Child & Adolescent Track
(All times in Eastern time)

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

3:00 – 4:30 PM Breakout Session Number 1
Child & Adolescent Track
Behind the Mask: Understanding and Treating Depression in Adolescent Males
Presented by David Flack, LMHC, SUDP
Studies show that depressed adolescents of all genders are at high risk for a variety of negative outcomes, such as suicide, problematic substance use, violence, and school failure. Studies also show that depression is soaring among adolescent males, who often go undiagnosed and untreated, frequently because they do not exhibit standard diagnostic criteria. Instead, after a lifetime being told boys don’t cry, they present as angry, oppositional, self-destructive, or simply numb. They hide behind these masks, trying to push away the world and hoping nobody notices they are actually sad, lonely, vulnerable boys. In this highly interactive presentation, attendees will develop the knowledge and skills to look behind those masks, in order to better understand and address the roots of this covert depression, the impact of the Guy Code, and the Stuckness that results when biological predispositions and environmental stressors collide. Attendees will also consider a variety of field-tested strategies to help adolescent males get unstuck, start moving forward, and leave their masks behind.

5:00 – 7:00 PM Breakout Session Number 2
Child & Adolescent Track | Trauma Track
13 Reason Why: A Mental Health Perspective on the Glamorization of Suicide
Presented by Sergio Washington, MS and Don Tranhan, PhD, LPC, ACS, NCC and Felicia Pressley, PhD, LPC-S
13 Reasons Why is an international bestseller and Netflix sensation. The series revolves around 17-year-old Hannah Baker, who takes her own life and leaves behind audio recordings for 13 people who she says in some way were part of why she killed herself. Each tape recounts painful events in which one or more of the 13 individuals played a role. Information about the epidemiology of such behavior is important for policy-making and prevention. Suicide is a complex phenomenon, thus, the prevention of it needs to be tailored accordingly. Prevention can occur on both the individual and societal level, with the most effective strategies being a combination of efforts. The session will examine the glorification depicted in the art, draw together key evidence, resources and group discussions as an opportunity to provide feedback on the resources communities need to support their youth.
Thursday, June 25, 2020

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Breakout Session Number 1
Child & Adolescent Track | Trauma Track
Multisensory Trauma-Focused Interventions for Elementary School Children with Developmental Disabilities

*Presented by Vanessa B. Teixeira, Ed.D*
Mental health counselors often lack the necessary knowledge and evidence-based training when working with children who have experienced multiple levels of childhood trauma. Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT) is an evidence-based counseling model widely utilized by mental health counselors when working with children, adolescents and families who have experienced trauma (Cary & McMillen, 2012). This short-term, therapeutic treatment focuses on building healthy coping skills, constructing a trauma narrative, and incorporating substantial parental involvement in the counseling process. Current research suggests that TF-CBT techniques significantly improve trauma symptoms experienced by children and adolescents after being exposed to trauma or significant life stressors (Jensen, Holt, & Ormhaug, 2017). Many mental health counselors are not specifically trained to work with trauma and many do not feel comfortable working with young children presenting with special needs or developmental disabilities such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Down Syndrome, Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and Learning Disabilities (Cohen, Mannarino & Deblinger, 2012). This presentation focuses on the importance, use and application of multisensory TF-CBT clinical interventions mental health counselors can use with elementary school children who may present with mild to moderate developmental disabilities. Multisensory counseling interventions can include auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic activities that keep children interested and focused throughout the counseling session (Kahveci, 2016). These types of activities, which can be used in both the school and home environment, are essential to use with children who may struggle with attention, focus, learning, emotional dysregulation, communication difficulties, and various levels of cognitive deficits. An important part of TF-CBT includes involving parents and teachers who may facilitate the therapy process and further help children with any trauma-related symptoms they may be experiencing at home and school. This presentation will also highlight effective ways in which mental health counselors can work collaboratively with parents and teachers to reduce trauma symptoms in children with developmental delays and quickly improve mental health functioning and pro-social behaviors.

5:00 – 6:30 PM Breakout Session Number 3
Diversity Track | Child & Adolescent Track
Parenting the Rainbow: Working with Parents of Queer and Trans Children

*Presented by Laurie Bonjo, PhD, PSC, NCC and Misty Ginicola, Ph.D, LPC*
Research has shown that queer and trans youth who come from affirming families have
better outcomes, including higher self-esteem, academic success and increased career planfulness. Furthermore, young people with supportive families demonstrate fewer at-risk behaviors. This includes reduced risk for substance use, non-suicidal self-injury, homelessness, sex work, as well as lower risk of suicide. The annual GLSEN survey provides robust evidence that the majority of clinicians perceive themselves as under-prepared to work with queer youth (https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/GLSEN-2017-National-School-Climate-Survey-NSCS-Full-Report.pdf) and their families. While young people are going through their own identity development processes as LGBTGEQIAP+ people, their families are going through parallel processes of developing into ally identities as family members of an LGBTGEQIAP+ person. Clinicians can help queer youth by helping their families. Counselors working with LGBTQGEIP+ youth can: 1) help young people make important choices about identity management based on their safety; 2) discuss, plan, and role play interactions with young people and also discuss, plan, and role play interactions with their caregivers; 3) provide empathy and psychoeducation to parents and family members as well as to young people; 4) help family members understand the identity development processes experienced by most queer youth so that they are better able to support their young people; 5) help family members understand their own identity development processes; 6) help young people and family members understand how intersectional identities figure into the continuum of acceptance to rejection and help young people and their families explore how to leverage feelings of inclusion and belonging across all identity statuses; 7) use modeling through bibliotherapy and cinematherapy to create space for young people and their family members to self-empower by challenging homophobic/transphobic/biphobic/queerphobic messages they are at risk for internalizing; 8) create space for families of queer youth to build connections and provide support, encouragement, and inclusion through community membership that affirms all of the identity statuses our young people occupy. This presentation offers a number of concrete, practical, clinical interventions that counselors can use with queer youth and their families. Distal and proximal interventions are presented for young people as well as their family members. We provide concrete suggestions for how to work with family members who are resistant or who are struggling to accept their LGBTQGEIP+ child. Our goal is to prepare counselors to support family members as they are learning how to best understand, affirm, embrace and effectively advocate for their children.

Friday, June 26, 2020
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Breakout Session Number 1
Diversity Track | Couples & Family Track | Child & Adolescent Track
Empowering Transgender Youths and Their Families
Presented by April Megginson, PhD
Research indicates that transgender youths that are supported by family and/or school have a tremendous impact on their mental health (Reisner, 2015; Russell 2018). Transgender
youth are far more likely than their non-transgender peers to experience depression at nearly four times the risk (Reisner, 2015). Understanding the unique needs of transgender youths can help mental health counselors effectively work with them and their families. The use of a chosen name being used in multiple contexts (school, home, work, & friends) led to a 29% decrease in suicidal ideation, and a 56% decrease in suicidal behavior (Russell, 2018). Yet, only 26 % of LGBTQ youth feel safe at school (Human Rights Campaign, 2018). For many transgender youth and their families the conflict between safety and living a genuine life is a central dilemma (Kreiger, 2017). Assisting transgender youths and their parents advocate for their needs at the school level can one of the most important treatment goals.

3:00 – 6:30 PM Breakout Session Number 2 & 3
Child & Adolescent Track
Mindfulness With Teens
Presented by David Flack, LMHC, SUDP
Research shows that practicing mindfulness can be extremely helpful to those challenged by depression, anxiety, trauma, substance use disorders, and more. In fact, mindfulness is an essential component of evidence-based practices such as Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy. However, the abstract nature of mindfulness can make it challenging to teach in ways that are meaningful and translate into the daily lives of many teen clients. In fact, those clients who would find mindfulness the most difficult to practice — due to significant impulse control issues, extreme hyper-vigilance, or chronic chaos-making behaviors — are generally the ones who would most benefit from it! Our task as helpers, then, is to present mindfulness in ways that are concrete, accessible, and provide obvious value. This workshop will focus on strategies for doing just that. Along the way, we'll explore practical ideas for teaching mindfulness to teens, participate in several field-tested activities that make mindfulness concrete, review the evidence supporting clinical applications of mindfulness, and develop practical skills for integrating mindfulness into our own work as professional helpers. PLEASE NOTE: This breakout spans two sessions (3:00pm - 4:15pm and 5:00pm - 6:30pm). You must attend both sessions to receive full 2.75 CE credit.