

Higher Education Protection
NETWORK 

Annual Report 2025

CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	5
LETTER FROM THE CHAIR	6
OUR MISSION & PURPOSE	8
STAFF, BOARD, & COMMITTEE MEMBERS	11
SPONSORS, VENDORS & DONORS	14
STATS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS	16
MEMBER BENEFITS	22
FINANCIALS	23
WAYS TO SUPPORT	24



“

I could not do my job without the resources and support of the great people at HEPNet.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



“

I love the Community. And the opportunities to learn from others' experiences. I love that HEPNet gives me a chance to contribute to something that is bigger than just my job. We impact over 6 million youth through our collective work!

Dear HEPNet Community and Supporters,

This past year has underscored both the responsibility and the opportunity we share in protecting children and youth who engage with higher education. Colleges and universities now interact with millions of minors each year, and HEPNet exists to ensure those interactions are grounded in strong practices, shared learning, and a deep commitment to well-being.

In 2025, our network continued to grow in both size and impact. HEPNet now represents more than 300 professionals across over 200 institutions and organizations, collectively supporting more than an estimated six million youth annually. Through expanded programming, a successful annual conference, community chats, webinars, and our Boot Camp program, members strengthened their skills, connections, and confidence in navigating this critical work.

None of this would be possible without the dedication of our members, the leadership of our Board and committees, the generosity of our sponsors and donors, and the hard work of our staff. Together, we are building a collaborative, ethical, and forward-looking community that elevates youth protection across higher education.

As we look ahead, HEPNet remains focused on deepening member engagement, expanding access to practical resources, and continuing to serve as a trusted national voice for youth protection. Thank you for your commitment to this mission and for the vital work you do every day.

Yours in service,

Lindsay Meyer Bond

Lindsay Meyer Bond | Executive Director
Higher Education Protection Network (HEPNet)



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear HEPNet Community,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am proud to share this year's report and to reflect on the collective progress of the Higher Education Protection Network. HEPNet continues to play a vital role in strengthening how colleges, universities, and partner organizations protect children and youth in their care.

This year demonstrated the power of an engaged and collaborative network. Membership growth, strong participation in programs, and an annual conference with record numbers all reflect the trust our members place in HEPNet as a source of expertise, connection, and leadership. The Board remains committed to ensuring that the organization is well-governed, financially responsible, and strategically positioned to meet the evolving needs of the field.

We are deeply grateful to our members, volunteers, staff, sponsors, and donors whose dedication makes this work possible. Your willingness to share knowledge, ask hard questions, and invest time and resources strengthens not only HEPNet, but the broader ecosystem of youth protection in higher education.

As we look ahead, the Board is focused on sustaining HEPNet's growth while remaining grounded in our mission and values. We are honored to support this important work and excited about what lies ahead for our community.

With gratitude,

LeeKeshia Williams

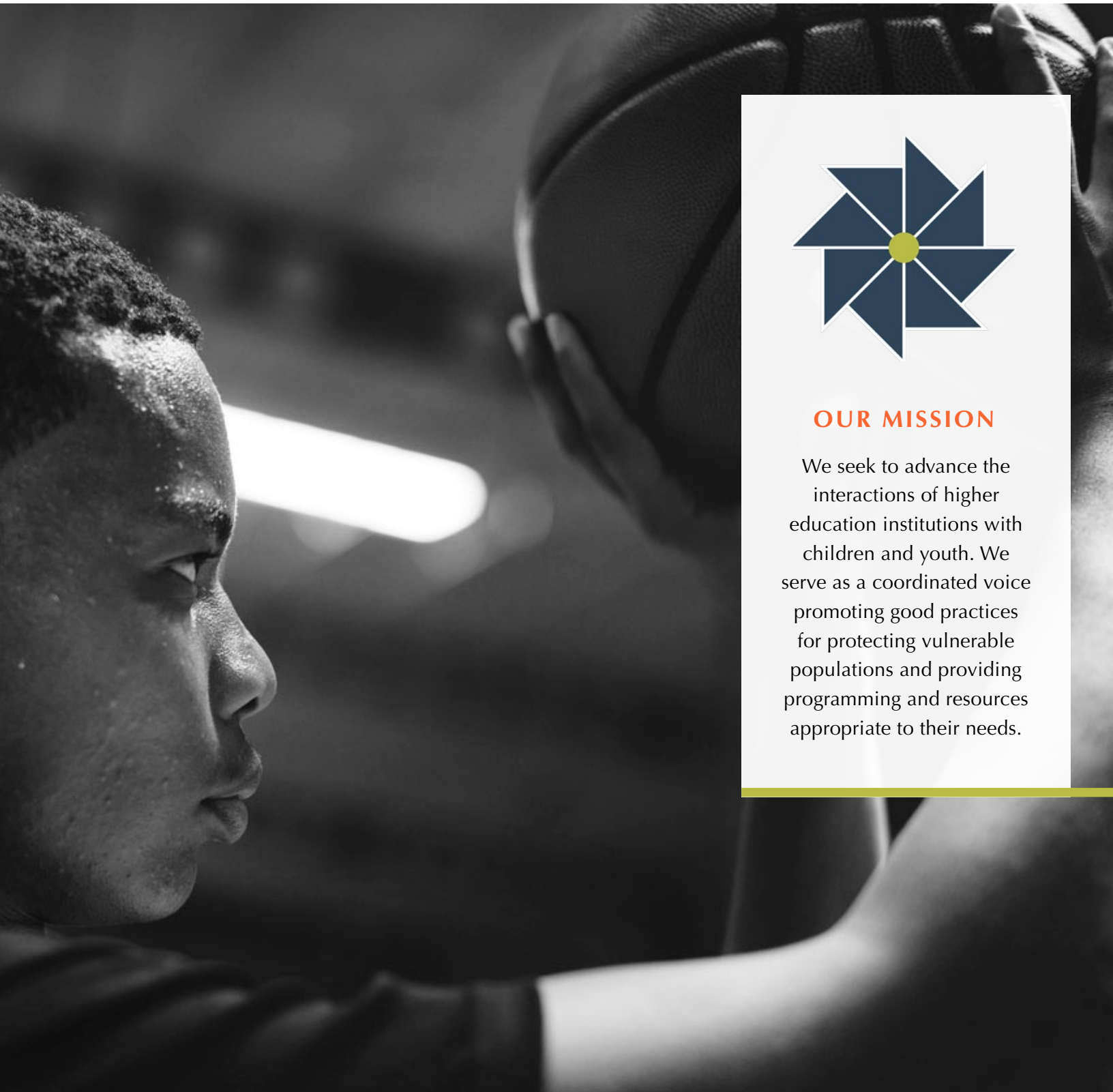
2025 Board Chair





“

I love the community chats! I always learn something new, and I leave feeling like I'm not alone in this work.



OUR MISSION

We seek to advance the interactions of higher education institutions with children and youth. We serve as a coordinated voice promoting good practices for protecting vulnerable populations and providing programming and resources appropriate to their needs.



OUR VISION

With guidance and support of the Higher Education Protection Network, colleges and universities advance the well-being of children and youth with whom they interact.



OUR VALUES

Accountable. We are accountable to our mission and to the public good.
Collaborative. We work together productively and respectfully.
Ethical. We act with integrity and fairness in all our dealings.
Expert. We develop and promote reliable knowledge.
Inclusive. We champion a welcoming and broadly diverse community.
Innovative. We develop and embrace new solutions.
Professional. We promote organizational efficacy.
Responsive. We address requests and obligations in a helpful, timely manner.

OUR PURPOSE

Many colleges and universities interact with more minors than they do college students. We seek to help safeguard the well-being of minors by supporting institutions through networking and relationship-building, resources on good practices in interacting with minors, and ongoing programming and learning.

We offer both public and member benefits. Our work aids parents and youth who participate in programs and activities related to higher education. We offer numerous member benefits, such as a discussion board, an annual conference, regular programming, and online resources. See all the ways we support our mission [here](#).

***The Higher Education
Protection Network
(HEPNet)***

*is an international
association linking together
those that seek to advance
the interactions of higher
education institutions with
children and youth. We
serve as a coordinated voice
promoting good practices
for protecting vulnerable
populations and providing
programming and resources
appropriate to their needs.*



STAFF BOARD & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

STAFF

Lindsay Meyer Bond, Executive Director

Kirsten Bramley, Director of Membership & Engagement

Tammi Laycox, Membership Specialist

BOARD

Joanne Baptista (Rice University)

Melanie Bennett (United Educators)

James Bourgeois (Praesidium)

Carri Burgjohann (YMCA-USA), Vice Chair

David Chupak (Michigan State University)

Stacy Fair (North Carolina State University)

Nate Friedman (University of Utah)

Charles Johnson (University of Virginia), Secretary/Historian

Cara Mulvaney (Rochester Institute of Technology)

Dawn Riddle (Vanderbilt University)

Brian Stone (University of Georgia), Treasurer

Ryan Van Dusen (Kansas State University)

LeeKeshia Williams (University of Texas at Austin), Chair

ADVISORS

Gina Maisto Smith (Cozen O'Connor)

Ann Franke (Wise Results LLC)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

COLLABORATIONS (*James Bourgeois | Board Liaison*)

Ryan Brownfield (The Ohio State University), Chair

Amanda Franklin (Wheaton College)

Denne Lawton (University of Michigan)

Kim Nawyn (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Wendy Pfrenger (University of Mississippi)

Sarah Pharr (Duke University)

Debbie Taylor (University of Texas at El Paso)

FINANCE (*Brian Stone | Board Liaison*)

Greg Linke (Clemson University)

CONFERENCE PROGRAMMING (*Brian Stone | Board Liaison*)

Joanne Baptista (Rice University), Chair

Stacey Forsyth (University of Colorado Boulder)

Carley Gardiner (University of Texas at Austin)

Lisa Mortensen (Brigham Young University)

Kim Nawyn (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

MEMBERSHIP (*Charles Johnson | Board Liaison*)

Heather Boylan (University of Wisconsin, Parkside), Co-Chair

Eric Cardella (Oregon State University)

Ashleigh Dinkins (The University of Texas at Tyler)

Alicia Lage (Illinois State University)

Therese Mashak (University of Denver)

Meghan Rapp (University of Virginia), Co-chair

Starr Sanders (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

Sandra Warner (Johnson County Community College)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

PROGRAMS (*Cara Mulvaney, Carri Burgjohann | Board Liaisons*)

Sammy Loeks-Davis (University of Minnesota)

Julie Guild (University of Connecticut), Co-chair, partial year

Dimitrios Lemonas (Yale University)

Alice Moore (University of Delaware), Co-chair

Alyson Murphy (Cornell University)

Melissa Porter-Krum (Pennsylvania State University)

Ashley Rose (University of Wisconsin - Madison)

RESOURCES (*Ryan VanDusen | Board Liaison*)

Justin Anderson (University of Virginia)

Madeleine Frankford (University of Alabama in Huntsville)

Lora Galabi (University of Arizona), Chair

Melissa Graham (University of Arkansas - Fayetteville)

Anne Koester (Georgetown University)

Carla Markx (University of Central Florida)

FUNDRAISING (*Melanie Bennett | Board Liaison*)

Brandy Cunningham (Iowa State University), effective 6/12/2025

Anna Domings (Five Colleges Inc.)

Ann Franke (Wise Results LLC), Chair

Buz Grover (George Mason University)

Nadia Guevara (University of North Texas)

Gerald Parham (University of California, Irving)

“

I love the ALL the expertise among members, the willingness to help, the access to so many resources, how anyone can be involved and are encouraged to be involved.

SPONSORS & VENDORS

Thank you
FOR YOUR SUPPORT

DONORS

Eric Cardella

John M. Gothel (Thrivent Choice)

Cara Mulvaney

Ann Franke

Mellisa G. Krume (Thrivent Choice)

LeeKeshia Williams

FOUNDATION SUPPORTER



YEAR-ROUND SPONSORS

PRAESIDIUM



CONFERENCE SPONSORS



PRAESIDIUM



SystemsAnalytix

AI & Agent Powered
Incident Case Management
& Program Compliance
Systems

Enterprise Systems
on the Microsoft Power Platform

SystemsAnalytix.com

HEPNET REPRESENTS

HEPNet represents **324** individuals at **226** unique institutions of higher education and youth-serving organizations with members ranging from small schools and community colleges to the largest US institutions.

Collectively, our members serve over an estimated **6 million** youth annually.

126

Higher-Ed
Members

181

Institutional
Members

14

Affiliate
Members

1

Student
Member

1

Lifetime
Member

1

Retiree
Member

PROGRAMS OFFERED



6 Live Webinars
1 Recorded Webinar



12 Community
Chats Offered



1 Custom
Program Offered



Boot Camp program served **30** individuals from
15 institutions



Over **223** people registered for the webinar
"Understanding Camper-to-Camper Interactions and
Problematic Sexual Behavior" webinar, presented by
Katie Johnson, Chalmers Insurance Group, open to
the general public



I love the amazing resources. Everyone has helped orient me in the greatest ways. I was so unsure where to start and how to start, and the boot camp provided me with great levels of reassurance and support to ask questions. I feel so fortunate to be a part of this group.

For nearly a decade of service to HEPNet and more than 20 years in higher education and public safety, Dawn Riddle has helped shape the future of youth protection with clarity, integrity, and purpose. As Director in Risk Management and University Compliance at Vanderbilt University, Dawn oversees Protection of Minors and collaborates across campus to ensure youth protection is not simply a compliance obligation, but a shared commitment rooted in accountability and care. She has long championed the belief that youth protection is more than a set of procedures—it is a culture. She believes the strongest protection frameworks grow from campuses that embrace both individual and collective responsibility in serving children and youth.

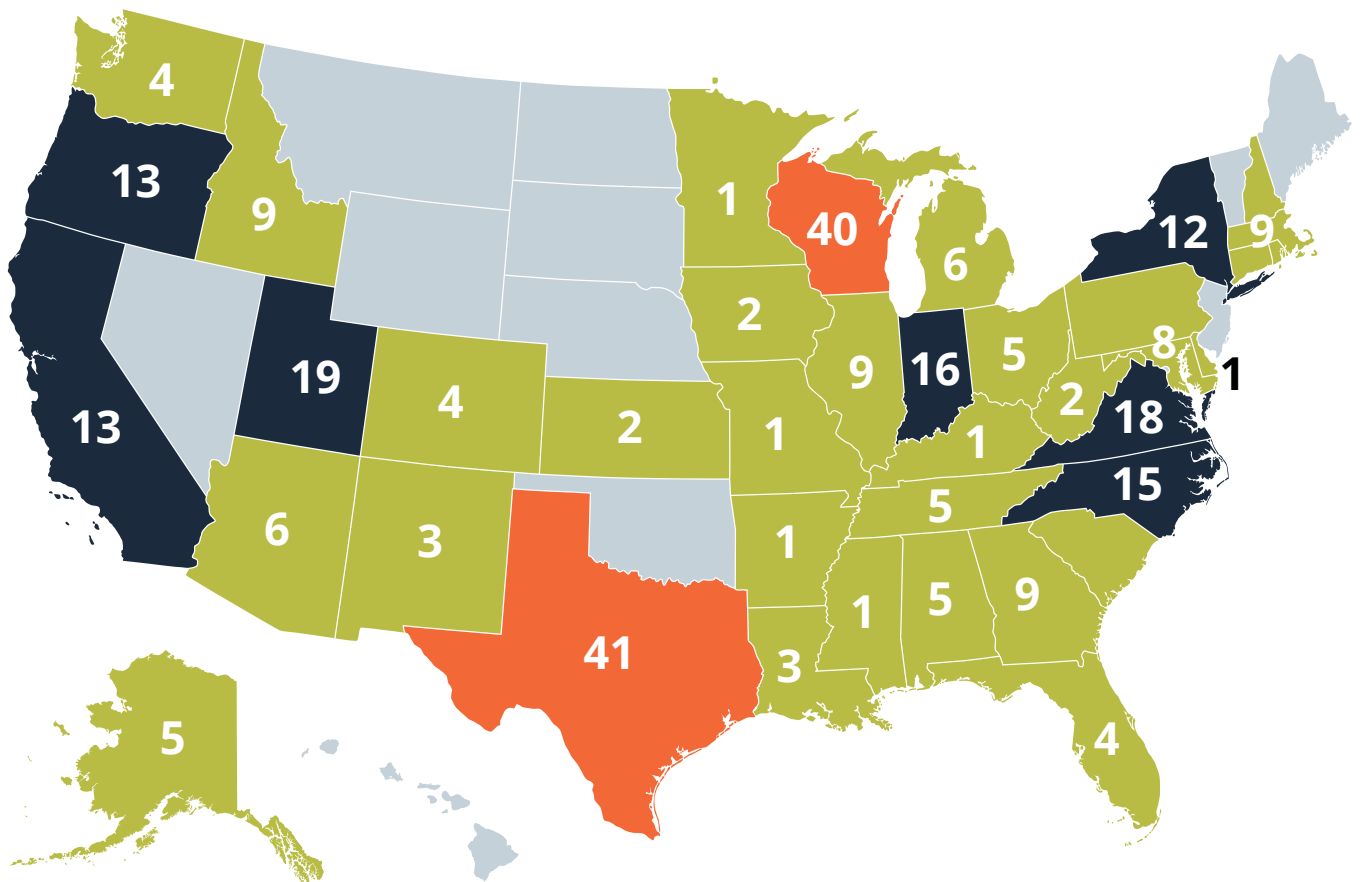
During her time on the HEPNet Board, Dawn was a steady, thoughtful leader who strengthened our organization's professionalism and reach. As Board Liaison to the Resource Committee, she helped advance practical tools and strategic guidance that institutions rely on every day. Colleagues describe her as incisive, diplomatic, and deeply engaged—someone who could view complex issues from every angle while encouraging others to grow.

Beyond governance, Dawn recruited and mentored new leaders, cultivating the next generation of youth protection professionals. Her impact on HEPNet and on the broader field will be lasting. We are deeply grateful for her leadership and unwavering commitment to protecting children and youth.



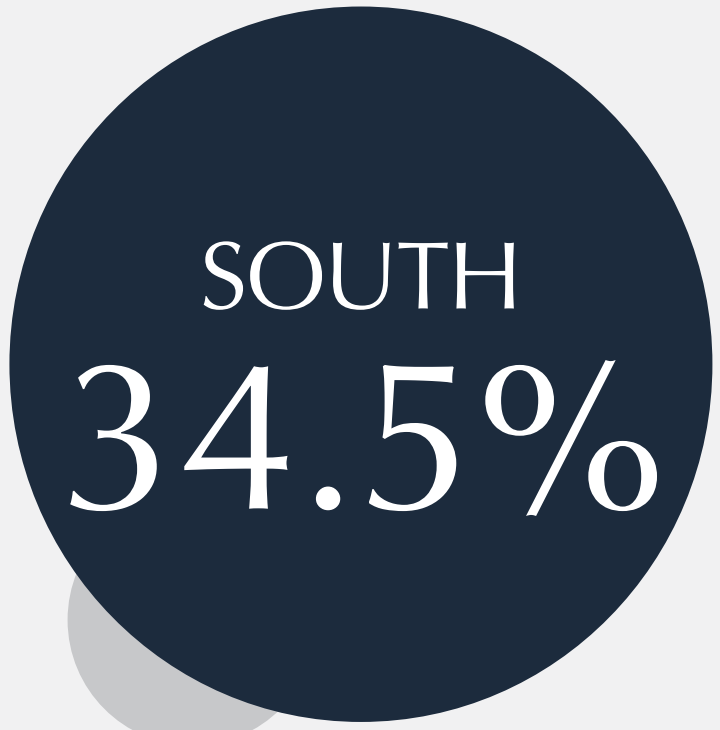
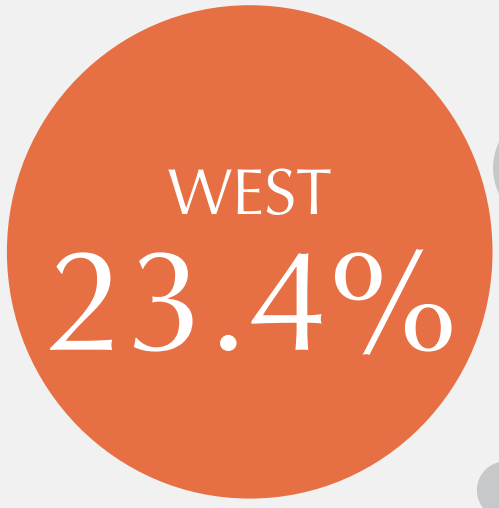
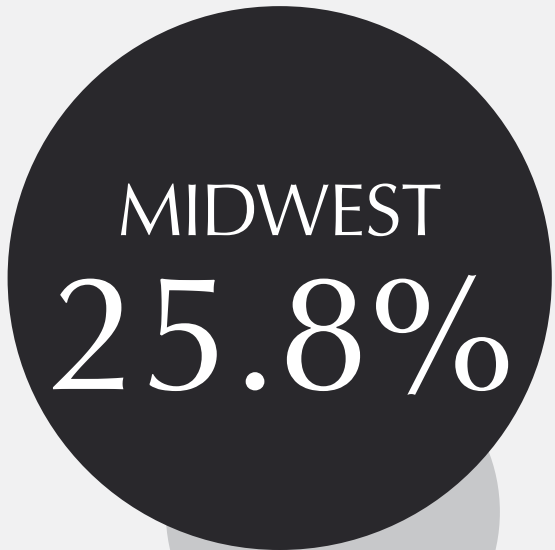
Dawn Riddle | Vanderbilt University
Director of Risk Management & University Compliance

MEMBER LOCATIONS



324 Members
across 39 States

Numbers as of 2/10/2026



CONFERENCE RECAP

92% of survey respondents said that they plan on attending the 2026 HEPNet Conference.



“

This was one of the most well-organized events I've attended, and I wanted to reach out and thank you for all the effort that went into making it happen. The sessions were relevant, engaging, and the event just had such a welcoming atmosphere. Thank you again for all your work in creating such a successful event.

Travella Free

4-H Youth Development Specialist | NC A&T State Cooperative Extension



SESSION POPULARITY

BASED ON LIKES AND PERSONAL AGENDA ADDS:

1. From Crisis to Clarity: Understanding the Challenges of Today's Generation and Strategies for Supporting the Children We Serve
2. Welcome and Keynote: Reflecting on your Role, Acting to build toward HEPNET Competence Excellence
3. All Group Session: Legal Updates
4. Supporting the Youth Protection Officer/Risk Manager Relationship
5. Bridging Compliance and Culture: Building Buy-In for Behavior Expectations

MOST POPULAR STREAMS

1. Supporting the Youth Protection Officer/Risk Manager Relationship
2. All Group Session: Legal Updates
3. From Crisis to Clarity: Understanding the Challenges of Today's Generation and Strategies for Supporting the Children We Serve

MEMBER BENEFITS



PROGRAMMING

Regularly Scheduled
Webinars
Community Chats
Annual Conference
Member Connections
Boot Camp
Custom Programs

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Opportunities with Committees & Board of
Directors
Affinity and Affiliated Groups
Job Board
Member Blog



[VIEW MEMBER BENEFITS ONLINE](#)

SERVICES

HEPNet HUB Including Discussion
Board
Benchmarking Surveys & Data
Mentor Program

RESOURCES

Professional Competencies
Training Modules
Registration Systems
Research
Presentations
Member Directory
Newsletters

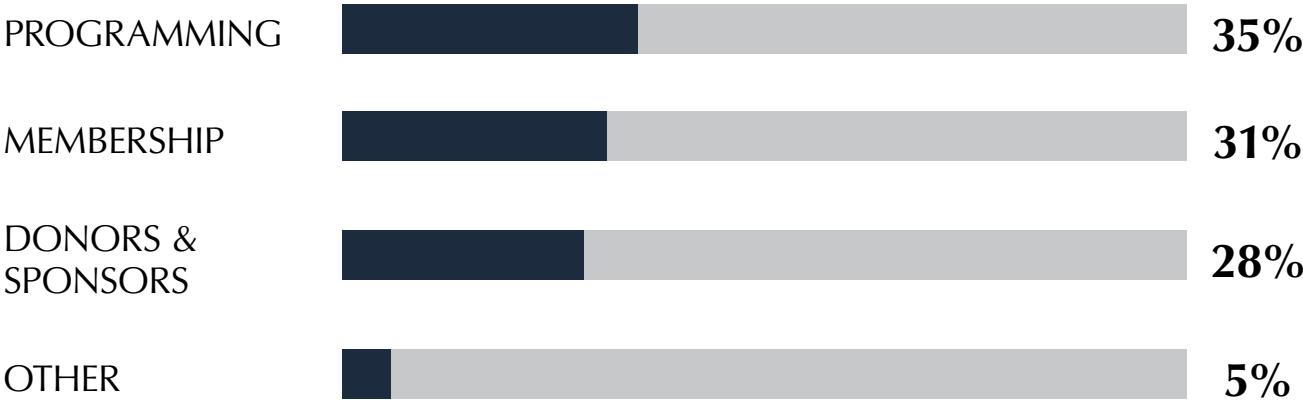


*I found HepNet's Professional
Competencies useful in this
process—good stuff! Thank you
for those as well!*

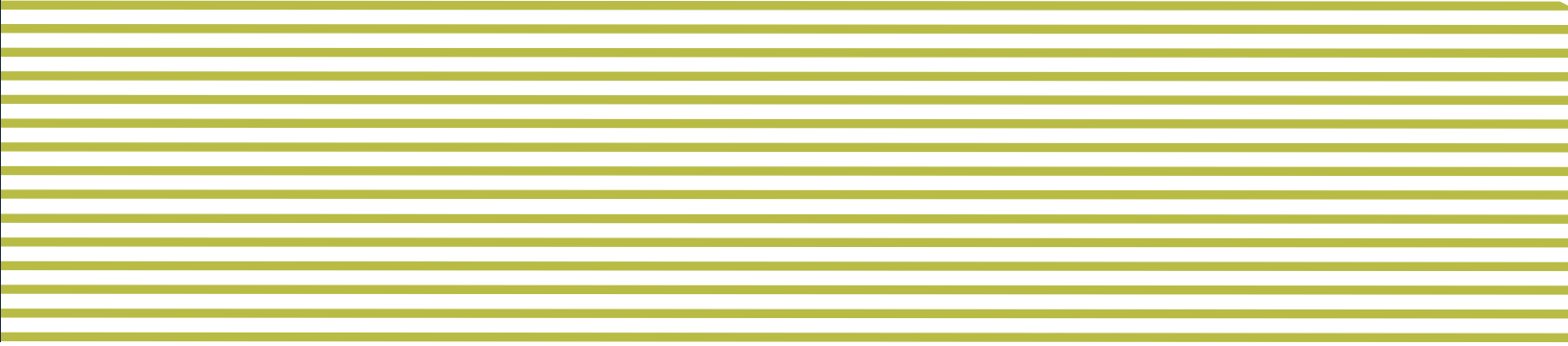
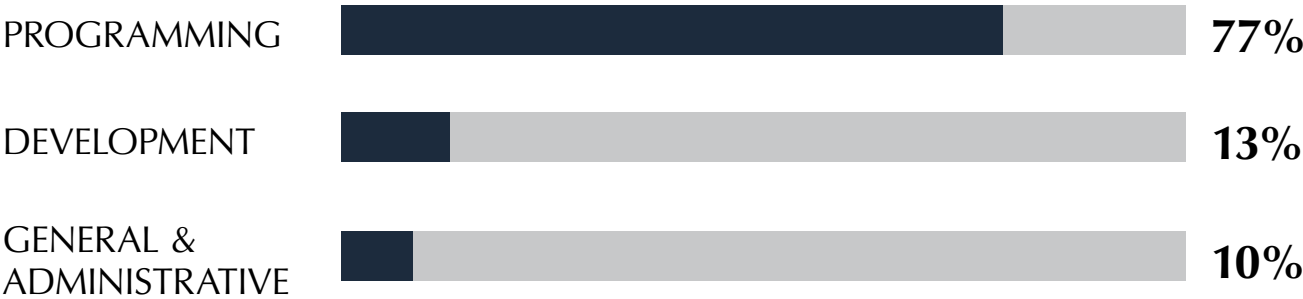
Nikki Roe Cropp | Campfire

FINANCIALS

REVENUE



EXPENSES



WAYS TO SUPPORT



MEMBERSHIP

While most HEPNet [members](#) are within higher education, we have many members from outside of higher education that support our mission and can benefit from membership. Affiliate members also receive discounted member pricing on our annual conference.

Want to add members from your institution?

Group rates available.

[Get involved in committee work as a member!](#)



DONATIONS

HEPNet is a charitable not-for-profit organization under sec. 501©(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We greatly appreciate your [donations](#), which are tax-deductible. Truly, no donation is too small to contribute to HEPNet's mission. You can contribute by credit card, check, or ACH bank transfer, and know that your money is going to a great cause.



SPONSORSHIP

HEPNet is the nation's only organization linking together professionals dedicated to protecting youth and other vulnerable populations in higher education. Members work across various departments in colleges and universities. Our members' institutions serve more than 6.5 million youth annually. We have a unique target audience.

Members often seek vendors that offer training solutions, registration systems, background checks, insurance coverages, and outsourcing services.

[We offer both year-round and conference sponsorship opportunities.](#)



Higher Education Protection
NETWORK 

www.higheredprotection.org