

Student Assistance Program (SAP) Webinar Series

Presenter Biographies

Izzy Chavez, Student Assistance Professional, Capitol Region ESD 113, Washington

Mr. Chavez earned a bachelor's degree in Human Services from Western Washington University. For the last 7 years, he has put that degree to use working for Capitol Region ESD 113, True North as a Licensed Chemical Dependency Professional and Prevention Specialist. In this capacity, he serves youths at Hoquiam High School and Middle School. He leads a team of students known as the Grizzly Prevention Squad (GPS), who strive to prevent the use of drugs and alcohol among their peers. In his work with students and with GPS, Mr. Chavez also focuses on mental health awareness and support.

Valerie Connolly-Leach, OCPS, Behavioral Health/Prevention Administrator, Office of Prevention & Wellness, Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services

Mrs. Connolly-Leach is a Prevention Administrator with the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, Office of Prevention & Wellness. Currently, she leads and facilitates the advancement of Behavioral Health Prevention and Early Intervention services and supports utilizing a public health approach related to substance misuse, suicide, depression/anxiety, and youth empowerment for Ohio. Mrs. Connolly-Leach has been with the department since March 2007. She has worked in the field of behavioral health providing direct care services in correctional settings and also has experience in providing services to individuals in the community with co-occurring substance use and mental health disorders. Mrs. Connolly-Leach graduated from Ohio University and holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and has been working in the field of behavioral health for more than 15 years.

Michael L. Dennis, Ph.D., Lighthouse Institute Director and Senior Research Psychologist, Chestnut Health Systems

Dr. Dennis is the Director of Chestnut Health Systems' Lighthouse Institute (LI) and a Senior Research Psychologist. LI conducts research, program evaluation, and training on evidence-based practices they helped develop. He is currently the principal investigator (PI) of the Smartphone Addiction Recovery Coach for Young Adults experiment and the cross-site evaluation of Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Guidelines. He is also co-investigator on e-Connect, a service system intervention for youths at risk for suicide. He was PI or co-investigator of over a dozen major adolescent and adult studies including the Cannabis Youth Treatment experiment. To date, Dr. Dennis has authored 315 peer-reviewed journal articles, chapters, manuals, or monographs, and other kinds of technical reports. He has made over 400 major presentations at professional meetings or workshops. He received his Ph.D. in Psychology from Northwestern University in 1988.



Emily M. Eckert, LPCC-S, Assistant Director, Office of Whole Child Supports, Ohio Department of Education

Ms. Eckert is an Assistant Director in the Office of Whole Child Supports at the Ohio Department of Education (the Department). At the Department, she focuses on mental health, prevention education, school climate, and school safety. She is also a licensed professional clinical counselor with experience in community mental health and education settings with children experiencing social, emotional, and behavioral needs and their families.

Sara Ellsworth, Regional Administrator, Behavioral Health and Integrated Student Supports, Capital Region ESD 113, Washington

Ms. Ellsworth is the Regional Administrator for Behavioral Health and Integrated Student Support at Capital Region ESD 113’s True North Student Assistance & Treatment Services. Ms. Ellsworth has worked directly with children and youths in various capacities for 18 years, including providing direct therapeutic services for both mental health and substance use disorders, juvenile justice, family wrap-around, and care coordination. She has been a Licensed Mental Health Clinician since 2006 and a Substance Use Disorder Professional since 2009. As Regional Administrator, Ms. Ellsworth is instrumental in supporting ESD 113 in achieving its mission of providing high-quality, cost-effective school-based services. She is fluent in implementing student assistance within a multi-tiered system of support framework. Ms. Ellsworth holds a master’s degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of Denver and a bachelor’s in Psychology from Gonzaga University. She lives in Olympia, WA, with her husband and three sons.

Ellen Morehouse, LCSW, CASAC, CPP, Executive Director, Student Assistance Services Corporation, New York

Mrs. Morehouse is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor, Credentialed Prevention Professional, and the Executive Director of Student Assistance Services Corporation, a nonprofit corporation in Tarrytown, NY. She is the creator of three national model substance abuse prevention and early intervention programs, including the Westchester Student Assistance Program and Project SUCCESS (Schools Using Coordinated Community Efforts to Strengthen Students), which are currently being replicated in schools across several states. Mrs. Morehouse has served as a consultant to treatment programs, school districts, parent and professional organizations, community groups, and state agencies in planning and implementing substance abuse prevention and treatment programs. She has presented to parents and professional groups in 44 states, published several articles in professional journals, and been interviewed by the national media including Good Morning America, PBS, *People Magazine*, *Psychology Today*, and *Parents Magazine*. She has received several awards, including the National Association of Social Workers—NYS Chapter, Social Worker of the Year Award, and the 2021 Sober St. Patrick’s Day Foundation Emerald Spirit Award. She is also one of the founders and is currently a board member of the National Association for Children of Addiction, and Prevention Committee Co-Chair for the NY Association of Addiction Services and Professionals. Mrs. Morehouse received her bachelor’s degree from Cornell University and her master’s degree in Social Work from New York University.



Amity Noltemeyer, Ph.D., NCSP, Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Professor of Educational Psychology, Miami University, OH

Dr. Noltemeyer is Professor and Associate Dean of the Graduate School at Miami University. Previously, Dr. Noltemeyer served as Chair of the Educational Psychology Department and Program Coordinator of the School Psychology Program at Miami University. Dr. Noltemeyer serves as Editor-in-Chief of the *School Psychology International* journal, co-manages several externally funded projects, is former President of the Ohio School Psychologists Association, and has worked as a practicing school psychologist.

Perri Rosen, Ph.D., NCSP, Consulting Psychologist, Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Dr. Rosen is a consulting psychologist at the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) at the Department of Human Services (DHS) in Harrisburg, PA. She is also a Pennsylvania-licensed psychologist, Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP), and a Pennsylvania certified special educator. At DHS-OMHSAS, Dr. Rosen has helped lead several youth mental health initiatives, many of which have focused on schools and cross-systems collaboration. Dr. Rosen represents DHS-OMHSAS as one of the three state agencies (Departments of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Education, and Human Services) providing oversight of SAP in Pennsylvania, through the Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services. She has also served as Co-Chair of the Governor’s Suicide Prevention Task Force and has led multiple federally funded Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention grants awarded to DHS-OMHSAS. Dr. Rosen has participated in a range of research and program evaluation efforts, including those focused on youth suicide prevention, universal mental health screening in schools, and statewide SAP efforts in Pennsylvania. Dr. Rosen has also presented nationally and in Pennsylvania on a wide range of youth mental health and suicide prevention–related topics. She is a certified trainer in Youth Mental Health First Aid; PREPaRE, 3rd edition Core Workshops 1 and 2, focused on school crisis planning and response, developed by the National Association of School Psychologists. She is also a trainer-of-trainers in Question, Persuade, Refer.

Jill Smith, School Counselor, Hoquiam High, Washington

Ms. Smith earned a B.A. from Western Washington University and an M.A. from the University of Portland. She has been employed by the Hoquiam School District for over 30 years. Ms. Smith has been a counselor for the past 17 years. In 2009, she earned her National Board Certification (NBPTS) in School Counseling and she has renewed and maintains NBPTS certification annually. She is a member of the Grays Harbor College Foundation Board and serves on the YMCA of Grays Harbor Board.

Robert M. Vincent, M.S.Ed., Associate Administrator for Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Policy, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Mr. Vincent serves as the Associate Administrator for Alcohol Prevention and Treatment Policy for SAMHSA’s Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Prior to coming to SAMHSA, Mr. Vincent served as the Administrator for True North-Student Assistance & Treatment Services at the Educational Service District 113’s Department of Educational Support in Olympia, WA. He was responsible for



developing, implementing, and managing a 45 school district consortium addressing school safety and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment programs within the five-county region.

As a nationally certified clinician, Mr. Vincent has worked in the area of substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment for more than 34 years, and has served as the Director for Counseling and Assistance Programs for the U.S. Navy during Desert Storm. Mr. Vincent served as the principal investigator of the Olympia Effective Adolescent Grant, and as a consultant specializing in the implementation of school-based prevention and treatment programs for several states. He received his Master of Science in Education from Southern Illinois University.

Erin Wick, M.B.A., SUDP, Senior Director of Behavioral Health and Integrated Student Supports, Capital Region ESD 113.

Ms. Wick is the Senior Director of Behavioral Health and Integrated Student Supports for Capital Region ESD 113 in Tumwater, WA. Currently, she leads True North Student Assistance and Treatment Services, which provides comprehensive behavioral health services to school-aged students. True North is certified by the Washington State Department of Health as a provider of outpatient and intensive outpatient treatment services. It was the first dual-licensed program of its kind in Washington, and has become a model for other programs in the state. She designed, developed, and facilitated the implementation of the School Safety Consortium, a collaboration of 40 school districts across five counties to collectively fund threat assessment services and support. She has been with ESD 113 since 2001. Additionally, Ms. Wick is the Washington State Lead of the ESD Network Behavioral Health COVID Response team. She leads a statewide team of behavioral health professionals tasked with providing additional supports to schools. Ms. Wick graduated from The Evergreen State College and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. She received her Master of Business Administration from University of Massachusetts Global.