



January 2026 Newsletter

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

As we step into a **new year**, I'm grateful for the mentors, caregivers, educators, and partners who show up for young people with such dedication. January is **National Mentoring Month**, and it's a powerful reminder that consistent, caring relationships can change the trajectory of a young person's life.

To support this work, we've added new mentoring-focused resources to our [Youth Development Portal](#), including tools that highlight the benefits of mentoring, offer growth-mindset strategies for mentors, and address the unique needs of rural communities. Each resource is designed to strengthen connections and equip adults with practical, trauma-informed approaches that help youth thrive.

Thank you for being part of a community that believes in the potential of every young person. Email me or complete our [Request a Training Form](#) if we can provide a training for your staff. Together, we're building pathways to hope, belonging, and opportunity.

With appreciation,
Dr. Barb Brady, IDN Executive Director



Upcoming IDN Trainings

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

WV Promise Training to Grow Conference: IDN Trainings



January 20th-22nd, 2026

National Conservation Training Center
698 Conservation Way | Shepherdstown, WV 25443

ACEs 101: Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences

Date: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 | 8:30-10:00am

Trainers: Dr. Barb Brady & Laren Iezzi, IDN Leadership VISTA

Building Relationships & Resilience

Date: Thursday, January 22, 2026 | 10:45am-12:00pm

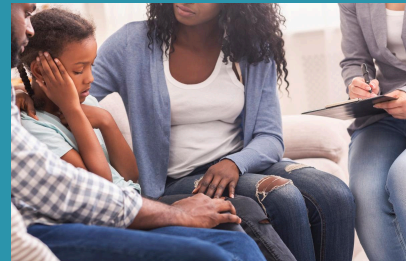
Trainers: Dr. Barb Brady & Laren Iezzi, IDN Leadership VISTA

Mental Health 101: Understanding and Taking Charge of Mental Health

Date: January 27, 2026 | 11:00am-12:30pm

Trainer: Dr. Barb Brady

Location: Zoom



Description: This training supports youth-serving adults in leading safe, nonthreatening discussions to help youth understand the components of mental health based on the CDC and WHO definitions. This training empowers adults to discuss what good mental health looks like and what we can do to take charge of and improve mental health. Additionally, participants will be able to access their own mental health and employ strategies to enhance their own wellbeing, capacity to overcome life stresses, and better prepare themselves to engage with others in healthier ways that contribute to positive mental health. This training provides mental health resources to improve mental health and identifies some basic coping skills, resiliency traits, and habits that anyone can develop to lead to positive mental health outcomes.

Objectives:

- Review the WHO and CDC definitions of mental health
- Understand the components of good mental health
- Access one's strengths and weaknesses in relation to mental health
- Identify best-practice strategies to improve mental health, including building resiliency, coping skills, and self-care practices

***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!

February ACEs Training Series

ACEs 101: Understanding ACEs

Date: February 4, 2026 | 2:00-3:30pm

ACEs 102: Preventing ACEs

Date: February 11, 2026 | 2:00-3:30pm

ACEs 103: Overcoming ACEs

Date: February 18, 2026 | 2:00-3:30pm

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), and Addictions CEUs offered! If you wish to receive STARS credit, please register on the STARS Portal www.wvstars.org**

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Register Here!



Lean On Me: Supportive Practices for Families to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

Date: February 20, 2026 | 11:00am-1:00pm

Trainer: Paula Kerner

Location: Zoom

Description: This is a follow-up to Mandated Reporting to help families with supportive practices. Parenting is hard and imperfect. Everyone needs help sometimes. LEAN on Me WV is an initiative to promote child well-being by supporting families with listening, empathy, affirmation, and nonjudgment. The goal of LEAN on Me is to promote community responsibility to support families, rather than solely report families to CPS. All of us can use the LEAN on Me approach to support families and prevent child abuse and neglect. Techniques practiced in this

training will better equip providers including school personnel in making the decision of what resources are needed and if mandatory reporting is utilized.

Objectives:

- Discerning needs vs. neglect.
- Building Protective factors.
- Child Protective Services – processes, capabilities, and difficulties
- Bias in decision making.
- Community resources.

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

www.wvstars.org

Register Here!



Mandated Reporting

Date: March 17, 2026 | 1:00pm-4:00pm

Trainer: Sara Robinson & Leslie Slaughter

Description: Unfortunately, those of us who work with children run into situations where we observe or hear from children about varying forms of neglect and abuse. As a child-serving adult, we are mandated reporters and must

determine if what a child is sharing merits a report to DHHR or requires support and intervention with the family. Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia has updated their *“Making a Difference: Mandate to Report, Responsibility to Prevent Child Abuse & Neglect”* Curriculum. The updated curriculum incorporates additional information regarding distinguishing between poverty and neglect, addressing bias for mandated reporters, and ways to offer support to families in addition to how to make a report to the CPS hotline. The *“Making a Difference”* curriculum helps mandated reporters and those who work with children and families:

- Understand when you are legally required to call CPS, including when it is more appropriate to refer for community-based services
- Reduce bias in the decision-making process
- Foster a greater understanding of the impact of trauma, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs)
- Foster a greater understanding of protective factors and supports you can refer families to in lieu of making a report to CPS.

This training is open to anyone who is a mandated reporter.

***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

Pending Addictions CEUs

Register Here!

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

What has IDN been up to?

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.

In honor of **National Mentoring Month**, we're highlighting new resources that strengthen mentoring relationships, offer strategies for cultivating a growth mindset, and address the unique needs of rural communities. These additions reinforce the power of connection and the role caring adults play in helping youth thrive.



[The Benefits of Youth Mentoring](#)

[Growth Mindset for Mentors Toolkit](#)

[Mentoring in Rural Communities: Video](#)

Partner Updates

 EXTENSION


WVSAN
West Virginia
Statewide Afterschool Network

Mott Million Dollar Challenge: A Pitch Competition for Kids and Teens

Kids and teens everywhere have world-changing ideas that deserve the spotlight, and the Mott Million Dollar Challenge is their chance to shine. This national pitch competition invites **K-12 students** to submit a simple 30-90 second video sharing an idea that betters their very own school, home, or community.

Students can enter individually or in teams of up to three, and **\$1 million in prizes** will be awarded across the competition! There is a guaranteed winner from every state. **Submissions are due February 27, 2026.**

WV Statewide Afterschool Network (WVSAN) is hosting a webinar with Venture Lab to share more details and answer your questions.

- Date: Wednesday, January 21st at 11:00 a.m.
- After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

[Learn More](#)

[Register for Informational Webinar](#)



WV Peer Recovery Upcoming Trainings

PRSS Micro-Credential Class

Date: February 9-12, & February 16-17, 2026

Location: Southern WV CTC - Logan Campus Location

PRSS Basic Training

Date: Weekly on Tuesdays from February 3-March 24, 2026 | 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Location: Zoom

[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 drbarbrady@inspiringdreamsnetwork.org



How did you like this email?



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

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