



16TH ANNUAL

Right From the Start:

Understanding, Investigating, and
Intervening in Violence Against Women
and Children

Aster Event Center • Allentown, PA

APRIL 30, MAY 1 & 2, 2025

www.vallierecounseling.com



Right From the Start

April 30, May 1, & 2, 2025

Aster Event Center, Hyatt Place, Allentown, PA

Registration 7:30 a.m. each day

Continental Breakfast Daily; Lunch provided Wednesday & Thursday

Knowledge, change, and growth, with the discomfort those cause, is the theme of this year. We will explore the pathologization of feelings, the impact of interpersonal maltreatment, and the importance of accurate information and knowledge.

Course Descriptions (Schedule Subject to Change)

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. – **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

8:30 am – 9:00 am – Keynote Speakers – C. Vendel & J. Wise, PENNLIVE. *A yearlong project from PennLive revealed prosecutions for all reported sex offenses, including rape and sex crimes against children, averaged 24% across Pennsylvania in the past five years. That figure dropped even lower, below 15%, in eight of the state's counties. Four counties filed criminal charges in fewer than 10% of reported sex crimes. Why are the numbers so low? Through interviews and surveys, some of victims who had been turned away by prosecutors, the project authors uncovered some enlightening information on what works, what does not, and what is happening to victims in the system. During this Keynote, the speakers will discuss their important findings.*

9:00 – 12:00 – “Disordered: State, trait, or diagnosis? Understanding the extremes” – V. Valliere, PsyD - *When does a normal experience become pathological? Is it a natural reaction or do you have an anxiety disorder? Quirky or “on the spectrum”? The overuse and misuse of psychological concepts has led to problematic labeling and intolerance of the human experience. This training will provide information and education about what is truly “disordered.” (3 hours) ***

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Lunch Provided

1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Choose one

“Intimate Violence: Understanding domestic violence offenders” – V. Valliere, PsyD . *The domestic terrorism and tactics of offenders of intimate partner violence is often misunderstood or minimized. This training will help attendees understand and identify the thinking, intentions, and impact of domestic abusers, including how society often supports and facilitates their behavior. (3 hours) ***

“Comfortable Uncomfortable: What Intolerance of discomfort, ‘toxic self-care,’ and accommodation are doing to us and our children.” – B. Beckwith, Psy.D. *Nuggets at every dinner. Accommodating to every discomfort. Toxic self-care and positivity. All of these issues and more will be examined for their impact on our coping, resiliency, and psychological well-being as new research proves the detrimental impact of our intolerance of discomfort to our functioning. (3 hours)**

Thursday, May 1, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. – **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

8:45 a.m. – 10:15 p.m. – **Choose one**

“Shame and Trauma: Mitigating shame in trauma survivors to facilitate healing” – A. Boehm, LCSW – Shame has a powerful impact on post-traumatic healing in vulnerable populations, like human trafficking survivors. Shame pervades every aspect of the being, including identity, interpersonal relationships, and perception of self, all of which can compromise healing. This training will offer strategies in compassion-focused interventions to foster shame resilience and built shame competency in order to mitigate shame in survivors and enhance the capacity to heal. (90 minutes)*

“Using a ‘blind expert’ in sexual assault and domestic violence prosecutions” – A. Werner, Senior Deputy Attorney General. Use of an expert in the complicated cases of sexual assault and domestic violence can be highly effective for prosecution. 42 PA §5920 allows for the expert testimony regarding victim responses and behaviors in order to educate a jury about victim responses and the dynamics and impact of violence. This presentation will provide prosecutors effective strategies in obtaining, preparing, and using an expert to provide jury education in sexual assault and domestic violence cases, all while keeping that expert “blind” from the facts of the case. Bolstering, introducing offender dynamics, and writing motions to introduce this testimony will be discussed (90 minutes)*

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – **Choose one**

“Trauma Bonds: Understanding and unraveling the connection between victims and the abuser” - A. Boehm, LCSW – Abusers use highly effective psychological tactics of control, coercion, and abuse to create strong, destructive attachments, or trauma bonds, with their victims. This training will provide an understanding of how these bonds are formed, challenge the assumption of “choice” in victims, and provide strategies to unravel and disrupt this bond. (90 minutes)*

“Managing friction: Dealing with conflict, difference, and accountability in relationships” – B. Beckwith, PsyD – Conflict is uncomfortable, often difficult, and easily avoided. However, true intimacy, cohesion, and growth, in ourselves, our colleagues, and our clients, cannot be attained without conflict. In this presentation, we will explore the importance of conflict, strategies to manage it, and developing the skill and resilience to engage in productive conflict. (90 minutes)*

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Lunch Provided

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. – **Choose one**

“Sacrificial lambs: How society protects systems over children and women” – L. Attieh, Esq. Children and women are sexually abused, trafficked, and exploited, often openly by those individuals or organizations who are popular, powerful, or societally supported. Society chooses to ignore, fails to recognize, or can be corrupted to support these abuses, especially in cases that may stigmatize the organizations or individuals involved, even in organizations like schools regulated by Title IX. In this training, we will explore how children and women are sacrificed, sometimes in plain sight, to protect the abusers. The presentation will include case studies to expose some of the issues these victims face and law enforcement, mental health professionals, prosecutors, and everyone can do to improve our system and care for our victims. (3 hours)**

“Gangs: What is true and how to help” – T. Lowe, GVI Project Manager – What people think they know about gangs is full of misinformation and stereotypes. Understanding what a gang is, how recruitment occurs, and what is happening in your community is imperative to effective violence intervention. This presentation will explain gang structure and recruitment and offer effective strategies for violence intervention. (90 minutes)*

2:30 – 3:00 – Snack break

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. – **Choose one**

“Sacrificial lambs: How society protects systems over children and women” (con’t) – L. Attieh, Esq.

“Trauma made me pull the trigger: Healing as intervention to violence” – T. Lowe, GVI Project Manager – Trauma, adverse experiences, and the burden of violence and stereotypes contribute significantly to the perpetuation of gang activity

and violence. This training will explore the root causes of gang behavior, as well as address the scarcity of resources for youth. The mission "more graduations, less funerals" will be promoted, through offering effective strategies and interventions that support this mission and promote healing. (90 minutes)*

HAPPY HOUR TO NETWORK & CELEBRATE ONE ANOTHER! 5-6 PM AT THE ASTER CENTER!

Friday, May 2, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. – **Registration and Continental Breakfast**

8:45 a.m. – 10:15 p.m. – **Choose one**

"Exploring consciousness of guilt in sexual violence prosecutions" – M. Tokash, Esq., Director of the Sexual Misconduct Response Unit. Often, in sexual assault or abuse prosecutions, the offender's intention to sexually assault the victim is camouflaged by claims that the offense was accidental, a result of poor communication, or the victim's failure to resist. This interactive presentation will offer strategies and means to explore and expose an offender's intention and reveal indices of consciousness of guilt that attorneys can use during investigation and trial. (90 minutes)*

"Ethical issues in professional self-care: Avoiding ethical pitfalls and professional impairment" V. Valliere, Psy.D., B. Beckwith, Psy.D. and presenters – In this interactive exploration of ethical issues in self-care, participants are encouraged to explore when failures in self-care may lead to professional missteps, psychological harm to the professional or client, or disruption to the team or agency's functioning. Case examples of particularly challenging situations will be examined. We will analyze a professional's ethical requirement to set boundaries, address personal issues that impact others, and intervene with colleagues that are struggling. The ethical issues for the cases will be highlighted and dissected to help ensure the highest quality and ethical solutions are offered. Qualifies for ethics credits for attorneys, psychologists, counselors, PCACB, and social workers. (3 hours) *

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – **Choose one**

"Kayden's Law: Enhanced risk assessment and intervention in Pennsylvania child custody" – D. Neiderer, Esq. Seven-year-old Kayden Mancuso's tragic death, at the hands of her domestically violent father during an unsupervised visit, inspired Senate Bill 55. The law, effective August 13, 2024, creates a presumption that parties to a custody action with a history of violence or convictions for some crimes, pose a risk of harm to children. This presentation will explain the purpose of the law and how to apply the enhancements. Steps to apply the law and judicial enhancements will be identified, and unintended consequences will be explored. (90 minutes)*

"Ethical issues in professional self-care: Avoiding ethical pitfalls and professional impairment" (con't).

CONFERENCE WRAP UP



Valliere and Counseling Associates, Inc. has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6294. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. Valliere & Counseling Associates, Inc. is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs.



Valliere & Counseling Associates, Inc. is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Valliere & Counseling Associates, Inc. maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

This conference is approved for continuing education for CLE's for Pennsylvania and PCACB.
It is pending approval for New Jersey CLE's and Pennsylvania Law Enforcement.

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April 30, May 1, & 2, 2025
Aster Event Center • Hyatt Allentown, PA



REGISTRATION by fax or ONLINE with QR code

Name: _____

[] April 30, 2025

8:30 A.M. Keynote Speaker
9:00 – 12:00 “Disordered: State, Trait, or Diagnosis?” – V. Valliere, Psy.D.

1:00 – 4:30 p.m. **CHOOSE ONE**

[] “Intimate Violence: Understanding domestic violence offenders” – V. Valliere, PsyD
[] “Comfortable Uncomfortable: What intolerance of discomfort is doing to us . . .” – B. Beckwith, PsyD

[] May 1, 2025

8:45 am – 10:15 **CHOOSE ONE**

[] “Shame and trauma: Mitigating shame in trauma survivors” – A. Boehm, LCSW
[] “How to use a ‘blind expert’ in sexual assault/domestic violence prosecution” – A. Werner, Esq.

10:30 am – Noon **CHOOSE ONE**

[] “Trauma bonds: Understanding and unraveling the connection between abuser and victim” – A. Boehm, LCSW
[] “Managing friction: Dealing with conflict, difference, and accountability” – B. Beckwith, PsyD

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[] “Trauma made me pull the trigger: Healing as an intervention to violence” – T. Lowe, GVI Project Manager

[] May 2, 2025

8:45 am – 10:15 pm **CHOOSE ONE**

[] “Ethical issues in professional self-care” – V. Valliere, PsyD, B. Beckwith, PsyD
[] “Exploring consciousness of guilt in sexual violence prosecutions” – M. Tokash, Esq.

10:30- Noon **CHOOSE ONE**

[] “Ethical issues in professional self-care” – V. Valliere, PsyD, B. Beckwith, PsyD
[] “Kayden’s Law: Enhanced risk assessment and intervention in PA child Custody” – D. Neiderer, Esq.

\$459.00 complete; **\$399.00** for 2 Full days; **\$249.00** for a single full day.
Friday only - \$139.00
Breakfast and Lunch included for the 2 full days!

*Save 10% for early registration – before 2/28/25 • Save 5% for more than 3 per agency
Save 25% for student discount with valid ID*

Name: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Enclosed:** _____

Email: _____ **Type of CE needed:** _____

Send check with forms to:

Valliere & Counseling Associates, Inc.,
P.O. Box 864, Fogelsville, PA 18051;
Email: h.bednar@vallierecounseling.com
Call to register at (610) 530-8392 or Fax registration to (610) 530-8940

CE's credits are available for Psychologists, Licensed Professional Counselors, Social Workers, PCACB, and PA CLE's. It pending/applied for approval PA Law Enforcement, and NJ CLE's. Other CE's must be submitted by the participant. Approved CEs for the entire conference will be 15 credits for all three days, 6 per full day, 3 for last day.

DEADLINE: April 20, 2025