mental Health Providers
- Health Care: Advanced Practice Providers, Physicians, Registered Nurses
- School Personnel
- Case Management



## Continuing Education

### Approval pending for the following:

ND, MN Social Work CEUs  
ND, MN Law Enforcement Post Credits  
ND Counselors CEUs  
ND Psychologist CEUs  
ND, MN Attorney CLEs



## Registration Cost

**Before 02/28/2024:**  
Early Bird Registration \$125

**After 02/28/2024:**  
General Registration \$150

**Register at:**  
<https://onecau.se/training2025>



## Lodging

**HOMEWOOD SUITES by Hilton Fargo**  
2021 16th St N Fargo, ND 58102  
701-235-3150  
1800-225-5466

<http://fargo.homewoodsuites.com>

Click [HERE](#) to reserve your room.

**Group Code: 90B**

### Rates:

Studio King Suite - \$110/night  
Double Queen Suite - \$124/night



## Lodging

**CANDLEWOOD SUITES**  
1831 NDSU Research Park Dr.  
Fargo, ND 58102  
701-235-8200

Click [HERE](#) to reserve your room.

**Group Code: RCAC 2025**

### Rates:

Studio - \$110/night  
Double Queen - \$130/night  
One Bedroom Suite - \$140/night



## Lodging

**BREWHALLA**  
1702 1st Ave N  
Fargo, ND 58103

Click [HERE](#) to reserve your room.

**Discount Code: SPRINGRRCAC**

**15% Discount during conference week**



## Location

**FARGODOME**  
1800 North University Drive  
Fargo, ND 58103



## Snacks and Meals

Coffee and pastries will be provided in the morning.

Light refreshments will be provided in the afternoon.

Lunch is on your own, with many restaurants in walking distance.



## Session Handouts

Session handouts will not be provided at the conference.

Attendees can access any available handouts submitted by workshop presenters on the website in advance, during, and after the conference.

## Wednesday, April 23rd

8:00am - 8:30am	Registration
8:30am - 8:45am	Welcome
8:45am - 10:15am	Keynote - Room 202 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Tim Cromie and Jennifer Schuett - <i>Lived to Tell: Jennifer Schuett Case Study</i></li> </ul>
10:15am - 10:30am	Break
10:30am - 12:00pm	Keynote - Room 202 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Tim Cromie and Jennifer Schuett - <i>Lived to Tell: Jennifer Schuett Case Study (cont.)</i></li> </ul>
12:00pm - 1:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm - 3:15pm	Breakout Session 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jill Krone and Jesse Smith - <i>Safety with Online Applications/Gaming</i> - Room 101</li> <li>Hannah Pavek, DNP, APRN, CNP - <i>Small Injuries, Big Implications</i> - Room 202</li> <li>Renata Selzer and Leah Viste - <i>Building a Criminal Case</i> - NDSU Theatre/Team Room</li> </ul>
3:15pm - 3:30pm	Break
3:30pm - 5:00pm	Keynote - Room 202 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mariah Prussia - <i>Defining the Fight by Building a Solid Foundation</i></li> </ul>



## Thursday, April 24th

8:00am – 8:30am	Registration
8:30am – 10:00am	MDT Panel – Moderated by Alyssa Nelson, RRCAC Program Manager
10:00am – 10:15am	Break
10:15am – 12:00pm	Breakout Session 2
(Ethics – 10:15a–12:15p)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jessica Hoeper, MSW, LISW – <i>Embodied Emotional Intelligence: What it is and how to use it</i> – Room 101</li> <li>• Katie Krukenberg, LMSW – <i>Ethics</i> – Room 201</li> <li>• Lori Conroy and Nicola Herting, Ph.D. – <i>Ensuring Successful Prosecutions in Victim Cases from Investigation through Trial</i> – NDSU Theatre/Team Room</li> </ul>
12:00pm – 1:15pm	Lunch
1:15pm – 2:45pm	Closing Keynote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Hohn and Elliott Crayne – <i>Wolf Hunt: A Partnership Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement</i> – Room 202</li> </ul>
2:45pm – 3:00pm	Break – <i>Evaluations and Closing</i>
3:00pm – 4:15pm	Breakout Session 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matthew Benson-Tuff and Nichole Gubbels – <i>Addressing Youth Homelessness</i> – Room 101</li> <li>• Jason McCoy – <i>The Truth About Vaping</i> – Room 201</li> <li>• Anna Schimmelpfennig, PhD, LP – <i>Disclosure of Child Abuse: What Professionals Need to Know</i> – NDSU Theatre/Team Room</li> </ul>

## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **OPENING KEYNOTE (Day 1, 8:45a-12p):**

#### **Chief Tim Cromie**

Chief Tim Cromie is a 40-year veteran of law enforcement, starting his law enforcement career in 1985. He joined the Nassau Bay Police Department as Chief of Police in 2018. Tim previously worked for the Galveston County Sheriff Office, Hitchcock Police Department, Santa Fe Police Department and Dickinson Police Department. During his career, Tim has worked assignments as patrol officer, patrol sergeant, dispatch/communications supervisor, community policing officer, DARE Instructor, school resource officer, detective, public information officer, and detective sergeant. Tim currently holds a Master Peace Officer License and a Police Officer Instructor License from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement. He also holds a Basic Police Juvenile Officer Certification and a Crime Prevention Certification, both from Southwest Texas State University's Institute of Criminal Justice. He has also completed training in Hate and Bias Crime Investigation from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. Tim currently serves as an advisor to the Texas Governor's Sexual Assault Survivor's Task Force. Tim has presented training classes and seminars across the US and Canada, on the topics of sexual assault and child abuse investigations. He has presented training for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). Tim has also worked with The U.S. Department of Justice and Fox Valley Technical College assisting with writing a child abuse investigation curriculum for FVTC's distance learning program. He has been a guest presenter/instructor for the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Dallas Crimes Against Children Conference, the National District Attorneys Association, Canadian Centre for Child Protection's Missing and Exploited Children Conference, Minnesota Sex Crimes Investigators Association, Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, New Jersey Sex Crime Investigator's Association, and the Toronto Police Services International Sex Crimes Conference.

#### **Jennifer Schuett**

Jennifer Schuett is a proud victim advocate and survivor of an attack that nearly killed her when she was eight years old in 1990. She continues to share her story in hopes she may encourage other survivors to speak out along with her in conquering crime. Jennifer has shared her journey for justice on the Today Show, America's Most Wanted, CNN & Investigation Discovery, including many conferences throughout the United States and Canada; and has touched many lives.

Jennifer is a co-recipient of TAASA's 2010 "Champions For Social Change" Award, was named a "Galveston County Champion" in 2012, was also named Girl ExtraOrdinaire 2012 by Girl ExtraOrdinaire in California, and a "Viva Babe" by Consuela in 2024.

#### **Lived to Tell: Jennifer Schuett Case Study**

This case study will introduce Jennifer Schuett, kidnapped as an eight-year-old, brutally raped, throat cut and left in a field for dead. Investigators discuss the challenges of the initial 1990 investigation and working with a child victim. They discuss the advantages and hurdles of multiple agencies, including the FBI, working together. Jennifer shares her memory of that night, her desire to find her attacker, and moving on with life. Investigators discuss how time becomes an obstacle and an advantage in an eighteen-year investigation. They will discuss working with the media to find possible witnesses and clues. Advances in technology are discussed, how DNA identified a possible suspect and the steps taken to connect him to Jennifer. Jennifer will talk about highs and lows of the investigation and dealing with multiple detectives over the years. She will describe her experiences, becoming the "Survivor", and her desire to motivate survivors and professionals who work within the system.



## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Day 1, 1:30p–3:15p):**

#### **Jill Krone**

Jill Krone is a Victim Witness Specialist for Eastern North Dakota currently employed with the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Victim Services Unit (VSU) and is a member of the North Dakota Human Trafficking Task Force. Prior to her working for BCI, she was a Parole Officer for the State of North Dakota for 14 years and before that worked at the Clay Co Jail as a Correctional Officer for 8 years. Jill is a graduate from the University of Minnesota–Duluth with a Bachelor of Arts with a double major of Sociology and Criminology.

Jill's work with the Human Trafficking Task Force, Cyber Crimes Unit, and Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) statewide teams includes, providing training, technical assistance, and crisis support for victims of crime to include exploitation and trafficking. In her role as a Victim Witness Specialist for the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) covering the Eastern region of North Dakota, Jill provides direct services to victims of violent crimes ensuring that the needs and the rights of crime victims and witnesses are met through compliance with the law, and with respectful, trauma-sensitive, and fair treatment.

#### **Jesse Smith and Jib**

Special Agent Jesse Smith started his law enforcement career in 2005 as a Deputy in Ramsey County North Dakota. During that time as a Deputy, Special Agent Jesse Smith joined the North Dakota Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force in 2008 and started working proactive luring cases, (Catch a Predator).

In 2010 Special Agent Jesse Smith was hired by the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation and assigned to the Cyber Crime Unit. Special Agent Smith remains a member of the Internet Crimes Against Children task force and actively investigates Cyber crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children. Since 2008, Special Agent Smith has participated in thousands of investigations involving the exploitation of children here in North Dakota. Special Agent Smith's investigations have led to the arrest of individuals from around the world exploiting children in North Dakota and identifying children from around the world that have been exploited by people living in North Dakota.

In 2020, Special Agent Smith was assigned a special partner Special Agent Jib. K-9 Jib is a 7-year-old Black lab trained as an electronic scent detection canine. K-9 Jib is used to locate items such as cellphones, hard drives, thumb drives, SD and Micro-SD cards that are sometimes hidden or missed by investigators. K-9 Jib has assisted on numerous search warrants and has located items of evidence that would have been missed without him.

#### **Safety with Online Applications and Gaming**

To bring awareness and education to the community about basic social media and online gaming. Teaching communities about online safety and learning to recognize potential dangers online. We will explore apps like TikTok, Roblox and Instagram so you can start having the conversations with children early to keep them safe online and learn about the latest online trends.





## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Day 1, 1:30p-3:15p):**

#### **Renata Selzer**

Renata Selzer has worked as a prosecutor for over 17 years. She began her career working as a municipal prosecutor for the City of Fargo. In 2008, she joined the Cass County State's Attorney's Office. Renata has prosecuted a wide variety of cases, including drug offenses, property, traffic, and violent crimes. She is currently a team leader of the personal crimes team, which handles sex offense cases, crimes against children, domestic violence, assaults, and homicides.

During her time as an Assistant State's Attorney, Renata has served as lead counsel in numerous felony jury trials. She enjoys teaching and frequently conducts trainings for law enforcement. She is a past president of the North Dakota State's Attorney's Association and served as a member of the North Dakota State Bar Association Ethics Committee.

Renata graduated summa cum laude from Concordia College in Moorhead, MN with degrees in English Writing and Sociology. She received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of North Dakota School of Law in 2006. Following law school, she served as a law clerk for the Honorable Galen J. Vaa of Minnesota's Seventh Judicial District.

#### **Leah Viste**

Leah Viste currently serves as a public defender for the North Dakota Commission on Legal Counsel for Indigents in Fargo, ND. Prior to her current position, Leah was a prosecutor for the State of North Dakota from 2003 - 2023. Leah has prosecuted and represented clients in all types of criminal cases. Leah primarily prosecuted crimes against people during her time as an Assistant State's Attorney. These included cases involving domestic violence, sex crimes, and murder.

Leah has previously presented on victims and learned helplessness, civil commitment of sexually dangerous offenders, report writing and courtroom testimony for law enforcement, legal issues for SANE (sexual assault nurse examiner) professionals, as well as number of other trainings specific to law enforcement, such as search and seizure, 1983 actions and immunity, constitutional issues in corrections and law enforcement.

#### **Building a Criminal Case: Defense and Prosecution**

In this session, attendees will hear from a prosecutor and a defense attorney on how they build a criminal case. Specifically, the attorneys will discuss their real-life experiences in prosecuting or defending criminal cases involving child victims.

## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Day 1, 1:30p-3:15p):**

#### **Hannah Pavek, DNP, APRN, CNP**

Hannah is a former Sanford pediatric ICU nurse and pediatric sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE). Hannah attended graduate school at the University of Minnesota, where she obtained her doctorate of nursing practice in pediatric primary care. Hannah is a board-certified pediatric nurse practitioner and certified pediatric SANE at the Sanford Children's Child Abuse Referral & Evaluation (CARE) Clinic in Fargo, providing care for children with concerns of sexual abuse, physical abuse, and neglect.

#### ***Small Injuries, Big Implications***

This session will equip attendees with the knowledge and skills to recognize sentinel injuries indicative of child physical abuse (CPA), understand the mechanisms of these injuries, conduct appropriate screenings, and fulfill mandatory reporting obligations to protect vulnerable children.

### **CLOSING KEYNOTE (Day 1, 3:30p-5:00p):**

#### **Mariah Prussia**

Define the fight, burn your excuses with Mariah Prussia! Mariah is a dynamic Motivational Speaker, Self Defense Expert, 2020 North Dakota Mother of the Year, Podcaster & Show Radio Host, Fargo's First Sanctioned Professional MMA Fighter and Professional Boxer. Mariah has faced and defeated many life ambushes as a single mother inside and out of the cage; which is reflected in the Upper Midwest Emmy Award Winning Best Topical film "Prussia." Prussia depicts her life as a fighter, survivor, and driven mother with an indomitable will to DEFINE and WIN the fight of life. Recognizing that her mission is larger than herself, she strives to ignite the internal warrior within her clients, corporations and newly founded non-profit organization Define the Fight, Inc, empowering youth to lead from within. If you are ready to define your fight, join Mariah Prussia and the tools she provides to help you WIN YOUR FIGHT!

#### ***Defining the Fight by Building a Solid Foundation***

A strong foundation requires the implementation of healthy daily habits. Self advocacy and self care are imperative to becoming an effective leader for youth and community. The question to be asked is, how can we expect children to create life balance, make healthy choices and implement strategies to lead a healthier life, if we are failing to do the same? It's time to define the fight, by building a solid foundation with Mariah Prussia.



## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **OPENING KEYNOTE (Day 2, 8:30a-10:00a):**

#### **MDT Panel**

#### **Christopher Bittmann**

Chief Christopher Bittmann has served as the Chief of Police for Carrington since 2022. Prior to this role, he worked as Deputy Sheriff for both Eddy and Pembina Counties. Chief Bittmann has been a licensed Peace Officer since 2011. He earned a bachelor's degree in Natural Resources Law Enforcement from the University of Minnesota Crookston. With over 515 hours of certified law enforcement training, Chief Bittmann recently completed the ND BCI Advanced Criminal Investigations course and is now a licensed firearm instructor for the state of North Dakota. In 2017, he was honored with the Beyond the Traffic Stop award for making over 35 drug-related arrests in a single year, one of which resulted in the seizure of \$25,000 in drug money.

#### **Kara E. Brinster**

Attorney Kara E. Brinster is the Foster County State's Attorney. She was elected to her first term in 2018 and re-elected in 2022. Ms. Brinster was born and raised in Wahpeton, North Dakota, where she graduated from high school and went on to attend North Dakota State College of Science and then North Dakota State University. Ms. Brinster received a Bachelor of Science from NDSU and went on to the University of North Dakota School of Law, graduating in 2009. She is married to Chad and they have one daughter. Kara enjoys spending time with her family, quilting, crafting and camping. Kara is a member of the Carrington Lions and the Jamestown Zonta Club. Ms. Brinster also has a private law firm in Carrington where she practices Family law and mediation.

#### **Jada Ingalls, DO, MS Forensic Medicine**

Dr. Jada Ingalls is a Child Abuse Pediatrician at Sanford Children's CARE (Child Abuse Referral & Evaluation) Clinic in Fargo, ND. Dr. Ingalls received both her Doctorate of Osteopathic Medicine and Master of Science in Forensic Medicine from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in 2014. Dr. Ingalls completed her pediatric residency at the University of South Dakota/Sanford Children's Hospital in Sioux Falls, South Dakota in 2017. Dr. Ingalls then completed her Child Abuse Pediatrics fellowship the University of Minnesota in 2020 having trained at both the Otto Bremer Trust Center for Safe & Healthy Children and the Midwest Children's Resource Center. Dr. Ingalls has published in textbooks and peer reviewed medical journals on the subject of child sexual abuse and has presented at numerous local, regional, national, and international conferences on all forms of child maltreatment.





## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **OPENING KEYNOTE (Day 2, 8:30a-10:00a):**

#### **MDT Panel**

#### **Stephanie Wieland**

Steph graduated from North Dakota State University in 2012 with a degree in Human Development and Family Science. Starting her career in child welfare in 2013, Steph was drawn to the Child Protection Unit and later became a Child Protection Worker in 2015. Steph's focus is centered around victims and their families. Although in Child Protection there are numerous different types of cases, Steph's passion is working with victims of child abuse, primarily those of a criminal nature, and being their advocate when possible. Steph has worked countless cases involving various forms of child abuse and attended several trainings focused on child abuse investigations. Steph has been requested to assist law enforcement in certain cases where there's a child victim but no active child protection involvement.

#### **Travis Zahn**

Special Agent Travis Zahn started his law enforcement career in 1998 with the Rapid City Police Department. In May of 2000 S/A Travis Zahn moved back home to work for the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department until S/A Zahn was hired by the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation in 2003. S/A Zahn started out with BCI in Grand Forks until S/A Zahn moved back to Devils Lake in 2008. While working in Devils Lake S/A Zahn helped form and start the Lake Region Narcotics Task Force in 2014. S/A Zahn has been the Coordinator of the Lake Region Narcotics Task Force since 2014. While running the Lake Region Narcotics Task Force S/A Zahn also does criminal investigations for the State of North Dakota. Since 1998 S/A Zahn has participated in thousands of investigations in and around the state of North Dakota. Many of these investigations involved the exploitation and abuse of child victims. These investigations have led to the arrest of suspects not just in the state of North Dakota but all around the country.

#### **MDT Panel**

This session will appeal to all members of the multi-disciplinary team as our panel of experts share their real-life experience of conducting an investigation into an infant homicide case. Attendees will hear from law enforcement, child protective services, medical providers, and prosecution who will provide investigative techniques, safety considerations & assessments, medical & coroner examination, and legal aspects into this case.



## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Day 2, 10:15a-12p):**

#### **Jessica Hoeper, MSW, LISW**

Jess is a licensed independent social worker, Reflective Consultant, Author, Mother, Wife and Founder of Ray of Hope, LLC. With almost 20yrs of human service experience; in the roles of reflective coach/consultant/supervisor, child and family services supervisor, child protection social worker, juvenile justice social worker, and mental health practitioner. Jess works nationally with Human Service Professionals and Leaders, enhancing their self+awareness through reflection, providing Reflective Coaching/Consultation/Supervision. Jessica has a passion for reflection and making it accessible to practitioners. Jessica's Reflective Coaching strategy is informed by and draws from her training in professional coaching and infant mental health's reflective consultation/supervision model. Personally, Jess and her husband are raising their five kids on a farm in central Minnesota.

#### ***Embodied Emotional Intelligence: What it is and how to use it***

The data our emotions send to our bodies can be overwhelming. We know that self+awareness is the first building block of emotional intelligence. Self+awareness must surpass just an understanding of our feelings from a cognitive perspective and move to an embodied understanding, the use of all your senses to interpret emotions. Knowing how to interpret this data through embodied emotional intelligence is meaningful for your work and personal life. Understanding embodied emotional intelligence helps leaders integrate their emotions into their decisions and actions. Jess will use personal experiences to guide your understanding of how some of our best learning opportunities are often hidden in plain sight, we just need to open up to being taught by life. Participants will leave with increased understanding of how to embody their emotional intelligence.

#### **Katie Kukenberg, LMSW**

Katie Krukenberg, LMSW, is the Program Director and Associate Professor of Social Work at the University of Mary in Bismarck, ND. She obtained a Master's degree from Florida State University and Bachelor's degrees in social work and criminal justice from the University of North Dakota. She currently teaches classes on social work practice with individuals and families, social work theory, diversity, and senior seminar along with supervision of social work field placements. Prior to teaching at University of Mary, Katie worked as a school social worker for Bismarck Public Schools, Charles Hall Youth Services, and Home on the Range, in addition to having been a PATH foster parent for 10 years. She lives with her husband and four children in Bismarck, ND.

#### ***Ethics***

This session will provide an overview of ethical standards in the NASW/ND Code of Ethics pertaining to the core values, ethical responsibilities to clients, colleagues, and in practice settings. This session will provide an overview of ethical core values and the ethical standards derived from each of these values. Implications of impaired practice and strategies for prevention will also be provided. Ethics presentation suitable for continuing education hours for licensed social workers, child welfare workers, law enforcement, licensed addiction counselors, licensed counselors, supervisors, and foster parents.

## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Day 2, 10:15a-12p):**

#### **Lori Conroy**

AUSA Conroy attended the University of North Dakota School of Law and graduated with distinction in 2009. While in law school, she completed an externship with the United States Attorney's Office in Fargo.

Following graduation, she practiced with the Vogel Law Firm for more than two years, primarily litigating medical malpractice cases. AUSA Conroy's primary area of interest has always been criminal law, specifically prosecution. She left the law firm to pursue that interest and joined the Clay County Attorney's Office in Moorhead, Minnesota. In her more than six years as an Assistant County Attorney, AUSA Conroy prosecuted a wide-range of criminal offenses with an emphasis on felony-level personal crimes.

AUSA Conroy joined the United States Attorney's Office for the District of North Dakota in October of 2018. Her primary area of responsibility is the prosecution of major crimes on the Spirit Lake Reservation. These offenses often involve children as victims and witnesses. She currently serves as the Office's Victim Rights Coordinator and as the Violence Against Women Act Point of Contact. In her career as a prosecution, AUSA Conroy has completed more than 40 criminal jury trials. Many of these trials involved violent crimes including domestic assault, child sexual abuse and murder.

#### **Nicola Herting, Ph.D.**

Nicola Herting, Ph.D. is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist committed to reducing barriers and increasing access to evidence-based treatment for children and families impacted by trauma. Dr. Herting is passionate about addressing mental health disparities among underserved youth with innovative program development, statewide collaboration, and dissemination of evidence-based treatment. Dr. Herting is involved in several statewide trauma and resiliency initiatives in North Dakota, she is a national expert on delivery of trauma treatment over telehealth, and the Project Director of REACH ND, a SAMHSA NCTSN Treatment and Services Center Grant. Dr. Herting's efforts as a clinician, clinical investigator, and clinical assistant professor focus on reducing barriers, expanding access, and advancing trauma care for children and families to heal, and building staff resiliency.

#### ***Ensuring Successful Prosecutions in Victim Cases from Investigation through Trial***

Effective prosecution of child sexual abuse and child abuse cases begins long before the courtroom. Lori H. Conroy, Assistant United States Attorney - District of North Dakota, and Nicola Herting, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist, Sanford Health, will discuss trauma-informed best practices for introducing the prosecution team to child victims and caregivers within the multidisciplinary setting and developing and maintaining effective communication throughout the case to build trust and rapport in preparation for testimony. This session will also focus on the effective identification, use, and preparation of a treating provider as an expert to explain to the jury the trauma and dynamics of children as witnesses.





## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **CLOSING KEYNOTE (Day 2, 1:15p-3:45p):**

#### **David Hohn**

Dave Hohn has been a Special Agent with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Sioux Falls since January of 2020. SA Hohn's primary investigative responsibilities are crimes against children and human trafficking. Prior to HSI, SA Hohn was a federal probation officer for 12 years in the District of North Dakota. He has an bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin – River Falls and a master's degree in Criminal Justice from North Dakota State University.

#### **Elliott Crayne**

Elliott Crayne started his 26-year career as a patrol officer in North Sioux City, SD where he served for five years. He later joined the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office, Sioux Falls, SD in 2003 as a Deputy Sheriff in the patrol division. Here he has served as a patrol deputy, motor officer, field training officer, K-9 handler, and has spent the last 5 years in the investigation division specializing in domestic violence, sexual assaults, and crime against children. Elliott retired from law enforcement in May of 2024, and currently works as a Juvenile Investigator for the Minnehaha County State's Attorney's Office.

#### ***Wolf Hunt: A Partnership Between Local and Federal Law Enforcement***

In February 2022, the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) opened an investigation on Jayden Kusiek Wolf for two counts of rape of minor females. Early in the investigation, MCSO requested the assistance of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) when it was discovered that KUSIEK WOLF had the minor females produce child pornography.

The resulting investigation is a great example of state and local investigators working together. The investigators identified 14 minor victims which led to state and federal charges.

This presentation will highlight investigative tools utilized to identify Kusiek Wolf and other victims. The Kusiek Wolf case also had two other major investigation which spanned from the case when victims disclosed other victimization.



## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Day 2, 3p-4:15p):**

#### **Matthew Benson-Tuff**

Matthew Benson-Tuff (they/them) has been working with Youthworks since 2018. They oversee Youthworks Homeless Programs in the Fargo Moorhead area. Matthew has been a board member for the ND Continuum of Care since 2022 and has been leading the planning team ND LGBTQIA2S+ Summit for youth programming since 2022.

#### **Nichole Gubbels**

Nichole Gubbels (she/her) has been working in the Fargo/Moorhead community as a licensed social worker since 2018 but joined Youthworks in 2021 when she began working in the Transition Living Program. In 2022, Nichole assisted with program development and implementation of Youthworks' Continuum Housing Program for Youth (CHPY) which provides housing services to youth 17-24 years old that have experienced trafficking or exploitation. Nichole became a program manager for the Short-Term Care and Assessment Center in 2023 which provides short term shelter for youth 10-17 years old.

#### ***Addressing Youth Homelessness***

This presentation will provide insight on Positive Youth Development and Housing First models as it pertains to serving youth experiencing housing insecurities.

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#### **Jason McCoy**

Jason McCoy is the Tobacco Prevention Coordinator for Clay County Public Health in Moorhead, Minnesota. He received his Master of Public Health from North Dakota State University. Jason has been working in substance prevention for ten years, building coalitions, raising awareness, and passing policies reducing tobacco's & cannabis' harm. He has led efforts to pass 34 tobacco & cannabis prevention policies. He is building Positive Community Norms – working upstream to address Hopes & Concerns in the DGF school system.

In 2022, Jason opened Verity Presents, a platform to provide presentations and training regarding the harms of tobacco & cannabis, emphasizing vape prevention. He is also working on the first of a series of novels that offer speculative fiction related to substance prevention and other topics.

#### ***The Truth About Vaping***

Vaping has singlehandedly reinvented nicotine addiction in our schools. Big Tobacco rebranded its image and caught an unsuspecting nation in its web of lies. The Truth About Vaping will pull back the curtain on industry tactics & nicotine addiction. We will address both hope and concern regarding the youth vaping epidemic.



## **SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (Day 2, 3p-4:15p):**

#### **Anna Schimmelpfennig, PhD**

Dr. Anna Schimmelpfennig, PhD is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist who specializes in working with children and families impacted by trauma. She is the Director of Mental Health Services at the Red River Children's Advocacy Center. She is passionate about making trauma-specific, evidence-based treatment accessible for children and families impacted by abuse, neglect, and exploitation. She is trained in many evidence-based treatments for trauma and also provides training, consultation, and expert witness testimony on issues related to child abuse. She is also trained in evidence-based treatments for children and adolescents with problematic or illegal sexual behavior and provides training and consultation related to problematic sexual behavior.

#### ***Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse: What Professionals Need to Know***

Disclosures of child sexual abuse don't often happen in the way we think they should. It's important that professionals working in the response to child sexual abuse have an understanding of the many factors that influence disclosure and may help professionals facilitate earlier disclosures. This presentation will discuss research regarding the prevalence of child sexual abuse disclosures, barriers and facilitators to disclosure, the process of disclosure, and the impact of trauma on disclosure.

**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE 18TH ANNUAL SPRING  
CONFERENCE**

*"It takes a village to raise a child,  
but it takes a team to protect  
one."*

UNKNOWN



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