

Building Communities that Thrive Through Connection

Youth Matter, Community Resilience, and Positive Childhood Experience (PCEs) Research

Thursday
June 22, 2023
8 am to 5 pm

Burke Mountain Resort
2559 Mountain Road
East Burke, Vermont

This conference is
FREE to attend!



Key Note:
Kini-Ana Tinkham
Executive Director
of the Maine
Resilience Network



Presented by the
NEK Prevention
Center of Excellence



The Northeast Kingdom Prevention Center of Excellence is pleased to present **The Building Communities that Thrive Through Connection** conference.

The gathering aims to bring everyone in our community together to inspire one another to work towards creating a healthy and connected Northeast Kingdom. Sessions will focus on:

- substance misuse prevention
- comprehensive strategies to connect authentically with all community members, and
- various pathways to promote mental wellness.



To sign up for this **FREE** conference, scan or click on the QR code.

Who should attend?

Community members, prevention professionals, school staff, mental health professionals, community leadership, coalition leadership and members, youth serving organizations, religious organizations, nonprofit staff.

Presented by the NEK Prevention Center of Excellence in conjunction with Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital and Umbrella.

Planning Committee

Jen Carlo, *Northeast Kingdom Collaborative*
Cheryl Chandler, *Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital*
Amanda Cochrane, *Umbrella*
Hannah Cornelius, *Umbrella*
Juliet Emas, *The St. Johnsbury Community Hub*
Joseph Forscher, *Northeast Kingdom Human Services*
Diana Gibbs, *Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital*
Kathrin Lawlor, *Vermont Dept of Substance Use Programs*
Ruth Marquette, *Northeast Kingdom Human Services*
Julie Raboin, *Vermont Dept of Substance Use Programs*
Henekis Stoddard, *Umbrella*
Carolyn Towne, *Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital*
Kari White, *Northern Counties Health Care*
Vicky Whitehill, *Northeast Kingdom Human Services*
Savannah Williams, *Umbrella*



Accessibility

Conference organizers are committed to ensuring that this event is open to all community members who are interested in the content of this gathering. On the registration page, you will be able to indicate any accessibility request such as language interpretation and food allergies or dietary restrictions. In addition you will be able to request stipends for transportation as well as your time.

Tabling

The day will include a tabling space in order to share information on organizations and projects that build on our theme of connection. If you are interested in tabling at the event please contact Cherly Chandler at c.chandler@nvrh.org. Please include your name and contact information, organization/project you are representing and a brief description.

Funding

This conference was made possible by a grant from the Vermont Department of Health, Division of Substance Use Prevention

Keynote: Building Community Resilience through Connection

The Keynote address will focus on the importance of connectedness, mattering, and resilience for community members to support our health and well-being. Participants will be introduced to the science of mattering and belonging and understand how core competencies impact resilience. Participants will be able to identify strategies that build connected communities that support healthy outcomes for youth and adults to thrive.



Kini-Ana Tinkham, (she/her/hers), is the Executive Director of the Maine Resilience Building Network (MRBN). Kini works to improve the health and well-being of children, families, and communities by advancing the MRBN mission through capacity building, system integration, policy and advocacy.

Kini has worked in public health and healthcare for 40 years as a RN, educator, advocate, and leader. She brings system transformation leadership to advance health equity, wellness and improved health and well-being. In addition to her work at MRBN, her career expands across maternal and child health, home visitation, school-based health centers, youth leadership, education, clinical healthcare delivery and public health. Kini is a graduate of the Daniel Hanley Center for Health Leadership Class VII.

She has experience leading the integration of intimate partner violence prevention service in Maine's federally qualified health centers, family planning and school-based health centers, planning and implementation of reproductive health service in Maine's school based health centers, building capacity of school-based health centers across Maine to improve access of medical and behavioral health care for adolescence, and supporting youth advocacy at the state and federal level. She has served as a school board member and Chair of the RSU #38 school committee and a past recipient of the Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN) Youth Leadership and Advocacy award.

Conference Schedule, June 22, 2023

The Promoting
Mental Wellness track
is presented by



Time	Activity	Prevention	Engaging Communities	Promoting Mental Wellness
8–9 am	Conference Check-in and Breakfast			
9–10:30 am	Keynote: Building Community Resilience through Connection Kini-Ana Tinkham, RN, BA, Executive Director, Maine Resilience Building Network	<i>See pages 5-7 for breakout workshop descriptions and presenters</i>		
10:30–10:45 am	Break			
10:45 am–12 pm	Breakout Workshops 1	Intersections in Prevention	Helping our Youth Thrive through Community Action	Youth Engagement & Youth Empowerment as Healing Practices
12–1 pm	Lunch			
1–2:15 pm	Breakout Workshops 2	Cultivating Youth Matterering	Human Centered Community Building: Connecting and Activating Landscapes for Positive Change	Trauma Informed Overview and Engagement Strategies
2:15–2:30 pm	Break			
2:30–3:45 pm	Breakout Workshops 3	Impact of Retail Cannabis in Your Community	Rooted in Racism: Substance Misuse, Drug Incarceration, & Treatment Discrimination	Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health
3:45–4:30 pm	"Connecting to Community" Tour	<p>The tour will include opportunities to hear about a variety of collaborative efforts going on in the Northeast Kingdom. Participants will learn about some of the key initiatives as well as how they can get more involved.</p> <p>There will be PRIZES and lots of opportunities to make connections!</p>		
4:30–5:30 pm	Appetizers and Networking			

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10:45 am–12 pm

Breakout Workshops

1

● PREVENTION TRACK

Intersections in Prevention

Panelists: **Henekis Stoddard**, Umbrella
Carolyn Towne, Northeast Prevention Coalition
Brian Duff, The St. Johnsbury School CatCH Afterschool Program
Sung-Hee Chung, Powered Magazine
Gemma Stowell, student at Lyndon Institute
Moderator: **Kari White**, Northern Counties Health Care

Join our panelists to discuss the important intersections in prevention work. While we each have our concentrated areas of focus on social issues such as gender-based violence, racial inequality, substance misuse, mental health, and poverty, we also strive to see where our efforts can and do overlap.

This type of collaboration strengthens our prevention efforts as we combine resources and engage the community in effective multi-faceted prevention. Our panelists will explore the work we engage in together, prevention strategies that focus on shared protective and risk factors, and next steps for community initiatives.

● ENGAGING COMMUNITIES TRACK

Helping our Youth Thrive through Community Action

Jennah Godo, MS, PS-C, Engagement and Education Director, Maine Resilience Building Network

This interactive workshop will present an action oriented, evidenced informed tool to helping youth thrive in community through eight foundational “keys” to success. Using a healthy equity approach you will learn about fostering authentic relationships with youth, creating a shared vision, creating a caring community, through the lens of understanding the importance of the eight keys to thriving.

Bring your big ideas and solution oriented minds to the table at this session. Session participants will receive a hard copy of *Maine Youth Thriving: A Guide for Community Action*.

● PROMOTING MENTAL WELLNESS TRACK

Youth Engagement & Youth Empowerment as Healing Practices

Matt Wolf, Youth Voice Coordinator, Vermont Afterschool

Come learn foundational youth empowerment principles and explore simple frameworks for engaging and utilizing youth voice in everyday interactions and programming. Youth are more invested in activities when they have a voice that genuinely influences how that programming progresses. This also helps them build deeper connections with staff, resulting in staff having a stronger impact on the lives of their youth.

This workshop will give participants simple tools to enhance everyday interactions and foster their youths’ engagement in their programs, while showing them how this work is trauma informed and healing centered for our youth.



1:00–2:15 pm

Breakout Workshops

2

● PREVENTION TRACK

Cultivating Youth Mattering

Kini-Ana Tinkham, RN, BA, Executive Director,
Maine Resilience Building Network

In response to 2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS), where 45% of high school students did not feel they mattered in their community, the Maine Resilience Building Network responded with the Youth Mattering Initiative. Rates of youth anxiety, depression, and feelings of loneliness have reached crisis levels. Mattering and social connectedness are protective factors that reduce the likelihood of poor mental health and other risks such as suicide and substance use.

Participants will leave grounded in the science of mattering and social connectedness, understand how cultivating mattering is a primary prevention strategy that reduces loneliness that may lead to suicidal feelings. Lastly, participants will be able to understand the mattering data and identify evidence strategies, safe spaces and small acts that promote mattering.

● ENGAGING COMMUNITIES TRACK

Human Centered Community Building: Connecting and Activating Landscapes for Positive Change

Bill Traynor, Partner, Trusted Space Partners

This workshop will explore elements of Network Organizing, an approach pioneered by the presenter. This approach is rooted in the idea that system change of any kind is hard: 'The way things are' is rooted in power dynamics, habits, norms and traditions, language and every-day practices. Systems change therefore requires 'culture-change': new

understandings and actually new ways of doing things, whether that's related to how people make decisions in a city or a neighborhood, or how much mental health patients and their families can be part of shaping treatment options.

The workshop will focus on key shifts in Thinking, Practice and Leadership that have helped to unlock impactful and genuinely collective strategies, and new practices and habits that over time can shape a new infrastructure for helping people get and stay connected.

● PROMOTING MENTAL WELLNESS TRACK

Trauma Informed Overview and Engagement Strategies

Vicky Whitehill, MSW, Children Youth and Families Director,
Northeast Kingdom Human Services

A trauma-informed approach seeks to resist re-traumatization of individuals as well as staff. Organizations often inadvertently create stressful or toxic environments that interfere with the recovery of clients, the well-being of staff and the fulfillment of the organizational mission. Trauma-Informed Care actively avoids retraumatizing interactions or care experiences by being aware of an individual's triggers, taking note of body language, and promoting holistic, person-centered, culturally aware, and strengths-based care.



2:30–3:45 pm

Breakout Workshops

3



● PREVENTION TRACK

Impact of Retail Cannabis in Your Community

Jessica Bickford, Coordinator, Healthy Lamoille Valley
Alison Link, Policy and Community Outreach Coordinator, Healthy Lamoille Valley

Retail cannabis in your community, practical examples of building protective factors into the retail environment. We will look at assessing your retail environment, building relationships with the retailers, setting appropriate boundaries, and using retailers' relationships with their customer as a tool for embedding prevention messaging in the community.

● ENGAGING COMMUNITIES TRACK

Rooted in Racism: Substance Misuse, Drug Incarceration, and Treatment Discrimination

Peace & Justice Center

We will examine the connection between systemic racism and high rates of substance misuse among PoGM, BIPOC, and other marginalized communities. This will include

diving into the historical background, unpacking the current crisis' connection to racism, and examining an Ani-racist intersectional problem-solving approach. This workshop will include some lectures as well as activities to engage in conversation and content.

● PROMOTING MENTAL WELLNESS TRACK

Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health

Terri Lavelly, MS, QMPH, Training, Development and Advancement, Northeast Kingdom Human Services

Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health takes an upstream approach to support the mental health and wellness of youth. It is data-driven and evidence-informed. The Guide seeks to introduce mental health and wellness, and how to care for one's mental health in a nonthreatening way that encourages the self-identification of warning signs and when to apply the use of internal and external healthy coping strategies to help reduce risk.

Participants will be asked to participate in the presentation of this program as it would be presented to a group of younger youth.





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