

Guiding the Future of Youth Protection

9/29/25 - 10/2/25

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Presented by:



Higher Education Protection
NETWORK

2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Contents

Stay Engaged	2
Welcome	4
Thank You to Our Sponsors & Vendors	6
Schedule At-A-Glance In-Person Event	10
Schedule At-A-Glance Virtual Event	11
Opening Session	12
Monday Pre-Conference Sessions	16
Youth Protection 101 Deep Dive	16
Pre-Con 202	17
Tuesday Breakout Sessions	19
Wednesday Breakout Sessions	20
Support Our Work	22

Stay Engaged.No matter where you conference from

This year, we are using **Whova** as our mobile app and virtual platform. This helpful attendee guide offers ways to enhance your experience by building out your profile and networking with attendees and sponsors. With networking lounges, parallel sessions, virtual booths, 1:1 communication, a live feed, and more, this promises not to be your typical Zoom meeting for those attending virtually and serves as the go-to platform for those on-site, also. Look out for an email to join the platform soon!



Welcome!



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

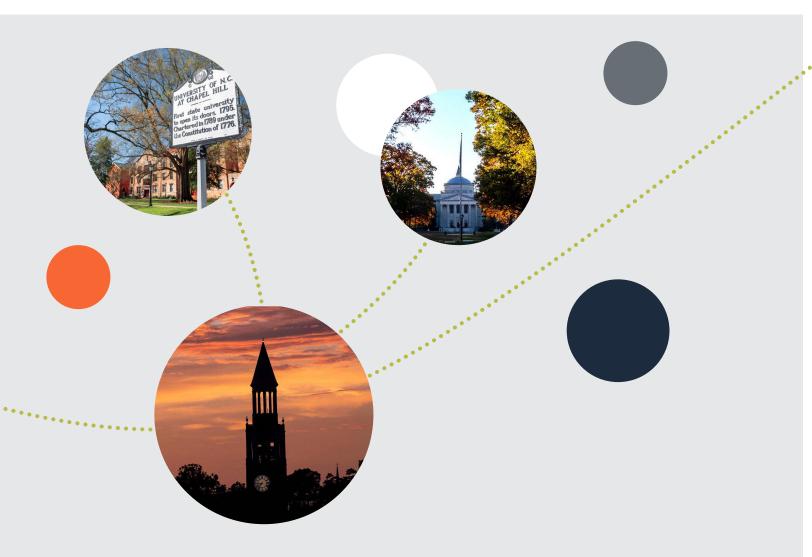
Welcome to HEPNet 2025—Beacons of Safety: Guiding the Future of Youth Protection! It is a great honor to have you with us for this year's conference, whether you are participating in person or virtually. Your presence here is a powerful testament to your commitment to youth protection—especially in a year when tightened budgets and shifting priorities have made professional development choices more difficult than ever. We're truly grateful that you've chosen to make HEPNet a priority.

This year's theme reminds us that each of us serves as a beacon—illuminating the path forward for our institutions and the young people we serve. Through

policy, programming, partnerships, and persistence, we are collectively shaping the future of youth protection. This conference is an opportunity to reflect, reconnect, and refocus on the essential work we do.

The 2025 program offers a wide array of sessions on emerging issues, evolving practices, and innovative solutions. Whether you're seeking inspiration, practical strategies, or new collaborations, I trust you will find meaningful takeaways to apply in your campus communities.

I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our incredible conference planning team— Brian Stone, Joanne Baptista, Carley



Gardiner, Kim Nawyn, Lisa Mortensen, and Stacey Forsyth—for curating such a thoughtful and engaging program. I'm also deeply grateful to our exceptional Executive Director, Lindsay Bond and Director of Membership and Engagement, Kirsten Bramley; our conference planner, Denise Barker; and the dedicated HEPNet staff, committee members, and Board of Directors for their unwavering efforts behind the scenes. Your leadership and vision continue to move our network and our field forward.

We are especially thankful to **The University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill** for serving as our host this year. Their

hospitality and support have made this convening possible and have helped us create a welcoming space for learning, collaboration, and connection.

Whether this is your first HEPNet conference or your ninth, I hope you find in this gathering not only knowledge, but also encouragement, camaraderie, and a renewed sense of purpose. Together, we are lighting the way toward a safer and stronger future for youth across all our institutions.

With sincere gratitude,

LeeKeshia Williams

Chair, HEPNet Board of Directors

Thank You!

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Schedule At-A-Glance

See Whova for complete details. All times are Eastern.

In-Person Event

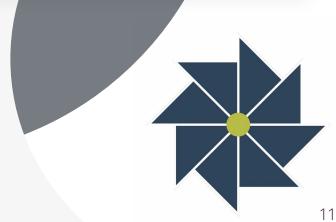
Monday 9/29	Tuesday 9/30	Wednesday 10/1	Thursday 10/2
1:00-4:30 PM Pre-Conference 101	8:30-9:30 AM Opening Keynote: Deb Getz	7:30-8:30 AM Bagels with the Board	8:30-9:45 AM ALL GROUP Session: Expert HEPNet Member Panel
1:00-4:30 PM Pre-Conference 202	9:30-10:00 AM Networking Break & Refreshments	8:30-10:00 AM ALL GROUP Session: Roundtable - Situation Room Case Study Analysis	9:45-10:00 AM BREAK
4:30-5:00 PM Newcomers Orientation Sponsored by Ideal Logic	10:00-11:00 AM Educational Breakout: Session 1	10:00-10:15 AM BREAK	10:00-11:15 AM HEPlan
5:00-6:30 PM Welcome Event	11:15-12:30 PM LUNCH (Hosted)	10:15-11:30 PM Educational Breakout: Session 4	11:15-11:30 AM CLOSING
	12:45-1:45 PM ALL GROUP Session: Legal Updates	11:30-1:00 PM LUNCH (On Your Own)	
	1:45-2:00 PM SPONSOR BREAK	1:00-2:15 PM Educational Breakout: Session 5	
	2:00-3:00 PM Educational Breakout: Session 2	2:15-2:30 PM BREAK	
	3:00-3:30 PM SPONSOR BREAK	2:30-3:30 PM ALL GROUP Session: Presented by Cozen O'Connor	
	3:30-4:30 PM Educational Breakout: Session 3	3:30-3:45 PM BREAK	
	4:45-5:45 PM Happy Hour Sponsored by CampDoc	3:45-5:00 PM Educational Breakout: Session 6	
		6:00-9:00 PM Hosted Dinner Pods (See WHOVA for Details)	

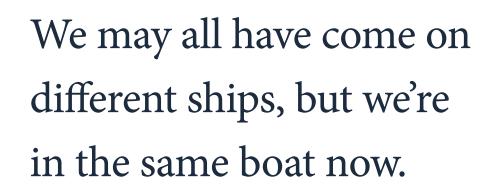
Schedule At-A-Glance

See Whova for complete details. All times are Eastern.

Virtual Event

Tuesday 9/30	Wednesday 10/1	
8:30-9:30 AM Opening Session: Deb Getz	10:15-11:30 AM Educational Breakout: Session 4	
10:00-11:00 AM Educational Breakout: Session 1	1:00-2:15 PM Educational Breakout: Session 5	
11:15-11:45 PM Virtual Speed Networking in WHOVA	2:30-3:30 PM ALL GROUP Session: Presented by Cozen O'Connor	
12:45-1:45 PM ALL GROUP Session: Legal Updates	3:45-5:00 PM Educational Breakout: Session 6	
2:00-3:00 PM Educational Breakout: Session 2	5:00-5:30 PM Virtual Wrap Up Session (In WHOVA)	
3:30-4:30 PM Educational Breakout: Session 3		





Martin Luther King Jr

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OPENING SESSION Dr. Deb Getz, Re. D., CYC-P

Dr. Getz is committed to supporting the professionalization of youth work in the U.S. Throughout her 30+ years as a faculty member in the Indiana University School of Public Health-Bloomington, she led the development of the major

and minor in Youth Development and works to support the design, delivery, and evaluation of a wide variety of topics in youth development, trauma-informed perspectives, supporting high-quality child and youth care, and community engagement. She is the President of the Child and Youth Care Certification Board where she focuses on building partnerships and identifying ways to build collaboration among and between professional disciplines that serve youth and families.

Deb is particularly passionate about educating youth workers, and the public about exploitation and human trafficking identification and prevention. She was a Fellow for the 2023 Human Trafficking Leadership Academy through the US Office of Trafficking in Persons; is an active member of the Indiana Prevention Education Coalition; and actively engages with individuals 13 and older to build awareness of exploitation and assist them in creating action plans for when exploitation occurs.



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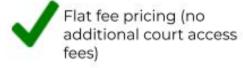




In-depth background checks and comprehensive safety services

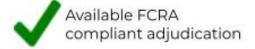
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Monday Pre-Conference Sessions

Youth Protection 101 Deep Dive

1:00-4:30 PM

Protect Minors on Campus and Related Properties:

PART 1 Keep Kids Safe & Reduce Liability

Lindsay Meyer Bond (The Higher Education Protection Network)

PART 2 Protection of Minors in Higher Education Programs from Industry Experts:

Registration | Paul Bollman (Ideal-Logic)

Background Checks | Teresa Papanicolaou (alNSIGHT)

Training | James Bourgeois (Praesidium)

Compliance & Monitoring | LeeKeshia Williams (The University of Texas at Austin) & Rick Curtis (IncidentAnalytix)

PART 3 Debrief, Q&A, and Panel Discussion

Panelists:

Dawn Riddle (Vanderbilt), Greg Linke (Clemson), along with all other presenters



Monday Pre-Conference Sessions

Pre-Con 202

1:00-4:30 PM

Introduction & Ice Breaker

Moderators: Brandy Cunningham (Iowa State University) and Cara Mulvaney (Rochester Institute of Technology)

PART 1 Beyond Compliance:

Youth Program Quality Improvement

Carri Burgjohann (YMCA - USA), Charles Johnson (University of Virginia), Ari Pak, and Patrick Freeland (Forum for Youth Investment)

PART 2 Recognition and Remediation:

Celebrating Success & Supporting Growth

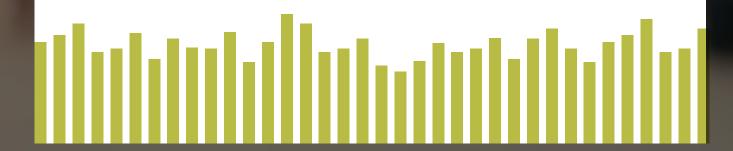
Cyn Olvera (Texas A&M University)

PART 3 Upskilling Staff:

Developing Role-Focused Training

Lisa Mortenson (Brigham Young University)

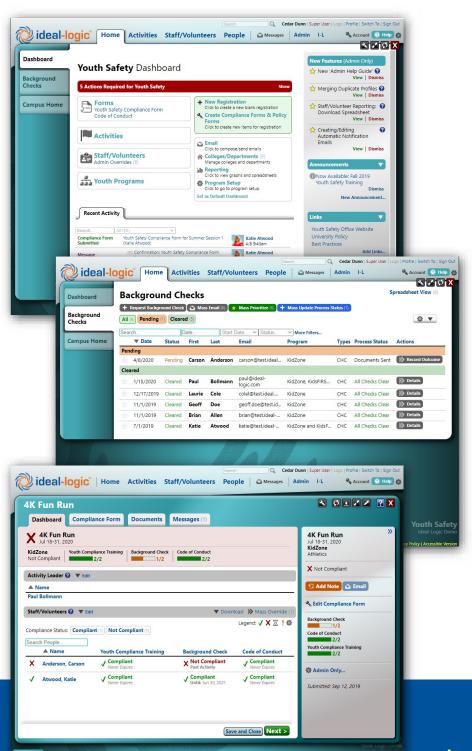
Final Discussion & Wrap-Up



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Tuesday Breakout Sessions

10:00-11:00 AM

EDUCATIONAL BREAKOUT SESSION 1

Keynote breakout | Secondary Trauma:

Action Planning in Your Teams

Deb Getz (Child & Youth Care Certification Board)

Understanding and Managing Risk:

Identifying High-Risk Camper Behaviors and Ensuring Staff Safety

Starr Sanders (UNC - Chapel Hill) and James Bourgeois (Praesidium)

Speed Round - New for this year

Speed Round Sessions will feature a series of short, high-impact presentations (12 minutes each) on a variety of topics. These fast-paced sessions provide an opportunity to share key insights, best practices, and innovative ideas in a concise format. Presenters will deliver focused discussions, allowing attendees to gain valuable knowledge from multiple speakers in a single session.

2:00-3:00 PM

EDUCATIONAL BREAKOUT SESSION 2

From Crisis to Clarity:

Understanding the Challenges of Today's Generation & Strategies for Supporting the Children We Serve Sandy Weaver (Penn State University)

It Takes a Village, Not a Kingdom:

Building Your Youth Protection Community

Eric Cardella (Oregon State University), Emily Nicholson (Oregon State University), Karen Swanger (OSU KidSpirit)

Affinity Group

3:30-4:30 PM

EDUCATIONAL BREAKOUT SESSION 3

Bridging Compliance and Culture:

Building Buy-In for Behavior Expectations

Sterling Leija (Innovative Camp Company) and Kendra Perkins (Innovative Camp Company)

Protecting Students, Protecting Budgets:

Mitigating Rising Insurance Costs for SAM Coverage in Higher Education

Daniel Thomas (Lockton Insurance), Michelle Smith (URMIA), Brandy Cunningham (Iowa State University)

Speed Round

Wednesday Breakout Sessions

10:15-11:30 AM

EDUCATIONAL BREAKOUT SESSION 4

Sexting, Sextortion, and Generative Artificial Intelligence:

Updating Internet Safety Messages to Counter the Latest Threats

Belinda Swan (National Center for Missing & Exploited Children)

Supporting the Youth Protection Officer/Risk Manager Relationship

Melanie Bennett (United Educators Insurance), Joanne Baptista (Rice University), Brandy Cunningham (Iowa State University), Dawn Riddle (Vanderbilt University)

1:00-2:15 PM

EDUCATIONAL BREAKOUT SESSION 5

Working Together to Elevate Child Safety with Practical Resources

Belinda Swan (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children)

Enhancing Youth Protection:

Managing and Supporting High-Risk Groups

Joanne Baptista (Rice University), Marissa Starr (Vanderbilt University), Misha Lind (Oregon State University)

3:45-5:00 PM

EDUCATIONAL BREAKOUT SESSION 6

Cozen O'Connor Breakout Session

Building Buy-In for Youth Protection

Gina Maisto Smith (Cozen O'Connor) and Leslie Gomez (Cozen O'Connor)

Promoting Next Generation Staff Practices

Charles Johnson (University of Virginia), Ari Park (Forum For Youth Investment), Patrick Freeland (The Weikert Center/Forum For Youth Investment)



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Courses cover topics including sextortion and best practices on how to address disclosures and reporting:

connect.missingkids.org/learn



Connect

Upcoming Events & Membership Benefits

Following the annual conference, HEPNet will continue offering exclusive programming designed to support members in addressing emerging challenges in higher education youth protection. These programs include expert-led webinars, community chats, and discounted, practical workshops covering implementation, risk mitigation strategies, peer collaboration opportunities, and much more. Review upcoming programs on the <u>member portal</u>.

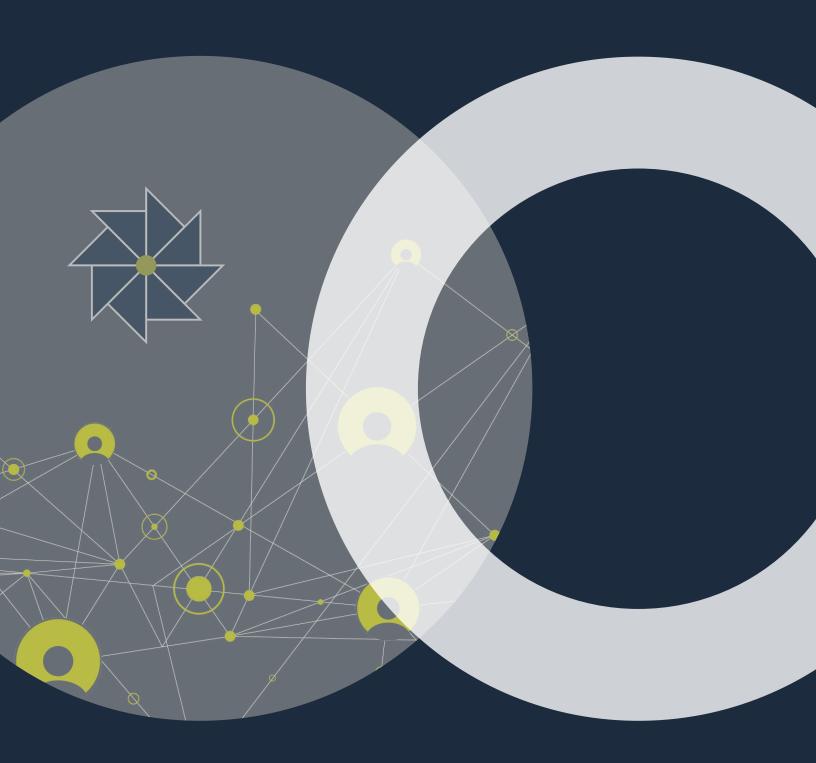
Not a Member Yet? Non-members are invited to join HEPNet to gain access to these valuable upcoming programs and become part of a growing network of higher education professionals committed to safety, accountability, and best practices. <u>Sign Up Now!</u>

Support Our Work

The Higher Education Protection Network is a charitable not-for-profit organization under sec. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We greatly appreciate your tax-deductible donations. <u>Check out our website</u> to learn more about supporting HEPNet with a Donation, Thrivent Choice program, or Year-Round Sponsorship.







Higher Education Protection NETWORK