21ST NCCAN CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

The Children's Bureau's Office on Child Abuse and Neglect (CB/OCAN) within the Administration on Children, Youth and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is pleased to announce the 21st National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN), which will be held April 24-26, 2019, at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park hotel in Washington, D.C.

The 21st NCCAN offers a unique opportunity to come together for leadership and action-oriented dialogue around creating a continuum of supports to ensure that we are a nation of *Strong and Thriving Families*—the theme of this year's conference. The Children's Bureau is committed to advancing national efforts that strengthen the capacity of families to nurture and provide for the well-being of their children. At the 21st NCCAN, child welfare staff, child maltreatment prevention partners, the legal and judicial community, parents, foster care alumni, child and family serving professionals, and community members will explore strategies for making this vision of strong and thriving families a reality.

LEARNING TRACKS

CB/OCAN is committed to offering a program featuring a cadre of compelling and thought-provoking speakers. We welcome the submission of abstracts that address a wide range of topics of interest and importance to those engaged in promoting the well-being of children and families. We are interested in proposals representing a diversity of backgrounds, communities, and perspectives, including: urban, suburban, and rural areas; racial and ethnically diverse populations; and involvement at the national, state, and local levels. We also strongly encourage the participation of consumers, parents and young people with lived child welfare experience, and other community partners as session presenters.

To achieve CB/OCAN's vision, the 21st NCCAN will offer diverse sessions addressing current approaches, policies, strategies, programs, and practices in the following five target areas.

1   Prioritize Prevention

Nurturing and safe family relationships are key to child well-being. Prioritizing families and focusing on primary prevention, through flexible funding and community-based services that strengthen the protective capacities of all parents, will help children and their families thrive. We must also focus our interventions in ways that prevent unnecessary placements, keep children in their communities and schools, and build family strengths as a primary intervention. *This track explores a variety of topics related to primary prevention, in-home services, family engagement, and other service innovations intended to support families and keep children with their families.*

2   Focus on Well-Being

We should ensure that our interventions support the physical, emotional, and psychological well-being of all children and families. *This track explores a wide variety of topics relevant to the social, educational, economic, behavioral, cognitive, and relational well-being of children and families. We particularly welcome sessions focused on measuring well-being, addressing trauma, strengthening protective factors, and building resilience.*

3   Reshape Foster Care as a Support for Families

Engagement with the child welfare system should have positive impacts on children and families—equipping parents and caregivers with enhanced protective factors, skills, and supports to safely care for their children and improve child well-being. Even when parents are unable to keep their children safe at home, children need to feel connected to their parents, siblings, and relatives. Parents should remain actively involved with their children in foster care in safe and healthy ways, with foster and birth families working together to support children and ensure successful reunification whenever possible. *This track explores innovations in child welfare practice with a special emphasis on efforts that keep families meaningfully engaged and connected, even when out-of-home care is necessary. We welcome sessions highlighting approaches that promote the active involvement of parents in their children's lives while in out-of-home care, promote healthy relationships between birth and foster parents, provide timely and successful reunification, address kinship care, and avoid unnecessary family separation and trauma.*

4   Build Community Capacity

Primary prevention of maltreatment and a focus on well-being occur best in the communities where children and families live, and cannot be the work of child welfare alone. A wide array of stakeholders and systems must work together, guided by the communities they serve, to build programs and systems that get needed supports to families where they are and when they need it. *This track explores ideas and initiatives for leveraging diverse community-based partnerships to better serve children and families. We especially invite proposals related to reaching rural communities, engaging non-traditional partners, and moving beyond traditional services.*

5   Support the Workforce

To serve families well, we must have a strong, competent, and healthy workforce. An effective child welfare system requires social workers, attorneys, and service providers to have adequate supports and supervision, manageable workloads, and the skills needed to do their work well. Inspired, competent leadership can garner the support of community partners, staff, and families on the path to meaningful and sustained improvement. *This track explores ideas and initiatives for supporting the child welfare workforce in ways that enhance their effectiveness and ensure their well-being. We especially invite proposals related to addressing secondary traumatic stress, creating a safe and supportive organizational culture, and reducing staff turnover.*

AUDIENCE

The National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect is unique for its scope and the deep diversity of its participants, which include professionals, researchers, policy makers, parents, and volunteers representing a wide variety of disciplines. It provides a unique opportunity for those who are committed to achieving better outcomes for children, youth, and families to come together, learn from and support each other, take in new knowledge, build new understanding, and reenergize for the always changing and challenging work ahead. We anticipate that more than 2,000 in-person and virtual attendees will participate in the 21st NCCAN from across the United States, its territories, and around the world.

APPROACH

Sessions at the 21st NCCAN will reflect principles of adult learning and be responsive to what adult learners find most useful. This includes:

- **Personal Benefit**. Adult learners must be able to see the personal benefit of what they are learning, and how it satisfies a need they have. They are motivated to learn if the learning—
  - Solves or avoids a problem for them; and
  - Leads to professional or personal growth.

- **Experience.** Adult learners come to each learning event with a unique background of knowledge and experience. They are motivated to learn if the learning—
  - Involves them in sharing what they know;
  - Builds on what they know; and
  - Validates their expertise.

- **Application and Action.** Adult learners are busy, practical, and learn by doing. They learn best when—
  - There is immediate application for the learning;
  - They participate actively in the learning process; and
  - They can practice new skills or test new knowledge before leaving a learning session.

- **Learning Styles.** Adult learners approach learning in a great variety of ways, from hands-on and moving to using their eyes, ears, and/or logic to anchor new skills and knowledge. They learn best when—
  - The learning taps into a mix of learning styles that fit their preferences and stimulate their 'multiple intelligences' (e.g., verbal, visual, kinesthetic, interpersonal, logical, intrapersonal); and
  - Multiple means are used to present the material being learned.

SESSION FORMATS

The 21st NCCAN will offer participants the opportunity to engage in discussion with and learn from one another in a variety of formal and informal settings. Through the Call for Abstracts, we are soliciting proposals for the following session formats:

Workshops are designed to increase knowledge and understanding and provide practical applications for a broad range of research, policy, and programmatic issues. Up to three presenters engage participants in exploration of a single topic over a 90-minute period.

Skills Seminars engage participants in intensive, hands-on training designed to enhance proficiency and learn new skills and strategies. Presenters will use various formats, including dialogue, role-play, brainstorming, and other active learning modes, and are encouraged to share tools and resources that participants can access after the session. Skills Seminars are 1.5 or 3 hours in length.

Spotlight Sessions are 45-minute discussions that **do not** involve the use of audio-visual equipment. Spotlight Sessions are ideal for showcasing innovations or convening in-depth discussions around issues or practices. Please note that the rooms will not be equipped with AV.

Poster Presentations offer unique opportunities to present original research, new data, exciting service delivery initiatives, educational activities, and other pioneering work impacting our field today. CB/OCAN strongly encourages submissions on innovative and cutting-edge research from child welfare and other related disciplines to help inform discussions around research, policy, and practice. Posters will be available for general viewing throughout the Conference; specific presentation times are to be determined. Audio-visual equipment is not provided.

Policy Forums are half-day (3-hour) sessions offering the opportunity to dig deep into a policy issue. Policy Forum sessions may include a number of presenters but are intended primarily to allow for the type of dialogue that is critical to informing the development of policies or improving policies being implemented.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Acceptance for presentation will be based on the extent to which abstracts fulfill the following criteria:

- Responds to the Conference theme and Learning Tracks and promotes the types of systems change envisioned.
- Addresses an important understudied topic, or provides new information on a well-studied topic.
- Increases knowledge and/or improves practice significantly.
- Demonstrates how key principles of adult learning will be incorporated into the session.
- Articulates how the stated learning objectives will be achieved.
- Incorporates evidence base and/or outcomes assessment findings.
- Reviewer's overall impression of the quality and clarity of the abstract.

Abstracts will be peer-reviewed by at least three people with content expertise using these criteria.

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GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

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- While there is no registration fee for the Conference, presenters must register to participate.

- The Conference is unable to underwrite or reimburse any travel, lodging, or incidental expenses for presenters.

- Supplemental material, to be made available through the Conference app, is expected for every selected presentation.

- Use of presentation time to sell or market products is prohibited.

- By submitting an abstract for consideration, applicants acknowledge that:

    o They have read and agree to abide by the terms of this Conference policy statement.

    o They understand that the purpose of the session is primarily to make information and resources available to those working in child abuse and neglect practice, research, and policy, and secondarily, to the general public.

    o They understand that any presentations and handouts provided in conjunction with the session may be posted on the World Wide Web and made available to the general public. (*More information on handouts will be sent to those presenters whose abstracts have been accepted.*)

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SUBMITTING YOUR ABSTRACT

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Abstracts should be submitted for consideration through the online Abstract Submission Portal. **Abstracts must be submitted online NO LATER THAN 11:59 p.m. on July 3, 2018.**

REQUIRED ABSTRACT PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

- Learning Track

- Session Format

- Presentation Title (*20 words maximum*)

- Primary Presenter Information *(Name, email address, organization, state/territory/country, and biographical sketch—100 word maximum)*

- Other Presenters *(optional) (No more than three; name, contact information, and biographical sketch; 100 word maximum)*

- Learning Objectives *(Two or three; no more than 25 words each)*

- Brief Description (*100 word maximum*)

- Full Description (*Summary of the substantive content and format of the presentation; 500 word maximum*)

- Target Audience (*With suggested level of participant expertise; 75 word maximum*)

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ABSTRACT

Abstracts should be submitted for consideration through the online Abstract Submission Portal.
Abstracts must be submitted online NO LATER THAN 11:59 p.m. on July 3, 2018.

1. Select "I am a Presenter" then "Create Abstract" on the side menu.

2. Once you've selected "Create Abstract," you will be presented with a form that you must fill out. One of those fields will be for adding authors/presenters.

   a. When adding an author/presenter, choose the type you wish to add by clicking the appropriate button.

   b. A small window will appear where you can fill out the contact information for that author/presenter. Be sure to complete all the mandatory fields, then click "Add."

   c. After clicking "Add," the small window will close and the newly created author will be added to the list of authors for this submission.

   d. At this point you can either add another author or change the author type for authors that have already been added.

3. When all the mandatory abstract fields have been filled out, click the "SUBMIT" button at the bottom of the page.

4. If there is a problem with your submission, you will be notified either by an alert box indicating the problem or one of the fields will be highlighted indicating the problem.

5. If there were no problems with your submission, you will be brought to the "View My Abstracts" page where you will find all of your submissions, including the new one. You can get to the page via the menu item "I am a Presenter" then "View All My Abstracts."

Check Your Submission for Accuracy. Please check your confirmation and ensure that all of your contact information, the title of your presentation, and your summary are complete and correct. The information you have provided at this time will be used, as you have submitted it, to create our program, agenda, and website. In particular, please ensure that your presentation title and summary statement are not truncated due to character and word limits. It is your responsibility to address any questions, or make any changes requested by the 21st NCCAN Planning Committee online, or send any questions about your submissions to the 21st NCCAN Planning Committee well in advance of the deadline of June 14, so that we can help you make the changes or complete the submission on time. Changes may not be made during or following the review period.

THE ABSTRACT REVIEW PROCESS

All abstracts submitted that meet minimal acceptance requirements (i.e., submitted by the deadline, contain sufficient information in each of the required elements for reviewers to make rating decisions) will be reviewed by a minimum of three qualified individuals. Proposals will be scored in each of the required proposal elements.

The Children's Bureau reserves the right to make all final decisions regarding which proposals to accept.

We anticipate that those submitting abstracts will be notified as to whether or not their proposal has been accepted no later than mid-January 2019.