

NWI/NWIC Wraparound-Related Sessions at the 2025 Training Institutes

2025 Training Institutes

Building a World Where Young People Thrive

July 6-7, 2025

Pre-Institutes Training Programs

July 8-10, 2025

Main Conference



The 2025 Training Institutes will be held July 8-10 in National Harbor, Maryland, just outside of Washington DC. The agenda includes a robust selection of sessions focusing on Wraparound, as described below. For more information, and to register, visit the Training Institutes website: <https://innovations.socialwork.uconn.edu/training-institutes-2025>

Wraparound Sessions

Accelerating Wraparound Impact: Leadership, Rapid-Cycle CQI, and Managed Care Integration

Denise Sulzbach, Kim Estep, Kim Coviello, Sara Strader

Successfully implementing & sustaining Wraparound requires more than adherence to fidelity measures-it demands strategic leadership, purposeful system integration, & agile responses to real-time data. This interactive session will explore how states & local leaders can skillfully manage Wraparound implementation & dismantle systemic barriers. Participants will also discover how to leverage rapid-cycle Continuous

Quality Improvement methods to inform immediate, impactful actions statewide. Special attention will be given to integrating managed care organizations within these processes, highlighting strategies for aligning managed care incentives with Wraparound fidelity, quality outcomes, & systemic accountability. Join us to gain practical tools & innovative approaches to strengthen leadership, accelerate data-informed decision-making, & align managed care systems with your Wraparound vision, ultimately driving transformative outcomes for youth & families. (3-Hour Institute)

Applying and Enhancing Wraparound to Address Substance Use in Youth and Caregivers: Stories from Two States

Erin Barnett, M. Kay Jankowski, Eric Bruns, Crystal Wytenus

Teams from New Jersey and northern New England adapted the evidence-based Wraparound model for substance use disorders (SUDs); one focused on caregivers with SUDs and one on youth with SUDs. Facilitated by moderator Eric Bruns, the two teams will engage the audience in discussion and interactive exercises. The audience will consider why Wraparound may be uniquely suited to support these populations and learn about adaptations and enhancements made to the model. The New Jersey's Children's system of care integrated Wraparound with the Nurtured Heart Approach®, aiming to build "inner wealth" within youth. The northern New England method focused on integration with existing addiction and recovery resources within their system of care. Qualitative outcomes suggest that greater family stability and recovery facilitated engagement, and families appreciated family empowerment, a focus on strengths, and flexibility. (3-Hour Institute)

Beyond Case Management: The FOCUS on Evidence-Informed Tiered Care Coordination

Emily Bradshaw, Tony Bonadio, Lisa Spera, Catherine Bracialello

Traditional case management has consistently fallen short in addressing the evolving and complex needs of children, youth, and families. These outdated practices often lack accountability, consistency, and clarity, resulting in fragmented and duplicative services that fail to deliver meaningful outcomes. This session challenges the status quo, advocating for tiered care coordination as an essential component of a modern system of care. Participants will gain a deep understanding of how tiered care coordination, including the FOCUS Intermediate Care Coordination Model and Wraparound, can transform systems by aligning intensity of care coordination practices with the unique needs of families. With insights from

system leaders and practical strategies, this session will explore how evidence-informed practices reduce inefficiencies, enhance collaboration across sectors, and improve outcomes for families. (Workshop)

Building Meaningful Partnerships Between Care Coordination and Parent Peer Support Workforce

Conan Green

This interactive workshop will explore the essential collaboration between care coordination and Peer Parent supports, with a focus on tiered care models. Participants will delve into the evolution of this partnership, starting from its roots in systems of care, wraparound services, and the peer parent support movement, leading up to the development of tier 2 coordination. Presenters will share insights on the key elements needed to foster a successful collaboration, highlight challenges faced over time, and discuss strategies to overcome obstacles. Through a blend of lecture group and discussions, attendees will leave equipped with the knowledge and tools to strengthen partnerships in their work. (Workshop)

Care Management Organizations Using Wraparound to Transform Outcomes for Youth: Lessons Learned from New Jersey

Eric Bruns, Alan DeStefano, Victor Alvarez

Twenty five years ago, a group of parent advocates in New Jersey were frustrated with the lack of access to appropriate and effective local interventions for children with emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs. These parents partnered with providers and state leadership to develop a concept that became the foundation for what is now a statewide comprehensive and integrated Children's System of Care (CSOC), rooted in the principles of Wraparound, and designed to support youth and families at home. Care Management Organizations (CMOs) are key partners and central to the growth and success of CSOC, having emerged as leaders in innovation, community connection, resource development, and creative initiatives. CMOs foster a culture of openness, collaboration, and determination within

their organizations and communities, in their shared pursuit of ensuring every youth in New Jersey with behavioral and mental health needs has the opportunity to thrive. (Workshop)

Care Pathways Analysis: A Data-Driven Approach to Understanding a System of Care

Denise Sulzbach, Kim Estep, Tony Bonadio

The session will describe and present findings from an innovative approach to understanding the actual experiences of young people and caregivers in accessing, receiving, and transitioning from services across a system of care. Care pathway analysis uses a mixed methods approach to map the patterns of service utilization and gather feedback based on the experiences of youth and caregivers who have accessed those services. Using secondary data analysis of claims data, we have been able to identify the most common patterns of service utilization, including the temporal order in which services were utilized, and then examine differences within and across those care pathways based on individual and system characteristics. These quantitative findings are paired with qualitative data from focus groups in which young people and families shared their experiences in services. The presentation will highlight how findings from care pathways analysis can be used to inform system redesign. (Workshop)

Contextual Influences on Wraparound Implementation: The Impact of System and Organizational Factors

Kim Estep, Jon Olson, Kim Coviello, Tony Bonadio, Eric Bruns

Implementation of Wraparound Care Coordination requires purposeful action within and across provider organizations and external systems, which takes considerable time and effort. In this session we will present results of a study focused on Wraparound implementation within different types of administrative structures in 10 U.S. states. Four states used Care Management Entities (CMEs) and six used Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs). Results indicated that CMEs completed more implementation activities

than CMHCs and were faster to complete most activities. Compared to other complex cross-system EBTs, Wraparound took significantly more days to implement, with system-level activities (e.g., engaging state leaders) and organization-level activities (e.g., conducting implementation reviews) accounting for the slow pacing of implementation. We will conclude this session with a discussion of how to create hospitable administrative structures designed to facilitate implementation success. (Poster)

Effective Systems and Practices for Universal Mental Health Screening

Rayann Silva, Eric Bruns

This poster will provide an overview of universal screening as part of a comprehensive school mental health system. Best practices, tool selection, and critical steps (with resources) for implementation including data analysis and connecting students to supports will be shared. Participants will hear a state-level approach to policy and capacity for installing universal screening with practical examples from district exemplars. Action planning tools and briefs will be provided. (Poster)

Evolution of Language: A Journey through Time

Toni Donnelly

Language is powerful. Language creates a culture and preserves a culture. Language shapes relationships, policies and systems. Through an inspiring IGNITE Talk, the presenter will explore how language in the SOC has evolved over time and its profound impact on culture and relational dynamics, the intersection of language and culture and the relational distance that language can create. (Ignite Talk)

Families' Needs Must Come First: Preventing Moral Injury in Our Youth and Family Workforce

Eric Bruns

What leads to moral injury among doctors? In America's current healthcare system, healthcare workers are increasingly forced to put the priorities of

insurers, managed care, electronic health records, and other entities before the needs of the people they are treating. Unfortunately, these repetitive insults also afflict members of our youth and family behavioral health workforce. When these injuries amass, these invaluable members of our workforce can be driven to leave the field. We often use the term burnout to describe this phenomenon. Moral injury is a more accurate term for this escalating tragedy. Moral injury locates the source in our systems - our fiscal and policy structures - and in the profit-driven forces that we have allowed to dictate the kind of care we provide. This talk will hope to “ignite” a conversation about recognizing and labeling the phenomenon of moral injury in our workforce, to help us build alternatives for our helpers and the families they serve. (Ignite Talk)

Moving Beyond Adaptation to Customization: Developing a Coordinated System of Crisis Care for Youth

Sarah Quinn, Chyna Locklear, Jill Mays

This session will bring the three National Crisis Care Guidance documents together by presenting an overview of the new guidance, discussing the model definitions for the component services, and providing framework for the Behavioral Health Coordinated System of Crisis Care. The session will feature presentations from exemplar youth crisis services and systems that will help bring these documents to life. (3-Hour Institute)

Transforming Student Health: A Unified Approach to Behavioral and Mental Health Supports

Casey Ehde, Erin Wick, Eric Bruns

In response to the pandemic, Washington State’s nine Educational Service Districts (ESDs) united to enhance student behavioral and mental health support. Central to this effort is the Behavioral Health Student Assistance Program (BH-SAP), a model promoted by SAMHSA. BH-SAP is a scalable, accessible, school-based approach, utilizing Student

Assistance Specialists (SAS) with associate and bachelor’s degrees. The SAS provide group and individual interventions, supporting faculty and reducing reliance on highly trained clinicians. This workshop will detail Washington’s BH-SAP, featuring direct student services, regional coordination, and statewide collaboration. Presenters will share data on SAS activities across behavioral health tiers, adherence to the model, and the program’s impact on students and schools. Additionally, participants will learn about innovative cost-sharing strategies, policy efforts, and how ESDs collaborate with community-based organizations. (Workshop)

Using Implementation Science to Support Statewide System Reform

Denise Sulzbach, Kim Estep, Sara Strader

In this workshop, we will share insights from a university-state partnership supporting statewide behavioral health reform efforts for children and families. Guided by implementation science principles, this initiative has developed infrastructure to implement a comprehensive service array focused on three practice models: Wraparound, FOCUS, and MRSS. Participants will learn about proactive technical assistance, targeted training, and ongoing coaching strategies used to assess readiness, track implementation progress, and evaluate outcomes. We will discuss how identified facilitators and barriers have informed ongoing improvements. (Workshop)

Using Readiness Tools to Support Youth Crisis System Implementation and Practice

Sarah Quinn, Denise Sulzbach

This session will provide participants an opportunity to consider how robust readiness assessment and work can lay the groundwork for effective youth crisis services implementation with specific focus on scaling up the Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) model. The University of Connecticut School of Social Work has developed several tools to support states and sites in evaluating readiness including leverable assets and areas for growth. The MRSS

System Readiness Tool is grounded in implementation science and care pathways and prioritizes those indicators known to be associated with modern systems design and improved outcomes. The Environmental Scan (ES) is completed in several phases including a payor/system level scan and a provider level scan. When completed in tandem, the ES creates an overview of the full crisis landscape and offers an opportunity for comparison on two levels: current practices to best practices and current practices to current payor standards. (Workshop)

Workforce Turnover Among Wraparound Providers: Insights and Strategies for Retention

Jessica Lim, Jon Olson, Tony Bonadio, Grace Metz

Workforce turnover within behavioral health systems is associated with loss of expertise, staff burnout, hiring costs, and reduced service accessibility and quality. In this session, we will present data related to staff turnover in Wraparound. The study included 225 care coordinators and 82 administrators from 64 provider agencies. Results suggest an average annual turnover rate of 29.8%, with 33% of current employees actively considering new employment. Reasons cited included high job demands, emotional burnout, paperwork, and low pay. Intentions to stay were negatively associated with burnout but positively associated with resources and support ($p < .001$). Suggested retention strategies included increased pay (67.7%), reduced documentation (36.2%), and improved benefits (33.2%). This session will conclude with a discussion of potential retention strategies, such as creating avenues for professional advancement, streamlining documentation, and providing administrative support. (Data Points)

Wraparound in Schools: Connecting the Dots for Student Success

Lisa Garland, Lisa Spera, Shammica Jones

This presentation will focus on the installation of High Fidelity Wraparound within school systems emphasizing the implementation of the Wraparound process. We will draw on lessons learned from the field to illustrate how to effectively align the principles of the System of Care framework with existing educational frameworks, including Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504 plans, and behavior intervention plans, into one comprehensive plan of care. Engaging the right school staff and community stakeholders is crucial; we will share strategies for school-based care coordinators that have proven effective in fostering collaboration and understanding across various domains. Real-world challenges and successes will be discussed, highlighting strategies for integrating diverse plans into a cohesive support system. (Workshop)