



# FOSTER PARENTS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

*The dedicated voice of foster families in Ontario*

## HILITES

**Virtual Conference  
Edition**

**DOUBT ENDS AND TRUST  
BEGINS WHEN  
COMMUNICATION HAPPENS**

**October 2023**

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS GREETING

Although at this time we may all be midway through enjoying our summer; it's Fall Conference registration time once again. We have been preparing and planning for the fall virtual conference since before the October 2022 conference wrapped up. We are so glad you are joining us for more training. FPSO intends to continue offering a high-quality training program for foster parents and alternate caregivers.

We strive to take training recommendations from our members, incorporating their suggestions for trainers, as well their awareness of challenges and emerging trends. We believe using input from our members to help guide our work, gives us the ability to offer what is valid and useful. We understand that foster parents and alternate caregivers know best the training they need to be effective caregivers and to maintain a high quality of care.

Throughout the year FPSO works alongside professionals to support the caregiving families as they care for the out of home children and youth by bringing their unique needs to the attention of Child Welfare stakeholders. We also offer easily accessible advice and peer support over the phone when people are curious about becoming foster parents or present caregivers are facing challenges they need to know how to navigate.

It is our hope that through our 8-day virtual educational conference in the fall, our free to members monthly trainings, and our live spring mini-conference; that we are supporting not only caregiving families but the Child Welfare system of Ontario as we all work together for the best interest of the young people in the care of the system.

Recognizing today's financial challenges FPSO works diligently to offer either free or very affordable training opportunities that are available to both members and non-members.

For those of you who would like more information on the other works of the FPSO, please check out our website [www.fosterparentsociety.org](http://www.fosterparentsociety.org) to see our quarterly Board updates, the documentation that supports our initiatives, and all the varied projects that transpire through the year.

With Highest regards

*Vanessa Milley,*

FPSO Chief Executive officer  
Governance and Policy Chairperson

## CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER GREETING

As we gathered this year's training for the fall virtual conference, we once again aimed to give care givers tools they can use in the everyday care of children and youth. More than ever before care givers are being asked to care for children with far more complex needs. It is FPSO's goal to support the care givers across the province by giving them the opportunity to access the education they need to be able to supply restorative, therapeutic care. By maintaining the virtual conference format, we are able to offer training by experts at a very reasonable cost and in a manner that fits with the busy lives of families.

We recognize the importance of building trusting relationships with children and young people as being at the heart of successful care giving. This also extends to building supportive relationships with the families of the children.

Acknowledging this can be challenging at times we hope a number of the trainings on offer will assist care givers in understanding the impact of their words and how to use new understanding to break through the protective shields' trauma has built up.

In response to the issues of the younger children this conference offers training on sleep issues and on how to support the child who has speech delays as these are two areas we often face when children first arrive in our homes and it often takes a long time to access therapy.

As always, this conference welcomes everyone to join us whatever their connection to the children may be because we passionately believe shared training offers an opportunity for team building and collaborative problem solving.


**REACH - Restorative, Education, Advocacy, Child-Centered, Holistic**


*Elaine Pratt*


CONFERENCE SCHEDULE


	<b>Morning Session</b> 9:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Lunch Break</b> 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	<b>Afternoon Session</b> 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
<b>Saturday October 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Advocacy One, Part One</b> with Vanessa Milley		<b>Supporting Your Marriage/Partnership While Fostering</b> with Dr. John DeGarmo
<b>Sunday October 22<sup>nd</sup></b>			<b>Fostering Hope - Former foster child discusses as an adult the impact on her life and issues she sees with the system</b> with Melinda Mello
<b>Monday October 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Sibling Rivalry</b> with Mary Jo Land		<b>Understanding the Impact of Childhood Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence on Young People</b> with Angelique Jenny
<b>Tuesday October 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Family Group Conferencing</b> with George Hull Center		<b>Sleep Issues</b> with Alison Ezell
<b>Wednesday October 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Effective Advocacy Depends on Foster Parents Communicating Effectively</b> with Cathy Vine		<b>Hanan Strategies: Facilitating Positive Caregiver-Child Interactions and Early Language Development in Everyday Life</b> with Erin Broxterman
<b>Thursday October 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Setting Boundaries Effectively Within Therapeutic Parenting of Traumatized Children</b> with Robyn Gobel		<b>Everyday Language – How our Language Both Verbal and Non- Verbal Impacts Youth with Trauma</b> with Rebecca Fidler
<b>Friday October 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Foster Caring Conflict Resolution with Teens</b> with Michael Sani		<b>Neurodiversity &amp; Neurodivergence: What We Make of Brain &amp; Behavior Differences</b> with Angela Marx
<b>Saturday October 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Advocacy One, Part Two</b> with Vanessa Milley		


WORKSHOPS

<p>Advocacy Module One – Advocacy Foundations</p>		<p>Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup> 9:00 am -12:00 pm Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> 9:00 am-2:00 pm</p>
<p>Presenter</p>	<p>Vanessa Milley</p>	
<p>Session Summary</p>	<p>This workshop is an introductory course into the field of Advocacy and takes a professional look at three main components, Communicator/Advocate, peer support and liaison. This course is designed to provide a comprehensive foundation for those considering becoming an advocate, those already advocates; as well as those interested in applying the advocacy principals and training to their own role as a foster parent.</p> <p><b>We will examine child protection issues and the responsibilities of the agencies, as well as explore:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ The role of the communicator/advocate during an allegation or complaints procedure</li> <li>✦ The needs of the caregivers involved in an allegation</li> <li>✦ The types of supports and resources they will require.</li> </ul> <p><b>When you take this workshop, you will have the tools you need to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Set up an Advocate program within your own FPA/FFA, or agency</li> <li>✦ To maintain your local area advocacy program.</li> <li>✦ To participate in your local area as an advocate.</li> <li>✦ To advocate for your foster parent peers</li> <li>✦ To advocate for and protect yourself.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE: This training is offered in two parts, the first part on Oct. 21 (9:00-12:00), the second part on October 28<sup>th</sup> (9:00-2:00). The second part will run longer due to the volume of material, but there will be a lunch break.</b></p>	
<p>Biography</p>	<p>Vanessa Milley is FPSO Chief Executive Officer, Chief Communications Officer &amp; Governance and Policy Chairperson; and has served on the FPSO Board for the past 15 years. Vanessa has done many presentations on behalf of FPSO including Bill 170, and the Strengthening Family Based Care Brief, Bill 179 Adoption Openness, and participated in the Adoption Openness Advisory at OACAS where the adoption openness curriculum was developed. Vanessa has been on various boards for nearly 42 years. , Vanessa began fostering with a local areas CAS for 20 years, during which time she fostered 150 children alongside of raising her own 5 children 3 biological and two adopted. While fostering for the CAS Vanessa volunteered on her local FPA for 17 years 13 of those years as President, and 8 as regional FPSO Director. Vanessa has fostered in the Private Sector since 2018. Vanessa is an experienced advocate with 24 years’ experience providing advocacy support to foster parents, and is privileged to have been able to train the FPSO Advocacy One training for the past nine years.</p> 	



Supporting Your Marriage/partnerships While Fostering		Saturday, October 21 <sup>st</sup> 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Presenter	Dr. John DeGarmo	
Session Summary	Marriage and Foster Parenting: Making it Work this session focuses on the difficulties that caring for a foster child can bring to a relationship. During this presentation, participants will come to understand the many challenges that foster parents face in their marriage/partnership while foster parenting. Participants will be equipped with strategies designed to help strengthen their relationship, their family, and their foster parenting.	
Biography	<p><b>Dr. John DeGarmo</b> is an international expert in parenting and foster care and is a TEDx Talk presenter. Dr. John is the founder and director of The Foster Care Institute. He and his wife have had over 60 children come through their home as foster parents. He is an international consultant to schools, legal firms, and foster care agencies, as well as an empowerment and transformational speaker and trainer for schools, child welfare, businesses, and non profit organizations. He is the author of several foster care books, including Keeping Foster Children Safe Online: Positive Strategies to Prevent Cyberbullying, Inappropriate Contact, and Other Digital Dangers and writes for several publications. Dr. John has appeared on CNN HLN, Good Morning, America, and NBC, FOX, CBS, and PBS stations across the nation. He and his wife have received many awards, including the Good Morning America Ultimate Hero Award. He can be contacted at drjohndegarmo@gmail, through his Facebook page, Dr. John DeGarmo, or at The Foster Care Institute.</p>	


Fostering Hope		Sunday October 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Presenter	Melinda Melo	
Session Summary	This workshop tells Melinda’s story, born into abuse and neglect, suffering the perils of bouncing in and out of the system and landing on the street. Her story will share how she found her way out of the cycle of trauma, abuse and neglect, into not only a stable and loving marriage, but also as a mother, foster mother, and adoptive parent.	
Biography	<p><b>Melinda Melo</b> is one of nine children born to a struggling paranoid-schizophrenic mother who repeated the cycle of abuse she was exposed to. Melinda spent her childhood living in some of the poorest communities in Toronto, Ontario. She was neglected and exposed to violence, abuse, crime and substance abuse. As a result, she was in and out of foster care and kinship care. She ultimately ran away at 15 years old, and embarked on a naïve and lonesome independence that continued the cycle of abuse and trauma she was accustomed to. At 19, Melinda entered a recovery program, and changed the course of her life. With newfound hope, and stability, she met and married her husband, Mike, and went to college to study, mental illness, developmental disability, and dual diagnosis, graduating with honours. Her studies helped her understand her mother’s illness and trauma, which helped heal the many wounds Melinda was still carrying. Melinda and her siblings tirelessly, boldly, and empathetically advocated for their mother and were able to see her receive treatment so that she is now thriving and healthy. Melinda and Mike have been married for 12 years and together they are biological, foster, and adoptive parents living in a small rural area outside of London, Ontario. Her memoir is in the editing phase and is expected to be released toward the end of 2023.</p>	

Sibling Rivalry		Monday, October 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 9:00 am -12:00 pm
Presenter	Mary-Jo Land	
Session Summary	<p>Sibling Rivalry All siblings fight like that, don't they? Where is the line between typical sibling rough play or teasing and concerning emotional or physical harm? Sibling emotional abuse is the most common form of family violence and yet it is the least reported and researched. Sibling physical and emotional harm needs effective intervention by parents and systems. In this workshop, we will explore the parameters, prevention and intervention of sibling emotional and physical harm</p>	
Biography	<p><b>Mary-Jo Land</b> is a Registered Psychotherapist in private practice in Ontario. Mary-Jo specializes in developmental trauma, war and migration trauma and the ameliorating the effects of trauma on attachment, bonding and family relationships. She is a member of the National Consortium on Aggression toward Family / Caregivers in Childhood and Adolescence (AFCCA) (afcca-apfea.ca) and is an educator for The Association for Training in Trauma and Attachment in Children (ATTACH.org). Mary-Jo lives in Grey County.</p>	

Understanding the Impact of Childhood Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence on Young People		Monday, October 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Presenter	Angelique Jenney	
Session Summary	<p>Childhood experiences of intimate partner violence (CEIPV) is one of the most frequently substantiated forms of child maltreatment in Canada and research is clear that childhood experiences of IPV may have a variety of short and long-term impacts on development across the lifespan. There are unique risks for children and youth as they begin to navigate their own relationships and research has linked risks associated with both perpetration and victimization for young people. Incorporating the perspectives of young people with lived experience, this presentation will highlight the developmental impacts of CEIPV for children from infancy to young adulthood while considering both risk and protective factors and suggestions for foster parents in addressing the unique needs of this population.</p> <p><b>By the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the impacts of childhood experiences of intimate partner violence on children and youth</li> <li>2. Recognize both risk and protective factors for children and youth in their care</li> <li>3. Consider approaches to caregiving which healing from trauma and the support of healthy relationship development for young people</li> </ol>	
Biography	<p><b>Angelique Jenney, MSW, PhD, RSW</b> is an Associate Professor and the Wood's Homes Research Chair in Children's Mental Health in the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary. Dr. Jenney has 25 years of experience in intervention and prevention services within the gender-based violence, child protection and children's mental health sectors. Her community-based research and practice interests focus on the impact of intimate partner violence (IPV) on children and families including: family-based interventions for childhood trauma; child protection responses to IPV cases; and the use of reflective, simulation-based learning approaches to training both social work students and practitioners in the field.</p>	




<b>Family Group Conferencing</b>		<b>Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am -12:00 pm</b>	
<b>Presenter</b>	<b>The George Hull Centre</b>		
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>In this workshop, participants will learn about Family Group Conferencing (FGC), a Child Protection Alternative Dispute Resolution method that brings together support networks to assist with creating plans for children, youth and their families. This workshop will share</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the benefits of FGC for children, youth and families.</li> <li>• a detailed look at the FGC process.</li> <li>• how foster parents can best support foster children and youth in the process.</li> </ul> <p>Presenters will also share information on Youth-led FGC and on the newest model of conferencing, Transitional Planning Conferences, which is designed to assist youth leaving CAS care to plan for this transition.</p> <p>Participants who have participated in an FGC conference in the past are encouraged to attend and share their experiences with the group</p>		
<b>Biography</b>	<p><b>The George Hull Centre</b> is a leading children’s mental health centre in Toronto helping infants, children, youth (0-18 years) and their families achieve mental wellness.</p> <p>We do this through a continuum of innovative, evidence-based and evidence-informed mental health services from prevention and early intervention programs, to treatment services that include a community clinic, residential and in-home programs, and specialized day treatment classrooms for elementary and secondary students.</p> <p>With an unwavering commitment to clinical excellence across assessment, treatment, prevention and education, our multidisciplinary team of experts provide help and support to children whose lives are impacted by mental health issues, many in very complex ways.</p>	 <p>Changing the trajectory of children's mental health.</p>	


<b>Sleep Issues</b>		<b>Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm</b>	
<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Allison Ezell</b>		
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>We all know healthy sleep is important to helping our children and families thrive, but far too often, this is an area where foster and adoptive families feel unprepared and left to struggle through their issues with little to no professional guidance. In this breakout session, Certified Pediatric Sleep Consultant and adoptive mom Allison Ezell will be covering the foundations of healthy sleep in children who have experienced trauma. Topics covered in this session will be the big picture sleep basics, information specific to infants and toddlers, parasomnias, the impact of trauma on sleep and common issues, and when to seek professional help. Allison will conclude by offering plenty of time to answer all your burning sleep questions at the end of the session</p>		
<b>Biography</b>	<p><b>Allison Ezell</b> is a Certified Pediatric Sleep Consultant from Dallas, Texas, and the founder of Dwell Pediatric Sleep. She is also a wife and mom of four children - a biological son and daughter and two sons who joined her family through adoption. With a special passion for helping foster and adoptive families navigate sleep issues, Allison brings a unique perspective to her sleep consultations, as she is able to bring a trauma-informed perspective to a field where it has been desperately needed. Allison's goal at Dwell Pediatric Sleep is to help families identify the root cause of their children's sleep issues and offer practical, science-based solutions and sleep plans that actually work. Allison has a Bachelor's degree in Communication, a Master's degree in education, and she spent many years in the classroom prior to founding Dwell Pediatric Sleep in 2021</p>		


<p><b>Effective Advocacy Depends on Foster Parents Communicating Effectively</b> Tips and tricks for delivering your message to achieve your goals</p>	<p><b>Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am -12:00 pm</b></p>	
<p><b>Presenter</b></p>	<p><b>Cathy Vine and Alex Gill</b></p>	
<p><b>Session Summary</b></p>	<p>Foster parenting children of all ages involves a lot of love, patience, and skills. It can also involve a lot of advocacy on behalf of the children in their care. Through this advocacy, foster parents can not only work to get what they want, they can also model problem-solving and communication skills for their children, helping them to eventually assert their own voices in positive and productive ways.</p> <p>Because advocating for children is such an important part of fostering, we've designed a training session to share research, tips, and tricks on how to get your point across. These techniques don't guarantee you will succeed every time, but they should help you get your message across, understand the points others are expressing, and increase the chances of a positive resolution.</p> <p>In this session, you will:</p> <p>Understand what goes into effective communication. Learn when and how different approaches work and why you need a plan.</p> <p>Make psychology work for you. Learn three useful theories of persuasion that help you understand why people think and argue the way they do.</p> <p>Learn verbal self-defence. Walk through several examples of techniques that defuse confrontation and help progress beyond the "no" in difficult discussions and arguments.</p> <p>Write that letter and right that wrong. Learn how to put your concerns into a winning letter that will increase the chances you will get a positive response (downloadable template will be provided)</p> <p>This interactive session is offered by Cathy Vine and Alex Gill of Mendicant Group, a social consultancy that helps charities, non-profits and corporate citizens plan and improve their community impact. Founded in 2005, the Mendicant team has worked with many organizations across Canada and (so far) in 16 countries around the world.</p>	
<p><b>Biographies</b></p>	<p><b>Cathy Vine, MSW, RSW</b> collaborates with diverse groups—young people, parents, researchers, and advocates—to advance their goals by getting their messages heard. Career highlights include using creative communication approaches to advocate with and for children and youth at Voices for Children; supporting children and youth to run the Youth Leaving Care Hearings in Ontario; and working with Indigenous researchers and educators to promote cultural safety and Indigenous student success. Cathy is the co-editor of <i>Cruel but Not Unusual: Violence in Families in Canada</i>, 3rd edition, and has co-written and co-edited several books, chapters and reports in the areas of child maltreatment, sexual abuse and resilience.</p> <p><b>Alex Gill</b> is a social entrepreneur who founded Mendicant Group in 2005 after working as an exec at a number of nonprofits and charities. A graduate of Stanford University's Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders, Alex co-founded Toronto Metropolitan University's social enterprise incubator, the Social Ventures Zone and regularly speaks around the world on social change, entrepreneurship, and community development. Alex is author of <i>AIM: Achieve, Inspire and Make a Difference</i> (Wiley, 2010) and was named by THIS Magazine as one of Canada's Social Justice All-Stars in 2015. Check out Alex's TED talk "What's stopping us from making social problems obsolete?"</p>	






Hanan Strategies: Facilitating Positive Caregiver-Child Interactions and Early Language Development in Everyday Life		Wednesday, October 25 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Erin Broxterman</b>	
<b>Session Summary</b>	This 3-hour presentation describes the early stages of communication and focuses on how and why children send messages. Factors that impact children’s desire and willingness to interact will be discussed. The importance of building children’s interaction skills first and the foundational Hanen strategies to support extended, back and forth interactions will be presented. These practical strategies can be implemented throughout the day during naturally occurring interactions. This presentation will be interactive and include video examples. Participants will be encouraged to apply the strategies presented to the children in their care.	
<b>Biography</b>	<p><b>Erin Broxterman</b> is a Speech-Language Pathologist at The Hanen Centre who is passionate about supporting language and communication skills in children. With over ten years’ experience in pediatrics, Erin has worked collaboratively with families and other professionals to help preschool, and school aged children reach their potential. Erin enjoys sharing information and empowering parents and caregivers with tools to enrich daily interactions with their children.</p>	

Boundaries with Connections		Thursday, October 26 <sup>th</sup> , 9:00 am -12:00 pm
<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Robyn Gobbel</b>	
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>Sometimes therapeutic parenting with children with histories of trauma and vulnerable nervous systems can appear to be permissive parenting. But actually, this way of parenting often calls for more structure and boundaries. It’s just that we often aren’t using the word ‘boundaries’ correctly! This session will bring clarity to what boundaries are and aren’t. Participants will learn how to set boundaries that set our kids up for success. We will also address how to have boundaries with behavior we cannot control specifically verbal aggression.</p> <p><b>Learning Objectives -Participants will be able to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate the difference between boundaries, rules, and consequences.</li> <li>• Identify ways to establish boundaries that set kids up for success</li> <li>• Create a practice that will increase their psychological boundary with stressful behavior like verbal aggression</li> </ul>	
<b>Biography</b>	<p><b>Robyn Gobbel, LMSW-Clinical</b>, has 20 years of practice as a family and child therapist, specializing in complex trauma, attachment, and adoption. Her diverse clinical training includes EMDR (including EMDR adapted for children with attachment trauma), Somatic Experiencing, Theraplay, Trust Based Relational Intervention®, Circle of Security Parent Educator, The Alert Program® and Yogapeutics Aerial Yoga Level 1 Teacher Training. Robyn has integrated these training modalities with a foundation of attachment theory and the relational neurosciences to create an attachment-rich, sensory-sensitive, and relational neurosciences supported healing environment for children and families. Robyn consults, teaches, and trains extensively throughout the US. She previously served as an instructor for the Foundations of Interpersonal Neurobiology Certificate Program at Portland Community College as well as with the Adoptive &amp; Foster Family Therapy Post-Graduate Certificate Program. Robyn has served on the working board of the Global Association for Interpersonal Neurobiology Studies (GAINS). Her first book, Raising Kids with Big, Baffling Behaviors: Brain-Body-Sensory Strategies that Really Work , will be published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers in 2023.</p>	

Everyday language – How our Language Both Verbal and Non-Verbal Impacts Youth with Trauma		Thursday, October 26 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Rebecca (Becky) Fidler</b>	
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>We will explore and gain insight into how words that we use in our day-to-day language can elicit specific responses from another person, especially if that person has experienced trauma. I hope to explore this so deeply that you walk away knowing more about your own communication style and the ways that you can strengthen relationships in your life by giving attention to communications.</p> <p><b>Participant will gain:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand how language is more than words and how someone with a trauma history learns to “speak another language” based on their life experiences.</li> <li>2. Gain personal insight into how you are impacted by your own lived experiences and how that affects your communication style.</li> <li>3. Explore and gain understanding of the impact of language and communication on trauma responses in the home.</li> <li>4. Become more equipped to assess what the youth behavior(s) is trying to communicate to you.</li> </ol> <p><b>Practical and Applicable skills that a participant will leave with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal and nonverbal strategies to de-escalate a person in trauma response.</li> <li>• Specific tips for creating a more productive conversation with the youth in your life.</li> <li>• Learning how to share your communication style with another person while also “speaking their language” (blended communication)</li> </ul>	
<b>Biography</b>	<p><b>Rebecca (Becky) Fidler</b> is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor based in Massachusetts, US where she has a private counseling and training practice. Becky has been practicing Master’s level therapy since 2005 in a broad range of settings which has created her dynamic background. Her work with children, adolescents, adults, couples, families and school districts has her highly sought after for counseling, training services and speaking engagements. Becky has spent the last seven years of her career dedicated to helping others understand the impact of language on themselves and others. She is committed to supporting others to better understand their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors so that they can have more meaningful and connected relationships in their lives. More information about Becky can be found at Taprootsbh.com.</p>	

Foster Caring Conflict Resolution with Teens		Friday, October 27 <sup>th</sup> , 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Presenter	Dr. Michael Saini	
Session Summary	<p>Foster Caring Conflict Resolution with Teens: Opportunities for Trust Building and Creating a Greater Sense of Belonging Many teens involved in foster care have undergone adverse childhood experiences. As a result, teens in foster care may display emotional dysregulation, conflictual interactions and difficulties with trusting others. Unresolved traumas can negatively impact attachment patterns that can affect their social-emotional development, and cognitive functioning. Given their early experiences, it is understandable that teens may reject their foster carers, possibly believing that adults cannot be trusted to meet their needs. Equally, foster carers may inadvertently avoid becoming too attached in an attempt to reduce the emotional impact of an inevitable loss, especially when placements are short term. In considering what makes foster placements work, this workshop will explore how best to explore conflict with teens constructively while being sensitive to the window of tolerance so to keep these conflicts in the midrange. Constructive conflict and negotiating difference expectations is not only natural but it's essential to build trust and a sense of belonging. This workshop will teach foster carers the art and science of taking the high road, staying calm and engaged and to use these conflicts as opportunities for connection</p>	
Biography	<p><b>Dr. Michael Saini</b> is a Professor at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto Canada and holds the endowed Factor-Inwentash Chair in Law and Social Work. He is the Co-Director of the Combined J.D. and M.S.W. program and with the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto. He teaches family mediation as a graduate course at the university, and he has presented at international conferences on topics related to mediation, including issues of neutrality, trauma-informed mediation, adult attachment patterns, neuroscience and conflict resolution. Dr. Saini is a Board Member of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts, an Associate Fellow of the International Academy of Family Lawyers, Lifetime Member of Family Mediation Canada, Associate Member of Ontario Association of Family Mediation and an Editorial Board Member of the Family Court Review and the Journal of Divorce and Remarriage. Dr. Saini has over 200 publications, including books, book chapters, government reports, systematic reviews and peer-reviewed journal articles. In 2019, Dr. Saini was awarded the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts’ Stanley Cohen Distinguished Research Award, sponsored by the Oregon Family Institute.</p>	

Neurodiversity & Neurodivergence: What We Make of Brain & Behavior Differences		Friday, October 27 <sup>th</sup> , 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
<b>Presenter</b>	<b>Angela Marx</b>	
<b>Session Summary</b>	<p>What can we do to promote and support the health and wellness of children? How do we understand behavior based on current brain science? How can we support and educate ourselves to help our children heal and thrive?</p> <p>Take the opportunity to explore these questions and learn about supporting healthy children through the lens of neurodiversity. Neurodiversity, the biological fact that all human brains are different, is critical to consider when supporting children, especially those who experience concerning or confusing behavior. This session will explore a more inclusive, relational, and strength-based approach for every child instead of one that is one-size-fits-all and deficit-based. Updated information will be introduced with a focus on translating it into real-world practice that facilitates health and healing of children and families</p>	
<b>Biography</b>	<p><b>Angela Marx, Ph.D.</b> is a licensed clinical psychologist. For the past 18 years, she has been joining with children, adolescents, adults, and families in various community-based support roles including direct support, recruiting direct support professionals, case management, person-centered planning facilitation, inclusion facilitation, behavioral support, crisis response, employment support planning, education and outreach, and policy and program development. Dr. Marx also has research experience with and provides clinical consultation to caregivers and direct support professionals. Her clinical experience includes psychotherapy and psychological assessment to individuals of all ages and abilities. Although she uses research and scientific knowledge, she relies more heavily on each person’s experience to join and learn with them. Dr. Marx is the founder of Place of Mind LLC, that specializes in psychological assessment and mental health and wellness with neurodivergent individuals to help them define and discover who they are and find, or create, the places where they belong and flourish.</p>	



**THIS CONFERENCE WILL BE FULLY VIRTUAL**

- ✚ Each regular workshop will be \$30.00 for members, \$35.00 for non-members
- ✚ Advocacy Module One will be \$75.00 for members, \$100.00 for non-members
- ✚ A full conference package of all workshops – without Advocacy will be \$325.00 for members,  
\$375.00 for non-members.
- ✚ A full conference package of all workshops – including Advocacy will be \$400.00 for members,  
\$500.00 for non-members.?

Each workshop will only run once during the conference

The Advocacy One Module will be trained in Part One – October 21, 9-12 & October 28, 9-2  
The second session is set for a longer time as there is a large volume of material that will be covered.

Please indicate on your registration for if you will be paying your registration directly, then pursue your own reimbursement, or if you need FPSO to send your invoice directly to your FPA or your CAS. **Registration**

**If filling out your registration online please use the link [HERE](#) to use our google form.**

Completed electronic registrations can be emailed to: [fpsconference@fosterparentssociety.org](mailto:fpsconference@fosterparentssociety.org)

**Electronic payments can be made via etransfer to:** [FPSOPayments@fosterparentssociety.org](mailto:FPSOPayments@fosterparentssociety.org)

**Please forward any inquiries to:** [FPSO@fosterparentssociety.org](mailto:FPSO@fosterparentssociety.org)

**Or contact us by phone:** Head Office: 905-788-6820

**Cheques are made payable to:** FPSO Conference 2023

**Please mail registration form and check to:** FPSO Head Office  
340 Kingsway  
Welland ON  
L3B 3N9

*If you are not a member and would like to be, please go to member section of FPSO website fill out membership form and send in along with conference registration to receive membership discounts. 2023 FPSO Membership fee \$30.00 per open home*



**FPISO CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM**  
**OCTOBER 21<sup>ST</sup> -OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2023**

All costs are including GST

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Workshop Pricing				
Date/Time	Workshop Name	Member Cost	Non-member cost	Total
Sat. Oct. 21 & 28 (AM)	Advocacy Module One	\$75.00	\$100.00	
Sat. Oct. 21 (PM)	Supporting Your Marriage/Partnership while Fostering	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Sun. Oct. 22 (PM)	Fostering Hope – former foster child discusses the impact on her life and the issues she sees with the system	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Mon. Oct. 23 (AM)	Sibling Rivalry	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Mon. Oct. 23 (PM)	Understanding the impact of childhood experiences of intimate partner violence on young people	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Tues. Oct. 24 (AM)	Family Group Conferencing	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Tues. Oct. 24 (PM)	Sleep Issues	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Wed. Oct. 25 (AM)	Effective Advocacy Depends on Foster parents Communicating Effectively	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Wed. Oct. 25 (PM)	Hanen Strategies-Facilitating Positive Caregiver-child Interactions and early Language Development in Everyday Life	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Thurs. Oct. 26 (AM)	Setting Boundaries effectively within therapeutic parenting of traumatized children	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Thurs. Oct. 26 (PM)	Everyday Language – How our language both verbal and non-verbal impacts youth with trauma	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Fri. Oct. 27 (AM)	Fostering Caring – Conflict resolution with Teens	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Fri. Oct. 27 (PM)	Neurodiversity & neurodivergence: What We Make of brain & Behaviour Differences	\$30.00	\$35.00	
Workshop Packages				
Full package, access to all training <b>excluding</b> Advocacy		\$325.00	\$375.00	
Full package, access to all training <b>including</b> Advocacy		\$400.00	\$500.00	
				<b>Grand Total</b>