



June 2026 Newsletter

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



This month, IDN is excited to share a fresh collection of supports now available on our [Youth Development Portal](#) — our free, trauma-informed hub designed 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.

In alignment with **IDN's mission** to build a network of youth-serving adults who are prepared to inspire, prepare, and support all youth to thrive, we are proud to uplift two communities whose experiences are often misunderstood or overlooked. In recognition of **LGBTQ+ Pride Month**, we're featuring new affirming resources that support young people exploring who they are and seeking safe, inclusive spaces. We are also highlighting **Men's Mental Health Awareness Month**, drawing attention to the significant disparities in help-seeking behaviors among men. With male life expectancy averaging eight years shorter than women's—often linked to underutilization of mental health supports—these losses can leave deep gaps in the lives of the youth who depend on fathers, grandfathers, and male role models. Our **new materials** offer guidance that helps boys and young men break through stigma, strengthen emotional well-being, and access the support they deserve.

IDN would welcome the opportunity to **collaborate with your organization** to bring training on these and other topics to your community. If we can support you with training, please complete our [Training Request Form](#).

Thank you for being part of a community that believes every young person deserves to feel seen, valued, and supported. Together, we continue building pathways of hope, healing, and possibility for all.

With appreciation,

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.

Family Fun Days “Helping Families Thrive” Series - Educational Sessions (30 minutes) Provided by IDN

Horseshoe Heaven on Smith Farm—home of the Itty Bitty Therapy Horses—is honored to partner with Inspiring Dreams Network to bring you a one-of-a-kind **Family Fun Day** experience!



After a brief presentation, your family will spend 1.5 hours immersed in the beauty and calm of our *160-acre farm*. You'll enjoy guided, hands-on interactions with our miniature therapy horses and friendly farm animals, peaceful nature walks along our trails, and engaging activities designed to promote connection, confidence, and **fun for all ages**.

Their Certified Equine Specialists in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHLs), Educators, and Recreational Therapists will lead simple, meaningful experiences that encourage teamwork, relaxation, and joy—no horse experience needed! Whether you're grooming a mini horse, taking a quiet moment in nature, or sharing laughs together as a family, this experience is all about slowing down, connecting, and creating lasting memories.

Check out the video below to learn more about this fun event!

\$25/pp | \$50/family- includes parents and one child. Additional children \$5.

July 24 | Family Fun Day 5:30–7:30pm
***Peaceful Conflict Resolution* | 5:30-6:00pm**

August 14 | Family Fun Day 5:30–7:30pm
***Supporting Youth and Families with Neurodiversity Struggles* | 5:30-6:00pm**

[Watch Video](#)

[Register Here!](#)

Toxic Stress: Supporting Youth & Families to Overcome Trauma



Date: July 29th, 2026 | 10:15am-12:00pm

Trainer: Dr. Barb Brady

Location: Pipestem Resort State Park | 3405 Pipestem Dr, Pipestem, WV 25979

Description: If not addressed, individuals exposed to ongoing trauma and toxic stress suffer negative outcomes, including poor

mental and physical health, and early death. Since WV has the lowest life expectancy in the nation, it is likely that our children and families are experiencing high levels of trauma and toxic stress. Best practices for helping children and families overcome and prevent generational recurrence of trauma will be discussed. Professionals who work with youth and families will understand supportive or trauma-informed practices and be able to examine their own practices in creating a safe environment to prevent secondary trauma and instead promote healing.

Objectives:

- Understand how trauma and toxic stress affects the brain and impacts behavior, school success, as well as poor health outcomes.
- Understand ACEs that contribute to toxic stress
- Learn ways to support families to mitigate toxic stress, including building resilience and protective factors; and the importance of Safe, Stable and Nurturing Relationships

STARS credit, Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Nursing, and Social Work CEUs offered!

[Register Here!](#)

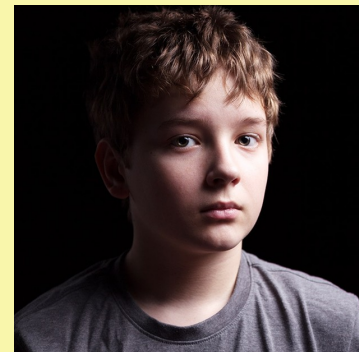
Youth Mental Health First Aid

Date: August 13, 2026 | 8:30am-4:30pm

Trainers: Dr. Barb Brady & Paula Kerner

Location: BCG Martinsburg | 105 W John St, Martinsburg, WV 25401

Description: Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) is an interactive, skills-based training course that teaches participants about common adolescent mental health issues and teaches a five-step process on how to identify, understand and respond to these youth issues. Participants are able to practice using the skills to build confidence in supporting youth. Those who successfully complete the course earn a Mental Health First Aider Certificate.



Objectives:

- Describe the PURPOSE of Youth Mental Health First Aid and the ROLE of the Youth Mental Health First Aider.
- Recognize the SIGNS and SYMPTOMS of mental health challenges that may impact youth.
- Explain the role of RESILIENCE and the impact of traumatic experiences on adolescent development.
- Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) in CRISIS and NON-CRISIS scenarios.
- Practice appropriate methods for SELF-CARE following the application of Youth Mental Health First Aid in a crisis or non-crisis situation.

[Register Here!](#)

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?

IDN Welcomes New Summer Associate VISTA!



IDN is thrilled to welcome our new Summer Associate VISTA, **Aurora Loudin**, to the team! Aurora began her service with IDN on June 2 and will continue through August 3. She will play an important role in shaping the future of our training initiatives. She will help elevate and strengthen our training materials through enhanced branding and design, creating resources that are engaging, impactful, and aligned with our mission.

In addition, Aurora will collaborate with our [Training and Development Team](#) to intentionally integrate **student voice** and address the evolving needs of youth-support systems. Her work will help ensure that as we continue building and expanding our training units, they remain innovative, relevant, and responsive to the real needs of the young people and communities we serve.



Aurora Loudin is an education consultant with **over 22 years of experience** supporting early learning programs, educators, children, and families. A Maryland State Department of Education–approved trainer, she specializes in professional development, coaching, classroom observation, curriculum implementation, social-emotional development, and family engagement. Known for her collaborative, hands-on approach, she helps programs build nurturing, high-quality learning environments where children thrive. A strong advocate for nature-based learning and family partnerships, Aurora brings her passion for meaningful, research-based training to IDN, where she will help brand and standardize training materials, develop

facilitator and participant guides, create interactive activities, and elevate youth voice to ensure adults are equipped with the skills young people say they need most.

[Read More](#)



EXCITING OPPORTUNITY!!

Full-Time AmeriCorps VISTA

In partnership with WV's Promise Youth Alliance, Inc., Inspiring Dreams Network (IDN) is recruiting a motivated full-time AmeriCorps VISTA to serve a year-long term beginning **August 4th, 2026**. This role focuses on capacity-building to strengthen programs that support youth, families, and communities across West Virginia.

What You'll Do:

- Develop curricula and training materials
- Support grant writing, data collection, and reporting
- Assist with fundraising and community outreach
- Build partnerships and support IDN committees
- Create marketing materials, websites, and social media content
- Design templates, manuals, and program infrastructure
- Support youth-voice data collection and IDN training initiatives

Who Can Apply:

- 18+
- U.S. Citizen/National/Legal Resident
- HS diploma/GED
- Able to pass background checks
- Must apply through the AmeriCorps portal.

Benefits:

- Bi-weekly living allowance (~\$960)
- End-of-service award (\$7,395 education award or \$1,800 cash)
- Healthcare allowance
- Loan forbearance
- Professional development
- 10 personal and 10 medical days
- NCE eligibility
- WV SB 610 tuition waivers.

Apply by: July 17th, 2026 | Start date: August 4th, 2026

Applicants must complete the AmeriCorps online application and provide two professional references. IDN Leadership will interview candidates and recommend final selections before AmeriCorps issues official offers.

Learn more and apply through the [My AmeriCorps portal](#).

For more information, contact Dr. Barb Brady at
drbarbbrady@inspiringdreamsnetwork.org.

help young people navigate identity, transition, and moments of challenge with confidence and care.

This month, we're proud to highlight resources in honor of **LGBTQ+ Pride Month** and **Men's Mental Health Month**—two areas where affirming information, supportive adults, and accessible guidance can make a life-changing difference. The featured additions uplift LGBTQ+ young people with tools that promote safety, belonging, and self-understanding, while also addressing the unique mental health needs of boys and young men by breaking stigma and encouraging early, compassionate support.



Starting or Reigniting GSA Spaces

Breaking the Stigma Around Men's Mental Health

A Guide for Foster Parents of LGBTQ+ Youth

Men's Mental Health 1-Pager

Rethinking Young Men's Mental Health Support

Coming Out: A Handbook for LGBTQ+ Youth

Partner Updates

Child & Adolescent Health Teach Resort 2026

Date: June 29-July 1, 2026

Location: Pipestem State Park | 3405 Pipestem Drive, Pipestem, WV, 25979, United States



2026 Child & Adolescent Health Teach Resort

Pipestem Resort State Park
June 29 - July 1
2026



IDN is collaborating with the SESC by providing a session on **Toxic Stress: Supporting Youth & Families to Overcome Trauma** on June 29.

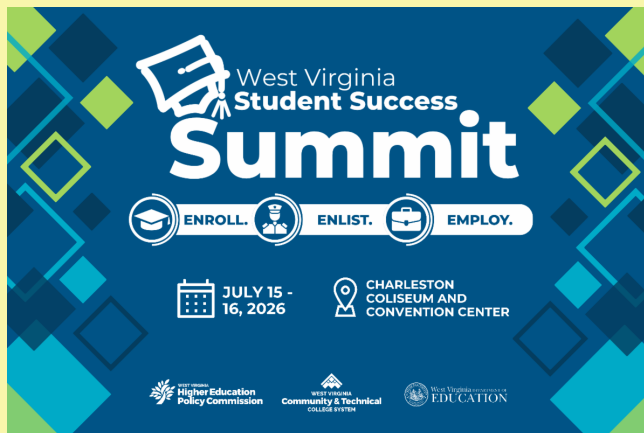
Teach Resort 2026 is shaping up to be a standout summer learning experience for anyone who works with children and youth. Held at the beautiful **Pipestem Resort State Park**, this three-day event brings together educators, counselors, nurses,

social workers, administrators, and other youth-serving professionals for meaningful learning, practical tools, and a chance to truly recharge. Participants will dive into timely topics like vaping prevention, youth suicide prevention, child abuse prevention, ACEs, PCEs, trauma-informed strategies, and more, through sessions designed to offer real-world approaches they can take back to their schools, agencies, and communities. Attendees can also earn **Graduate credit, CEUs (pending approval) for Social Work, Nursing, LPC, Law Enforcement, and STARS, and educational hours** for certification and salary advancement.

What makes Teach Resort 2026 especially unique is the blend of professional development and renewal. With light breakfast and lunch included, evening family activities, a Monday **"Grill and Chill,"** and a Tuesday **Lake Party**, participants can learn by day and unwind with colleagues, friends, and family in a welcoming, family-friendly environment. Registration is \$300 for all three days or \$150 for a single day; lodging is separate, with a room block available at Pipestem Lodge under "Teach Resort." This is professional growth with room to breathe—set in one of West Virginia's most beautiful places.

If you have any questions, please email at smvickers@wvesc.org or call **304.663.3037**

[See Flyer & Register](#)



WV Student Success Summit

Date: July 15-16, 2026

Location: Charleston Coliseum & Convention Center | 200 Civic Center Dr, Charleston, WV 25301

Registration is now open for the 2026 WV Student Success Summit! This statewide event brings together **PK-12**

educators, higher education partners, workforce leaders, and community organizations for two days of breakout sessions, networking, and collaboration focused on student success. **Attendance is free**, space is limited to 500 participants, and registration closes July 3. Discounted hotel rates are available, and free parking is provided at the Charleston Coliseum garage.

IDN will be exhibiting at the 2026 WV Student Success Summit, and we invite you to attend and stop by our table to connect and explore our latest youth-focused resources.

[Learn More & Register](#)



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!

West Virginia Behavioral Health Ethics Conference: Upholding Integrity Across the Continuum

Don't miss this full day virtual event with tracks in **behavioral health, addiction/prevention, and peer recovery**. Clinicians, counselors, social workers, peer specialists, and prevention pros: Save the date to connect, learn, and strengthen ethical practice across the continuum of care!

Date: Tuesday, August 4, 2026 | 8:30am-4:35pm

Conference session titles and conference speakers have been announced! Check out the registration page below for more information.

Register Here!



"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



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

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