

20th Annual
**NEW JERSEY
YOUTH FIRESETTING
INTERVENTION CONFERENCE**

Celebrating
20
YEARS



Presented by:



November 30 – December 1, 2023

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

MIDDLESEX COUNTY FIRE ACADEMY
1001 Fire Academy Drive
Sayreville, NJ 08872

20th Annual
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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30

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 Special Presentation – 20 Years of NJ Youth Firesetting Intervention & Beyond... Keynote Address Eriks Gabliks, Superintendent National Fire Academy
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Afternoon Classes in Session

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM	Breakfast
9:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Plenary Session – Amphitheater Dianne Grossman - "Mallory's Army"
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Afternoon Classes in Session

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission 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

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM



1 Mentoring Our Youth, One Starfish at a Time

Instructor: **Laura Billon**

Our youth are our future and right now the future is being adversely affected by many different tentacles: that of technology, that of trauma, that of envelope-pushing, and that of engaging in dangerous and risky behaviors. What are some things that we can do to cut off the heads of these poisonous snakes? We can incorporate the tenets of the restorative justice model of juvenile justice, we can teach better coping mechanisms for ensuring resilience, and we can provide our youths with what they have been missing: time and attention to be listened to, to be heard. With the outline for this road map, our youths misusing fire are sure to be on a better road for improvement, building the bridge of health and wellness.

Participate in this engaging course and take creative ideas back to your communities to assist our youths and their caregivers challenged without the knowledge to do so on their own. Be the conduit for your healthier communities!

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2 ★ **YFIRES**

Instructor: **Kathi Osmonson**

The Youth Firesetting Intervention Repository and Evaluation System is a national secured case management system. Founded through the IAFF and FEMA grants, this program is now housed within Vision 20/20.

*Use and Operation *Secure Fields *YFIRES data results *What does the future hold?

3 ★ **Defining CRR – Roles and Responsibilities**

Instructor: **William Broschious**

Instructor will discuss with students the concepts of Community Risk Reduction (CRR), including roles and responsibilities. By the end of the course, students should be able to define the basic concepts of CRR and how to apply the concepts to their departments. This course is interactive, and students should be prepared to participate in the discussion along with possible group activities.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM



4 Addressing the Lurking Community Risk of Adverse Childhood Experiences

Instructor: Karla Klas

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are prevalent, significantly impact safety and well-being, and yet are often overlooked as a priority in Community Risk Reduction (CRR) planning. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) revealed 1 in 6 adults in the U.S. have four or more ACEs, which are proven to lead to many long-term serious chronic mental and physical health problems. ACEs are associated with at least five of the top ten leading causes of death. ACEs have been shown to contribute to substance misuse, drinking, smoking, and other high-risk behaviors that lead to injury and jeopardize safety. ACEs and associated behaviors negatively impact not only our communities, but also firefighter health and well-being. This session will explain ACEs and the effect of shared risks. Evidence-based approaches to mitigate and prevent ACEs utilizing trauma-informed care and other protective factors will be discussed. Learn how you can recognize and positively address the often-overlooked CRR issue of ACEs in your department and communities to improve safety and well-being.

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5 **Everything You Wanted To Know About
Interviewing Children/Families About Fire... But
Were Too Afraid To Ask**

Instructors: Joe Ehrhardt & Helge Nordtveit

This course will be an opportunity for Fire Service, Mental Health, Social Service and allied professionals to critically discuss strategies and issues regarding the child/family interview process following a youth set fire or fires.

Topics to be discussed:

- ▶ Targeting desired interview outcomes.
- ▶ Dynamics, strengths, and weaknesses of available screening instruments.
- ▶ Reading the room: Avoiding common interviewing mistakes while optimizing the interview's outcome.
- ▶ The value of the punt.
- ▶ Building, choosing, and successfully deploying the interview team.
- ▶ Critical self-evaluation of the interview process:
 - Did you get the information you need?
 - Did the information lead to a successful outcome? If not, what went wrong?
 - Was the family satisfied with the results and why?

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6 **Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention –
A Community Approach**

Instructor: **Michael McLeieer**

Fire departments are uniquely positioned to know their communities better than most other organizations. However, they face a number of challenges getting the job done. Too often the public educator and youth firesetting intervention specialist find resources are becoming more limited and budget cutbacks continue to decrease the effectiveness of their Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention programs. This presentation will discuss strategic ways to build rapport with numerous stakeholders from the community and beyond. Attendees will learn about available resources at the local, state and federal levels to start or expand their YFPI program. An emphasis will be placed on building multi-disciplinary teams which will improve program efficiency and safety throughout the community.

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CONFERENCE HOTEL INFORMATION

HOMEWOOD SUITES BY HILTON EDISON/WOODBRIDGE

**100 Parsonage Road
Edison, NJ 08837**



Overnight accommodations will be available at the Homewood Suites by Hilton Edison/Woodbridge at a special rate. Overnight rooms should be reserved no later than November 10, 2023. All reservations made after this date will be based on availability and at the standard room rate.

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=EWRWOHW&groupCode=CHWNJF&arrivaldate=2023-11-28&departuredate=2023-12-01&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT>

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BIOGRAPHIES

Laura Billon

Laura Billon has been in the fire service for over twenty-five years. She is a Certified Fire Investigator and possesses a Law Degree in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Youth Justice and Child Law, a Master's Degree in Forensic Science with an emphasis in Criminology, and a Bachelor's Degree in Fire Protection Administration. She is a Senior Firesetting Profiler for the Center for Arson Research, focusing on firesetting motivations of individuals of all ages and developing intervention and diversionary programs for behavioral changes for youths involved in misusing fire. Since 2003 she has been an instructor in the Arson Investigation, Safety and Operations, and Fire Prevention Management Departments for the United States Fire Administration's National Fire Academy in Maryland. She is a POST certified instructor of arson laws and motivations to the San Diego Sheriff's Department and has been an adjunct professor of fire science and technology in the School of Public Safety to SDCCD since 2002. She speaks to and trains departments in various fire investigation, community risk reduction, safety, ICS, and law enforcement topics around the world. She was hand selected to be part of the curriculum writing committees for the Fire and Arson Investigation and Fire Prevention Management curricula at the U.S. Fire Administration. She has developed many youth firesetting intervention, community risk reduction and safety programs for cities and counties around the country. She 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, has published numerous articles regarding fire investigation and prevention, profiled hundreds of firesetters, regularly investigates fires and testifies as an expert on various fire cases around the country. She is a frequent contributor to NPR radio in Los Angeles where she speaks about arsonists, firesetters, and the motivations behind their fire setting behaviors. She resides in Southern California.

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William Broscius

Will Broscius began his journey in the fire service with the City of Greer Fire Department in 2001 as a Fire Explorer. Roughly a year later he became a volunteer firefighter. In 2004, Will was hired as a full-time firefighter for the City of Greer Fire Department. In 2005, he began volunteering with the Belmont Fire Department. During his time with the department, Will served as a Firefighter, Lieutenant and Captain and was tasked with managing the volunteer firefighter program. Will joined the Greenville City Fire Department in December of 2005 as a full-time firefighter. In July of 2012 he was promoted to the department's Fire Prevention Bureau. Within the Fire Prevention Bureau, Will served as a Fire Inspector and was promoted to the position of Community Risk Reduction and Education Coordinator and Public Information Officer, which held the rank of Lieutenant. Will holds the distinct honor of being the first person to hold the position within the department's history.

In 2018, Will was hired by Columbia-Richland Fire Department as a Battalion Chief tasked with managing the department's volunteer firefighters. In 2021, Will was promoted to the rank of Division Chief and tasked with forming the department's first Accreditation and CRR Division. Will became one of the youngest Chief Officers in the department's history and the first CRR/Accreditation Chief.

Will has been married for roughly 18 years. Will and his wife Cleary are the proud parents of William Elias Broscius IV (Eli), which is the couple's first and only child.

Will also holds an Associate in Applied Science with a major in Fire Science Technology from Greenville Technical College (with Honors), Bachelor of Science with a major in Fire Science Administration from Waldorf University (Summa Cum Laude). Additionally, Will has served as a Subject Matter Expert for Vision 20/20, NFPA, and for the National Fire Academy. Will was 1 out of 11 people in North America selected as an NFPA Star in 2018.

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Joseph Ehrhardt

Joe Ehrhardt was a Life Member of the Nottingham Volunteer Fire Company in Mercer County, New Jersey, with over thirty 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 current 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 from 2015-2020. From August 2022 – August 2023, Joe was a contracted PREA Coach/TTA for The Moss Group, providing support to local and state correctional and juvenile justice agencies throughout the United States.

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

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

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Eriks Gabliks

Eriks Gabliks is the Superintendent of the National Fire Academy (NFA). He was named to this position in November 2020. As superintendent, Mr. Gabliks provides leadership for the NFA, which focuses on enhancing the ability of fire and emergency services and allied professionals to deal more effectively with fire and other emergencies.

His interest in the fire service began in 1982 when he joined his neighborhood volunteer fire company in Adelphia, New Jersey. Over the years, he would serve with four volunteer, combination, and career fire agencies.

In 1991, he joined the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST). DPSST sets professional training and licensing standards for more than 41,000 public and private safety professionals in the state of Oregon. DPSST also operates the Oregon Public Safety Academy, which provides training to more than 25,000 first responders on an annual basis. Eriks served as agency director from 2010 to 2020, overseeing a staff of more than 450 employees. He is the first employee in the agency's history to have ascended to this position from the internal ranks and served under three governors.

Mr. Gabliks holds a master's degree in public policy and administration from Portland State University. He has also completed the Executive Fire Officer Program at the NFA and the Executive Development Institute at the FBI Academy in Quantico, VA.

Mr. Gabliks is past president of the North American Fire Training Directors and serves on various state and national organizations, including the Drexel University Fire Injury Research and Safety Trends Advisory Committee, and many others.

He is a first generation Latvian and speaks, reads, and writes the language.

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Dianne Grossman

Dianne is a wife of 23 years, mom of 4, entrepreneur and now advocate... On June 14, 2017 - the unimaginable happened. Dianne and her husband Seth's youngest daughter -Mallory Rose Grossman, 12, of Rockaway, NJ - died by suicide after months of bullying at school. She was an avid gymnast, cheerleader, and lover of all things outdoors. She is the 4th child in the Grossman family. Her character at the young age of 12 made her more inspirational than the average adult. She was a compassionate, selfless, KIND, and loving old soul. She loved summer weekends at the family campground where she sold homemade crafts to raise money for Camp Good Days, a camp for children with cancer.

Her smile and giggle could light up a room. With this as her mother's memory, Dianne Grossman - the advocate - was born out of tragedy and vowed to do her part to empower children, educate parents and enrich schools, hopefully do her part to "blue out bullying". Dianne Grossman graduated from the school of hard knocks life. She's used her journey over the last 40+ years to be a resilient person, she believes "it is never about what happens to you in life, but what you DO after that matters." Many say, YOLO (you only live once), Dianne disagrees, she believes we live twice - the life here and now and the legacy carried on after you have passed. Reminding young people to leave behind a legacy worth carrying on is her mission. Be the KIND of person you want to meet. With a blue band on her arm, she lives a bracelet KIND of life.

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Karla Klas

Karla Klas, BSN, RN, CCRP manages the University of Michigan Trauma Burn Center's nationally acclaimed community and family-centered injury prevention programs. Her 31-year distinguished career in burn/trauma critical care nursing, research, professional development training, mentoring, program management, public education, curriculum development, CRR, and injury/violence prevention has produced numerous journal publications, textbook chapters and grant awards. She has attained multiple specialty certifications and leadership appointments to committees devoted to injury control. She is a Michigan ACE Community Champion trainer and a Professional Instructor for the National Fire Academy. An award-winning educator, speaker, and author, Karla also mentors at-risk youth, volunteers in survivor support programs, and enjoys all kinds of outdoor adventures with her family.

Learn more at: <https://traumaburn.org/karla-s-klas-bsn-rn-ccrp>

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 program manager, 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, public information officer for the Michigan Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, 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 risk reduction public education and alarm installation campaign Keeping Michigan S.A.F.E.™ (Smoke Alarms For Everyone) with his media partners WOOD TV 8 (NBC), WOTV 4 West Michigan (ABC) and WLNS TV 6 (CBS).

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Helge (Hagar) Nordtveit

Helge Nordtveit has served in the fire service in New Jersey for over forty-five 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.

Helge is a former 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 32 years, he is the Past Co-Chair of the Middlesex County FireWatch Program and is a current member of the New Jersey State Youth Fire Setter Advisory Council.

Kathi Osmonson

Kathi Osmonson is an international speaker, author, and holds a Master's Degree in Forensic Behavioral Health. She teaches professionals how to work with children who start fires and how to present fire prevention education. She writes and peer reviews scholarly articles, is a contract instructor for the National Fire Academy, and works with Vision 20/20 on the YFIRES Project.

Kathi has developed and maintained a statewide youth fire intervention team in Minnesota consisting of fire service, mental health, law enforcement, justice, and social service professionals. She also developed a nationally recognized certification for youth fire intervention specialists and program managers in Minnesota. She started fighting fire in 1987 and quickly developed a passion for saving lives and property through fire prevention and public education, now known as community risk reduction.

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