



# VALCPA FALL CONFERENCE

## September 17-19, 2017

Sheraton Oceanfront Hotel in Virginia Beach

3501 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA

**Register Online using the  
following link:**

***[VALCPA2017FallConference.EventBrite.com](http://VALCPA2017FallConference.EventBrite.com)***

**OR register by mail with the  
enclosed registration form**

# Conference Agenda

## Sunday, September 17, 2017

4:00pm to 5:00 pm  
5:00pm to 6:00pm  
6:00pm to 7:00pm

Registration  
**Opening Session by Foster Care Alumni of America**  
Dinner (additional fee and RSVP required)

## Monday, September 18, 2017

8:00am to 9:00 am  
9:00am to 10:30am  
10:30am to 10:45am  
10:45am to 12:15pm

Registration and Breakfast  
**Welcome and Keynote by Juli Alvarado**  
Break  
**Breakout Sessions choice of:**

1. Brain-Based Interventions with Juli Alvarado
2. Sensory Processing and Self-Regulation in Mental Health with Angie Hale
3. The Impact of the Internet and Genetic Testing on the Adoption Reunion Process with Varda Makovsky

12:15pm to 1:15pm  
1:15pm to 2:45 pm

Lunch  
**Breakout Sessions choice of:**

1. FFTA Committee Meeting
2. Adoption Committee Meeting
3. It's OK To Think About Yourself: An Honest Conversation about Self-Care with Kimberly Harrell

2:45pm to 3:00pm  
3:00pm to 4:00pm  
4:00pm to 5:00pm

Break  
**VALCPA Business Meeting**  
Evening Reception

## Tuesday, September 19, 2016

8:00am to 9:00am  
9:00am to 10:30am

Registration and Breakfast  
**Breakout Sessions Choice of:**

1. Developing Cultural Humility with J. Patrick Slifka and Angela Edmonds
2. Youth on the Move in Independent Living with Renee Garnett and Two Youth Facilitators
3. From Foster Care to Forever with Jennifer Surratt and Shannon Updike

10:30am to 10:45am  
10:45am to 12:15pm

Break  
**Breakout Sessions Choice of:**

1. Exploring the Experience of African American Families with Shardae Washington
2. Parenting Through the ACES: A Model For Improving Family Dynamics for Children of Trauma with Sara Buckheit and Lauren Weidner
3. Internet, Social Media, and Gaming: Taming the Three Headed Dragon with John Dennis

**Conference Concludes at 12:15pm**

## **Hotel Reservation Information**

### **Sheraton Oceanfront**

3501 Atlantic Avenue  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451  
**(757) 425-9000**

**Reservations can be made using the following link:**

***<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1612157933&key=6ED1E13>***

**Reservations must be made directly with the hotel.**

**Conference Rate of \$129 per room is available for all rooms reserved before August 15, 2017.**

**Complimentary Valet Parking is available for all conference guests.**



## Session Descriptions

### **Opening Session**

**Sunday, Sept. 17, 5:00pm**

***Hand-Hope-Home: Understanding the Importance of Relational Permanence and Lifelong Connections for Youth***  
**Brandy Hudson**

Research indicates that every year, approximately 20,000 children leave foster care without legal permanency, and an uncounted number leave without emotional permanency. Without the social, emotional, and financial support typically offered to young adults by their families, many foster youth find themselves alone during important periods in their lives when they face serious challenges. This session will highlight the small but powerful impact that everyday interactions have in helping youth achieve permanence to reach their maximum potential.

### **Keynote**

**Monday, Sept. 18, 9:00am**

***The Truth in Healing***  
**Juli Alvarado**

Why aren't I motivated sufficiently to make necessary personal changes? How can I find this motivation? How does my own life trauma affect my capacity to receive, honor, and serve the trauma of my clients? How does my inner-matrix relate to my capacity to serve others? How does self-care relate to my role within my organization? How can I, and my organization, become more compassionate, supportive, and effective in serving others? Juli will address these and many other root-level dynamics that affect personal and professional well-being in this inspiring keynote presentation.

### **Breakout Sessions**

**Monday, Sept. 18, 10:45am**

***Brain-Based Interventions***  
**Juli Alvarado**

This workshop will offer 5 statements to engage clients of trauma as you deepen your understanding of simple, effective brain based strategies directed at the mitigation of the damaging impact of trauma.

***Sensory Processing and Self-Regulation in Mental Health***  
**Angie Hale**

Sensory processing and self-regulation are complex and current issues in mental health. This presentation will cover the basics of what sensory processing is and how related difficulties may present in children and adolescents with mental health challenges. Various interventions and considerations for improving self-regulation will be discussed.

***The Impact of the Internet and Genetic Testing on the Adoption Reunion Process***

**Varda Makovsky**

Historically, adoption reunions were facilitated by third parties including social workers and state officials, and involved counseling both before and during the search process to assist all parties with the emotional complexities associated with reconnection. In recent years, many adoptees and birth family members have found each other directly using the internet and genetic testing services. This session will explore how these developments have changed the reunion process, and steps adoption professionals can take to ensure a healthy and beneficial reconnection process, regardless of how a reunion occurred.

### **Breakout Sessions**

**Monday, Sept. 18, 1:15pm**

***FFTA Committee Meeting***

Updates from the Virginia Chapter of the FFTA as well as updates from FFTA National.

***Adoption Committee Meeting***

Updates and information from the Virginia Adoption Committee.

***It's OK To Think About Yourself: An Honest Conversation about Self-Care***  
**Kimberly Harrell**

Working in the adoption and /or foster care field is more than just a job. For many of us, it is a calling, a vocation, our life's work. As a result we give of ourselves in a way that can leave us feeling tired both physically and emotionally. During this presentation I will share practical ways to take care of yourself so you can continue refreshed and renewed in this important work.

## **Breakout Sessions**

**Tuesday, Sept. 19, 9:00am**

### ***Developing Cultural Humility***

**J. Patrick Slifka and Angela Edmonds**

The helping professions have placed a great deal of emphasis on diversity and cultural competency. While knowledge and skill development are essential in our work with diverse client populations, they are frequently not enough. How do we know if we are performing competently or if our approaches are truly meeting the needs of those we serve? Cultural humility is about attitude, self-reflection, and informed curiosity and is applicable at all levels of practice. This training will review the basic tenets of cultural humility and will offer opportunities for attendees to apply these concepts in practice.

### ***Youth on the Move in Independent Living***

**Renee Garnett**

The purpose of this workshop is to help licensed child-placing agencies and other paraprofessionals better understand the importance of helping youth in care plan for their future. Without a transition plan to connect the dots they can easily get off track. The Fostering Futures program provides an array of independent living (IL) services to help youth in foster care transition and move in the right direction.

### ***From Foster Care to Forever***

**Jennifer Surratt and Shannon Updike**

Foster families who make the commitment to adoption will experience many changes in that transition. There is paperwork, negotiations, changes in parental responsibilities and roles – and often the foster care agency has to help the foster family in making that shift. This workshop will help professionals to better understand the nuts and bolts of the adoption process and the clinical needs for families and children as they transition to adoption. The presenters will provide resources and strategies for professionals to better support foster families who become forever families.

## **Breakout Sessions**

**Tuesday, Sept. 19, 10:45am**

### ***Exploring the Experience of African American Families***

**Shardae Washington**

The purpose of the training is to evoke respectful but open and honest dialogue regarding the African American (AA) culture and family related issues in connection to the dominant norms and culture. Participants will develop a sense of cultural understanding around AA families and their relationships and will be educated about how to attempt to create strong therapeutic relationships and address cultural differences in the context of therapy. The goal is to create a safe environment for participants to explore stereotypes and pathologies that shape unrealistic and damaging views of the AA community and to acknowledge the diversity within the AA community and amongst AA families but also focusing on common issues.

### ***Parenting Through the ACEs: A Model For Improving Family Dynamics for Children of Trauma***

**Sara Buckheit and Lauren Weidner**

Children who have experienced trauma require help to reshape their brains and behaviors. They need us as caregivers to teach them how to connect with others. This workshop will walk through practical activities and methods for mentoring the child's brain to help them on their path toward resilience. Participants will gain knowledge about CHS's approach to services, brain development, practical tools for building safe, trusting relationships, and methods for teaching brains new skills such as self-regulation and social competence.

### ***The Internet, Social Media, and Gaming: Taming the Three-Headed Dragon***

**John Dennis**

The technology used in today's society is a never-ending, ever-changing landscape of apps, information and resources. Children and teens are often light years ahead of their social workers and foster/adoptive parents. This training will look at emerging trends in social media and internet usage while educating professionals on how to close the gap.