



Children's Law Conference

November 1, 2024 / Cooperative Conference Center / Columbia, SC

AGENDA

8:15 Registration

9:00 Welcome

Michelle Dhunjishah

9:15 Keynote: Empathy, Empowerment, and Excellence

Dr. Zenobia Edwards, Ed.D.

10:45 Break

11:00 Workshop Session I

- **The Fourth "E" - Encourage**
Dr. Zenobia Edwards, Ed.D. (Ballroom)
- **Education and Advocacy: Working with LGBTQ+ Youth**
Bri Newton, MS (Classroom 1/2)
- **Bridging the Gap: Supporting Children with Autism in the Child Welfare System**
Stephanie Turner, LMSW, MPH, BCBA (Classroom 3/4)

12:15 Lunch (Ballroom)

12:45 Legislative Update

Morgan Maxwell, MSW, JD

1:15 Break

1:30 Workshop Session II

- **Empathy-Driven Excellence: Transforming Trauma Responses in Children**
Jewel Rembert, MA, BSW, LPC, LPCS (Ballroom)
- **Sibling Connections in Foster Care: What We Have Learned from the Children**
David White, MBA, LMSW and Elise Durham (Classroom 1/2)
- **Legacy of Trauma: The Co-Occurrence of Domestic and Child Abuse**
Michelle Tate, MS (Classroom 3/4)

2:45 Break

3:00 Life in Limbo: An Immersive, Emotional Training on Life in Foster Care and Dual Involvement

David White, MBA, LMSW (Ballroom)

4:30 Closing Remarks

Workshops

	Ballroom	Classroom 1/2	Classroom 3/4
Session I 11:00-12:15	<i>The Fourth “E” – ENCOURAGE</i> <i>Dr. Zenobia Edwards</i>	Education and Advocacy: Working with LGBTQ+ Youth <i>Bri Newton</i>	Bridging the Gap: Supporting Children with Autism in the Child Welfare System <i>Stephanie Turner, LMSW*</i>
Session II 1:30-2:45	Empathy-Driven Excellence: Transforming Trauma Responses in Children <i>Jewel Rembert, BSW*</i>	Sibling Connections in Foster Care: What We Have Learned from the Children <i>David White, LMSW*</i> <i>Elise Durham</i>	Legacy of Trauma: The Co-Occurrence of Domestic and Child Abuse <i>Michelle Tate</i>

(* Qualifies for degreed social work hours)

Session I

The Fourth “E” - Encourage

(Ballroom)

This workshop will further explore the tenets of the 3 E’s: Empathy, Empowerment and Excellence as they pertain to advocating for young people. We will examine the factors that consistently put our youth at risk and how we as Youth Advocate Professionals (YAP) can mitigate some of these factors and ENCOURAGE others to do the same.

Education and Advocacy: Working with LGBTQ+ Youth

(Classroom 1/2)

This workshop is designed to further examine issues of sexual identity and gender expression. It will also address best practices for working with and supporting LGBTQ+ youth involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and their families.

Bridging the Gap: Supporting Children with Autism in the Child Welfare System

(Classroom 3/4)

This workshop will explore the intersection of autism, intellectual disabilities, and the child welfare system. Children with autism and intellectual disabilities face unique challenges when they enter the DSS system, often compounded by a lack of specialized knowledge among caregivers and professionals. This session will provide an overview of the prevalence of autism and intellectual disabilities among children in DSS care as well as specific services and supports available across South Carolina. We will explore state-funded resources, community-based interventions, and the role of multidisciplinary teams in addressing the needs of children with autism in the DSS system. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of the intersection between child welfare and developmental disabilities and practical strategies for ensuring that these children receive the support they need to thrive.

Session II

Empathy-Driven Excellence: Transforming Trauma Responses in Children

(Ballroom)

Children who have experienced trauma often exhibit challenging behaviors as a way to cope with overwhelming emotions and difficult experiences. For child-serving practitioners, understanding and addressing these trauma-related behaviors with empathy is essential for helping children heal and thrive. This engaging workshop will equip participants with the tools and strategies to recognize trauma responses in children and effectively support their emotional and developmental needs. By fostering an environment rooted in empathy, participants will learn to move beyond the behaviors to connect with the child's actual needs, building resilience and promoting positive outcomes.

Sibling Connections in Foster Care: What We Have Learned from the Children (and our response)

(Classroom 1/2)

Children in foster and kinship care are often separated from their brothers and sisters. The trauma of removal from a parent is hard. The additional layer of pain in the removal from a sibling is very real, if you speak at any length with the children. We open up this discussion with the obvious and unique pain points of children, as described by children, and show meaningful ways to take action, helping to rebuild the bonds of separated sibling sets, in this engaging workshop.

Objectives

The primary goal is to develop empathy for the reality of separation in foster care and consider solutions.

Objective #1 is to see sibling separation from a lived experience perspective.

Objective #2 is to candidly discuss ways to improve foster care with a focus on sibling care.

Objective #3 is to learn how sibling care informs placement stability if children can see their siblings right away, after removal.

Legacy of Trauma: The Co-Occurrence of Domestic and Child Abuse

(Classroom 3/4)

This session focuses on the co-occurrence of domestic abuse and child abuse and the lasting effects these intertwined experiences can have on individuals and families across generations. It examines how exposure to domestic violence can lead to child maltreatment, creating a cycle of trauma that affects not only the immediate victims but also future generations. Participants will explore the dynamics of this co-occurrence, including the psychological and emotional ramifications for children who witness or experience violence. The session will emphasize the importance of recognizing these patterns and implementing trauma-informed strategies to foster healing and resilience.

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the Co-occurrence of Domestic and Child Abuse: Recognize how domestic violence often leads to child abuse and the implications of this relationship for affected families.
- Identify the Impact of Intergenerational Trauma: Analyze how the combined effects of domestic and child abuse create a legacy of trauma that can shape behaviors and emotional responses in subsequent generations.
- Apply Trauma-Informed Care Principles: Utilize trauma-informed approaches to effectively support individuals and families affected by the co-occurrence of domestic and child abuse, promoting healing and resilience.
- Develop Strategies to Break the Cycle: Formulate actionable strategies to address and mitigate the effects of co-occurring domestic and child abuse, fostering healthier family dynamics and community interventions.

This session aims to equip participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to understand the

complexities of domestic abuse and child abuse when they occur together, ultimately contributing to more effective interventions and support for those affected.

Closing Plenary: Life in Limbo: An immersive, emotional training on life in foster care and dual involvement

(Ballroom)

Life in Limbo allows participants to experience foster care for a moment in time. Participants become the child who enters foster care and also has involvement with the juvenile justice system, the parent whose children are temporarily removed, the caregiver who tries to bring stability, or the community observer viewing the chaos, joys, and struggles. Life in Limbo is highly interactive and emotionally intense. Learning is significant for many who participate.

Objectives

The primary goal is to develop empathy for children in foster care and dually-involved youth, their families and caregivers. Objective #1 is to see foster care from a lived experience point of view. Objective #2 is to learn deeply about the journey in foster care. What are the stress points, why do children enter, and what are outcomes? Objective #3 is to find solutions by focusing on stable relationships and quality caregiving as foundational needs of children in foster care.

Exhibitors

❖ **Store of Hope**

(Neal Romriell, SC DJJ)

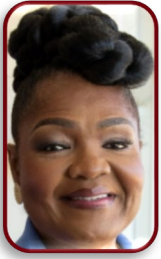
❖ **Fostering Great Ideas**

(David White, Director)

❖ **SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs**

(Pacifco "PJ" Perea, Public Information Director)

Speaker Profiles



Keynote Presenter

Dr. Zenobia Edwards, Ed.D. has fulfilled many roles in the education arena. She has worked as a schoolteacher and administrator; as a school partnership manager with College Summit, Inc.; and was the Founding Dean of Metropolitan College at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, North Carolina. In 2004, Dr. Edwards co-founded, I Am B.E.A.U.T.I.F.U.L., Inc., an award-winning educational enrichment nonprofit organization dedicated to building self-esteem and leadership capability in girls and women of all ages.

Dr. Edwards credentials include: an Ed.D. in Education Administration from Nova Southeastern University, an M.A.T. and Ed.S. from Converse College, and a B.S. from Wofford College. She is a 2018 graduate of the prestigious leadership development program; Leadership America and she serves on several boards for community and state organizations.

Dr. Edwards enjoys music and has composed and performed several original musical compositions. One of her music compositions debuted on a nationally syndicated radio program to promote the release of *Move Without the Ball*, a compelling book and inspirational guide by New York Times bestselling author Stedman Graham.



Elise Durham is an executive life coach based in the Upstate. Elise experienced foster care as a child, with her twin sister, and moved all over South Carolina to different placements. From her lived experience, she is deeply invested in sibling connections for children experiencing out of home placement. Elise is a lifelong learner and is currently working on her Bachelor's Degree. She holds Associate Degrees in Psychology and Early Childhood Development. Elise believes family is most important and that all children need a foundation of love and support from family and nurturing adults



Morgan Maxwell, MSW, JD serves as Legislative Resource Attorney to the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children. Morgan graduated Cum Laude from the University of South Carolina School of Law with a concentration in Children's Law. Prior to attending law school, Morgan received her Master's in Social Work and worked as a social worker in the child welfare field and with Children's Law Center of California.



Bri Newton, MS serves as the Associate Director of the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs at the University of South Carolina. Prior to that, they were the Assistant Director for LGBTQ Education at the University. Bri earned a B.S. in Psychology from Columbia College and an M.S. in Psychology from Purdue University Global. They are currently a doctoral student in a human sexuality program where their dissertation will be examining the how social media impacts identity development for neurodiverse trans folks in the South.



Jewel Rembert, MA, BSW, LPC, LPCS is the CEO and founder of The Ultimate Choice Consulting, LLC. She is an experienced clinician who is always seeking ways to enhance her therapeutic skills. Currently, she holds credentials as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor (LPCS), and Certified Mediator. Ms. Rembert is proficient in Person-Centered Therapy, Trauma-Focused Therapy, Cognitive Processing Therapy, and certified in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. She has a genuine passion for knowledge and is constantly striving to improve

herself and her clinical skills.

Ms. Rembert has a deep love for working with clients ranging from thirteen-year-olds to geriatric individuals. She firmly believes that change is possible when faced with difficult life choices. Her dedication to her clients is unwavering, always putting their best interests at the forefront. Ms. Rembert consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty to serve her clients. She approaches her work with innovation, encouraging creative problem-solving to tackle life stressors, while adhering to ethical and moral principles.

With over 20 years of experience, Ms. Rembert embodies all the qualities and characteristics of a senior therapist. She is a reliable collaborator, known for performing her duties with compassion, dedication, and a commitment to quality.



Michelle Tate, MS has served in the domestic violence sector for over two decades, ascending from local involvement to national influence. Michelle currently serves as the Dept. of Defense Domestic Abuse Victim Advocate (DAVA) Program Director with NOVA. She has made her mark as an expert trainer on domestic and sexual violence, offering instruction and presenting at conferences internationally. Her status as a US Air Force veteran has also shaped her focus, placing military-connected survivors as well as BIPOC communities at the heart of her work. This commitment is evident in her research and her relentless pursuit of violence prevention strategies. She also supports Durant Children's Center, relating to the military.



Stephanie Turner, LMSW, MPH, BCBA is the Autism Division Director at the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, overseeing community outreach, statewide service improvement, and autism eligibility. As a Licensed Social Worker and Board-Certified Behavior Analyst, she brings a wealth of expertise to her work. Ms. Turner holds master's degrees in social work and public health from the University of South Carolina, with a specialization in individuals, families, and health promotion. Her distinguished career is marked by a strong commitment to improving autism services.



David White, MBA, LMSW is the founder of Fostering Great Ideas, an organization providing innovative programs to improve the understanding and experience of foster care. Prior to Fostering Great Ideas, David was the regional director for a clinical foster care agency. Prior to that, he ran First Steps in Greenville County. Before his work in the non-profit field, David was a business development manager. For the last 10 years, David has also taught social impact entrepreneurship as a lecturer for the Clemson MBA in entrepreneurship program.