

25TH Annual



SHOULDER TO SHOULDER VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Strengthening Children and Families

October 20 & 21, 2024

Shoulder to Shoulder is a collaborative partnership between community agencies to provide quality training and networking opportunities to those who work with, support and care for children and families who have been connected to Child Welfare. We rely on community partners and collaborations to operate. Conference scholarship and program funding was made possible by Oregon Resource Family Alliance and Oregon Department of Human Services Child Welfare. Contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the grantors.

2023 Conference Planning Committee



2024 Planning Committee

Virtual and In-Person Options Available!

2024 Shoulder to Shoulder Conference



Monday, October 21, 2024

In-person @ Monarch Hotel – Clackamas
Full-day Conference | 8:30am-4:00pm
Morning and afternoon meals included.

Sunday, October 20, 2024

In-person @ Monarch Hotel – Clackamas
Pre-Conference Event | 4:00-7:00pm
Appetizers, Dessert & Refreshments included.

Voices of Youth **Foster Care Alumni Panel**



Crystal



Sage



Alyssa



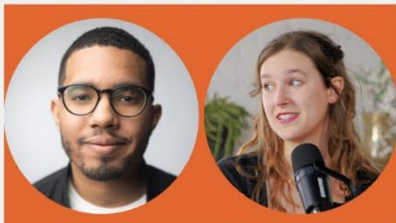
***Understanding Trauma's Impact On Your Child
So You Can Build Lifelong Attachment & Healing***
Mike Berry



***Building Bridges: Applying TBRI Principles
with Teens and Tweens***
Henry Milton



***Keeping Families Together, Stable and Safe:
Transformation in Oregon Child Welfare***
Aprille Flint-Gerner, ODHS CW Director &
Lacey Andresen, ODHS CW Deputy Director



Transracial Families and Sibling Dynamics
Isaac Etter and (sister) Sarah Etter-Hinojosa



2024 Shoulder to Shoulder Speakers & Presentations



PRE-CONFERENCE: SUN, OCT 20, 2024

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PDT)

Pre-Conference Reception

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Join us for an IN-PERSON Shoulder to Shoulder Pre-Conference Event, held at the Monarch Hotel & Conference Center in Clackamas, OR. Come to connect with others, enjoy some light refreshments, appetizers and desserts. We'll have the opportunity to hear from inspiring speakers with the foster care alumni panel.

There is also the opportunity to attend the speaker portion of this evening virtually.

Speaker(s): None

Voices of Youth: Foster Care Alumni Panel

5:00 PM (PDT)

[View Handout](#)

This pre-conference event offers a unique opportunity to listen and learn from young adults with a wealth of knowledge and insight, graciously sharing their firsthand experiences with conference participants. A dynamic panel consisting of individuals with lived experience in the foster care system will share about their journey and the impact of time spent in foster care on their lives. Attendees will leave with greater understanding around the impact of trauma while gleaned practical strategies on how caregivers may enhance their affirmation and support of children and young adults in care. You won't want to miss this valuable opportunity!

Speaker(s): Crystal Sneddon, Sage Dupre, and Alyssa Shiprack



Moderator/Panelist: Crystal Sneddon

Panelist: Sage Dupre

Panelist: Alyssa Shiprack

2024 Shoulder to Shoulder Speakers & Presentations



ALL DAY CONFERENCE: MON, OCT 21, 2024

8:30 AM - 4:00 PM (PDT)

Understanding Trauma's Impact On Your Child So 9:00 AM (PDT) You Can Build Lifelong Attachment & Healing

[View Handout](#)

Trauma and disrupted attachment can be confusing, and downright defeating. Often, caregivers are left feeling disconnected and wondering if they'll ever have a healthy relationship with their child. If this is you, we have good news. It doesn't take a PhD, or in-depth knowledge of brain science, to build a healthy attachment with your child. It takes a basic understanding of what's really happened to your child, and why they behave the ways they do. This keynote will walk you through practical understandings of trauma, and simple strategies for connection and healing. Plus, you'll learn valuable behavior response strategies in the process.

Speaker(s): Mike Berry



Mike Berry is the author of 6 books in the adoption and foster care community, the most recent being the best-seller, *Securely Attached: How Understanding Childhood Trauma Will Transform Your Parenting*. In addition to writing books, Mike is also the co-host of *The Resilient Caregiver Podcast*, reaching more than 40,000 listeners a month in 65 different countries. He and his wife Kristin are the co-founders of *The Resilient Caregiver*, a company specializing in bringing online support and training to foster and adoptive parents worldwide. They are the parents to 9 children, all through adoption. When they are not traveling and speaking, they spend time on their farm in Central Indiana. Learn more about their work at www.resilientcaregiver.org.

Building Bridges: Applying TBRI Principles with 10:30 AM (PDT) Teens and Tweens

[View Handout](#)

Building Bridges offers a comprehensive exploration of how Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) can be effectively applied to older children and adolescents. This session will introduce the core TBRI principles of Connecting, Empowering, and Correcting, and demonstrate how these can be adapted to meet the unique needs of teens and tweens.

Participants will gain insights into building trust, fostering effective communication, and creating safe environments for teens. The session will also cover strategies for addressing physiological and emotional needs, promoting self-regulation, and encouraging responsibility and independence. Through video demonstrations of staff utilizing TBRI

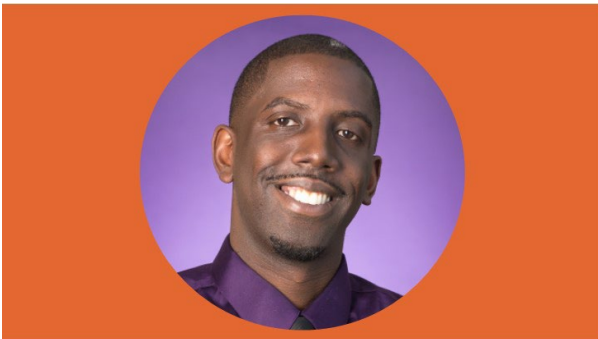
2024 Shoulder to Shoulder Speakers & Presentations



skills and parent testimonies, attendees will see real-life applications and hear firsthand experiences of both challenges and successes.

Additionally, practical tips, daily practices, and resources will be provided to support parents and caregivers in their ongoing journey to connect with their teens. The session will conclude with an interactive Q&A, allowing for deeper engagement and personalized advice. Join us to learn how to build bridges and strengthen your relationships with the teens and tweens in your care.

Speaker(s): Henry Milton



Henry Milton is a Karyn Purvis Institute of Child Development Training Specialist. As a Trauma-Informed Training Specialist for KPICD with over two decades of experience, Henry has professionally and personally dedicated his career to educating various populations and professionals in Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI). His expertise lies in addressing complex trauma and its impacts, particularly in child development and family systems. He has worked extensively with diverse settings implementing TBRI, including healthcare, juvenile justice, orphanages, education, psychiatry, and social services, delivering training and support that is both empathetic and effective. He is a Ph.D. Candidate in Counseling Studies at Texas Christian University, a certified instructor in the Prevention & Management of Aggressive Behavior (PMAB) and certified in Adult Attachment Interview (2018). TBRI is an approach rooted in the latest research and best practices in trauma-informed care. As a trainer for KPICD, Henry strives to ensure that TBRI training is relevant and transformative. As a Training Specialist for KPICD, Henry works to empower individuals and communities through TBRI, working collaboratively to support those worldwide who work with children and families affected by trauma.

Lunch Break

11:45 AM - 1:00 PM (PDT)

For those in-person, lunch and beverages will be provided. Those watching virtually will need to plan lunch on their own.

Speaker(s): None

2024 Shoulder to Shoulder Speakers & Presentations



☐ Keeping Families Together, Stable and Safe: Transformation in Oregon Child Welfare

1:00 PM (PDT)

[View Handout](#)

Executive leadership with Oregon Department of Human Services, Child Welfare Division will share an update on the latest developments in Child Welfare, Family Preservation, and progress toward implementing the Child Welfare [Vision for Transformation](#).

Speaker change as Lacey Andresen is no longer available to present.



Speaker(s): Aprille Flint-Gerner, MSW, ODHS Child Welfare Director & Akhila K. Nekkanti, PhD, ODHS Child Welfare Family Preservation Assistant Manager

Aprille Flint-Gerner was named Director of the Child Welfare Division for the Oregon Department of Human Services in July 2023 after previously serving as Deputy Director for Equity, Training and Workforce Development and Interim Director. She has more than 25 years of experience with the public sector. She has specialized experience in workforce and adaptive leadership development, community and cross-system engagement, technical assistance and implementation support and coaching to leaders in various private & public sector settings. Aprille is considered an expert in many promising practices and equity frameworks in child welfare and human services, having worked in various systems in both California and Nevada prior to Oregon. With a strong commitment to promoting equity and inclusion and modeling cultural humility, she has helped countless leaders and organizations work toward practice and system transformation. Aprille holds a BA in African American Studies & MSW.

Akhila K. Nekkanti, PhD, ODHS Child Welfare Family Preservation Assistant Manager, provides strategic planning support for managers and staff around equitable community organizing and repair with external partners. She is working with staff to build capacity for engaging with diverse communities and identifying tools to foster stronger reparative relationships and honor lived expertise. Akhila works closely with our program partners to ensure that lived expertise is an integral part of all local innovations. She also supports state-level community partnerships and is developing structures that honor lived experts in decision making processes through appropriate compensation and recognition. She has experience in strengthening parent-child relationships amidst stressful contexts, addressing root-cause barriers to intergenerational family healing, and transforming systems through the unique, collective strength we each carry in our communities.

2024 Shoulder to Shoulder Speakers & Presentations



Transracial Families & Sibling Dynamics

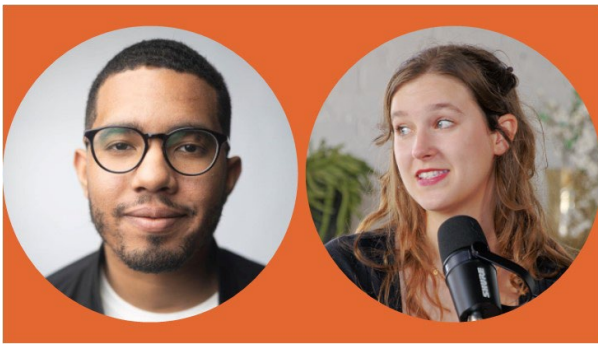
2:15 PM (PDT)

[View Handout](#)

It's often difficult to see the full picture in foster care and adoption. Adoptees, fostered children and their siblings have individual and unique perspectives and struggles that don't get seen side by side. Transracial Families and Sibling Dynamics is a window into the journey of an adoptive family with all the highs and lows.

Isaac Etter, Adoptee, and sister, Sarah Etter-Hinojosa open up to give foster care and adoption professionals and parents a window into their real-life challenges, lessons, and joys. They will share honestly about their perspectives on adoption (or foster care's) impact on their sibling dynamics and family.

Speaker(s): Isaac Etter (adoptee) & Sarah Etter-Hinojosa (sister)



Isaac Etter is an adoptee and social entrepreneur who was transracially adopted at the age of two. He founded Identity, a startup focused on creating a world where adopted and foster children feel seen, heard, and valued. At Identity, Isaac is working on re-imagining post-placement support for adoptive and foster families. He uses his story and deep passion for adoption and foster care education to bring relevant, quality, and diverse resources to adoptive and foster parents.

Isaac utilizes his experience of being adopted to curate deep conversations about race, identity, and adoption. With his unique insight, Isaac facilitates impactful discussions about adoption's impact on children and how parents can support their children in navigating identity and racial identity development. He specializes in helping child welfare professionals and parents understand the unique challenges and joys involved in transracial adoption and fostering.

Sarah Etter-Hinojosa was raised in Lancaster, Pennsylvania with four brothers. Having two adopted siblings was always a part of their family identity, and she is overjoyed to explore the complexities of that in adulthood with her oldest brother. Now, she is pursuing a Master's degree in International Relations and works in refugee resettlement in Lancaster, where she lives with her wonderful husband and two chaotic cats.