



The Los Angeles County Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) serves as the official County agent to coordinate the development of services for the prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect. ICAN's Policy Committee includes 32 County, City, State and Federal agency heads, as well as, UCLA, Police Chiefs' Association and five private sector members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. ICAN's Operations Committee and ad hoc committees carry out the work of ICAN by addressing a broad spectrum of issues related to the health and safety of children and families. Twelve community-based, interdisciplinary child abuse councils interface with ICAN, providing valuable information regarding many related issues.

ICAN Associates is a private, non-profit corporation that works in partnership with ICAN. Its Board of Directors consists of business, media and community leaders. This organization addresses the important issues identified by ICAN through the provision of services and materials, including the sponsorship and coordination of media campaigns, community educational forums and projects, special events, newsletters and funding. Further, ICAN Associates provides support for direct and indirect services to prevent child abuse and enables integration and collaboration among child service agencies.

This strong, multi-level, multidisciplinary and community network provides a framework through which ICAN is able to identify those issues critical to the well-being of children and families. With limited resources available, ICAN develops strategies to implement programs that will improve the community's collective ability to meet the needs of abused, neglected and at-risk children. The work of ICAN has received national recognition as a model for inter-agency coordination for the protection of children. In 1996, ICAN was designated as the National Center on Child Fatality Review (ICAN/NCFR).



19TH ANNUAL ICAN/ICAN ASSOCIATES CONFERENCE

CHILDHOOD GRIEF AND TRAUMATIC LOSS

Restoring Joy to Children and Families



DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH
hope. recovery. wellbeing.

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

The California Endowment
1000 N. Alameda Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Message from the ICAN Executive Director

INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT County of Los Angeles



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June 10, 2025
ICAN Childhood Grief and Traumatic Loss



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EL MONTE, CA 91732
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Email: ican@lacounty.gov

DEANNE TILTON DURFEE
Executive Director

On behalf of ICAN, I am pleased to welcome you to the 19th annual Conference on Childhood Traumatic Grief and Loss Conference. We sincerely appreciate each one of you for sharing your valuable time with us.

Today we again address critical issues often unrecognized as we respond to tragic events. This is a day to focus on the impact of trauma and loss on children who may not be a primary victim, but experience events that could result in unresolved grief throughout their life's journey. We hope you leave this conference with confidence that you can make a positive difference in the lives of these children, and a realization of the importance of your response to them.

Our program today features nationally renowned childhood grief experts and local heroes, and is intended to help us in our work with bereaved children, - to bring hope and joy into their lives.

With many thanks to our sponsors, ICAN Associates, DCFS, Keynote and Workshop presenters, ICAN staff, and Volunteers who made this conference possible again this year.

With warmest regards,

Deanne Tilton Durfee, Doc.Hc
ICAN Executive Director



Continuing Education (CEs)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

To receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs), you are required to sign in and out at the CEU table located in the registration area.

- Sign in must be no later than 8:45 a.m.
- Sign out will be no earlier than 4:00 p.m.
- At the time of sign out, you will need to return your completed signed Conference Evaluation form to the CE table.
- Partial credit cannot be awarded.

There Will Be No Exceptions

LCSWs / LMFTs: CEUs for LCSWs and LMFTs will be provided by ICAN Associates. This course is approved for five (5) Continuing Education Units by the California Board of Behavioral Science Examiners (provider Number PCE5656). This CEU certificate (for LCSW/LMFTs) can be provided to other disciplines who require continuing education in the counseling field. Please check with your licensing bureau.

Child Life Specialists: To obtain professional development units for this conference, you must provide proof of conference registration along with a conference program as you will need to document the content outline as mandated by the Child Life Council. If you registered online, your email confirmation is your proof of registration. If you registered by mail or on site, please pick up your proof of attendance at the registration table on the day of the conference.

Photograph & Video Policy

Attendance at the 19th Annual Childhood Grief and Traumatic Loss Conference constitutes an agreement by the attendee to the Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN)'s use and distributions (both now or in the future) of the attendee or attendee's image or voice in photographs and videos of such events and activities.

Conference Evaluations

Your opinion matters! Please return conference evaluations to the CEU Table at the end of the conference. Evaluations are required to receive certificates of attendance, and signed evaluations are required to receive CEUs.

Certificate of Attendance

Certificates of attendance will be provided at the end of the day, at the CEU area once attendees turn in their completed conference evaluation. CE certificates are separate and are emailed two to four weeks after the completion of the conference, but certificates of attendance will still be provided upon request after the conference. Please see the CEU section above for more information.

Exhibitors

We invite you to visit the breezeway during your breaks and lunchtime to see our many excellent exhibitors.

Electronic Devices

Please have all electronic devices turned off or in silent mode during all presentations and workshops.



Rooms

Morning/Lunch Program + Workshop - Dr. Beatriz Solis Hall
Workshop Sessions -

Cabrillo	Joshua Tree
Catalina	Mojave
Big Sur	
Tahoe	

Acknowledgments

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Deanne Tilton Durfee, Doc.H.C., Executive Director, ICAN
Michael Durfee, M.D., Adult, Adolescent, and Child Psychiatrist
Joyce Tajuna, Conference Coordinator, ICAN
Susana Montanez, Program Administrator
Linda Garcia, MA, CCLS, Grossman Burn Center, West Hills Medical Center
Dr. Arvis Jones, MA
Tracie Andrews, LCSW, MH Program Manager, DMH

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Luis Escalante, MSW, MPA, DMH Training
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John Solano, IT/Event Coordinator

REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST. 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

CONFERENCE OPENING 8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m

Honor guard - Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Pledge of Allegiance - Mark West Macabe, ICAN Ambassador
Vocal - Annie Bosko
Deanne Tilton Durfee, Doc.H.C., Executive Director, ICAN

SPECIAL MESSAGE

Kathryn Barger, Chair LA County Board of Supervisors
Brandon Nichols, Director, Department of Children and Family Services

WELCOME

Sheriff Robert Luna, ICAN Co-Chair

MORNING PLENARY PRESENTATIONS. 9:15 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

David Kessler, Grief Expert, Author, and Speaker

BREAK 10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

PLENARY PRESENTATION. 10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Dr. Alicia F. Lieberman, Director, UCSF Child Trauma Research Program

GRIEF SPECIALIST PANEL 11:15 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.

Panelists: Dr. Arvis Jones, Linda Garcia, Tracie Andrews

LUNCH 12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

WELCOME 12:30 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Nathan Hochman, Los Angeles County District Attorney
ICAN ASSOCIATES: Judge Mary House, Lindsay Wagner, and Justin Chambers

DURFEE AWARD 12:45 p.m. - 12:50 p.m.

Presented by Michael Durfee M.D.

Recipient 12:50 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Ana Estevez, "Piqui's Mom" Child Safety Advocate

LUNCH KEYNOTE PRESENTATION 1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Dr. Daniel J. Siegel, Founder and Director, Mindsight Institute

BREAK 2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

CONFERENCES CLOSES/SIGN-OUT

Welcome and Introductions



Kathryn Barger, Chair LA County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, proudly serves the residents of the 5th Supervisorial District — the county's largest — spanning 2,800 square miles, which includes 22 cities and 70 unincorporated communities in the Antelope, San Gabriel, San Fernando, Crescenta, and Santa Clarita Valleys. During the course of her county career as chief policy adviser on health, mental health, social services, and children's issues, Kathryn ensured efficient and effective services and programs to significantly improve the quality of life for foster children, seniors, veterans, those with disabilities, and those with mental illness. Committed to keeping our neighborhoods and communities safe, she has worked with state and federal leaders and our county district attorney, sheriff, and other law enforcement agencies to implement tough laws and vital public safety initiatives.

Robert Luna, Los Angeles County Sheriff

Robert G. Luna was elected as the 34th Los Angeles County Sheriff on November 8, 2022. Sheriff Luna commands the largest Sheriff's Department in the United States, with nearly 17,000 budgeted sworn and professional staff. In 2021, Sheriff Luna completed his service as Long Beach Chief of Police, capping a 36-year career at the Long Beach Police Department, Los Angeles County's second largest police department. Growing up in unincorporated East Los Angeles, Sheriff Luna's neighborhood was patrolled by the Sheriff's Department. He saw examples of both good and bad policing, which inspired him to become a peace officer and shaped his philosophy on relationship-based policing, specifically in communities of color.



Nathan Hochman, Los Angeles County District Attorney

A lifelong Angeleno, DA Hochman served as Assistant U.S. Attorney General for the Tax Division of the Department of Justice in 2008. Prior to that, he was an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Central District of California from 1990 to 1997, serving in the Criminal Division. He also had an extensive career in the private sector, as a partner of several nationwide law firms and as a leading expert in tax law, criminal defense and environmental law. DA Hochman previously served as President of the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission. He graduated magna cum laude from Brown University and earned his law degree from Stanford Law School.

Brandon Nichols, Director, Department of Children and Family Services

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors appointed Brandon T. Nichols director of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in July 2022. Director Nichols is regarded nationally as an accomplished professional with more than 20 years of expertise in child welfare, foster care, adoptions, mental health and law. Director Nichols previously held the roles of DCFS chief deputy director and acting director. Prior to that, he served as an attorney for the Los Angeles County Counsel's Office where he represented and advised DCFS for a number of years. Most recently, Director Nichols worked as the Executive Director of the County's Jail Closure Implementation Team that focused on decarcerating and closing the Men's Central Jail. In this role, he also led efforts to provide mental health services to inmates throughout Los Angeles County jails.





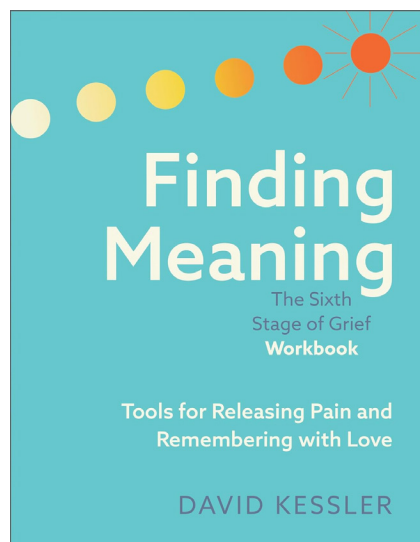
Why talk about Grief?

Presented by: David Kessler, Grief Expert, Author, and Speaker

Grief is a universal experience in adults and children, yet it is often not talked about—This session explores the importance of acknowledging and addressing grief in young individuals and those who work and care for them. As most know, grief is not just about death but also about various types of loss, from personal tragedies to community-wide crisis.

Biography: David Kessler is one of the world's foremost experts on grief and loss. His decades of experience with thousands of people on the edge of life and death has taught him the secrets to living a happy and fulfilled life, even after life's tragedies. He is the author of seven books including his latest bestselling book, *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*, as well as a new *Finding Meaning Companion Workbook*. He co-authored two books with Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *Life Lessons* and *On Grief and Grieving*. He co-wrote *You Can Heal Your Heart* with Louise Hay and also wrote *Visions, Trips and Crowded Rooms: Who and What You See Before You Die*. His first book, *The Needs of The Dying* received praise from Saint (Mother) Teresa. He also hosted his own Spotify Podcast called *Healing with David Kessler*.

David's volunteer work includes being a founding member of Project Angel Food. He also serves as Specialist Reserve for the Los Angeles Police as well as having served on the Red Cross's disaster services team. His new online model of grief support, *Tender Hearts*, offers over twenty-five groups. Additionally, David leads one of the most respected Grief Educator Certification programs. He is the founder of *Grief.com*.





Child Traumatic Loss and Grief in Early Childhood: Present Impact, Future Sequelae

**Presented by: Dr. Alicia F. Lieberman, Director,
UCSF Child Trauma Research Program**

Biography: Alicia F. Lieberman, Ph.D. is Irving B. Harris Endowed Chair in Infant Mental Health, Professor in the UCSF Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and director of the UCSF Child Trauma Research Program. She directs the Early Trauma Treatment Network, a center of SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network with the mission to increase access and raise the standard of care for trauma-exposed young children and their families. She is the senior developer of Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), an evidence-based treatment for traumatized children aged birth-five with an international reach, and numerous books and academic articles. Born in Paraguay, she received her professional training in Israel and the United States. Her cross-cultural experience as a Jewish Latina informs her commitment to address obstacles to health for low-income and minoritized children and families. Her numerous awards include the 2023 Holly Smith Award UCSF Award for Exceptional University Service, 2020 Zero to Three Lifetime Achievement Award, 2016 Rene Spitz Award for Lifetime Achievement from the World Association of Infant Mental Health (WAIMH), and 2016 Hero Award from the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

A Conversation About Grief and Loss and Support

Presented by: Tracie Andrews, Linda Garcia and Dr. Arvis Jones



Tracie Andrews, LCSW, Los Angeles County DMH

Tracie Andrews is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. She received her bachelor's degree from Lewis-Clark State College and her master's in social work from Aurora University. Tracie has worked in a variety of settings and has extensive knowledge of working with underserved children, adults, and families and disenfranchised communities. She has expertise in early childhood mental health, crisis services, and suicide prevention. She is currently a co-chair of LA Suicide Prevention Network.



Linda Garcia, MA, Certified Child Life Specialist

Linda has been a Certified Child Life Specialist for more than 25 years with extensive clinical practice working with chronically ill, injured, and suspected child abuse and neglect children and families. Linda worked at UCLA Medical Center, Child Life Director at Children's Hospital Los Angeles and is currently practicing at the Grossman Burn Center. Her clinical private practice has extended to the community providing trauma-grief support to victims of fatal family violence. Since graduating from Pacific Oaks College Linda has dedicated her career to advocating and addressing children's grief and loss through her clinical practice and academic education. Linda is a specialized trainer on Grief and Loss training for Dept. of Mental Health and an Adjunct Professor at Azusa Pacific University teaching in the Master's Program for those pursuing a degree in Child Life/Psychology. Co-Founder and President of the California Association for Child Life Professionals. She devotes her spare time playing with her 5 year old grandson.



Dr. Arvis Jones, Grief, Loss and Trauma Specialist, Damon's Center for Grief, Loss, and Trauma

Arvis Jones received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from California State Long Beach with a Music Therapy Certificate, a master's degree in clinical psychology from National University and an Honorary Doctorate in Sacred Music. She was the first African American Music Therapist employed by Arts & Services for the Disabled. Arvis was also the first Music Therapist at the Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, working with children and youth of all ages who have emotional and environmental problems where she developed a program to address the needs of children and youth ages 2½ to 22 years. Arvis directs and specializes in children and youth choirs all over the city, using Music Therapy techniques to increase attention span and concentration. Arvis has worked with children and youth with dual diagnosis.



An Interpersonal Neurobiology Approach to Childhood Grief, Traumatic Loss, and Healing

Presented by: Dr. Dan Siegel

This keynote will provide an interdisciplinary perspective on how childhood grief and traumatic loss impact the developing mind through the lens of Interpersonal Neurobiology (IPNB). We will explore how the mind emerges from neural processes in the body—the embodied brain—and interactions within relationships.

By integrating insights from a new framework of personality known as Patterns of Developmental Pathways (PDP), we gain a deeper understanding of how early relational experiences, loss, and trauma shape adaptation, personality, and resilience. We will examine how trauma, neglect, and grief influence brain development and identity formation, as well as the regulatory functions of the brain that shape emotion, attention, and behavior. We will explore how challenges in childhood can push the underlying adaptive strategies of personality toward more restrictive and chaos-prone patterns of emotion, thought, and action. Additionally, we will discuss how neuroplasticity enables healing and the movement toward higher levels of personality functioning, guiding children and adolescents from chaos and rigidity toward integration, resilience, and well-being after experiencing profound loss. By integrating IPNB with insights into temperament, attachment, and personality through the PDP framework, we can better understand the impact of childhood grief and traumatic loss, as well as the pathways to healing. This keynote will offer science-based insights and practical strategies for fostering integration, adaptability, and relational attunement in children and adolescents navigating profound loss.

Biography: Dr. Dan Siegel is the Founder and Director of Education of the Mindsight Institute and founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA, where he was also Co-Principal Investigator of the Center for Culture, Brain and Development and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the School of Medicine. An award-winning educator, Dan is the author of five New York Times bestsellers and over fifteen other books which have been translated into over forty languages. As the founding editor of the Norton Professional Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology (“IPNB”), Dan has overseen the publication of one hundred books in the transdisciplinary IPNB framework which focuses on the mind and mental health. A graduate of Harvard Medical School, Dan completed his postgraduate training at UCLA specializing in pediatrics, and adult, adolescent, and child psychiatry. He was trained in a Sackman research and narrative analysis through a National Institute of Mental Health research training fellowship focusing on how relationships shape our autobiographical ways of making sense of our lives and influence our development across the lifespan. Learn more about Dr. Siegel at: www.drdansiegel.com | www.mindsightinstitute.com



Ana Estevez, Children's Advocate

Ana Estevez is a passionate advocate for children, crime victims, and child safety. With over 27 years of experience in education, she has served as a teacher, elementary school principal, district administrator, and currently serves as a Director. Ana was honored by the State Assembly as the 2019 California Woman of the Year, recognized by Nexstar as a 2024 Remarkable Woman, and is a United States Army veteran. She has appeared on the Dr. Phil Show, Good Day LA, and has testified before the California



Senate and Assembly Judiciary Committees. She has been instrumental in major child safety legislative initiatives at both the state and federal levels, most recently with the passage of Senate Bill 331—Piqui's Law—in October 2023. However, most meaningfully, she is known as Piqui's momma

1A. THE MINDFULNESS EXPERIENCE: COPING WITH GRIEF WHILE MANAGING STRESS

Workshop Location: Mojave

Presenter(s):

Jerome Front, MA, LMFT, Mindfulness Trainings and Organizational Retreats

In today's world, the sources of stress are countless, and growing - from political strife to wildfire disasters. When grief and violence are added to our daily stressors, the entire family, as well as the helping professionals involved, can be sent on a draining roller-coaster ride. These strong emotions can cause clinicians burn-out, emotional fatigue, and shutting down at work. Occasionally, family members and professional caregivers are stretched to their limits in every way during this grief process. This workshop will discuss how to use mindfulness to build resiliency, manage stress, as well as develop clinical skills when life is compounded by grief. Through experiencing mindfulness and active learning, this workshop will review current research and provide a clinical perspective on mindfulness when working with clients. In a down-to-earth language, you will learn practical ways to use mindfulness as soon as today.

1B. CLINICAL INTERVENTIONS FOR WORKING WITH BEREAVED CHILDREN, TEENS AND FAMILIES

Workshop Location: Catalina

Presenter(s):

Claire Towle, Clinical Director, Taking Time: South Bay

Patty Ellis, Program Director, Taking Time: South Bay

This is an interactive workshop with activities and techniques for responding to the needs of bereavement children, teens and parents in individual bereavement counseling and support groups. The activities will be based upon the developmental level of the children and teens, the grief tasks and theories of William Worden, Alan Wolfelt & Sandra Fox Tasks. They will include:

- To accept the reality of the death.
- To work through the pain of the grief.
- To adjust to the new environment.
- To reinvest in life as it now is.
- To find meaning with life
- To continue the bond to the person who died.

1C. SELF-COMPASSION OR SELF-ESTEEM? BECOMING WOUNDED HEALERS

Workshop Location: Big Sur

Presenter(s):

Fr. Stan Bosch, Psy. D., LMFT, Director Mental Health/ Clinical Supervision/Psychotherapy, Soledad Enrichment Action (SEA)

In this conference we will explore the various principles regarding well-being. The argument will be made that 'self-compassion' is healthier than self-esteem, especially for the caregivers of traumatized children. The underlying assumption is that we are drawn to this healing work to reconcile our own unmet infancy and childhood wounds. We will offer clinical insights and explore contemporary research, to discover the deeper psychological and familial origins for a child's emotional reactions, and our

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

own. We will define ‘alexithymia’, ‘emotion’, ‘anxiety’, and ‘depression’ and offer solid interventions as the healing container for our client’s violent ‘acting out’/‘acting in’ of their developmental, complex and historical trauma.

1D. HEALING THROUGH ART: A CREATIVE APPROACH TO GRIEF SUPPORT

Workshop Location: *Tahoe*

Presenter(s):

Jennifer Miller, Art Therapist, UC Davis Children’s Hospital

Marisa Martinez, Child Life Specialist, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center

This workshop focuses on developing a community-based, multidisciplinary therapeutic group to support children and teens coping with grief and loss. Remembering Together is a three-session support group that integrates self-expression and art to help participants process their emotions. The sessions are co-facilitated by a Child Life Specialist and an Art Therapist, both trained in bereavement support and child development. Through creative activities and guided discussions, participants will explore different ways to express their feelings and navigate their grief journey. This group is designed for children and adolescent ages 6 – 16 who have experienced the loss of a significant person in their lives. The workshop will provide hands-on intervention opportunities.

1E. TEEN SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Workshop Location: *Cabrillo*

Presenter(s):

Pamela Gabbay, EdD, FT, Author, Educator, and Facilitator, Coping After Suicide

Joanne L. Harpel, MPhil, CT JD, President, Coping After Suicide

Every year in the US, nearly a million teenagers lose a loved one to suicide. Most of them will deal with it alone. While there has been significant media attention around the important issue of teen suicide, the experience of teens left behind after a suicide has gotten almost no widespread attention to date. So, these kids, who are already likely to feel more shame, anger, and guilt than if their loss had been due to a car accident or cancer, often face the world unsupported, misunderstood, and with a deep sense of loneliness. There is a deep psychological and emotional impact of suicide loss on teenagers. For these young people, it is critically important that we know how to approach them and talk to them about their grief with culturally sensitive and age-appropriate communication techniques. This workshop, which will include a 15-minute excerpt of the award-winning documentary “Talking Out LOUD: Teens & Suicide Loss, A Conversation,” is designed to equip mental health professionals, educators, and community leaders with practical tools and strategies to support teenagers who are grieving the loss of a loved one to suicide. Participants will explore the unique challenges grieving teens face, learn evidence-based approaches to provide effective support and engage in interactive exercises that build skills for fostering connection, resilience, and healing.



1F. WHAT I HAVE LEARNED AS A FIRST RESPONDER FOR GRIEF AND LOSS AND MOTHERS WHOSE CHILDREN HAVE DIED AND THEIR RESILIENCY

Workshop Location: Joshua Tree

Presenter(s):

Dr. Arvis L Jones, Founder, Damon's Center for Grief, Loss and Trauma

Koreen Cea, M Ed, Elementary Credential, Early Childhood Certificate

Barbara Pritchett-Hughes, Mother

Nicole Williams, Mother

First responders to violence are often family members or friends. The devastating wake following violence can have lifetime implications and memories for survivors. But what happens when you yourself are a Grief and Loss Counselor and violence and death suddenly touches your own life? This presentation will follow Dr. Jones' personal journey through the maze of feelings, emotions and inner conflicts; and her on-going recovery after her son, Damon, was killed in a mistaken identity incident while his wife was eight months pregnant, and his youngest daughter was born 6 days after he was murdered. This presentation will also include a panel of two other mother's experiences with the loss of their children due to murder. The main purpose and focus of these mother's stories, is to help professionals understand how best to help them in the beginning and if there a "too soon time frame" to give support. The 5 established stages of Grief; Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance, along with newer stages will be explored. This will also include some discussion on Anticipatory Grief and Loss, Anticipatory Mourning and Anticipatory Trauma. The support and guidance given in the first hours and days following are vital in assisting survivors to begin their journey of recovery. As a special experience, the audience will participate in some Music Therapy techniques that are used in treating grief, loss and trauma.

1G. UNRESOLVED CHILDHOOD GRIEF AND ITS IMPACT ON FUTURE ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS: FROM GRIEF TO GROWTH

Workshop Location: Beatriz Solis

Presenter(s):

Gregory Canillas, PhD, CEO, Soul 2 Soul Global/Associate Professor, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Children experience grief in many forms, from the loss of a loved one to the disruption of familiar environments. While grief is a natural and necessary process, unresolved grief in childhood can influence the way individuals relate to others later in life. In this workshop, we will explore how unaddressed grief can seep into adult romantic relationships, manifesting as difficulties in trust, intimacy, and emotional regulation. We will discuss why it is crucial to address grief during childhood, and we will provide evidence-based strategies that can help caregivers and professionals support children in processing their grief, laying a healthier foundation for future relationships.

Why Address Grief in Childhood?

Early intervention is key. Childhood is a formative period when emotional patterns and attachment styles are established. Unresolved grief can:

2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

- Disrupt the development of secure attachment, potentially leading to issues such as fear of abandonment or difficulty trusting others in romantic relationships.
- Impair emotional regulation, making it challenging to navigate the ups and downs of intimate partnerships.
- Create a lingering sense of loss and unresolved sadness that can interfere with relationship satisfaction and overall mental health in adulthood.

By addressing grief early, we not only support the child's immediate emotional well-being but also equip them with the tools to form healthy, resilient relationships later in life.



Tracie Andrews

Tracie Andrews is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. She received her bachelor's degree from Lewis-Clark State College and her master's in social work from Aurora University. Tracie has worked in a variety of settings and has extensive knowledge of working with underserved children, adults, and families and disenfranchised communities. She has expertise in early childhood mental health, crisis services, and suicide prevention. She is currently a co-chair of LA Suicide Prevention Network.

Fr. Stan Bosch

Father Stan Bosch, Psy. D. has worked with Los Angeles's gang involved youth and adults for more than 35 years. His work with inner city youth was featured in the National Geographic documentary "Inside LA Gang Wars", as well as in the Los Angeles Times August 2009: "Let's Talk About It!" <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-southla-therapy16-2006aug16,0,522160.story>; and The LA Archdiocesan Tidings: "Creating Communities of Care!" www.thetidings.com/2008/101708/gangs.htm. Fr. Stan holds a doctoral degree in psychology with an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology. He is a psychotherapist, Director of Mental Health, Personnel Development and Clinical Supervisor for gang intervention with Soledad Enrichment Action (SEA) and the City of Los Angeles' Gang Reduction and Youth Development Project (GRYD). He also maintains private practice in psychotherapy in South Los Angeles specializing in psychodynamic group and individual psychotherapy treating early trauma/abuse, depression, addictions and gang related issues. He is pastor of St. Raphael's Catholic Church in South LA. He is bi-lingual in English and Spanish.

Gregory Canillas

Dr. Gregory Canillas is an Associate Professor at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology (Los Angeles). With extensive experience in

clinical psychology and social work, Dr. Canillas has worked as a Clinical Psychologist with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) and as a Children's Social Worker (CSW) with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LAC-DCFS). His expertise includes working with children in foster care, addressing diversity in mental health, supporting queer populations, interfamilial abuse, and treating substance issues. Dr. Canillas has delivered numerous presentations on these topics at national and international conferences. Additionally, his research has been published in academic journals, including the American Psychologist. Dr. Canillas is the CEO of Soul 2 Soul Global (S2S), a mission-driven company providing "Simple Relationship Solutions for Busy People." S2S offers transformational couples and parenting retreats, including Love Wins! LGBTQ+ Weekend Couples Retreat, which combines LGBTQ+ specific coaching with luxurious resort experiences. Dr. Canillas's work focuses on helping individuals, couples, and parents create more fulfilling, harmonious relationships by employing a holistic model that utilizes cutting-edge research from family systems and psychodynamic theories.

Deanne Tilton Durfee

Deanne Tilton Durfee is founding Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) and ICAN Associates, a private non-profit charity comprised of corporate and media representatives. She has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse (NCPCA) and as President of the California Consortium of Child Abuse Councils (PCA), as a Commissioner on the California Attorney General's Commission on the Enforcement of Child Abuse Laws and as a Federal Commissioner on the U.S. Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, Chairing the Committee on Child Pornography. She was appointed by the Governor to the California Child Victim Witness Judicial Advisory Committee and by the Secretary of Health and Human Services

under three Presidents to the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect, serving two years as Chairperson. In October 2011, she became a member of Attorney General Eric Holder's National Task Force on Children Exposed to Violence. She currently serves as a Commissioner on the First 5 LA Commission on Children and Families. She holds a Doctorate in Humanities, honoris causa, from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

Michael Durfee

Michael Durfee, M.D. is a Board-Certified Adult and Child Psychiatrist and is the Chief Consultant for the LA County Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN). He was Chief Resident in Child Psychiatry for USC LA County Hospital where he finished his training. He built child abuse prevention programs in the Department of Health, Public Health, Mental Health and DCFS. He created a drug abuse program in the U.S. Army Korea. Dr. Durfee was psychiatrist and later medical director at McLaren Hall. He has provided expert testimony in courts throughout the state. His model for Multiagency Review of Child Deaths in 1978 has spread to all states and multiple countries. He provided on site consultation in multiple states and several countries. His work includes special programs for treatment of children including those who survive severe abuse. His present project involves a system to systematically serve over 1000 newborns a year reported at risk of child abuse. Dr. Durfee's work with fatal abuse includes addressing the trauma and grief of survivors of fatal family violence, including young children who witnessed their parent or sibling killed.

Patty Ellis

Patty Ellis is a Certified Grief Educator and presently serves as the Program Coordinator for Taking Time. She has worked in grief and loss for over 15 years. Her responsibilities have included direct services to the bereaved in the form of support groups and individual support, program development and outreach. She was formerly with Providence Trinity Care Hospice

where she was manager of The Gathering Place, their community bereavement center. She has worked with children, youth and families. Patty is the confounder of Taking Time, a non-profit bereavement center serving South Bay in Los Angeles County.

Ana Estevez


Ana Estevez is a passionate advocate for children, crime victims, and child safety. With over 27 years of experience in education, she has served as a teacher, elementary school principal, district administrator, and currently serves as a Director. Ana was honored by the State Assembly as the 2019 California Woman of the Year, recognized by Nexstar as a 2024 Remarkable Woman, and is a United States Army veteran. She has appeared on the Dr. Phil Show, Good Day LA, and has testified before the California Senate and Assembly Judiciary Committees. She has been instrumental in major child safety legislative initiatives at both the state and federal levels, most recently with the passage of Senate Bill 331—Piqui's Law—in October 2023. However, most meaningfully, she is known as Piqui's momma.

Jerome Front

Jerome Front, LMFT, a year-round Adjunct Faculty member at Pepperdine University in the Graduate School of Education & Clinical Psychology since 1999, created the first full graduate Course called "Mindfulness & Psychotherapy" countable towards Degree credit. Jerome has presented on the neuroscientific and contemplative aspects of mindful sensory meditations at the international UCLA "Mindfulness & Psychotherapy" Conference featuring Zen Master Thich Hanh. Few of the recent places Jerome has been invited to lead Mindfulness Trainings include:

USC Graduate School of Social Work, UCLA Ronald Reagan Medical Center, CA Association of Marriage & Family Therapists, American Association of Pediatrics, So. Cal., National Symposium on Palliative Care, & Penny Lane Centers. His past workshops around the country include conferences in Michigan, Washington, DC, and South Carolina, and he





wrote the cover story on Mindfulness for helping professionals called, “A Quiet Revolution,” for The Psychotherapy Networker. Jerome has had mindfulness meditation practice since 1987 and has trained in MBSR on three 8-day in-person Group Clinical Training Retreats with Jon Kabat-Zinn & Saki Santorelli. Jerome has been teaching two weekly meditation classes since 2000 and has had a therapy private practice in Studio City for 31 years. Also, for 30 years, he has led several unique, one-day local CE Mindfulness Training Retreats. More instructor Information and writing via: www.JeromeFront.com.

Pamela Gabbay

Pamela Gabbay, EdD, FT is a nationally recognized author, trainer, and consultant who has served the bereavement field in many capacities. She has worked in the critical space of suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention throughout her career. Dr. Gabbay is part of the Training Corps of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and travels throughout the country conducting trainings on their behalf. She is also a facilitator and educator with Coping After Suicide. Dr. Gabbay, along with Andy McNiel, is the co-author of *Understanding and Supporting Bereaved Children: A Practical Guide for Professionals*. Formerly, she was the Director of The Mourning Star Center for Grieving Children and Teens, as well as the Director of Camp Erin Palm Springs, a bereavement camp for children and teenagers. Dr. Gabbay holds a Fellow in Thanatology (FT) from the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) and earned a Master of Arts degree in Cognitive Psychology from Claremont Graduate University. She earned her Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership from Brandman University. Dr. Gabbay conducts nationwide presentations on children's grief and suicide bereavement for organizations including the National Alliance for Children's Grief, TAPS, and the Association for Death Education and Counseling. She is on the Advisory Board of the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS).

Linda Garcia

Linda has been a Certified Child Life Specialist for the past 25 years with extensive clinical practice working with chronically ill, injured, and suspected child abuse and neglect children and families. Linda worked at UCLA Medical Center, Child Life Director at Children's Hospital Los Angeles and currently practicing at the Grossman Burn Center. Her clinical private practice has extended to the community providing grief and loss support to victims of fatal family violence. Since graduating from Pacific Oaks College Linda has dedicated her career to advocate and address children's grief and loss through her clinical practice and academic education. Linda also facilitates peer support groups for burned injured surviving children and families through Children's Burn Foundation. Linda is a specialized trainer on Grief and Loss training for DMH and an Adjunct Professor at Azusa Pacific University teaching in the Master's Program for those pursuing a degree in Child Life and Psychology.

Joanne L. Harpel

“Joanne L. Harpel, MPhil, CT JD, an international authority on suicide bereavement and postvention, is President of Coping After Suicide and former Senior Director for Public Affairs and Postvention for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Her brother's suicide left her with two grieving teenaged siblings and a commitment to supporting young people. Her 20+ years of experience include:

- Creating the first national suicide bereavement support group for teens
- Developing a five-part “Ask The Experts: Helping Our Children Cope with Suicide Loss” series
- Co-authoring *After a Suicide: A Toolkit for Schools*, and consulting with schools nationwide
- Presenting on supporting children and teens in the aftermath of suicide at the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Association of Suicidology, and a pediatrics department of Kaiser Permanente
- Spearheading a training program on facilitating bereavement support groups for children and teens, in collaboration with the Dougy National Center for Grieving Children & Families
- Creating

the first widely-available resource for teen survivors of suicide loss in the voices of their peers Joanne received the American Association of Suicidology's Survivor of the Year Award and the International Association for Suicide Prevention's Farberow Award for Significant Contribution in the Field of Work with Survivors of Suicide Loss."

Arvis L Jones

Arvis Jones received a BA Degree from California State Long Beach with a Music Therapy Certificate and a MA Degree in Clinical Psychology from National University and an Honorary Doctorate in Music from Emmanuel Bible College. She was the first African American Music Therapist employed by Arts & Services for the Disabled and the first Music Therapist at the Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, where she developed a program to address the emotional and environmental needs of children and youth ages 2½ to 22 years. Arvis has worked with children and youths with dual diagnosis and has practiced Music Therapy with seniors, stroke clients, Alzheimer patients and other diagnoses, not limited to but including Cerebral Palsy, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and Sickle Cell. After her son, Damon Jones Sir's death in 2008 by mistaken identity, she developed a grief and loss program that was used in nine middle schools of LAUSD and is currently facilitating a Grief and Loss program for adults and working on a book about her experiences. She collaborated with the Los Angeles Police department at crime scenes, lending support to families. She is a national board member of The National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM), a member of Musicians-In- Action, a member of American Music Therapy Association, a member of Moms Demand Action, a former member of ADEC, a member of the Watts Gang Task Force, Cease Fire, a member of the Top Ladies of Distinction (TLOD) and a former Top Teens Advisor. Arvis has been honored by Senate District 25 as a "Distinguished Women" for her effective work in the Los Angeles Community. She was honored as Council District 15 "Pioneer Woman" by the Commission on The Status of Women in Los

Angeles, she received a Resolution from The California 25th Senatorial District, she was a 2018 Sherone for Council District 9, in 2019, received a commendation from LA District Attorney's Bureau of Victim Services, a commendation from LA County Board of Supervisors in 2022 for her community work with families, an award from the NAACP Youth Council for her work with children. She is a member of Moms Demand Action and Everytown USA. And is the Founder of Damon's Center for Grief, Loss and Trauma.


David Kessler

David Kessler is one of the world's foremost experts on grief and loss. His decades of experience with thousands of people on the edge of life and death has taught him the secrets to living a happy and fulfilled life, even after life's tragedies. He is the author of seven books including his latest bestselling book, *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*, as well as a new *Finding Meaning Companion Workbook*. He co-authored two books with Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *Life Lessons* and *On Grief and Grieving*. He co-wrote *You Can Heal Your Heart* with Louise Hay and also wrote *Visions, Trips and Crowded Rooms: Who and What You See Before You Die*. His first book, *The Needs of The Dying* received praise from Saint (Mother) Teresa. He also hosted his own Spotify Podcast called *Healing with David Kessler*. David's volunteer work includes being a founding member of Project Angel Food. He also serves as Specialist Reserve for the Los Angeles Police as well as having served on the Red Cross's disaster services team. His new online model of grief support, *Tender Hearts*, offers over twenty-five groups. Additionally, David leads one of the most respected Grief Educator Certification programs. He is the founder of *Grief.com*.

Alicia F. Lieberman

Alicia F. Lieberman, Ph.D. is Irving B. Harris Endowed Chair in Infant Mental Health, Professor in the UCSF Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and director of the UCSF Child Trauma Research Program. She directs the Early Trauma Treatment Network, a center





of SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network with the mission to increase access and raise the standard of care for trauma-exposed young children and their families. She is the senior developer of Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), an evidence-based treatment for traumatized children aged birth-five with an international reach, and numerous books and academic articles. Born in Paraguay, she received her professional training in Israel and the United States. Her cross-cultural experience as a Jewish Latina informs her commitment to address obstacles to health for low-income and minoritized children and families. Her numerous awards include the 2023 Holly Smith Award UCSF Award for Exceptional University Service, 2020 Zero to Three Lifetime Achievement Award, 2016 Rene Spitz Award for Lifetime Achievement from the World Association of Infant Mental Health (WAIMH), and 2016 Hero Award from the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

Marisa Martinez

Marisa Martinez, M.A., CCLS II, Reiki II, RWWP is a Certified Child Life Specialist, Reiki practitioner, and Registered Wonders and Worries Provider. Marisa graduated from UC Davis with a B.S. in Psychology then received her M.A. in Early Childhood Education with an Emphasis in Child Life in Hospitals from Mills College. Marisa was a volunteer student, and child life fellow at UC Davis Children's Hospital before working at two Sacramento child life programs. Now working at the Comprehensive Cancer Center, Marisa is lead for Radiation Oncology and School Re-Entry program, while providing education and coping support to patients and families in the Pediatric Infusion Room. As a Co-Facilitator for Remembering Together, Marisa also helps children and teenagers cope with loss and bereavement in a support group. (preferred pronouns: she/her)

Jennifer Miller

Jennifer Miller, M.A., ATR-BC, Art Therapist II, Reiki II is a board-certified Art Therapist, specializing in pediatric medical settings, using

creative expression to support children and families coping with illness, grief, and trauma. Jennifer earned a B.F.A from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in 2009 and a M.A. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling in Art Therapy from Lesley University in 2017. Since relocating to Sacramento in 2019, Jennifer has worked with UC Davis Health, first at the Comprehensive Cancer Center Pediatric Infusion Room and later inpatient pediatrics at UC Davis Children's Hospital, collaborating with interdisciplinary teams to enhance patient well-being through arts-based healing. Her additional training in mind-body stress reduction techniques, Opening Minds through Art, and Reiki informs her holistic approach to patient care. In addition to her clinical work, Jennifer co-facilitates Remembering Together and Young Adults Bereavement Art Group, providing opportunities for individuals to process loss through artistic expression. (preferred pronouns: she/her)

Dan Siegel

Dr. Dan Siegel is the Founder and Director of Education of the Mindsight Institute and founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA, where he was also Co-Principal Investigator of the Center for Culture, Brain and Development and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the School of Medicine. An award-winning educator, Dan is the author of five New York Times bestsellers and over fifteen other books which have been translated into over forty languages. As the founding editor of the Norton Professional Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology ("IPNB"), Dan has overseen the publication of one hundred books in the transdisciplinary IPNB framework which focuses on the mind and mental health. A graduate of Harvard Medical School, Dan completed his postgraduate training at UCLA specializing in pediatrics, and adult, adolescent, and child psychiatry. He was trained in a Sackham research and narrative analysis through a National Institute of Mental Health research training fellowship focusing on how relationships shape our autobiographical ways of making sense of our lives and influence our

development across the lifespan. Learn more about Dr. Siegel at: www.drdansiegel.com | www.mindsightinstitute.com

Claire Towle

Claire Towle is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who has over 30 years of experience combining direct clinical care, supervision, teaching, and management responsibilities. She has been certified in trauma, bereavement and Thanatology. Claire has worked in outpatient medical settings and is experienced in working with children, youth, adults and families. Ms. Towle was the Director of The Gathering Place, a center for loss and life transitions, and was the Associate Director of Bereavement Services for Providence Trinity Care Hospice. She had a private psychotherapy practice specializing in grief and loss. Claire has provided multiple presentations on grief and loss, health and mental health topics. As a lecturer with the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, she taught graduate MSW students. In 2022, Claire co-founded Taking Time: South Bay (Taking Time), a non-profit bereavement center, serving the South Bay of Los Angeles. She is CEO and Clinical Director of the program. Taking Time (takingtime.org) provides one-one bereavement counseling, bereavement support groups and information and referrals. The program is also contracted to provide bereavement services for Alcove Beach Cities, an innovative youth wellness center serving youth ages 12-25.

