



2022 Strengthening Connections:

Improving Student and Staff Emotional Wellbeing
in the Virtual and Real Worlds



November 29-30, 2022



Sponsored by the
Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
in partnership with the
Virginia Department of Education



AGENDA—Tuesday, November 29

8:00 AM **Presentation of Colors**
JROTC Huguenot High School
Pledge of Allegiance
Led by Student
National Anthem
Huguenot High School Choir

8:15 AM **Welcome**
Donna Michaelis, *Division Director, Public Safety Training and the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services*
Tracy Winn Banks, *Chief Deputy Director, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services*

8:30 AM **Does School Climate in Virginia Need Improving?**
Donna Michaelis, *Division Director, Public Safety Training and the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services*
James Christian, *Virginia Center School and Campus Safety Manager, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services*
Betsy Bell, *Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Program Coordinator, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services*
Gerard Lawson, Ph.D., *Professor, School of Education, Virginia Tech*
We'll take a deep dive into Virginia public school climate as evidenced by the annual School Safety Audit and Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions data. Participants will have the opportunity to explore potential connections between these two valuable sources of data and discover how division data can help drive meaningful change to school safety and climate.

9:30 AM **Break**

9:45 AM **Creating a Climate and Culture for Success – Part One**
Kim Bearden, *Co-Founder and Executive Director, Ron Clark Academy*
Kim will motivate, inspire, and remind participants of the powerful impact that they can have, despite the pressures and challenges of their profession. Kim will also share the importance of building relationships among staff, families, and students that will motivate, engage, empower, and create success for all.

10:45 AM **Break**

11:00 AM **Creating a Climate and Culture for Success – Part Two**
Kim Bearden, *Co-Founder and Executive Director, Ron Clark Academy*
In part two of Kim's keynote she will share how to ignite a passion for learning, provide support and encouragement, hold high expectations for student behavior, promote parental involvement, and ensure a safe, secure environment where everyone feels welcome. Additionally, Kim will share how to create consistency and expectations while simultaneously instilling passion and joy.

Noon **Lunch**

1:00 PM **"All the World's a Stage!" Creating SPACE for Healing and Wellbeing**
Monique Williams, MA, *Owner, Beginnings Family Enrichment*
Many children in our schools today are living lives filled with trauma or experiences beyond their control. In response, educators often find themselves having to take on the role of counselors, supporting the emotional healing of their students, not just their academic growth, as students' traumas take center stage. More so, with this evolving role comes an increasing need to understand and address the ways in which student trauma affects our education professionals. This session explores the single most important thing schools can do: create SPACE that provides a caring, safe environment to support students and address the reality and impact of secondary traumatic stress.

2:30 PM **Break**

AGENDA—November 29 (continued)

2:45 PM **Recognizing Anxiety in Our Students and Ourselves**

Dr. Tori Stone, *Assistant Professor of Counseling, George Mason University*

Dr. Shekila Melchior, *Assistant Professor and Academic Program Coordinator, George Mason University*

Recognizing anxiety as a human condition is the beginning of recognizing how we can support our students and help ourselves in the current mental health crisis. This keynote will explore the impact of anxiety on the nervous system, the connection between depression and anxiety, understanding and breaking the worry cycle, and understanding how certain behaviors serve as messengers of anxiety. Attendees will understand how fostering connections can support youth experiencing anxiety and how connections can help ease our own anxiety. Application of usable strategies will be discussed.

4:15 PM **Wrap Up and Preparing for Day Two**

Shellie Evers, *Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety Supervisor, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services*

4:30 PM **Day One Concludes**

AGENDA—Wednesday, November 30

8:30 AM **Merging the Real and Virtual Worlds to Build Trust and Enhance School Safety**

Steven MacDonald, *Senior Trainer, Safer Schools Together*

With the rise in the amount of time individuals are spending online, it's necessary for those with students in their care, and School Safety/Threat Assessment (SS/TA) teams to recognize the power of social media. Equally important is to recognize that social media can be used as a tool, and it's not something that simply needs to be banned or to be fearful of. This session will enhance participant understanding of the ever-changing digital landscape and provide strategies on how to proactively intervene at the first sign of worrisome behavior. Even if threats made on social media don't happen at school – they often have a way of impacting the school climate/culture. Trends including TikTok challenges (such as the Devious Licks), Doxing/Swatting threats, and even fake pages or 'finsta' pages can increase a student's anonymity online and make it harder to detect the origin of worrisome online behavior. Students may not know how to report or are afraid to report what they see online, even to teachers, or someone they trust, so staying informed on the latest trends and updates is the next step to ensuring a safe and caring school community. By learning how to effectively navigate the digital landscape, participants will have the tools to respond and investigate cyberbullying, harassment, slander, and other threats with a new understanding and greater empathy towards their students.

9:30 AM **Break**

9:45 AM **Helping Students Build Social Emotional Strength**

Dr. Paul Harris, *Educational Consultant*

What is social emotional learning (SEL)? Why is SEL particularly important in serving an increasingly diverse student population? How can we promote cultural competence in policy and practice through social emotional strength? These and more questions will be addressed through a strengths-based lens in this keynote presentation. After this session, participants will be able to describe transformative SEL, understand the relevance of SEL to multiple educational and wellness outcomes, and initiate and implement practical SEL strategies in their sphere of influence.

10:45 AM **Break**

11:00 AM **Overcoming Our Instinct to Instantaneously Like or Dislike Others in Support of Whole School Wellbeing**

Horacio Sanchez, *CEO, Resiliency, Inc.*

If you have ever found yourself saying "we just clicked" or "we don't have anything in common" then you have experienced an automatic attraction or the reverse with another person. In fact, we all have preconceived notions that can positively and negatively impact our lives. Understanding how and why these ideas form will make us more self-aware and influence how we think, react, behave, and yes, whether we instantaneously like or dislike someone. The brain associates things easily and this process can lead to a person consciously thinking one thing while the brain automatically associates it with something else. We can however, learn to see past our automatic thoughts – and improve our interactions with others in the process.

Noon **Conference Concludes**

RESOURCES

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

<https://vastudentservices-clc.org>

Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control (VA ABC)

www.abc.virginia.gov/education

Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS)

<https://dbhds.virginia.gov/behavioral-health/behavioral-health-wellness>

Virginia Department of Veteran Services (DVS)

www.dvs.virginia.gov

CO Safe Schools

www.carbonmonoxideinschools.org

Families Forward

www.familiesforwardva.org

James House

<https://thejameshouse.org/about>

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

<https://madd.org>

Sarah Michelle Peterson Foundation

<https://sarahmpetersonfoundation.org>

Youth of Virginia Speak Out About Traffic Safety (YOVASO)

<https://safeteendriving.org>

EVALUATIONS

We value your input on our conference.

Please use this QR code to access the evaluation for this event.



https://vadajs.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_00PlrytO5YIAPka

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional conference materials are available by accessing this QR code:



<https://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/2022-strengthening-connections-forum-resource-page>



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DCJS Division of Public Safety Training and the Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety

TRAINING SCHEDULE (AS OF 11/29/22)

Trainings are limited to target audiences and offered at no charge unless otherwise noted. Pre-registration is required to ensure space.

December 1, 2022	K-12 Virtual Behavioral Threat Assessment Basic Training	Online
December 1–2, 2022	Domestic Extremism and Violent Extremism Awareness	Marymount University, Arlington
December 6, 2022	K-12 Public School Safety Training for Administrators: Adding Tools to Your Safety Toolbox	Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, Abingdon
December 6, 2022	Homemade Explosives: Awareness, Recognition and Response	Salem Cardinal Justice Academy, Salem
December 7, 2022	Homemade Explosives: Awareness, Recognition and Response	Skyline Regional Criminal Justice Academy, Middletown
December 7, 2022	K-12 Public School Safety Training for Administrators: Adding Tools to Your Safety Toolbox	Roanoke College, Salem
December 8, 2022	School Security Directors' Virtual Roundtable	Online
December 8, 2022	Virginia SRO Connect	Online
December 8, 2022	Homemade Explosives: Awareness, Recognition and Response	Virginia State Police Academy, Chesterfield
December 8–9, 2022	Domestic Extremism and Violent Extremism Awareness	Piedmont Virginia Community College, Charlottesville
December 9, 2022	Homemade Explosives: Awareness, Recognition and Response	Virginia Beach Fire Training, Virginia Beach
December 12–16, 2022	School Resource Officer and School Administrator Basic Course	Liberty Mountain Conference Center, Lynchburg
December 13, 2022	Legal Updates for SSOs – 2022 v.1	Online
December 13–14, 2022	Disability Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers	Leesburg Police Department, Leesburg
December 14, 2022	Poverty's Impact on the Brain	Online
December 20, 2022	From the Case Files of: De-escalation of Youth in Crisis through Understanding Development, Trauma, and Mental Health for Law Enforcement	Hampton Roads, (TBD)
January 9–10, 2023	Critical Decision Making for Complex Coordinated Attacks	Eanes-Pittman Public Safety Training Center, Chesterfield
January 12, 2023	Civilian Response and Casualty Care (CRCC) <i>(morning and afternoon sessions)</i>	James Madison University, Harrisonburg
January 13, 2023	Civilian Response and Casualty Care (CRCC) <i>(morning and afternoon sessions)</i>	King William County Fire and EMS, King William
January 12–13, 2023	Critical Decision Making for Complex Coordinated Attacks	Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy, Ashburn
January 17, 2023	Drone Assessment and Response Tactics	Crater Criminal Justice Academy, Disputanta
January 18, 2023	Drone Assessment and Response Tactics	Rappahannock Regional Criminal Justice Academy, Fredericksburg
January 19, 2023	Drone Assessment and Response Tactics	Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Academy, Ashburn
January 26, 2023	K-12 Virtual Behavioral Threat Assessment Basic Training	Online
January 23–24, 2022	Domestic Extremism and Violent Extremism Awareness	Virginia State University, Petersburg
January 24–25, 2023	Mental Health Topics for Pathways for Violence Prevention	TBD, Charlottesville
January 30, 2023	Civilian Response and Casualty Care (CRCC) <i>(morning and afternoon sessions)</i>	The Governor's School for the Arts, Norfolk
February 6–7, 2023	Drug Interdiction and Conducting Complete Traffic Stops	Rappahannock Regional Criminal Justice Training Academy, Fredericksburg
February 15–16, 2023	Mental Health Topics for Pathways for Violence Prevention	TBD, Fredericksburg
March 13–17, 2023	School Resource Officer and School Administrator Basic Course	James City County Police Department, Williamsburg
March 23, 2023	K-12 Virtual Behavioral Threat Assessment Basic Training	Online
March 29–30, 2023	Mental Health Topics for Pathways for Violence Prevention	TBD, Charlotte/Mecklenburg
April 17–21, 2023	School Resource Officer and School Administrator Basic Course	Southwest Virginia Criminal Justice Academy, Bristol
April 26–27, 2023	Mental Health Topics for Pathways for Violence Prevention	TBD, Winchester
May 15–19, 2023	School Resource Officer and School Administrator Basic Course	Skyline Regional Criminal Justice Academy, Middletown
May 24–25, 2023	Mental Health Topics for Pathways for Violence Prevention	TBD, Abingdon
June 12–16, 2023	School Resource Officer and School Administrator Basic Course	Central Shenandoah Criminal Justice Training Academy, Weyers Cave
July 10–14, 2023	School Resource Officer and School Administrator Basic Course	Chesterfield County Public Safety Training Academy, Chesterfield
July 24–27, 2023	2023 School Safety Training Forum	Hampton Convention Center, Hampton