



**18<sup>th</sup> Annual**  
**NEW JERSEY YOUTH FIRESETTER  
INTERVENTION CONFERENCE**

FOR FIRE SERVICE, MENTAL HEALTH, LAW ENFORCEMENT, SOCIAL SERVICES AND EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS

Presented by:



**Registration  
Opens  
October 1st**



**DECEMBER 2-3, 2021**

**Reconnecting**

Middlesex County Fire Academy  
1001 Fire Academy Drive  
Sayreville, NJ 08872

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**AGENDA**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021**

**8:30 AM – 9:30 AM**

Conference Registration & Breakfast

**9:30 AM – 12:00 PM**

**Welcome Address – Amphitheater**

Richard J. Mikutsky, Director - New Jersey Division of Fire Safety

**Keynote Address**

Laura Billon, LBB, MFS, CFI

**12:00 PM – 1:00 PM**

Lunch

**1:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

Afternoon Classes in Session

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2021**

**8:30 AM – 9:30 AM**

Breakfast

**9:30 AM – 12:00 PM**

Morning Classes in Session

**12:00 PM – 1:00 PM**

Lunch

**1:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

Afternoon Classes in Session

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

Our Goal is to bring together State and County resources in the common goal of addressing the issue of youth firesetting throughout the state.

We also aim to provide existing county youth fire prevention programs the support necessary to continue their vital mission and make every effort to aid in the development of programs in the counties where none exist.

**REGISTER ONLINE AT:**

[WWW.KEANFIRESAFETY.COM/CONFERENCES-2021](http://WWW.KEANFIRESAFETY.COM/CONFERENCES-2021)

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**THURSDAY AFTERNOON 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM**  
**DECEMBER 2, 2021**

1

## **“Strategic Interviewing of High-Risk Youth With Firesetting Behaviors”**

**Instructors: Joseph Ehrhardt & Helge Nordtveit**

This course will provide the student with the following best practices in providing youth fire setting screenings to high-risk, sophisticated, and special needs youth who set fires or use fire in a dangerous and unsupervised manner.

- Developing a quality interview team
- Reviewing pertinent information to enhance the screening tool questions
- Preparation to address the special interviewing needs of the youth
  - Trained mental health professionals
  - Translators, American Sign Language Professionals
  - Family Support Personnel
- Ensuring that the screening interview will not evolve into an interrogation
- A discussion of interviewing dynamics when speaking with high-risk/sophisticated youth

The second half of this course will include guided interviews of youth fire setters in treatment at Abraxas Youth Center in South Mountain Youth Center via ZOOM connection. Several selected teams will conduct these interviews during live class time. At the end of the interviews, an Abraxas staff member will provide a debriefing and answer student questions.

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**2**

**“After The Fire – Part 1”**

**Instructor: Jennifer Moran**

Have you ever wondered what happens to a case after the flames are extinguished? That's when the real work begins for fire investigators, law enforcement officers and prosecutors. A successful prosecution of a juvenile arson case begins the moment that a fire is put out. It takes full cooperation between those in the fire service and those in law enforcement to get the job done right.

This presentation is designed to demonstrate just how vital cooperation between agencies is in the prosecution of these types of cases. Through the use of sample cases, we will discuss how important everyone's role, including education and mental health officials, is in order to ensure that justice is done.

**FRIDAY MORNING 9:30 AM to NOON**  
**DECEMBER 3, 2021**

**3**

**“An Introduction to the Criminal Behaviors of Juveniles”**

**Instructor: Laura Billon**

This engaging session will introduce you to the youth of today and explore how and why they make the unhealthy decisions that they do; how our juvenile justice system looks at them and what we can do about it. Be prepared to learn ways in which we can assist these individuals in making better choices and getting back on track. Laura will enlighten you with statistics, cases and means and mechanisms for making a difference in the lives of our youths.

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**4**

## **“After The Fire – Part 2”**

**Instructor: Jennifer Moran**

This course is the continuation of yesterday’s ‘Part 1’:

Have you ever wondered what happens to a case after the flames are extinguished? That’s when the real work begins for fire investigators, law enforcement officers and prosecutors. A successful prosecution of a juvenile arson case begins the moment that a fire is put out. It takes full cooperation between those in the fire service and those in law enforcement to get the job done right.

This presentation is designed to demonstrate just how vital cooperation between agencies is in the prosecution of these types of cases. Through the use of sample cases, we will discuss how important everyone’s role, including education and mental health officials, is in order to ensure that justice is done.

**5**

## **“Living Safely with Disabilities and Special Health Needs”**

**Instructors: Adrienne Robertiello & Miranda Jakubek**

An Interactive Peer Learning Session to Broaden Fire Safety Education and Practices

People with disabilities are often at increased risk for injury and in need of adapted safety education which is relevant, understandable, and functional for their needs. This session will describe collaborative work focused on inclusive and equitable safety education. Through an Inclusive Healthy Communities grant from the New Jersey Division of Disability Services, Department of Human Services, New Jersey partners, disability self-advocates, and subject matter experts throughout the country are leading the way to broaden safety education and resources. Attendees will be engaged to examine, expand, and analyze fire safety planning, practices, community interactions, and fire incidents. Interactive discussions will explore fire prevention, community education, safety planning, and standards of practice incorporating vital aspects and perspectives of disability.

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**6**

## **“Raising a Fire-Safe Generation and Connecting With Your Community”**

**Instructor: Lt. Michael O. McLeieer**

Your fire department is in an excellent position to increase community awareness and provide age-appropriate education about preventing home fires and youth firesetting incidents as well as addressing other life safety issues affecting your community. At the same time, it's essential to build rapport with the local news media to incorporate fire and life safety messaging into relevant news stories. This presentation will discuss strategic ways to develop a positive relationship with citizens, other stakeholders, and local media outlets to connect with the community, as well as existing resources and lesson plans available to enhance your fire prevention and youth firesetting intervention initiatives.

**7**

## **“Did the Pandemic Make Us Crazy?”**

**Instructor: Paul Schwartzman**

It is very clear that United States was profoundly impacted during the past 18 months in terms of the physical and economic health of our nation, but what about our mental health?

This presentation will explore the impact of the prevalence of mental health diagnoses for youth and adults, the effect on the delivery of mental health services, and the increased awareness of the necessity to improve outreach and intervention mental health services especially for youth in our schools.

The presentation will also take a look at the impact of Youth Firesetter incidents and program implications in regards to overall interventions and mental health treatment over the past year and into the future.

**8**

## **“Fire Incident Reporting (NFIRS)”**

**Instructor: Vincent Campagna**

Topics of discussion will cover: Why is NFIRS important? What is NFIRS and how it works. The benefits of participation in NFIRS and its relationship to youth firesetters, and why report writing skill C.A.R.T. is important in today's fire service environment.

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## CONFERENCE DIRECTIONS

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY FIRE ACADEMY**  
**1001 Fire Academy Drive, Sayreville, NJ 08872**  
**732-727-0008**

**Via Route 9 / Route 35 Northbound:** Come up through South Amboy into Sayreville. Do not go over the bridge. Take the exit on to the Route 9/Route 35 circle. The sign for the exit reads North 35. The ramp is just after a large sign marked Colosseum (sic). At the bottom of the ramp merge right into the circle, then move quickly to the left lane to go around the circle. Bear left going around the circle, passing the Amboy Cinemas. After going under Route 9, merge to the right and take the first right turn-off, on to Chevalier Drive, just past the Sayreville Motor Lodge (Note: Chevalier Drive street sign may be missing, look for signs for Garden State Parkway "South"). After 1/4 mile (just past the Parkway entrance) turn left on to Main Street (large church at corner). After 3/4 mile take the exit for Kennedy Drive. At the bottom of the ramp turn right into the Academy.

**Traveling from Perth Amboy on Route 35 Southbound:** Take Route 35 south, crossing the Victory Bridge, and passing the back of Amboy Cinemas. Follow the Route 9/Route 35 circle under Route 9. After going under Route 9, merge to the right and take the first right turn-off, on to Chevalier Drive, just past the Sayreville Motor Lodge (Note: Chevalier Drive street sign may be missing, look for signs for Garden State Parkway "South"). After 1/4 mile (just past the Parkway entrance) turn left on to Main Street (large church at corner). After 3/4 mile take the exit for Kennedy Drive. At the bottom of the ramp turn right into the Academy.

**Via East Brunswick / South River via Route 535:** Route 535 is Cranbury Road in East Brunswick. It becomes Main Street in South River. Travel North on Route 535 through South River and over the Veterans' Memorial Bridge, stay in left lane. At the light after the bridge go straight on to Washington Road. At the next light, (this will be the second traffic light after crossing the bridge) turn left on to Main Street. Proceed to the fourth traffic light (approx. 5 miles) and make a left into the Fire Academy.

**Via the Garden State Parkway Northbound:** Take Exit 125 (just after the Raritan tolls and before the bridge). At the bottom of the ramp turn left on to Chevalier Drive, then make the first left on to Main Street (large church at corner). After 3/4 mile take the exit for Kennedy Drive. At the bottom of the ramp turn right into the Academy.



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**Via the Garden State Parkway Southbound:** Take Exit 124 (just after the Raritan tolls). At the bottom of the ramp turn right on to Main Street and after a few hundred feet make the first right on to Kennedy Drive. Stay on Kennedy Drive for 3/4 of a mile, through the traffic light, and straight into the Fire Academy.

**Via Route 9 Southbound:** Take Route 9 south from Woodbridge over the Raritan River. Take the first exit (marked South Amboy Business Center). At the bottom of the ramp take the first right turn on to Chevalier Drive just past the Sayreville Motor Lodge (Note: Chevalier Drive street sign may be missing, look for signs for Garden State Parkway "South"). After 1/4 mile (just past the Parkway entrance) turn left on to Main Street (large church at corner). After 3/4 mile take the exit for Kennedy Drive. At the bottom of the ramp turn right into the Academy.

**From the New Jersey Turnpike North or South:** Take Turnpike Exit 11 for the Garden State Parkway (GSP). After the tolls, bear left and on to the Garden State Parkway (GSP) traveling south. From the GSP take Exit 124 (just after the Raritan tolls). At the bottom of the ramp turn right on to Main Street and after a few hundred feet make the first right on to Kennedy Drive. Stay on Kennedy Drive for 3/4 of a mile, through the traffic light, and straight into the Fire Academy.

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## CONFERENCE HOTEL INFORMATION

### HOME2 SUITES BY HILTON - EDISON

858 New Durham Road  
Edison, NJ 08817



Overnight accommodations will be available at the Home2 Suites by Hilton Edison at a special rate. Breakfast will be provided there each morning, in addition to at the Academy. Overnight rooms should be reserved no later than November 11, 2021. All reservations made after this date will be based on availability and at the standard room rate. For reservations call 732-248-6546. Please state that you are attending the New Jersey Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference to qualify for the rate.

Also, for your convenience, a link has been set up specifically to book rooms for the Conference. That can be found at:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/deeplink/?ctyhocn=EWREDHT&groupCode=CHTNJF&arrivaldate=2021-12-01&departuredate=2021-12-04&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

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## BIOGRAPHIES

### Laura Billon

Laura Billon is a subject matter expert on youth set fires, fire and arson investigation, interview techniques, forensic science and community risk reduction. She is a Certified Fire Investigator in the state of California with over twenty-five years in the fire service where she has investigated thousands of fire scenes. She possesses a post graduate law degree in International Law with specializations in Children's Rights and Youth Justice. She has a Master's Degree in Forensic Science with an emphasis on Investigations and Criminology, a Bachelor's Degree in Fire Protection Administration, teaches in the Fire Technology Department at Miramar College in San Diego and is an instructor in the Fire Prevention Management, Safety Operations, and Arson Departments for the Department of Homeland Security's United States Fire Administration / National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. She is a POST certified instructor of arson and juvenile firesetting to the San Diego Sheriff's Department Training Academy and previously served on the Board of Directors for the International Association of Forensic Professionals, Homeland Security Foundation of America and the California Conference of Arson Investigators (IAAI Chapter 22).

Ms. Billon is a Senior Fire Setting Profiler / Evaluator Specialist for the Center for Arson Research where she regularly investigates and analyzes fire scenes and profiles fire setters of all ages. She assists jurisdictions with program development for youth set fires and establishes intervention strategies for the various fire setting typologies based upon their pathologies and behaviors. She has been involved in Youth Fire Setting Intervention and Community Risk Reduction for over fifteen years, where she has developed programs for the jurisdictions that she served and lent her efforts to over a dozen others around the country.

Ms. Billon serves as a Peace Officer within the State of California. Among the many topics she speaks and instructs about are youth fire setting prevention and intervention, psychological profiles of fire setters, interviewing, criminal behaviors of juveniles, fire investigation, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, forensic evidence collection, fire death investigation, human behavior and reaction in fire, Kinesic interviews, incident command and community risk reduction practices around the world.

She is certified as an Instructor in Emergency First Response, Investigations and Hazardous Materials, has authored a chapter on origin and cause fire investigation for a college text book entitled, Burns, the Medical and Forensic Model, by Dr. Alan Clark. She has published numerous articles in scientific journals relating to youth set fires, fire

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investigation, interviewing, arson and fire prevention, as well as testifying as an expert on said subjects on various fire cases around the country. She regularly contributes to NPR radio in Los Angeles where she speaks about fire setters and the motivations behind their fire setting behaviors. She resides in Southern California.

## Vincent Campagna

Vince Campagna is a Program Specialist 2, Regulatory Programs with New Jersey Division of Fire Safety. He is a NJ DFS certified Fire Inspector/Fire Official and Fire Investigator. Currently assigned to OFDP (Office of Fire Department Preparedness), NFIRS Unit.

## Joseph Ehrhardt

Joe Ehrhardt is a Life Member of the Nottingham Volunteer Fire Company in Mercer County, New Jersey, with over thirty-nine years of volunteer service. He retired from Hamilton Township Fire District #7 as its volunteer Fire and Life Safety Educator in 2017 and formerly coordinated the Township's Youth Fire Setter Prevention and Intervention Program. Joe is also the Past Co-Chair of the Middlesex County FireWatch Program, the Mercer County Youth Fire Setter Intervention Program Advisory Committee and is a member of the N.J. Youth Fire Setter Advisory Council.

In 2010, Joe retired from a thirty-three year career in Juvenile Justice Administration at the Middlesex County Department of Corrections and Youth Services. In 2015, Joe was certified as an independent Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) auditor by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. He performed PREA audits as both an independent auditor and as a contracted auditor for Creative Corrections LLC until June, 2021.

During his Juvenile Justice career, Joe was an adjunct Criminal Justice instructor at both Rutgers University and at Middlesex County College.

In retirement, Joe has been an eleven year instructor for the N.J. Division of Fire Safety through Kean University's Fire Safety Training Program. Joe is also a contract instructor for the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, teaching the Youth Fire Setter Prevention and Intervention curriculum.

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## Miranda Jakubek

Ms. Jakubek is the Assistant Program Coordinator at Children's Specialized Hospital. She is dedicated to community outreach and reducing barriers that impede access to community services. She coordinates the Living Safely with Disabilities and Special Health Needs initiative at Children's Specialized Hospital, the nation's leading provider of inpatient and outpatient care for children from birth to 21 years of age facing special health challenges.

Ms. Jakubek collaborates with subject matter experts nationwide to advance Living Safely, a New Jersey Division of Disability Services Inclusive Healthy Community grant. She works on multiple community-based projects to promote policy, systems, and environmental change in the areas of health, climate, community improvement, and equitable access. Ms. Jakubek has a degree in Public Health from Tulane University.

## Lt. Michael McLeieer

Lt. Michael McLeieer has been in the fire service for over 25 years, is certified Firefighter II, Fire Officer III, Fire Instructor III, advanced public information officer, public fire and life safety educator, youth firesetter intervention specialist, and has served on fire departments in both Michigan and Massachusetts. He also served as the training and scheduling training coordinator for the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy and was in charge of the statewide youth fire intervention program. He is a National Fire Academy contract instructor and also serves as a past president of the Massachusetts Institute of Fire Department Instructors, the Michigan State Firemen's Association, founder of the nonprofit fire safety organization E.S.C.A.P.E. Inc (Education Showing Children and Adults Procedures for Evacuations), and launched the statewide public education and alarm installation campaign Keeping Michigan S.A.F.E.™ (Smoke Alarms for Everyone).

## Jennifer Moran

Jennifer Moran is a 1994 graduate of Saginaw Valley State University in Saginaw, Michigan. After obtaining her Bachelor of Arts degree there, she went on to attend Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan, where she graduated with honors in 1998.

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Upon graduation from law school, Ms. Moran obtained a judicial clerkship in Mercer County, New Jersey, with the Honorable Thomas P. Kelly, J.S.C. (retired). At the end of her clerkship, she went into private practice for a couple of years, handling criminal cases as well as personal injury and family court matters. In 2001, Ms. Moran accepted a position with the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office. She worked primarily in the Domestic Violence/Special Victims Unit where she ran the county-wide Domestic Violence Working Group. She spent a short time in the Trial Unit as well. After working there for six years, she transferred to the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office where she has been since September of 2007.

In her time with the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, Ms. Moran has been assigned to the Special Victims Unit, the Trial Unit, the Domestic Violence Unit, and the Juvenile Unit. She currently serves as the Chief of the Juvenile Unit, a position she has held since September of 2015. During the course of her time as Chief, Ms. Moran has trained multiple assistant prosecutors beginning their careers in the practice of law. In addition to handling cases on the Juvenile docket, she sits on several committees including the Youth Services Commission and the Juvenile Prosecutor Leadership Network. She has worked closely with fellow executive Youth Firesetter committee members to help design and implement the Mercer County Youth Firesetter Program, a successful screening program to help address youth fire setting behaviors exhibited by the youth in Mercer County. She has done numerous presentations in the community on topics such as the opioid crisis, cyberbullying and the Youth Firesetter Program. She has presented at the New Jersey Youth Firesetter Intervention Conference and has been invited to present at this state-wide conference again this winter. Most recently, she has helped to put into practice the new Juvenile eCDR system in accordance with the new Attorney General Directive, requiring not only the drafting of a directive specific to Mercer County, but the training of all law enforcement officers within the County.

## Helge (Hagar) Nordtveit

Helge Nordtveit has served in the fire service in New Jersey for over forty-eight years; both as a volunteer and in the career service. He has served as a volunteer Chief in the 1980's and in 2013, he retired as a career Fire Captain.

Helge is currently the Fire Marshal/Fire Official of Woodbridge Township Fire District #11 in central New Jersey. He is a licensed construction official and a New Jersey Certified Fire Instructor, Level 2. He is an instructor at the Middlesex County Fire Academy.

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Helge is an instructor for the New Jersey Division of Fire Safety through Kean University and is a contract instructor for the National Fire Academy. Active in youth fire setter intervention for over 29 years, he is the Past Co-Chair of the Middlesex County FireWatch Program and is a member of the New Jersey State Youth Fire Setter Advisory Council.

## Adrienne Robertiello

Ms. Robertiello is a the Special Health Care Educator at Children's Specialized Hospital. She collaborates with subject matter experts, organizations, agencies, individuals with disabilities, and families to educate and provide practical resources supporting inclusion, access, and equity. Ms. Robertiello serves as a lead in the Living Safely with Disabilities and Special Health Needs initiative – one of the New Jersey Division of Disability Services Inclusive Healthy Communities grants. Mrs. Robertiello has developed and implemented several initiatives including Autism and Safety – It's Unpredictable, Healthier Me, The Hospital and Me, Friends Like You Friends Like Me, and Real Life Tips for Kids with Autism. She is a graduate from Seton Hall University. Her lived experience as a person with a disability and parent of a child with multiple disabilities shapes her worldview. This viewpoint provides a meaningful connection with the efforts and outcomes of her work.

## Paul Schwartzman

Paul Schwartzman is a licensed mental health counselor, providing counseling services to children, adolescents and families in the Rochester (NY) area for more than thirty years. His interest in the field of juvenile firesetting developed while on staff at the University of Rochester where he participated with other researchers in the study of juvenile fire play and fire setting. Paul was a member of the original research team that originated the Fire Related Youth Unit for the City of Rochester (NY) Fire Department and the BIC preschool firesafety education curriculum, both award winning programs that address issues of children and fire.

Paul has co-authored books and produced several research articles for professional journals and has written a chapter on treatment of juvenile firesetters in The Handbook of Prescriptive Treatments for Children and Adolescents published by Allyn & Bacon.

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Paul also authored a chapter on juvenile firesetting for the revised NFPA Fire Protection Handbook.

Paul is the Past Chair of the Board of Directors of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Education Section and is the co-chairperson of the NFPA Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Committee. He was also a member of the NFPA 1035 Professional Public Life and Fire Safety Educator Standards Committee. He worked with the committee to develop national standards for juvenile firesetter intervention specialists. Paul is also the Executive Director of the Finger Lake Regional Burn Association.

Paul currently maintains a private consulting and counseling practice in Fairport, New York where he resides with his wife. Paul has two grown children.



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