



## September 2026 Newsletter

### Together, We Can Strengthen Youth Mental Health

Dear Friends and Partners,

With the school year well underway, you may be seeing young people who are struggling with anxiety, depression, isolation, trauma, or other mental health challenges. This is a moment to act and we are here to support you.



At Inspiring Dreams Network, we believe prevention begins with informed, connected adults and communities equipped to recognize concerns, respond early, and help young people build hope and resilience. Our partners are essential to making that happen.

September is **National Suicide Prevention Month**, making it an important time to strengthen the supports surrounding the young people we serve. To help, we have added new resources to our [Youth Development Portal](#)—a growing hub of evidence-based and best-practice resources for educators, youth-serving professionals, caregivers, and families.

#### Featured resources include:

[Zero Suicide Engage Toolkit](#) & [Ring the Alarm: The Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America](#)

#### **Our Call to Action... Explore. Share. Connect. Act.**

Take a few minutes to explore the resources. Share them with your staff, families, colleagues, and community partners. Talk about youth mental health in your organization. Identify opportunities to strengthen protective factors and expand trusted adult support. And, most importantly, help ensure no young person has to navigate a crisis alone.

When we work together across schools, families, nonprofits, agencies, and communities, we create a stronger network of support around young people;

one that helps them feel seen, heard, valued, connected, and hopeful. Let's make this more than a month of awareness. Let's make it a commitment to action.

Together, we can build stronger, more resilient communities where every young person has the support, connection, and opportunity they need to thrive. Check out our [training menu](#) and let us know if we can provide training for your organization.

Thank you for standing with Inspiring Dreams Network and for being part of this vital work.

With gratitude,

**Dr. Barb Brady**  
Executive Director  
Inspiring Dreams Network

## Upcoming IDN Trainings

**These FREE training opportunities are provided through funding from The Claude Worthington Benedum, Milan Puskar, and Greater Kanawha Valley Foundations. We appreciate our partnerships with these organizations.**



### October ACEs Training Series

#### **ACEs 101: Understanding ACEs**

**Date:** October 7, 2026 | 3:00-4:00pm

#### **ACEs 102: Overcoming ACEs**

**Date:** October 14, 2026 | 3:00-4:00pm

#### **ACEs 103: Preventing ACEs**

**Date:** October 21, 2026 | 3:00-4:00pm

**Trainers:** Corey Beahm & John Barton

**Location:** Zoom

**Description:** The youth you work with may struggle with the traumatic effects of **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**. We invite you to learn about ACEs and the impact ACEs have on brain development and behavior. ACEs often interfere with school success and can **negatively impact** participation in activities, events, school, relationships, overall wellness, and life outcomes. This ACEs training series is intended to help caregivers and adults who serve youth better understand the impact of ACEs and to learn some **best-practice strategies** to help youth and families overcome and prevent the future occurrence of ACEs, changing lives in a positive direction. This training series is brought to you through funding provided by the Milan Puskar Foundation, Benedum, and TGKVF.

**\*STARS credit, Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Nursing, Social Work, and Addictions CEUs offered! If you wish to receive STARS credit, please register on the STARS Portal at [www.wvstars.org](http://www.wvstars.org)\***

IDN is partnering with **Marshall University School Health Technical Assistance Center (MUSHTAC)** to offer continuing education units (CEUs) for **Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC)** and **Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (AADC)**.



**Register Here!**

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Interested in IDN providing a training for your organization? Check out our [Training Menu](#) and complete our [Training Request Form](#)!

## What Else is Up With IDN?

### Join Our Team! IDN Board Member Position Now Open

Inspiring Dreams Network is now accepting self-nominations for our [Board of Directors](#). Join a mission-driven team working to strengthen youth resilience, community well-being, and systems that truly support young people. We're filling **two Board seats** and welcome leaders of all backgrounds—no prior Board experience required. Members serve a three-year term, meet monthly (virtual), and help guide IDN's strategy, values, and impact. Walk with us as we build a more supportive, youth-centered future.



**\*Application deadline is September 21st.\***

For any questions, contact Dr. Barb Brady at [drbarbbrady@inspiringdreamsnetwork.org](mailto:drbarbbrady@inspiringdreamsnetwork.org)

**Apply Here!**

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IDN is excited to share a new collection of supports now available on our [Youth Development Portal](#), our free, trauma-informed hub for youth, families, educators, and professionals. The portal continues to grow with **practical, evidence-based tools** that help young people navigate identity, transition, and moments of challenge with confidence and care.

This month, we have expanded our **suicide prevention and mental wellness resources** with the addition of the **Zero Suicide Lethal Means Toolkit**, a valuable guide that promotes safe storage practices and practical strategies for reducing access to lethal means during times of crisis. We have also added the **CDC Suicide Prevention Resource for Action**, a comprehensive framework highlighting proven approaches



communities can use to strengthen protective factors, support youth well-being, and prevent suicide before a crisis occurs.

In addition, the portal now features **Ring the Alarm: The Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America**, an important resource that sheds light on the unique challenges affecting Black youth and emphasizes culturally responsive approaches to prevention, support, and intervention. Together, these resources provide **critical information** for caregivers, educators, mental health professionals, and community leaders committed to fostering safer, more supportive environments where every young person can thrive.

**We encourage you** to explore these new additions and share them with others who are working to promote youth wellness, resilience, and hope.

**Zero Suicide Lethal Means Toolkit**

**CDC Suicide Prevention Resource for Action**

**Ring the Alarm: The Crisis of Black Youth Suicide in America**

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Also, please check out the **Prevent Suicide WV website** linked below. As a West Virginia-based suicide prevention resource website, it provides crisis help information, suicide prevention education, support resources for people experiencing suicidal thoughts, support for survivors who have lost loved ones to suicide, guidance for helping someone at risk, educational materials, videos, and county-level suicide statistics for West Virginia. The site also promotes awareness that suicide is preventable and connects visitors with emergency resources such as the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

**Prevent Suicide WV Website**

## Partner Updates



### Anxiety and Depression Association of America Upcoming Webinar

**Date:** September 23, 2026 | 1:00pm

Join ADAA on September 23 for a **free, live Q & A event** presented by ADAA Member Simon Rego, PsyD, ABPP, A-CBT and Julian Barling, PhD, featuring a discussion of their new book, ***The Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Workbook for Leaders: How Improving Your Mental Health Is Essential to Avoiding Burnout and Leading More Effectively***, which focuses on science-backed strategies leaders can use to protect their mental health while maintaining high performance.

This engaging webinar will explore the unique psychological challenges that accompany leadership roles and why many leaders feel compelled to meet unrealistic "superhuman" expectations. Participants will learn how stress, perfectionism, self-sacrifice, and unhealthy coping strategies can undermine resilience and performance, as well as why leaders often hesitate to seek support due to stigma or fear of appearing vulnerable.

**Attendees will learn how:**

- To recognize the unique mental health challenges and sources of stress associated with leadership roles.
- To identify evidence-based CBT, DBT, and ACT strategies that promote resilience, reduce stress, and help prevent burnout.
- To apply practical techniques to support mental well-being, improve performance, and foster sustainable, healthy leadership.

**Learn More & Register Here!**



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**

## WVDE Student Support Conference

**Date:** September 24, 2026 | 8:00am-4:00pm

**Location:** Charleston Coliseum & Convention

Center, Charleston, WV

The Student Support Conference includes a wide variety of useful breakout sessions, opportunities to connect and network with other student support professionals and community partners, and an exciting keynote presenter.

Sessions will be organized into designated content tracks to help participants identify topics most relevant to their roles and local needs, including:

- **Data-informed Practices**
- **Homelessness supports**
- **Family engagement**
- **Communities In Schools**
- **Prevention**
- **College and career counseling**
- **Behavior supports**
- **School mental health**

While the tracks provide a helpful guide, participants are welcome to attend any session they choose. Sessions may be taken as standalone options or as part of a connected set within a track.

CEs for LPC, Social Work, and Addiction & Prevention are **pending approval**.

**For more information or to register, click the link below!**

**Register Here!**

**WVU Center for Excellence in  
Disabilities- Positive Behavior  
Support Program Upcoming  
Trainings**

Positive Behavior Support  
**PBS**

**Creating Structure & Routines:** September 30, 2026 | 11:00am-12:00pm Via Zoom

**De-Escalation Techniques:** October 7, 2026 | 10:00am-12:00pm Via Zoom

**MAPs and Paths Day 1:** October 13, 2026 | 10:00am-4:00pm at CED North

**MAPs and Paths Day 2:** October 14, 2026 | 10:00am-4:00pm at CED North

**Increasing Social Awareness:** October 20, 2026 | 1:00-2:30pm Via Zoom

**Anger Management for Youth:** October 27, 2026 | 5:00-6:00pm Via Zoom

**For more training opportunities or to register, click the link below!**

**WVUCED PBS Website**



## **WV Statewide Afterschool Network Updates**

### **Lights on Afterschool is October 22!**

This nationwide celebration of afterschool programs, students, and staff is back for its 27th year- bringing together more than 8000 programs to showcase the important role afterschool plays in supporting youth, families, and communities.

## **WVSAN Offers In-Person PD Sessions**

As you prepare your afterschool team for an exciting new year of learning and engagement, explore professional development opportunities designed by WVSAN specifically for afterschool professionals. These interactive sessions offer practical, ready-to use strategies to help staff build strong relationships with students, create engaging learning environments, set meaningful program goals, and begin the school year with confidence.

### **PD Sessions Currently Available:**

- **Quality Standards:** A 2-hour training offering an overview of the WV Afterschool Program Quality Standards, Assessment Tool, and how to develop a plan for program quality improvement. An all-day version of this training is also available.
- **Quality in Family and Community Engagement:** A 2-hour focus on the Family and Community Engagement Standard Domain, identifying community assets, and developing a plan to improve family and community engagement.
- **Career-Connected Learning Framework:** 1-2 hour training to help programs embed career awareness, exploration and preparation into activities in ways that are practical, age-appropriate, and grounded in both research and real-world relevance.
- **Advocacy:** 2-3 hour training learning what advocacy is, identifying local afterschool champions and stakeholders, creating advocacy messages for specific audiences, and elevating youth voice.

To schedule a Professional Development session, or to ask any questions, please reach out to Tami Jo Wilt, WVSAN Quality Program Coordinator at [tjwilt@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:tjwilt@mail.wvu.edu).

## **Nonprofit 411 Upcoming Workshops**

WV Nonprofit 411 supports nonprofit organizations in diversifying and expanding funding. Owner, Sarah Barton invites you to participate in the upcoming workshops.



**Every Monday | 2:00-3:00pm**

### **The Fundraising Roadmap Small Nonprofits Need**

**Description:** In this free workshop, Sarah Barton from Nonprofit411 walks you through the Fundraising for Small Teams Roadmap — a 9-step framework designed to help small nonprofit teams move from scattered fundraising efforts to a structured system that builds reliable, recurring donor revenue.

**Register Here!**

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## **ACEs Coalition Summit 2026**



**More information coming soon!**

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## **"Caring for the Caregiver" Conference 2026**

# Save The Date

## "Caring for the Caregiver" Conference



**November 17-18, 2026**

Embassy Suites Hotel  
300 Court Street  
Charleston, WV 25301

Metro Area Agency on Aging invites you to our FREE "Caring for the Caregiver Conference". This is an event for both family caregivers and provider agencies to gather and learn more about caregiving.

CEUs will be available

For more information contact:  
Kim Young  
kyoung@metroaaa.com  
(304)720-6861



### CFWV Pathway to Champion

**College for West Virginia** (CFWV) coordinates annual college-planning milestones to help students in West Virginia plan their pathway to education or training beyond high school. CFWV's milestone events, along with ongoing support at every school level, help bridge this gap and ensure that West Virginia's students are ready to achieve their goals and contribute to a strong, competitive workforce.

Learn more at the link below!

**CFWV Pathway to Champion**

### Complete Our Training Needs Survey!

**Inspiring Dreams Network** is excited to provide training and partner with you to better support the youth you serve. Help us serve you better by clicking the button above to complete our training needs survey.

**Training Needs Survey**

**Visit our  
Website**

If you have specific resource needs not available on our website, please contact Dr. Barb Brady at [drbarbbrady@inspiringdreamsnetwork.org](mailto:drbarbbrady@inspiringdreamsnetwork.org)



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