



November 2025 Newsletter



Greetings from Executive Director, **Dr. Barb Brady**

As we enter **November**, a month of reflection and action, I'm honored to share how Inspiring Dreams Network is marking **National Homeless Youth Awareness Month**. This is a time to center the voices and needs of youth experiencing housing instability—and to recommit ourselves to building systems of care that are accessible, affirming, and rooted in dignity. Homelessness, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act, means **lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**. This includes youth living in shelters, motels, cars, or temporarily with others due to hardship.

In West Virginia, the numbers tell a sobering story: youth homelessness is on the rise. Between 2020 and 2022, **the number of young people under 25 experiencing homelessness grew by more than 20%**. That includes children, teens, and young adults—each one navigating uncertainty, often without the support they need. **These aren't just statistics;** they're lived realities that demand our attention and care.

In that spirit, we've added several new resources to our online [Youth Development Portal](#), designed to support youth, service providers, and advocates alike. These include updated guides on emergency shelter access, mental health supports, and LGBTQ+ affirming care, as well as tools for navigating local services. We encourage you to explore these additions and share them widely—every connection counts.

We also know that knowledge is most powerful when it's shared. If you or your organization would benefit from a training, workshop, or resource walkthrough, please take a moment to fill out our [Training Request Form](#). Whether you're new to this work or deep in the trenches, we're here to support your journey and amplify your impact.

And as we grow our impact, we're also growing our leadership. We're proud to welcome **two new members to the Inspiring Dreams Network Board of Directors** — exceptional professionals whose expertise and passion for youth advocacy will help guide our next chapter. We're thrilled to have them on board and look forward to

the insight and energy they bring to our mission.

Thank you for being part of this community. Together, we continue to dream boldly and act with purpose.

With gratitude,
Barb Brady, IDN Executive Director

IDN Welcomes New Board Members!

Amy Yeater

Always compassionate, Amy Yeater has worked for **over 20 years as a public educator**. She has worked with all grade levels from kindergarten through high school and has an emphasis in special education. She now teaches in the Education Department at West Virginia University Parkersburg. She serves as a board member of the Salvation Army and continues to give back to all surrounding communities.



Amy received a master's degree in English from Southern New Hampshire University. She is pursuing her doctorate at National University and working to complete the coursework ahead of schedule. She is acquiring her EdD in Special Education in Trauma-Informed Practices to help educators and students learn resiliency and coping skills across the state. She is also a certified instructor for Youth Mental Health First Aid.

Amy became familiar with IDN at the Inaugural WV ACEs conference in June 2025. After hearing the mission and plan of IDN, she knew this was the path that would lead her to build resilience in children across the state and country. She is currently a candidate for the P.E.O scholarship that will benefit this work.

Sara Robinson

Sara Robinson is the longtime Supervisor of the Harrison-Marion **Parents as Teachers** program in Clarksburg, WV, where she's spent nearly a decade empowering families through early childhood education and home visitation. She holds a Regents BA and is completing her MBA at Fairmont State University, with certifications in child protection, car seat safety, and infant-toddler mental health.



Sara joins the Inspiring Dreams Network board with a passion for community collaboration and hopes to strengthen partnerships and outreach across West Virginia. A proud single mom of two teens, she finds joy in photography, crocheting, houseplants, and cheering on WVU athletics—values inspired by her father's legacy of service and leadership.

Upcoming IDN Trainings

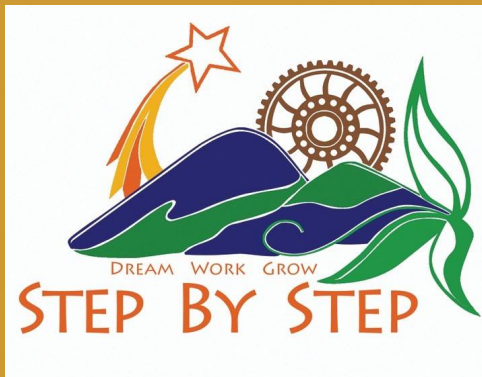
Succession Planning- St. Albans STAR Club

On November 11, 2025, Inspiring Dreams Network will host a Succession Planning training at the St. Albans STAR Club, led by experienced trainers Dr. Barb Brady and Sarah Barton. This session is designed to help nonprofit leaders and teams prepare for smooth leadership transitions with practical strategies and tools, ensuring that youth services are not disrupted.



If you would like IDN to support you with succession planning, please complete our Training Request Form below.

[Training Request Form](#)



Supporting Youth with Career Dreams and Financial Literacy Zoom Trainings

Partnering with Families to Inspire Youth Career Dreams

Date: December 18th, 2025 | 9:00-10:15am

Location: Zoom

Trainer: Heather McChesney, Higher Education Policy Commission

Supporting Youth in Building Financial

Literacy Skills

Date: December 18th, 2025 | 10:30am-12:00pm

Location: Zoom

Trainer: Rashad Sanders, Chase Bank

Who Should Attend? This training has been requested by Step-By-Step for their afterschool program, but we are inviting anyone interested in the training to participate!

[Register Here!](#)

December ACEs Training Series

ACEs 101: Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences

Wednesday, December 3, 2025 | 2:00-3:30pm

ACEs 102: Overcoming Adverse Childhood Experiences

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 | 2:00-3:30pm

ACEs 103: Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences

Wednesday, December 17, 2025 | 2:00-3:30pm

Trainers: Corey Beahm & John Barton

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.

***STARS credit, Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), and Addictions CEUs offered!**
If you wish to receive STARS credit, please register on the STARS Portal
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!**



Intersection of Suicidality & LGBTQ+ Youth Support

December 18, 2025 | 10:00am-12:00pm

Trainer: Paula Kerner, Fairness WV

Paula Kerner is an expert in providing support for LGBTQ+ Youth and collaborates with IDN to provide evidence-based training to help youth-serving adults provide needed support to help youth thrive. During this session, participants will analyze current data on LGBTQ+ youth and mental health to understand their challenges and needs and how this relates to the amount of acceptance and support received. Examining identity bullying and how intersecting identity traits may compound challenges is a key component of this

session. Participants will also work through scenarios on how to deal with specific needs and disclosures. Participants will also develop personalized plans to meet their



organization's needs. This is particularly beneficial to those working in a school setting or community after-school programs.

Objectives:

- Understanding trauma & suicidal ideation-emphasis on challenges for LGBTQ+ youth
- Analyzing identity bullying & how making connections to students can mitigate harm
- Examining how trauma can affect brain development even into adulthood
- Evaluating your program/school for strengths and weaknesses
- Discuss (briefly) how AI may be affecting mental health of youth
- Examine the success of LGBTQ+ youth in supportive environments
- McKinney-Vento and other programs to support LGBTQ+ youth



**Register
Here!**

What has IDN been up to?



This Month's Training Highlight: **Cyber Safety Workshop Engages** **Staff to Support Families to Keep** **Kids Safe Online**

On Friday, October 31, Dr. Barb Brady and Sarah Barton led a thought-provoking workshop for Step By Step Afterschool Program staff serving 17 programs across Kanawha, Lincoln, and

Logan Counties. The training, *Cyber Safety: Keeping Kids Safe Online*, sparked rich conversations about how educators, caregivers, and youth leaders can work together to help children navigate the online world safely.

The workshop explored how predators groom and manipulate youth, the emotional and social impacts of online exploitation, and practical steps adults can take to protect children. Participants learned to recognize red flags, create open lines of communication, and use hands-on strategies like co-viewing content, setting digital boundaries, creating safety contract, and using parental controls effectively.

Key takeaways included:

- **Talk early, talk often:** Regular, open conversations about online experiences help build trust and resilience.
- **Know the "Monster Myth":** Predators often appear kind and familiar — not scary strangers.
- **Empower through understanding:** Teach youth to identify boundaries and what healthy versus unhealthy relationships look like.
- **Stay involved:** Share online spaces with children — scroll, laugh, and learn together.

- **Model responsible behavior:** Kids notice how adults use technology.
- **Be proactive, not reactive:** Use safeguards, monitor platforms, and report suspicious activity immediately.
- **Create Cyber Safety Contracts:** Put agreements about Cyber Safety on paper outlining the do's and don'ts of being online. (A sample was provided)



Resources like GuardingKids.com, <https://teamwv.org/prevent-child-abuse-wv>, parents.thorn.org, connectsafely.org, and takeitdown.ncmec.org were shared to support ongoing efforts by families and youth support programs. If your organization would like to schedule a **Cyber Safety training**, complete our [Training Request Form](#) to schedule a session. Together, we can build safer, smarter, and more connected communities for our youth.

IDN Offering Social Work CEUs for Trainings

Inspiring Dreams Network is excited to announce that we are partnering with the *National Social Work Association WV* and will soon be able to offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for social workers participating in our trainings. IDN oThis milestone reflects IDN's commitment to professional development and our growing role as a trusted resource in the social services community. By aligning our workshops and educational offerings with CEU standards, IDN will empower social workers to deepen their skills, stay current with best practices, and meet licensure requirements—all while engaging in trainings that center equity, youth advocacy, and trauma-informed care. Stay tuned for launch details and accreditation updates as IDN expands its impact.

IDN is highlighting with new resources on our [Youth Development Portal](#). This free hub offers trauma-informed, best practice tools for youth, families, and professionals. Whether you're an educator, parent, case manager, youth advocate, or community member, the portal offers practical tools to support young people through moments of transition and challenge. This November, in honor of **National Homeless Youth Awareness Month**, Inspiring Dreams Network is featuring new tools on our

free Youth Development Portal. These resources support youth facing housing instability, guide families navigating homelessness, and equip professionals with trauma-informed strategies to foster long-term stability.



**Homeless and Housing Resource Center
(HHRC)**

**Families with Children Experiencing
Homelessness**

**Stepping Stones: Youth Transition
Project**

Partner Updates



WVU CED Positive Behavior Support- Upcoming Training

De-Escalation Techniques | November 18, 2025 | 10:00am-12:00pm | Via Zoom

Join PBS for the upcoming De-Escalation Techniques webinar. This free, interactive online training explores ways to recognize and manage one's own stress as well as ways to de-escalate a crisis. Participants can expect to learn how to recognize compassion fatigue and burn out. Assess your level of stress and anger, along with the effects and ways to manage those effects. The crisis cycle will be discussed along with tools and techniques to de-escalate a crisis.

School professionals, first responders, social workers, therapists, and direct support providers are encouraged to attend.

After attending, you will be able to:

- Differentiate between compassion fatigue and being burned out
- Recognize a power struggle and ways to avoid it
- Identify ways to effectively de-escalate a situation

2 Social Work CEUs available

**More Info. &
Registration**

KVC West Virginia- Free CEU Training

**Commonly Misused Substances | November
18, 2025 | 10:00am-12:00pm**



Substance misuse among youth and adults is constantly shifting—and it goes beyond illegal drugs. From vaping and alcohol to newer substances on the rise, helping professionals need up-to-date knowledge to effectively guide and support clients. This valuable training is designed for social workers, LPCs, therapists, clinicians, school-based professionals and other helping professionals who want to strengthen their understanding of substance misuse and interventions.

Objectives:

In this session, you will:

- Review the latest statistics on substance misuse, including vaping and alcohol trends
- Better understand medication classifications and commonly misused substances
- Explore new and emerging substances affecting communities today
- Learn how to have meaningful, judgment-free conversations about substance misuse with youth and parents
- Expand your awareness of street names and slang terms commonly used for various substances

2 Social Work/LPC CEUs available

**Register
Here!**



Mindspring Mental Health Alliance- Free Webinars

- Nov. 18 | Understanding Toxic Relationships
- Nov. 19 | Navigating Work-Life Balance
- Nov. 19 | What is Emotional Intelligence?
- Nov. 20 | Understanding Bipolar Disorder
- Nov. 24 | Attachment Theory: Emotional Attachments in Relationships
- Nov. 25 | Talking About Mental Health at Work and in Relationships
- Nov. 26 | Caregiver Stress & Burnout
- Nov. 26 | Understanding Family Reactions to Mental Illness

Register
Here!

State-Funded Mental Health and Wellness Coaching for Parents



Families statewide have access to **state-funded mental health and wellness coaching**, thanks to a partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education and the Cook Center for Human Connection. Research show that by increasing parenting knowledge and skills, children are more likely to be resilience and thrive. Parents can sign up for **FREE PARENT COACHING**. Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

This hub provides families and youth-serving adults with tools to share, promote, and access these services.

[Access Here](#)

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



How did you like this email?



Inspiring Dreams Network | 4035 Ridgeview Lane | Hurricane, WV 25526 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email & social marketing for free!