

THE CONNECTION
INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATIVE PRACTICE



2026 TRAINING CATALOG



The Connection Institute for Innovative Practice

TRAINING | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | CONSULTATION

The Connection's social enterprise, The Institute for Innovative Practice, offers professional development, training, and consultation, to support individual employee well-being and organizational success. The income generated from these services is reinvested back into The Connection's human service programs.

The Institute for Innovative Practice delivers high-impact training to over 5,000 participants annually, partnering with more than 300 organizations to strengthen teams and elevate outcomes.





The Connection Institute for Innovative Practice

TRAINING | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | CONSULTATION

Meet the Team



Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW

Assistant Vice President of Training and Grant Management

Michele leads product development initiatives at The Institute. She has published research with Yale University in top criminal justice and behavioral health journals, and is a sought-after presenter on topics such as trauma-informed leadership, grant writing, and resilience at work. Michele's work is grounded in neuroscience and focused on translating theory into practice through innovative training models that support both organizational change and professional growth.

mklimczak@theconnectioninc.org



Nikita Joslyn, LMSW

Senior Director of Business Development

Nikita leads certification and professional development training. Her dedication to excellence earned her the title of Connecticut's top Mental Health First Aid Instructor in 2022 and 2023, culminating in her being named the 2023 Adult Instructor of the Year by The National Council on Mental Wellbeing after training over 1,100 participants. Nikita is committed to translating her expertise in mental health, domestic violence, and criminal justice into fostering professional growth and promoting widespread well-being.

nljoslyn@theconnectioninc.org



Aaron Yosky, MA

Training Manager

Aaron leads the creation and delivery of impactful workforce development programs. His career spans leadership roles including school administrator, lead teacher, and instructional coach, where he has mentored educators and driven academic excellence. With a strong foundation in classroom teaching and a passion for professional growth, Aaron is committed to inspiring teams and advancing organizational success.

aayosky@theconnectioninc.org



Table of Contents

People	Page 5
Leadership	Page 14
Performance	Page 24
Gratitude to Greatness: Free Courses Powered by The Walker Group	Page 63



The Connection
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People

We help employees unlock their full potential by building emotional intelligence, resilience, and inclusive mindsets.

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Polyvagal Theory: Accessing the Healing Power of your Nervous System

Polyvagal theory offers a unique lens to understand the way our nervous systems regulate our thoughts, behaviors, and physiology in a process mediated by the vagus nerve: the literal link between our brains and our bodies. Beyond understanding how our bodies detect danger and then mobilize for fight, flight, or freeze, polyvagal theory gives us insights into the continuum of energy states we are in every moment of the day, all centered around our search for safety. The knowledge that we can impact processes previously thought to be largely unconscious has important clinical implications for work with traumatized individuals and enables all of us to access our innate resilience and empathy.

Suggested Next Course: Compassion Fatigue

Dates: January 26, 2026; June 24, 2026

Time: 1:00—2:30PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Creating Inclusive Trauma-Informed Systems of Care

Becoming a trauma-Informed organization requires a strong understanding of a system's approach, and a deep appreciation of the human dynamics underlying any significant organizational change. Most trauma-related initiatives are heavily client and direct-care staff oriented, failing to take into account the key role of administrative functions. This session will discuss how to successfully infuse trauma-informed principles into the everyday operations of all aspects of your organization, in a manner that honors the importance of every role. In the organization.

Dates: April 1, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:00AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Inclusive Practices: Enhancing Cultural Humility in Organizations

Cultural Humility emphasizes the importance of self-awareness in professional settings, highlighting that cultural competence is an ongoing, intentional practice rather than a one-time achievement. This course will explore key concepts like bias, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, and discuss how these impact interactions. It will discuss privilege, racism, microaggressions, and the importance of addressing social determinants of health. Additionally, the presentation provides strategies for creating inclusive environments and supporting vulnerable populations. Participants will gain knowledge and skills to foster humility, respect, and continuous learning in cross-cultural encounters to improve service delivery and organizational well-being.

This course fulfills the continuing education requirement for training in Cultural Competency.

Date: April 27, 2026

Time: 1:00—2:30PM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)





Managing Emotional Exposure Through Effective Work with Vulnerable Populations

This course will explore the impact of high-exposure work on professionals who serve individuals and communities facing systemic inequities, poverty, and trauma. With a focus on client-centered skills, participants will explore the importance of establishing and maintaining professional boundaries and mastering techniques for skillful crisis de-escalation, which are vital to sustainable well-being in the helping professions. A core component involves learning strategies that not only maximize effective support but also directly reduce the vulnerabilities of helpers to burnout by clearly defining the scope of their responsibility. Through reflection, discussion, and practical tools, this training will highlight strategies to build resilience and sustain compassion in demanding work environments. Emphasis will be placed on fostering organizational cultures of care that promote psychological safety, equity, and long-term professional vitality.

This course fulfills the continuing education requirement for training in Cultural Competency.

Suggested Next Courses:

- ***Polyvagal Theory: Accessing the Healing Power of your Nervous System***
- ***Engaging with Clients in Crisis***

Date: May 6, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Emily Veldow, LPC, Clinical Supervisor for The Connection Center for Behavioral Health

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

Register Here





How Racial Discrimination Alters Brain Function & Impacts Health

This course will examine the profound ways that racial discrimination and chronic exposure to bias affect the brain and body. Drawing from neuroscience, psychology, and public health research, participants will explore how experiences of racism can trigger stress responses that reshape neural pathways, influence emotional regulation, and contribute to long-term health disparities. The training will challenge assumptions about resilience and highlight how systemic inequities become biologically embedded over time. Participants will gain insights into the intersection of equity, mental health, and physiological well-being, and learn strategies to foster healing, inclusion, and organizational practices that support racial equity.

This course fulfills the continuing education requirement for training in Cultural Competency.

Date: June 25, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:00AM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)





Beyond Behavior: Neurobiology, Racial Trauma, and the Student Experience

This workshop delves into the profound impact of racism and discrimination on the nervous system, exploring how these experiences can trigger stress responses in students, affecting their well-being, academic performance, and social-emotional development. We will examine how the chronic activation of the nervous system, often triggered by microaggressions and systemic inequities, can manifest in the classroom through behaviors like hypervigilance, withdrawal, or difficulty focusing. Participants will gain insights into the neurobiology of trauma and learn practical strategies to create a culturally responsive and trauma-informed learning environment that fosters safety, belonging, and resilience. By understanding the connection between the nervous system, trauma, and behavior, educators can better support students in navigating the challenges of systemic oppression and promote their overall well-being.

Recommendation for school personnel, parents, and those working with youth.

This course fulfills the continuing education requirement for training in Cultural Competency.

Date: July 22, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:00AM

Presenters: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection, & Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Establishing Your Work/Life Balance

We all strive for a harmonious balance between our professional and personal lives but achieving this can be a real struggle. This course will challenge your understanding of “balance” and introduce practical tools to enhance fulfillment in both areas. Through an in-depth exploration of the dynamic between work and home, participants will explore actionable strategies to effectively manage both. Approaches will apply to both in-office and remote situations, while offering insights from both the employee and supervisory perspective.

Date: September 17, 2026

Time: 1:00—2:30PM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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NEW



**The Connection
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2026 Membership Package

Become a member of The Institute for Innovative Practice and unlock a year of unlimited training and professional development. With an Individual Membership, you'll gain access to our virtual instructor led trainings for 12 months.

SPECIAL OFFER \$199



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Leadership

We equip leaders to think strategically with both vision and heart, creating environments where teams can thrive.

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10 Essential Leadership Skills for Managers

Explore the essential role of leadership in shaping individuals, teams, and organizations. This training highlights the importance of blending self-awareness, effective communication, and the ability to inspire collective action toward shared goals. True leadership involves understanding both oneself and others, making informed and ethical decisions, and cultivating environments that foster team motivation and engagement. Strong leaders manage not just tasks, but also emotions, ensuring that decision-making and communication are grounded in empathy and evidence. Ultimately, leadership is key to organizational success, aligning employee performance with strategic objectives while fostering a culture of growth and recognition.

Dates: January 20, 2026; July 29, 2026

Time: 1:00–2:00PM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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The New Supervisor: From Team Member to Team Leader Series

The New Supervisor: From Team Member to Team Leader Series will be offered individually or as a package - \$240 (for all three courses).

Making the transition from individual contributor to a successful supervisor is a critical stage of professional development. This comprehensive three-part series is designed to prepare upcoming and novice supervisors for their new responsibilities by building foundational leadership skills, mastering emotional intelligence, and optimizing workflow. You'll gain the essential tools to define your supervisory identity, learn to lead with empathy through a trauma-informed lens, and master the art of delegation and time management to develop a confident, high-performing team. This series provides a complete skillset for maximizing both personal impact and team effectiveness.

[**Register Here**](#)





The New Supervisor: From Team Member to Team Leader Series

Session # 1: Defining Your Supervisory Role and Style

As you step into a management role, your focus shifts to nurturing your agency's most valuable asset—its staff—while ensuring effective service delivery. The core focus of this training is on self-awareness and the fundamental elements of effective supervision. Participants will discuss the role of the supervisor and what it means to lead others.

Key topics include:

- Understanding our values, biases, and natural leadership style.
- Defining the core responsibilities of a supervisor versus an individual contributor.
- Identifying the essential elements of effective supervision.

Date: April 14, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Location: 100 Roscommon Drive, Suite 203, Middletown, CT

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)





The New Supervisor: From Team Member to Team Leader Series

Session # 2: Leading with Empathy: A Trauma-Informed Approach

Building on foundational supervisory concepts, this training addresses the critical soft skills necessary for building and sustaining a competent, confident, and supported team. This course will explore the importance of emotional intelligence for supervisors, providing tools to better manage team dynamics and individual performance. Crucially, it will also outline a trauma-informed approach to supervision, ensuring that leaders can support their staff effectively and empathetically. Participants will leave with practical tools to:

- Use emotional intelligence for improved team communication and conflict resolution.
- Create a supportive and psychologically safe work environment.
- Cultivate a team that feels valued, supported, and motivated by the organization.

Date: May 12, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Location: 100 Roscommon Drive, Suite 203, Middletown, CT

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)





The New Supervisor: From Team Member to Team Leader Series

Session # 3: Delegation and Time Management: From Doing to Directing

This highly practical course equips upcoming supervisors and managers with the skills to effectively manage their expanded workload and develop their team members through strategic task assignments. Making the transition from individual tasks to a supervisory role requires mastering the art of delegation. Participants will learn how to:

- Strategically identify tasks that should be shifted off their plate to allow focus on higher-level priorities.
- Use a proven process for matching the right task to the right person, setting clear expectations, and providing the necessary authority and resources.
- Master techniques for follow-up and accountability without undermining their team member's confidence or independence.
- Implement time management tools to prioritize their daily work and minimize stress.

Date: June 23, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Location: 100 Roscommon Drive, Suite 203, Middletown, CT

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Retention-Oriented Supervision

Employees are the most valuable asset of any organization. While retention is an issue usually relegated to HR departments, program culture and management practices have a significant impact on employee morale and wellbeing. There is enormous potential in the supervisory role to create program environments that keep staff engaged, stimulated, and deeply invested in the mission of the organization. This session will focus on the continuum of staff care and client care through the role of the supervisor. Participants will learn how leaders can create high-functioning program cultures in which staff feel effective in their roles and truly valued, which in turn creates the conditions for organizational stability and optimal client outcomes.

Date: July 7, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)

Unlocking Teamwork: Building Bridges Through Effective Conflict Resolution

Conflicts are inevitable in human interactions and the workplace is no exception. This training will focus on common underlying dynamics that escalate differences of opinion into conflicts, including communication and personality styles and failing to address problems proactively. A progressive model of conflict resolution will be presented that will give participants the tools to recognize what level of assertiveness is appropriate given the situation, from ignoring to collaboration and compromise. Conflict resolution training is an important step in creating workplace cultures that are safe, respectful, and productive for all employees.

Date: October 20, 2026

Time: 1:00—2:30PM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Mastering the Art of Influence: Leadership Skills for Every Level

Leadership is not defined by titles, but by the ability to inspire and influence others. This course examines the principles of influence, emphasizing strategies to build trust, foster collaboration, and drive positive change. Participants will develop advanced communication techniques, strengthen interpersonal skills, and learn to navigate challenges with composure and confidence. Designed for professionals at all stages, this course will enable people, regardless of their role, to lead with impact and contribute meaningfully to their programs and organizations.

This training is ideal for individual contributors seeking to expand their professional impact and establish the foundational skills required for a successful transition into a supervisory role.

Date: November 5, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)





I-RISE Leadership Academy

For organizations ready to invest in the next generation of leaders, the I-RISE Leadership Academy equips emerging leaders with essential skills in emotional intelligence, decision-making, and performance management—preparing them to lead with clarity and confidence.

[Learn More & Register](#)

Next Cohort Dates:

March 12, 2026; April 2, 2026; May 14, 2026; June 4, 2026

Time: 9:30—4:30PM

Location: Middletown, CT

Interested in a private I-RISE cohort for your organization?

[Schedule a Discovery Session](#)





The Connection
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Performance

We strengthen the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that drive excellence. Through practical tools and reflective learning grounded in systems thinking, individuals connect their actions to purpose—turning insight into lasting impact across teams and organizations.

[Click Here to Register](#)

Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED

This certification course teaches participants how to recognize and respond appropriately to cardiac, breathing, first aid, and opioid overdose emergencies. Participants learn the skills needed to give immediate care to an injured or ill person, including NARCAN administration and when to call for advanced medical care.

Participants receive a 2-year CPR and First Aid certification through the American Red Cross.

Dates: January 13, 2026; February 10, 2026; March 10, 2026; April 21, 2026; May 19, 2026; June 16, 2026; July 14, 2026; August 25, 2026; September 22, 2026; October 20, 2026; November 17, 2026; December 15, 2026

Time: 1:00—5:00PM

Location: 100 Roscommon Drive, Suite 203, Middletown, CT

Cost: \$100.00

[Register Here](#)



Understanding Anxiety Disorders

Join us for an in-depth session on anxiety disorders, a group of conditions affecting approximately 40 million Americans. This session will cover the symptoms, underlying causes, and the profound impact these disorders have on daily life. Participants will gain valuable insights into the manifestations of anxiety disorders and explore effective coping strategies to help individuals navigate challenges and enhance overall well-being.

Date: January 15, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00pm

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Adult Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is a SAMHSA-endorsed, nationally recognized skill set designed to assist someone who is displaying signs of an emergent mental health problem or is experiencing an acute mental health crisis. This virtual course, designed primarily for non-clinical audiences, will teach participants how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness or substance use disorders. Mental Health First Aid takes the fear and hesitation out of starting conversations about these complex issues through providing a simple, effective action plan that ensures a safe and empathic response to individuals in crisis.

Participants will receive certification from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing valid for 3 years.

Attendees will be required to complete a 2-hour, self-paced online course, before participating in the instructor-led session.

Suggested Next Courses:

- ***Engaging with Clients in a Crisis***
- ***Mental Health Response (non-certification)***
- ***Youth Mental Health First Aid***

Dates: January 23, 2026; February 27, 2026; March 26, 2026; April 30, 2026; May 27, 2026; June 17, 2026; July 16, 2026; August 14, 2026; September 24, 2026; October 16, 2026; November 12, 2026; December 8, 2026

Time: 9:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$100.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 5.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Reproductive Dignity for Incarcerated Individuals

Nearly 200,000 women are currently incarcerated in the United States, and a significant portion of them are in their reproductive years. It is estimated that between 3-4% of women are pregnant upon entering correctional facilities, highlighting the urgent need for adequate reproductive healthcare services within these settings. This two-hour course will explore the critical issues of reproductive healthcare of incarcerated pregnant women in the US, with a specific focus on Connecticut. By the end of this training, participants will be able to describe the unique health risks and challenges faced by incarcerated pregnant women, identify essential components of pregnancy-related healthcare in correctional settings, and compare Connecticut's standards to national benchmarks.

Date: January 29, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30am

Presenter: Elizabeth LaRegina, LMSW, Director of Assessment & Intake for Supportive Housing for Families, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Youth Mental Health First Aid

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches participants how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders in adolescents and young adults. This virtual training will give anyone who works with youth the skills they need to reach out and provide initial support for emergent or existing behavioral health problems and make referrals to the appropriate level of care.

Participants will receive certification from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing valid for 3 years.

Attendees will be required to complete a 2-hour, self-paced online course, before participating in the instructor-led session.

Suggested Next Courses:

- ***Engaging with Clients in a Crisis***
- ***Adult Mental Health First Aid***

Dates: February 5, 2026; May 7, 2026; August 28, 2026; December 3, 2026

Time: 9:00—2:00PM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$100.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 4.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Beyond Grief: Supporting Individuals Through Loss

This course will explore the psychology of the bereavement process in all its complexity, debunking common misconceptions that are not helpful and rarely reflect the lived experience of grief. The stages of grief do not proceed in logical, sequential steps. Grief is not a medical condition, a weakness, or something we need to “get over.” It is, however, an unavoidable part of life, and the path of bereavement is the path to healing. This course will offer support, insight and concrete guidance for anyone interested in this important topic, for those who are supporting a loved one through the journey, or for those who are finding their way on the path.

Date: February 12, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Emily Veldow, LPC, Clinical Supervisor for The Connection Center for Behavioral Health

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Serving Those Who Serve: Support for Veterans and Their Families

Many professionals will work with individuals who have served in the military, or the people supporting them. The multiple challenges faced by veterans in reintegrating themselves into their families and communities following service are now widely recognized as a public health issue. This training will focus on the unique needs of veterans and their support network. Topics to be covered include understanding military culture, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in individuals returning from combat, traumatic brain injury, and suicide prevention. Participants will be given behavioral health and other community resources to support our veterans and their loved ones. This course fulfills the continuing education requirement for training in Veteran Services.

This course fulfills the continuing education requirement for training in Veteran Services.

Dates: February 23, 2026; August 19, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Microsoft Excel Series

Excel Courses will be offered individually or as a package.
\$300 (for all four sessions).

Microsoft Excel Training: Getting Started with the Basics

Microsoft Excel is a powerful tool essential for managing and presenting data in today's metrics-driven world. At some point in everyone's career, it is likely that they will be required to create, interpret, or enter data onto a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

In this entry-level Microsoft Excel training course, participants will learn the following topics:

- Data entry and navigation
- Adding columns and rows
- Copying and creating new sheets
- Sorting and filtering data
- Creating and formatting tables
- Cleaning and reformatting or reorganizing data

Suggested Next Course: Microsoft Excel Training: Data Tools

Date: February 24, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Susan Phillips, Ph.D, Vice President of Quality, Information and Risk, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)



Microsoft Excel Series

Microsoft Excel Training: Data Tools

This 2-hour training will familiarize participants with the power of Excel data tools. Conditional formatting and the identification of duplicates, then we will review the tools that can be used for eliminating, duplicates, separating one column of text into multiple columns, or combining text from multiple columns into a single column, and constraining data entry to only validated choices. We will also talk about flash filling cells and using flash formulas.

Suggested Next Course: Microsoft Excel Training: Pivot Tables and Charts

Date: March 31, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Susan Phillips, Ph.D, Vice President of Quality, Information and Risk, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)



Microsoft Excel Series

Microsoft Excel Training: Pivot Tables and Charts

This two-hour training will prepare participants to use the power of pivot tables to meaningfully summarize data and create tables and charts for reports. We will also review the use of slicers in Excel and other tools for visualizing data such as conditional formatting, sparklines, heatmaps, and icon sets.

Suggested Next Course: Microsoft Excel Training: Formulas and Functions

Date: April 28, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Susan Phillips, Ph.D, Vice President of Quality, Information and Risk, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)



Microsoft Excel Series

Microsoft Excel Training: Formulas and Functions

This two-hour training will focus exclusively look at Excel formulas and functions. We will cover:

- Working with text fields (LEFT, RIGHT, MID, LEN, FIND)
- Performing calculations with dates
- Using logical formulas such (IF, AND, IFERROR, COUNTIF) and combining or nesting them into a single “if, then, else” statement
- Array formulas for pulling information from one table/sheet into another (UNIQUE, XLOOKUP)

Date: May 19, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Susan Phillips, Ph.D, Vice President of Quality, Information and Risk, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)

Keys to Writing Winning Grants

This course will demystify the grant writing process, providing clear guidelines for presenting your project to funders in the most compelling way possible to increase your chances of success. Topics covered will include how to tell your story, matching your project with the funder's mission, demonstrating evidence-based need, and learning how to design a logic model based on your theory of change. The skills learned in this course have wide applicability outside the realm of grant writing, including developing a data orientation in your work, writing SMART goals, and presenting ideas for projects to funders, boards, and communities in a professional manner.

Date: March 3, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)



Adult Mental Health Response

Communities everywhere are facing a serious mental health crisis: 1 in 4 people will exhibit the symptoms of a diagnosable mental health disorder in any given year. A mental health crisis can occur unexpectedly, and fear and lack of knowledge greatly impact our ability to respond effectively. To safeguard the wellbeing of valued residents, customers, clients, and employees, staff of public institutions need the competence and confidence to recognize and support people experiencing a crisis. This 2-hour non-certification course will empower participants with the skills to recognize and address the symptoms of the most common mental health conditions, including gambling and substance use disorder. A model of supportive response based on validation, engagement, and empathy will ensure a safe environment for all until help arrives.

Suggested Next Course: Adult Mental Health First Aid

Dates: March 4, 2026; September 10, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Engaging with Clients in a Crisis

Effective crisis de-escalation is a necessary skill for anyone who works with people. In the human services, mastering the art of crisis management is vitally important for the safety of both staff and clients. Empathy-based de-escalation also offers powerful opportunities to assist clients in modulating their emotions and greatly enhances engagement. This course will present a trauma-informed approach to crisis management which begins with a mindset of connection vs. control. The Heart-Head-Heart model will be presented as an extremely effective way to validate, de-escalate, and provide solution-focused strategies to assist those in need.

Suggested Next Course: Providing Care Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

Dates: March 5, 2026; June 11, 2026; September 15, 2026; December 15, 2026

Time: 9:30—12:00PM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Foundational Concepts of Client Engagement

Our work in the human services field is primarily accomplished through relationships, and the ability to authentically connect with a client is the factor that most significantly contributes to successful outcomes. This training will explore the basic elements of client engagement and offer participants the opportunity to practice techniques that will create the conditions for a positive, collaborative relationship with those they serve. Topics covered include understanding the client experience, reflective listening, building rapport, enhancing client motivation, and managing conflict in the helping relationship.

Suggested Next Course: Providing Care Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

Date: March 17, 2026; November 18, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00pm

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB)

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The Art of the Case Note

"If it's not documented, it didn't happen." The accurate and timely recording of work with clients is an essential skill in human services and an important indicator of effective case planning, but writing a quality case note is not as easy as it may seem. This workshop will give participants the knowledge they need to produce documentation that is professional in both tone and content, providing a thorough record of client progress and reflecting the role of the practitioner in facilitating change.

Dates & Times: March 18, 2026, 1:00—3:00PM & October 22, 2026, 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Understanding Depressive Disorders

Depression is one of the most common and debilitating mental health conditions globally, affecting over 21 million American adults each year. This course will thoroughly examine the symptoms, diagnostic criteria, and complex etiology of Depressive Disorders. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the neurobiological, genetic, and psychosocial factors that contribute to these conditions. We will explore the significant impact Depressive Disorders have on an individual's emotional state, physical health, relationships, and overall functioning. We will also cover current evidence-based interventions, emphasizing strategies for assessment, treatment planning, and effective supportive engagement to aid individuals in managing symptoms and achieving sustained recovery.

Suggested Next Course: Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

Date: March 19, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Exploring Eating Disorders

Eating disorders are serious and sometimes life-threatening illnesses affecting millions of people at any given time, usually co-occurring with other psychiatric conditions including mood and anxiety disorders. Often associated with adolescent women, eating disorders affect people of all ages, backgrounds, and genders. In fact, one in three of those diagnosed are male, and these numbers are increasing. This training will provide a comprehensive overview of clinical and sub-clinical eating disorders and explore causes, risk factors, and effective treatment options.

Suggested Next Course: Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Skills (CBT)

Date: April 15, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[**Register Here**](#)



From Spreadsheet to Story: Finance as a Strategic Partner for Mission Impact

This interactive learning session is designed for finance professionals working in nonprofit and mission-driven organizations who want to maximize their impact by building stronger partnerships with program staff. Participants will learn how to translate financial concepts into programming language, understand program priorities, and communicate financial information in ways that support program goals.

Date: April 8, 2026

Time: 1:00—2:30PM

Presenters: Allison DeBlasio, Senior Director of Communications & Business Strategy, The Connection & Marissa Kontoulis, Senior Administrative Director, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)



Maximize Your Impact: Financial Management for Nonprofits

Master the art of financial stewardship for your nonprofit program.

This course is designed to equip program professionals with the essential strategies and skills needed to effectively manage surpluses and deficits, ensuring a balanced budget at the end of the fiscal year. We'll delve into the complexities of navigating the reporting process with state funders, providing step-by-step guidance on preparing expenditure reports, navigating the revision process, and preparing your annual financial report. Through engaging discussions and practical examples, attendees will gain invaluable insights into best practices for program staff to manage financial reporting and strategic budget management, ensuring compliance and financial stability for their programs.

Date: April 29, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenters: Allison DeBlasio, Senior Director of Communications & Business Strategy, The Connection & Marissa Kontoulis, Senior Administrative Director, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)



Introduction to Cognitive Behavioral Skills (CBT)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a short-term, skill-based psychotherapy treatment that helps people learn to assert more influence over their thoughts, behaviors, and feelings. When facing potential stressors, the way we interpret what we are experiencing can greatly exacerbate our stress or minimize it, which in turn largely determines our behavioral responses. Participants will explore CBT from theory to application in this introductory course. This training will give service providers an understanding of the basic elements of CBT and provide techniques to help clients identify and challenge distorted thinking, promoting growth and resilience in meeting life challenges.

Date: May 15, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Emily Veldow, LPC, Clinical Supervisor for The Connection Center for Behavioral Health

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Motivational Interviewing in Action: Implementing the Principles of MI into Vocational Work

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a collaborative, client-centered communication style designed to strengthen an individual's own motivation for and commitment to change. While traditionally used in clinical settings, MI can be a powerful tool in vocational work—supporting individuals navigating employment barriers, career transitions, or ambivalence about change. This training explores how the principles and spirit of MI can be practically applied in workforce development and employment support roles. Participants will learn how to engage clients in meaningful conversations that enhance autonomy, build confidence, and support goal setting aligned with their values. Through hands-on practice and discussion, this session will help vocational professionals integrate MI strategies into everyday interactions, ultimately fostering client empowerment, accountability, and long-term success in the workplace.

Dates/Times: May 28, 2026, 1:00—3:30PM & November 4, 2026, 9:30—12:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Mastering the Art of Group Facilitation

This course will discuss the fundamental concepts of effective group facilitation, and the natural stages of a group from inception to termination. Participants will learn the mechanisms by which groups facilitate change, how to set group and individual goals, how to understand the roles of group members, and strategies to maintain strong group cohesion. We will also discuss the dynamics of open vs. closed-ended groups, and techniques for managing challenging behavior.

Dates/Times: June 8, 2026, 1:00—3:00PM & December 16, 2026, 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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NEW

Results-Based Accountability: Measuring What Matters Most

Results-Based Accountability (RBA) offers a powerful framework for redefining how programs measure success and demonstrate impact. This training explores how to connect daily activities to meaningful outcomes that reflect real improvements in client, family, and community well-being. Participants will learn to develop a Theory of Change, build a Logic Model, and identify performance measures that answer three essential questions: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off? By using data to inform decisions, enhance performance, and communicate value to stakeholders, RBA empowers organizations to work smarter—not harder—while strengthening accountability, transparency, and results-driven action. Recommended for leadership at all organizational levels.

Date: June 10, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

[Register Here](#)



Responding to the Complex Trauma of Homelessness

The loss of one's home is extraordinarily traumatic and often leads to a host of secondary traumatic experiences for individuals and their families. Sleeping on the street, in an abandoned building or car, in a shelter, or a series of temporary homes results in extreme vulnerability, loss of control, and feelings of hopelessness. Past traumatic life experiences greatly compound the stress of homelessness. This training will explore the unique traumatic impact of homelessness on adults and children. Practitioners will learn how to recognize trauma-based reactions in their clients, and how to implement trauma informed strategies for supporting people experiencing housing instability.

Suggested Next Course: Providing Care Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

Date: July 8, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Introduction to Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is an evidence-based treatment used by practitioners to treat a large variety of problems in clients who experience Depression, Bipolar Disorder, PTSD, and Substance Abuse. Participants will explore DBT from theory to application in this introductory course. This training will give service providers an understanding of the basic elements of DBT and demonstrate how it can be used by clinical and non-clinical staff with clients experiencing a crisis or having difficulty managing strong emotions or challenging behaviors.

Date: August 5, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Emily Veldow, LPC, Clinical Supervisor for The Connection Center for Behavioral Health

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Using the Stages of Change Model to Promote Recovery-Focused Behavior

The Stages of Change model (also called The Transtheoretical Model) focuses on the decision-making process of individuals and assessing their readiness to make significant behavioral changes. The model is used extensively in the behavioral health field, particularly with individuals struggling with substance use disorders. Understanding an individual's readiness to change can help foster a therapeutic alliance and promote motivation, as well as guiding the choice of appropriate treatment strategies. This training will provide human service professionals with the basic concepts and tools needed to effectively use the Stages of Change model when working with clients to make positive life changes.

Suggested Next Course: Motivational Interviewing in Action: Implementing the Principles of MI into Vocational Work

Date: August 6, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Defining and Maintaining Professional Boundaries

As the basic framework for helping relationships, clear and appropriate boundaries are the foundation of quality client care. Professional boundaries are also essential for our own self-care. This training will teach participants the skill of staying in the “zone of helpfulness,” neither disengaged nor overly involved. Topics covered will include building awareness of factors that can compromise healthy boundaries, the art of self-disclosure, common conflicts of interest, and how to distinguish boundary transgressions from boundary violations. Understanding how and when the boundaries we set become compromised is a key skill of the effective, self-aware professional.

Suggested Next Course: Professionalism: Cultivating Your Personal Brand in the Workplace

Date: August 13, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Understanding Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar Disorder is a serious mental health condition characterized by dramatic, disruptive shifts in mood, energy, and functioning that profoundly impact an individual's daily life and ability to maintain stability. Join us as we examine the spectrum of Bipolar Disorder I and II. We will focus on practical, evidence-based supportive interventions to emphasize the vital role of treatment adherence, boundary setting, and collaborative care in helping clients achieve and sustain long-term functional recovery and independence.

Recommended for clinicians, case managers, and anyone supporting individuals diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder.

Suggested Next Course: Introduction to Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

Date: August 26, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Understanding Your Attachment Style

Our innate attachment style — secure, avoidant, or anxious — exerts a powerful and largely unconscious influence on every relationship we have. Everyone has a unique default mode of relating to others based on our earliest experiences with caregivers, but this does not mean we need to remain locked into old repetitive patterns of interaction. Through building our understanding of attachment and enhancing self-awareness about our own behavioral patterns, we can greatly improve our ability to connect with others: to exert positive influence as a leader, to form stronger therapeutic relationships with clients, and to improve relationships with family and friends.

Date: September 3, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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NEW

Navigating Challenging Conversations

Communicating through difficult situations is a skill that all professionals need. We are bound to experience conflict and disagreements in the workplace but knowing how to handle them competently can reduce frustration, poor attitude, reluctance to come to work, and a lack of productivity.

In this training, participants will learn how to recognize and deal with the most difficult personality types, how to control their emotions when interacting with these individuals, and identify their own communication styles that can help them work more successfully with others.

Suggested Next Course: Unlocking Teamwork: Building Bridges Through Effective Conflict Resolution

Date: September 16, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Beyond Labels: Addressing Bias in Substance Use Care

This training provides participants with a comprehensive understanding of substance use disorders and the journey of recovery. It goes beyond clinical definitions to explore the profound impact of societal stigma and systemic bias on individuals seeking help, accessing quality treatment, and achieving sustainable well-being. Participants will engage in meaningful self-reflection and acquire actionable strategies to dismantle biases within themselves and their professional environments.

Date: September 29, 2026

Time: 1:00—2:30PM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Working with Mandated Clients

The ideal client is often viewed as one who is self-motivated to seek help: easy to engage and more likely to have positive treatment outcomes. Mandated or involuntary clients, directed to enter treatment from an external source, are often assumed to be difficult to work with, resistant to change, and requiring a firm approach. This training will help us better support our mandated clients and care for ourselves by understanding and managing our own emotional responses, validating the emotional experiences of our clients, and tapping into our natural capacity for empathy and compassion. Pro-social modeling will be discussed as a powerful tool to encourage behavioral change. When we learn to work with rather than against our clients, we can experience the tremendous rewards of truly collaborative work with this vulnerable population.

Suggested Next Course: Motivational Interviewing in Action: Implementing the Principles of MI into Vocational Work

Date: October 7, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Workplace Safety: Best Practices for De-Escalation

Protecting our workplace is a shared responsibility. This training is designed to equip all employees of an organization with essential knowledge and practical skills to enhance their personal safety and the security of the workplace. We'll cover fundamental safety protocols and provide actionable strategies for managing challenging interactions with disgruntled individuals.

Suggested Next Course: Engaging with Clients in a Crisis

Date: October 21, 2026

Time: 11:00—12:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Professionalism: Cultivating Your Personal Brand in the Workplace

Some of the most important professional skills are never formally taught – we learn them by trial and error. While many social service training courses address effective communication with clients, the skill of interfacing with other professionals is equally important but rarely the focus until a problem or misunderstanding occurs.

Maintaining positive relationships with funders, supervisors, and colleagues hinges on our ability to communicate respectfully and effectively through digital, oral, and written means. This course will teach participants the skills of professional communication that will present you and your organization in the best possible light.

Suggested Next Course: The Art of the Case Note

Date: November 19, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Understanding Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a complex and often misunderstood chronic brain disorder that affects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. This session will provide a foundational understanding of the positive, negative, and cognitive symptoms characteristic of the disorder, along with current theories regarding its underlying genetic and environmental causes. Participants will gain crucial insights into the profound challenges individuals, and their families face in managing the condition and navigating social stigma. We will explore evidence-based treatment modalities, the importance of coordinated care, and practical strategies that enhance functioning, foster recovery, and improve the overall quality of life for those living with schizophrenia.

Date: December 2, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Hoardding

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, hoarding behavior that reaches a level of clinical pathology is not uncommon, affecting up to one in twenty people. In addition to creating extremely unsafe living environments, this potentially devastating condition can have significantly negative cognitive, emotional, and social effects on the lives of individuals and families. This comprehensive training will discuss theories about the root causes of hoarding behavior, dispel common myths, and discuss other mental health disorders associated with hoarding. “Dos and Don’ts” for empathically supporting those living with this disorder will be presented.

Date: December 10, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Best Practices for Treatment of Opioid Use Disorder

This training will present an evidence-based overview of the dynamics and effective treatment of Opioid Use Disorder. Topics covered will include the classification of opioids; indicators and risk factors for opioid misuse; and strategies to promote prevention, treatment and recovery. Medication Assisted Treatment will be addressed, as well as therapeutic interventions to promote whole person wellness.

Date: December 17, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenters: Aleksandra Slaski, M.Ed., NCC, LPC, Director of Clinical Development, The Connection, & Emily Velidow, LPC, Clinical Supervisor for The Connection Center for Behavioral Health

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Providing Care Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

This comprehensive training provides an in-depth exploration of the art and science of trauma-informed care, with a focus on applying theory to direct practice applications. Trauma will be discussed as a universal human experience, giving participants the opportunity to think about the complex trauma of those served, the life experience that each helper brings to the work, and how to form healing relationships that position clients for optimal success. Key topics include: the science of traumatic memory, viewing challenging behavior as the communication of a need, the importance of self-awareness and self-care for providers, and strategies for building safety and trust.

Suggested Next Course: Engaging with Clients in a Crisis

Dates & Times: March 24, 2026, 1:00–2:30pm & December 9, 2026, 9:30–11:00am

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: FREE

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Compassion Fatigue

Work in the human services can be immensely rewarding, but also undeniably challenging. Our capacity for empathy can put us at risk for what is known as compassion fatigue, a complex phenomenon attributable to chronic exposure to the emotionality of our clients, the demands of the work itself, and the interface of these with our own lived experiences of trauma. This course will explore the emotional, physical, behavioral, and spiritual signs of compassion fatigue. Strategies for recognizing and addressing our own unique risk and protective factors will be discussed, and participants will complete their own self-care plan.

Suggested Next Courses:

- **Providing Care Through a Trauma-Informed Lens**
- **Polyvagal Theory: Accessing the Healing Power of your Nervous System**
- **Managing Emotional Exposure Through Effective Work with Vulnerable Populations**

Date: February 26, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:00AM

Presenter: Nikita Joslyn, LMSW, Senior Director of Business Development, The Connection

Cost: FREE

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 1.5 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Assessing and Managing Suicide Risk

In our work with vulnerable client populations, it is not uncommon for clients to express suicide ideation or intent. This training will provide an evidence-based framework for evaluating suicide risk, and guidelines for responding in an effective, empathic manner. Topics covered will include recognizing the risk and protective factors for suicide, using structured screening and assessment tools to drive decision-making, and learning supportive interview strategies to enhance trust and safety. This training will prepare participants to support those in crisis with confidence and in accordance with best practice guidelines, protecting clients, your organization, and you as a service provider.

Suggested Next Course: Engaging with Clients in a Crisis

Date: May 5, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: FREE

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Emotional Intelligence for Professionals

Emotional intelligence is widely recognized as an invaluable skill that enhances communication, leadership, problem solving, and relationships in the workplace. Individuals with a high level of emotional intelligence are better able to regulate their own emotional responses, recognize when others are becoming dysregulated, and respond tactfully to challenging situations. Importantly, this is a skill that can be improved with practice. In this training, participants will explore the relationship between emotions, feelings, and behavior, and learn strategies for modulating our emotional reactions to ensure optimal functioning in our professional roles.

Suggested Next Course: Understanding Your Attachment Style

Dates: July 21, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: \$89.00

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

[Register Here](#)



Lifelong Impact of Early Trauma: Work with Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse

The ACES study brought to light the lifelong effects of early trauma, changing the way we think about adult physical and mental health, from substance use to eating disorders. This course will focus on the effects of early trauma from a perspective that integrates the physiological and psychological effects of trauma, and specifically, how this impacts the helping process. Participants will learn how to avoid common triggers and establish the safety that is central to a therapeutic alliance that nurtures healing and resilience.

Suggested Next Course: Providing Care Through a Trauma Informed Lens

Date: September 30, 2026

Time: 9:30—11:30AM

Presenter: Michele Klimczak, MA, LMSW, Assistant Vice President of Training & Grant Management, The Connection

Cost: FREE

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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Validation: The Essential Element of Empathic Communication

Validation is the cornerstone of reflective listening and a key skill for crisis de-escalation. Often it is relegated to a brief acknowledgement of the obvious by restating the concern expressed and adding “but” to the end of the phrase. That addition of “but”, whether spoken or unspoken, effectively stops communication in its tracks and sends the message that we are not really listening. This course will offer a validation boot-camp, taking a deep dive into the communication skills that give clients the direct experience of being heard. We will clarify exactly what we are validating, explore our reluctance to spend more time on this vital step, and hone the critical skill of listening to understand.

Date: October 14, 2026

Time: 1:00—3:00PM

Presenter: Aaron Yosky, MEd, Training Manager, The Connection

Cost: FREE

Continuing Education: This training has been approved for 2 Continuing Education Credit Hours by the National Association of Social Workers, CT (NASW) and Connecticut Certification Board (CCB).

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