

EDUCATION PRESENTER BIOS

Heather T. Forbes, LCSW

Heather is the owner of the Beyond Consequences Institute and is an internationally published author on the topics of raising children with difficult and severe behaviors, understanding the parent's reactivity when challenged in the home, and working with challenging children in the classroom. Ms. Forbes lectures, consults, and coaches parents and families in crisis throughout the U.S. and internationally, working to create peaceful and loving families. Ms. Forbes has also devoted a good portion of her work in working with schools across the US to become trauma-informed. She is the author of the book, *Help for Billy*, which is a pragmatic manual to help guide educators and parents who are struggling with children impacted by trauma. Based on the concept of the neuroscience of emotions and behavior, Ms. Forbes provides detailed, comprehensive, and logical strategies for teachers to better understand how traumatic experiences affect the brain and learning. She has also created other resources for schools including study guides and videos. She works with school districts across the nation to become trauma-informed.

Steve Graner

Steve Graner is a ChildTrauma Academy Fellow and has recently retired from teaching English at Erik Ramstad Middle School in Minot, North Dakota after thirty-three years. He grew up in Bismarck, ND, received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Sioux Falls, and completed his Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Minnesota State University Mankato. Throughout his teaching career, Mr. Graner has also coached cross country and track and field, receiving Coach of the Year honors in ND for both high school and middle school cross country.

Mr. Graner is best known for his creative approaches to teaching and coaching and combines a love of the arts and sports with the passion for pedagogy. He has written several one act plays for schools and churches, most of them musicals, and he established the Ramstad Coffeehouse, a yearly celebration of poetry, music, mime, and dance. He was awarded the North Dakota Reading Council's Literacy Award in 2009 for his efforts in inspiring literacy through the arts.

Mr. Graner is currently serving as the Project Director for the Neurosequential Model in Education for the ChildTrauma Academy and is active with the ChildTrauma Academy in training teachers and school personnel in trauma-informed educational practice.

Kathleen McNaught, J.D.

Kathleen directs the Legal Center for Foster Care, a project lead by the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, in collaboration with the Education Law Center and the Juvenile Law Center. The Legal Center provides advocacy for the

education of children in foster care on a national level, training and technical assistance across the country and is a clearinghouse of information on foster care and education. Kathleen is the author of numerous publications on addressing the education barriers for children in foster care and issues facing older youth transitioning from care. One of her publications, *Blueprint for Change: Education Success for Children in Foster Care*, has become a cornerstone publication offering states a framework to identify areas for reform.

Telethe Weary

Telethe and her husband are adoptive parents to three children. When the children came to live with them at the ages of 5, 6 and 8, all of them were significantly behind with their education and had significant behaviors that were manifesting in both the school and home setting. Telethe spent considerable time learning how to meet her children's educational needs, including changing the type of school they were enrolled, working closely with the teachers and administrative staff and providing additional tutoring outside of the school system. Telethe is proud to say that all three of her kids have gone from being profoundly behind with their academics to being on the honor roll.

James Lis

James Lis has been a classroom teacher for over 20 years. His career began in Title 1 elementary schools in inner City Chicago schools. When his family relocated to Orlando, FL in 2005, he started teaching science in a large, diverse middle school. While there, he came across a periodical that introduced him to the field of "restorative practices" which includes strategies for trauma-informed teaching. At this same time, he attended his school district's new restorative practice training, which emphasized the use of talking circles in the classroom. Mr. Lis began sharing this research and training with fellow teachers by conducting professional development sessions and by creating a resource website for his school. Mr. Lis currently teaches high school biology and enjoys the challenge of using restorative practice with older students. Mr. Lis and his wife are adoptive parents for three young men.