

# Joining Forces

Parents and professionals strengthening families

DAY 1

April 25 & 26, 2023

DAY 2

9:00 - 9:30am | Room A

## Welcome to Joining Forces

Laurieann Thorpe

### KEYNOTE

9:30 - 10:30am | Room A

## Can a Movement to End Child Abuse Succeed? Lessons Learned From Movements that Move & Those that Lose

Dr. Dave Schramm

10:40 - 11:30am | Room A

## Protective Factors Overview

Tanya Albornoz & Barbara Leavitt

10:40 - 11:30am | Room B

## Ciencia de la Adversidad y Resiliencia

Dr. Jose Alberto Santos & Dolores Gonzalez

11:40am - 12:30pm | Room A

## Moving Children from Developing to Flourishing: The Secret Sauce for Parents

Vonda Jump Norman

11:40am - 12:30pm | Room B

## Bringing the Protective Factors to Life: A Conversation About Concrete Support in Times of Need

Deondra Brown, Brenda, Maria

### LUNCH | 12:30-1:00pm

1:00 - 1:50pm | Room A

## Social Connections

Laurieann Thorpe

1:00 - 1:50pm | Room B

## Nurturing Healthy Child Development

JM Casper

2:00 - 2:50pm | Room A

## Social and Emotional Competence of Children

Rich Kallage

2:00 - 2:50pm | Room B

## Advocacy for High School Teen Centers: Concrete Supports for All Teen Students

The Policy Project

Room A | 9:00 - 9:10am

## Welcome to Day 2

Laurieann Thorpe

Room A | 9:10 - 10:05am

## Building Our Vision Together: Elevating Parent Voices

Magdalena Benitez, MSW & Samantha Florey, MA

Room A | 10:15 - 11:05am

## Resilience

Tanya Albornoz

Room B | 10:15 - 11:05am

## What does it mean to be a quality Family Strengthening and Support Program?

Deb Comstock

Room A | 11:15am - 12:05pm

## Understanding How to Practice Empathy

Wendy Smedley

Room B | 11:15am - 12:05pm

## Protective Factor: Social Connections

John Hansen

### KEYNOTE

Room A | 12:15pm - 1:15pm

## Thriving in Connection

Tanisha Shedden, CSW

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Day 1 | April 25, 2023

# **Joining Forces**

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9:00 - 9:30am | Room A

## Welcome to Joining Forces

*Laurieann Thorpe, Executive Director, Prevent Child Abuse Utah*



Welcome to the Joining Forces Conference! We are so pleased to have you join hands and hearts through video cameras across the state. We are stronger together when we unite in purpose and voice. Protecting children and lifting and strengthening families is our collective goal. At Prevent Child Abuse Utah, we know that prevention grows in partnership and we are so grateful to do this work with--not for, families and with--not for, partners and state agencies.

The Protective Factors for Families build and strengthen families AND recognize the strengths families already have. Each factor focuses on what a family needs. The protective factors are concepts everyone can learn and implement right away. The Protective Factors approach applies to all areas of school, work, and family life. The approach is versatile and effective. It works for parents, educators, therapists, home visitors, family service providers, state agencies, etc. I hope the protective factors come alive for you over the next two days.

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9:30 - 10:30am | Room A

## Can a Movement to End Child Abuse Succeed? Lessons Learned from Movements That Move & Those that Lose

*Dr. Dave Schramm*



We all want to be a part of something bigger, something that moves the needle forward. Over the past 100 years there have been many social movements fail, while some have succeeded, such as banning smoking, Black Lives Matter, and the #MeToo movement. What can we learn from successful social movements and how can we unite to create a social movement to end child abuse? Dr. Dave will share lessons learned, including the "3 Essential Ps" for a successful social movement to take hold—and it must be bold.



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## **10:40 - 11:30am**

### **Room A**

#### **Protective Factors Overview**

*Tanya Albornoz & Barbara Leavitt*

This short introduction to the Protective Factor Framework will cover why the framework is important, where the framework came from, and the basic definitions of each of the 5 protective factors. We will also briefly cover some strategies and every day actions that help build protective factors.

### **Room B**

#### **Ciencia de la Adversidad y Resiliencia**

*Dr. Jose Alberto Santos & Dolores Gonzalez*

Esta presentación se enfoca en los elementos necesarios para comprender y promover la conciencia sobre la adversidad, el trauma y la importancia del desarrollo de la resiliencia. Los profesionales de visitas domiciliarias están posicionados para hablar con los padres sobre la adversidad y la resiliencia. Las historias de las familias inmigrantes pueden estar impactando sus vidas y condiciones de bienestar. Los visitadores del hogar pueden usar su influencia para preguntar, escuchar y afirmar la historia única de cada familia, mientras se comprometen a trabajar juntos en el camino de la construcción de la resiliencia.

## **11:40am - 12:30pm**

### **Room A**

#### **Moving Children from Developing to Flourishing: The Secret Sauce for Parents**

*Vonda Jump Norman*

This presentation will discuss key elements in the promotion of children's development, including specific ideas for parents to support different aged children's skills, how positive development is a protective factor for children's mental health, and the importance of parents in children's development.

### **Room B**

#### **Bringing the Protective Factors to Life: A Conversation About Concrete Support in Times of Need**

*Deondra Brown, Brenda, Maria*

Join us for a conversation with Brenda and Maria, two Provo women who benefitted from the Strengthening Families framework, becoming friends while learning and helping their communities. This session will include discussion about the need for true collaboration with parents, strengthening trust when help is offered, and lessons learned through the lens of personal experiences.



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## **LUNCH | 12:30-1:00PM**

### **1:00 - 1:50pm**

#### **Room A**

#### **Social Connections**

*Laurieann Thorpe*

Social Connections are critical for the health and wellness of families. Parents need friends and family they can rely on. A support system is critical for wellbeing. Parents need friends they can rely on in an emergency, the kind that will take them to pick up their car from the shop, bring in a meal, and drop in for a visit. They need friends that will listen and empathize. They need friends who are the parents of their children's friends. They need friends who can connect them to other friends. When parents have good friends and connections, they have the village it takes to raise a child.

#### **Room B**

#### **Nurturing Healthy Child Development**

*JM Casper*

Learn how a child develops from infancy through the teenage years. We will be looking at several different types of development including physical, cognitive/ intellectual, and social emotional development.

### **2:00 - 2:50pm**

#### **Room A**

#### **Social and Emotional Competence of Children**

*Rich Kallage*

In this class, we will gain a deeper insight into the abilities that children of different ages possess in the social and emotional spheres of life. We will also explore areas where children may lack understanding, which parents may not perceive, and learn effective practices to help parents identify strengths and delays and develop these vital skills.

#### **Room B**

#### **Advocacy for High School Teen Centers: Concrete Supports for All Teen Students**

*The Policy Project*

We will share our advocacy and strategy for securing legislative funding and school and community support for high school teen centers, a space-based solution to help students access food, laundry, shower, and a trusted adult.



Day 2 | April 26, 2023

# **Joining Forces**

Parents and professionals strengthening families

9:00 - 9:10am | Room A

## Welcome to Day 2

*Laurieann Thorpe, Executive Director, Prevent Child Abuse Utah*



Welcome back! Let's join forces as we come to understand The Protective Factors and how they strengthen families, prevent child abuse and provide safe and happy childhoods.



Concrete Support  
in Times of Need



Parental Resilience



Knowledge of  
Child Development



Social Connections



Social & Emotional  
Competence of Children

9:10 - 10:05am | Room A

## Building Our Vision Together: Elevating Parent Voices

*Magdalena Benitez, MSW & Samantha Florey, MA*

Parent leadership is successfully achieved when parents and practitioners build effective partnerships based upon mutual respect and shared responsibility, expertise, and leadership in the decisions being made that affect their own families, other families, and their communities.

Amplifying the voice of those with lived experience may be used to transform systems, increase public awareness, or as tools to support training for staff, network members, partners, parents, and other key prevention stakeholders about the value of meaningful parent engagement and involvement. Join us to learn how to amplify parent voice and enhance parent leadership.



Day 2 | April 26, 2023

# **Joining Forces**

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## **10:15am - 11:05am**

### **Room A**

#### **Resilience**

*Tanya Albornoz*

Many people think of "Resilience" as "bouncing back", but it is so much more than that. The CSSP Protective Framework defines Resilience as "the ability to manage stress and function well when faced with challenges, adversity, and trauma." This session, geared towards professionals, will discuss some of the deeper aspects of resilience that can help families and individuals from a diversity of backgrounds and circumstances to build the resilience they need to thrive in challenging circumstances.

### **Room B**

#### **What does it mean to be a quality Family Strengthening and Support Program?**

*Deb Comstock*

This presentation will provide an overview of the nationally-adopted Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support. It will include examples of how they are being implemented at the systems and program level, including through the Standards Certification Training which more than 11,800 people (including in Utah) have successfully completed nationwide.

## **11:15am - 12:05pm**

### **Room A**

#### **Understanding How to Practice Empathy**

*Wendy Smedley*

Learn about the five attributes needed to practice empathy in your everyday life based on the latest empathy research from a self appointed empathy enthusiast. You'll walk away with a deeper understanding of how to implement empathy to deepen connections and strengthen relationships with those you interact with.

### **Room B**

#### **Protective Factors - Social Connections**

*John Hansen*

We all face various challenges in life, whether it be mental health struggles, financial difficulties, or other hardships. However, studies have consistently shown that individuals with a strong social support network are more equipped to overcome these challenges and bounce back from adversity. Additionally, the quality of these connections is just as important as the quantity, and having even one meaningful connection can make a significant difference.





Day 2 | April 26, 2023

# **Joining Forces**

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12:15 - 1:15pm | Room A

**CLOSING KEYNOTE**

## Thriving in Connection

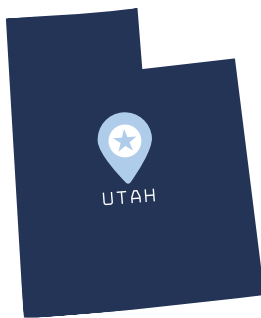
*Tanisha Shedden, CSW*

Community outreach is a critical tenant in prevention. Connected communities, stakeholders, and individuals can be the first line of infrastructure defense that disempowers the culture of abuse and creates a response system for when abuse does happen.

In this presentation, Tanisha will review connection strategies, ways to empower child survivors, how to fill the community needs gaps, and inform on policy and advocacy practices.



In 2014, Utah's Child Sexual Abuse Prevention law was passed (53G-9-207)  
In 2019, the law was updated to include trafficking prevention



It is estimated the impacts of child sexual abuse cost the state of Utah

**\$1 billion annually**

Utah Department of Health, 2022

\*Child abuse cases are under-reported

**"For every \$1 invested in prevention, Utah saves \$5.70."**

Governor Spencer Cox



[www.pcautah.org](http://www.pcautah.org)

Hear how Prevent Child Abuse Utah helped protect one Utah family from further abuse



# **Joining Forces**

**April 25 & 26, 2023**

**Speakers**

## ***Tanya Albornoz, CSW***

Tanya earned her Masters of Social Work at the University of Utah and is currently licensed as a Clinical Social Worker. Tanya worked for 20 years in Utah's child welfare system as the State Foster Care and Adoption Program Administrator, prior to joining the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) in January of 2020. Tanya was promoted in May of 2021 to be the Education Coordinator at USBE for School Counseling and Prevention Programs. In her position, Tanya oversees the implementation of programs such as suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention, bullying prevention, trauma-informed practices in education, and school counseling. Tanya has a passion for all things related to prevention science, evidence-based and research informed prevention practices in schools and communities, and school-based mental or behavioral health. Tanya also practices as a part-time therapist at a treatment program for youth and is the mother of three beautiful daughters.



## ***Magdalena Benitez, MSW***

Magdalena Benitez, MSW joined the FRIENDS National Resource Center as a Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator Fellow and enjoys supporting the CBCAP Tribal & Migrant Grantees and CBCAP state leads. Born and raised in Los Angeles, California - she has worked both in community-based organizations and as an independent consultant supporting community and education collaborators to strengthen families and communities. She is passionate about creating partnerships with parent and youth leaders, experienced in the development of family resource centers, and providing capacity building to the child abuse prevention and early education fields. Prior to joining FRIENDS, Magdalena supported the implementation of Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors (AP/OD) an evidence-based parenting, leadership, and advocacy training program for parents of children 0-5 in over 35 organizations across Los Angeles County as part of a family engagement initiative sponsored by First 5 LA. Magdalena enjoys being a community thought partner especially in facilitating learning conversations in English and Spanish that enhance our openness to cultural understanding and creating improved and equitable outcomes for children and families.

## ***Deondra Brown***

Deondra Brown is a concert pianist with the musical group The 5 Browns. Her personal experiences with child abuse have led to advocating for victims of child abuse and sexual violence. Deondra is a strong believer in prevention efforts and is proud to work with Prevent Child Abuse Utah.

Deondra co-chairs the Utah Coalition for Protecting Childhood, and co-chairs Utah's Behavioral Health Crisis Response Commission. She is the Program Administrator of the Utah Family Strengthening Network where she implements the Protective Factor Framework and the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support.





# **Joining Forces**

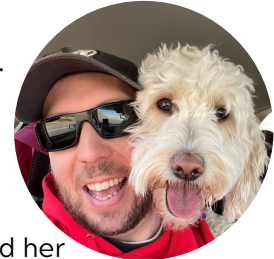
**April 25 & 26, 2023**

## Speakers

### ***JM Casper***

JM currently manages the Peer Parenting Program at Prevent Child Abuse Utah. He has been involved with Peer Parenting since 2018. Prior to that, he worked at the University of Utah in the Child and Family Development Center, formally a part of the Family and Consumer Studies department.

JM has a deep passion for child development and preventing abuse in young children. This stems from how his parents raised him. His mother received her Master's Degree in education and helped JM understand and feel the need for developmentally appropriate practices in schools and at home. JM's career offers him the opportunity to help children and families of all ages by providing parents with developmentally appropriate knowledge to help them better support their children.



### ***Deb Comstock***

Debbie Comstock's experience in the Family Strengthening and Support Field spans over 28 years. Her experiences include serving as a director of a community-based family resource center in San Diego, CA, where she first gained experience implementing the Standards Framework. Her experience also includes the implementation of the Standards Framework within a school-based family support model in the Davis Community Learning Center in the Davis County School District. Debbie is a Certified Trainer on the evidence informed 5 Protective Factors and a Certified Trainer on the Standards of Family Support Practice. She continues to focus her efforts through multidisciplinary efforts in the State of Utah as well as nationally.

### ***Samantha Florey, MA***

Samantha Florey, MA has over 20 years of experience in family support and program development. She has developed & delivered specialized training and provided technical assistance to family strengthening networks and organizations across the country. Prior to joining FRIENDS, Samantha was the Director of Training for the National Family Support Network. Other previous work includes 9 years as a Training Specialist working with the Strategies Program in California and several years as the Director of Education & Learning with the Executive Service Corps of Chicago. Samantha has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire and a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from the University of San Diego.



### ***Dolores Gonzalez***

With over 15 years of experience working with families with young children, Dolores brings a wealth of experience to parents she works with. Mrs. Gonzalez has received trainings from and subsequently taught many evidence-based curricula including Love & Logic and First Aid Mental Health. Additionally, she has consulted as a birth and postpartum doula, breastfeeding educator, and infant massage instructor to parents and fellow professionals. Mrs. Gonzalez enjoys having a front-row seat to healthy and loving child development through helping parents implement material she teaches. As a grandmother to a one-year-old, Mrs. Gonzalez also delights in being a part of her grandchild's life.



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**Speakers**

## **Rich Kallage**

Rich brings over 25 years of working with children, from teaching and developing school curricula, to designing therapeutic programs for teens.



## **Barbara Leavitt**



Barbara graduated with a degree in Business Management in 1981. She spent over 5 years within the business world. Over 20 years were spent co-running a small business which allowed her the opportunity to become very involved on the community level. As a mother of four wonderful daughters, she has come to realize the great influence a community can have on parents to increase their perspective and skill level. Barbara received a Masters of Public Administration in 2008. For the last 16 years, she has worked within the United Way of Utah County overseeing several programs including home visitation, the Help Me Grow (HMG) system statewide in Utah, the statewide implementation of Strengthening Families Framework: Five Protective Factors and working within the early childhood area to build regional and state systems that support parents. Barbara trained nationally with the Strengthening Families Framework Training Team through the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds. She has been involved with parents in writing a curriculum specifically for parents on embracing the protective factors in their everyday lives. She is now semi-retired and continuing her work with parent engagement and community systems building.

## **Emily Bell McCormick - The Policy Project**

Emily Bell McCormick is the Founder and President of The Policy Project. Emily is also the editor of Utah's NBC affiliate KSL Studio 5 "Smarter" series--informing viewers about issues, government, policies and politics of the time and helping to empower viewers to find their place in it all. Emily is an experienced communication strategist with a history of working in a myriad of industries including media, policy, NGOs, tech and fashion. She received a Bachelor of Art in Communication from Brigham Young University and a Master of Art in Communication from The Ohio State University, where she taught courses.



## **Vonda Jump Norman**



Dr. Vonda Jump Norman is an Associate Professor in Social Work at the Brigham City campus of Utah State University and is the Director of the Better Together/Juntos Es Mejor program at The Family Place, based in Logan, Utah. She has a strong interest in promoting positive parent-child relationships and the optimal development of children impacted by adversity. She is also an executive committee member of the Utah Coalition to Protect Childhood, worked as a consultant with ZERO TO THREE's Military Projects on trauma, grief, and loss issues, and is a ZERO TO THREE Fellow. She is married with one daughter and 2 young grandsons. She loves trail running, skiing, hiking, biking, trying to garden, and spending two days a week caring for her grandsons.



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Speakers

## **Mary Catherine Perry - The Policy Project**

Mary Catherine Perry is the Director of Policy and Government Affairs at The Policy Project. Mary Catherine received a B.A. in English and a Master of Public Administration from Brigham Young University where she developed a love of advocacy and sound policy. Mary Catherine began her career with the Utah Legislature at the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel where she worked analyzing policy, conducting research, and drafting legislation. Mary Catherine has spent 25 years volunteering in public schools and on nonprofit boards dedicated to helping women and children in the community including with The Junior League of Salt Lake City, Tanner Dance at the University of Utah, and she was recently appointed by Governor Cox to serve on the Utah Marriage Commission. She also serves as a board member of Utah Women Run. Mary Catherine and her husband, Jason Perry, reside in Salt Lake City with their four children.



## **Jose Santos**

Dr. Santos obtained his license in Psychology from the National University of El Salvador, where he was a university professor for 24 years. He holds a Master's degree in Human Resources and a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Francisco Gavidia University, Louisville Kentucky University and the Intercontinental University of Mexico. He has worked as a small business consultant, adviser to the government of El Salvador and international organizations. In the USA, he has served as an instructor in healthy relationships at Weber State University, Facilitator on prevention issues with Weber Human Services, and Parent educator at PCAU. Author of 30 books on change and more than 250 videos on provident family mentoring and ontological behavioral coaching.



## **Dr. Dave Schramm**

Known as “Dr. Dave” on campus and across the country, Dave Schramm is an associate professor and family life extension specialist at Utah State University in the department of Human Development and Family Studies. After graduating with his Ph.D. from Auburn University, he worked as a professor at the University of Missouri for nine years.

Shortly after arriving at USU in 2016, he was appointed by Governor Herbert to serve on Utah’s Commission on Marriage and he now serves as a faculty director of the Commission. In 2022, the Utah Marriage Commission launched the Stronger Marriage Connection podcast and Dr. Dave serves as a host. He appears regularly on television and shares tips and videos on social media and YouTube to help individuals, parents, and couples thrive in their life journeys. From British Columbia to Beijing, China, and from St. Louis to San Diego, Dr. Dave has given over 500 presentations, classes, and workshops to a variety of audiences, including the United Nations and a TEDx talk in Florida.

He married his high school sweetheart Jamie and they have four children. (He just might have a slight addiction to peanut M&Ms .) The Schramm fam lives in North Logan, Utah.



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**April 25 & 26, 2023**

## Speakers

### **Tanisha Sheddon, CSW**

Tanisha is a counselor, coach, and speaker specializing in trauma education and empowering survivors. She has advocated for policy change against abuse and supporting children and families at the United Nations, spreads trauma education for survivors of abuse, and works one-on-one to empower adult survivors. She began her career in juvenile substance abuse treatment and community mental health and is currently the middle school counselor for The Waterford School in Sandy, UT. Tanisha is passionate about child abuse prevention and hopes to be a voice in ending familial cycles of abuse.



### **Wendy Smedley**

Wendy is a highly regarded professional known for her ability to connect, collaborate, and build safe spaces. With a keen eye for building connection and a commitment to continuous growth, Wendy has become a sought-after mentor and leader. Wendy brings a unique blend of energy, enthusiasm, and authenticity to her work, excelling in fostering collaborative environments. She has played a pivotal role in improving organizational culture by developing empathy training across departments, as well as managing complex projects and presenting insights to executives, always using human connection and story to bring people together.

### **Laurieann Thorpe**

Laurieann Thorpe is the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Utah and an advocate for children and families. At Prevent Child Abuse Utah, Laurieann oversees all management aspects of the successful nonprofit and administers programs that strengthen families and empower children. Prior to her work at Prevent Child Abuse Utah, Laurieann worked for the Utah State Board of Education in Dispute Resolution for students with disabilities and oversaw educational programs for students in foster care and juvenile justice. Laurieann has a Master's Degree in Public Administration, a Bachelor's in Human Development and Family Studies, three cute kids, a very tall husband, and a crush on good books.



### **Brooke Gledhill Wood**

Brooke Gledhill Wood is the Director of Legal and Programs at The Policy Project. After receiving a B.S. in Therapeutic Recreation and Management from the Marriott School of Business, she pivoted from therapist to lawyer in pursuit of a career in social impact and policy. Brooke graduated cum laude from BYU's J. Reuben Clark Law School in 2022 where she served as the President of BYU Women in Law and was awarded the BYU Law Leadership Fellowship. Prior to joining The Policy Project as a founding board member, Brooke worked with the nonprofits Suyo, And Justice for All, Ohio Legal Help, and Encircle. With an educational background spanning law, business, and psychology, Brooke is dedicated to solving community problems with a focus on long-term solutions that address root issues.

