

The 29th Annual Northern New England Conference on Child Maltreatment

Continuing the tradition of state-of-the-art, practical, and evidence-based education for all professionals working with abused and neglected children

November 6, 2025 & November 7, 2025

Hilton Garden Inn Freeport Downtown
5 Park Street
Freeport, ME 04032

Presented by:



SPURWINK

About Spurwink

Spurwink is a mission driven non-profit organization of almost 1,000 Maine people, providing behavioral health and education services to over 8,500 people each year. Founded in Portland in 1960 as a single group home for 8 boys, today Spurwink provides a wide array of critically needed services statewide.

Through an evidence-based therapeutic model and an entrepreneurial approach, Spurwink provides access to care in areas of great need in Maine: mental health, trauma, autism, and intellectual and development disabilities.

About the Spurwink Center for Safe and Healthy Families

The Spurwink Center for Safe and Healthy Families was developed in response to the need for expert diagnostic and treatment services for Maine children who may have been abused. This diagnostic program provides specialized medical evaluation of children suspected of abuse and comprehensive evaluation of children in foster care.

The Cumberland County Children's Advocacy Center (CCCAC) is co-located at the Spurwink Center for Safe and Healthy Families. The CCCAC provides a coordinated response to the investigation of sexual abuse including a child friendly forensic interview of a child that is observed by a team of investigating professionals and advocacy support to access appropriate medical, mental health and/or advocacy services.

The main office is located at 778 Main St., South Portland, Maine and can be reached via phone 1-800-260-6160 or 207-879-6160. Spurwink's Center for Safe and Healthy Families also provide medical examinations at Satellite clinics which are in Augusta, Bangor, and Lewiston, Maine.

Audience

The Northern New England Conference on Child Maltreatment is intended for a multi-disciplinary audience, including professionals from the fields of nursing, mental health, law, child welfare, law enforcement, child advocacy, emergency services, medicine, and education.

Conference Goals

The goal of the conference is to provide multi-disciplinary training to increase professional skills and knowledge to professionals who are involved in prevention, recognition, evaluation, reporting, investigation, prosecution, and treatment of all forms of child maltreatment.

PROGRAM AGENDA

Thursday, November 6, 2025

8:45 Introduction: Eric Meyer, LCSW, MBA & Joyce Wientzen, LCSW

9:00 **A Trauma-Informed Approach: It Starts with YOU!**
Scott Kilpatrick & Lara Clary

This 75-minute workshop presented by a Forensic Nurse and a Detective will provide attendees with information on the importance of neurobiology of trauma and its relationship to investigative strategies, as well as the medical-forensic response to child sexual abuse provided in a victim-centered, trauma-informed manner. By understanding the neurobiology and science of the brain, we can prepare law enforcement officers to conduct better victim interviews. The presenters will discuss how utilizing a multidisciplinary approach is considered best practice, as it provides a collaborative, victim-centered response to these sensitive crimes by reducing the potential for re-victimization, while also beginning the process of healing both physically and emotionally. This presentation will provide a unique perspective on how victims are handled by different disciplines and will end with a case study involving the trauma-informed, multidisciplinary approach to a difficult child sex trafficking case.

10:15 Break

10:30 **Navigating the AI Frontier: Addressing AI-Generated Explicit Images of Minors in Schools**
Scott Kilpatrick

This cutting-edge course, "Navigating the AI Frontier: Addressing AI-Generated Explicit Images of Minors in Schools," tackles the emerging challenge of artificial intelligence-created child sexual abuse material (AI-CSAM) in educational settings. Designed for social workers and law enforcement professionals, this comprehensive 75-minute presentation equips participants with essential knowledge and tools to effectively respond to and prevent such incidents. Through an examination of recent case studies (2023-2025), participants will explore the legal challenges, psychological impacts, and best practices for school and law enforcement responses. The course delves into advanced investigation techniques, the crucial role of social workers, and the importance of collaborative approaches involving schools, law enforcement, and social services. By addressing prevention strategies, digital citizenship education, and evolving technological and ethical considerations, this course offers a unique opportunity to stay ahead of a rapidly evolving threat. Participants will gain valuable insights and practical strategies to enhance their ability to safeguard minors in the digital age, making this an essential learning experience for child protection professionals, school administrators, and anyone involved in ensuring the safety of young people online.

11:45 Lunch break

1:00 **Why Do Medical Providers Fail to Report Child Physical Abuse (and what can be done to fix the problem)**
Lawrence Ricci, MD

Reporting child abuse by a medical professional is a two-step process. The first step is “suspicion,” while the second is actual reporting. Both the medical and the legal literature are replete with examples of medical providers failing to suspect *and/or* report child abuse. The problem is not only failure to *suspect* abuse but failure to *report* even when abuse is suspected. This has at times led to devastating outcomes for children and significant legal and financial risk for the professionals and institutions involved. Almost a century after the medical diagnosis of child abuse was first described, why is this continuing to happen?

This lecture will focus on physical abuse rather than other forms of abuse, such as sexual abuse and neglect, because physical abuse is the most common and most studied type of abuse where medical providers fail to report, because such failure has the most devastating consequences for children, and because it has the clearest solutions. We will review the origins of the medical diagnosis of child abuse and mandatory reporting laws, historical medical and legal case examples of the effects of failure to report, cognitive errors and biases that lead to failure to report, and potential solutions such as clinical decision rules and ongoing child abuse recognition training.

2:15 Break

2:30 **Panel Discussion: Child Protection in Practice: Collaborative Approaches to Abuse Prevention and Intervention:**

Ryan Brockway, Amanda Brownell, MD, Ariel Piers-Gamble, Victoria Brayall

This panel of experts will examine how professionals across discipline such social work, healthcare, law enforcement, and prosecution—can work together to promote child safety and well-being. Participants will leave with a clearer understanding of how collaborative strategies can reduce risks, improve outcomes, and support families more holistically.

3:45 Adjourn

Friday, November 7, 2025

8:45 Introduction: Amanda Brownell, MD

9:00 **Munchausen by Proxy Abuse (Medical Child Abuse): A Multi- Disciplined Approach for a Successful Outcome**
Mike Weber

We will discuss proper investigative techniques for approaching these very different criminal cases of child abuse, including how police, CPS investigators, CPS attorneys, family court judges, and criminal prosecutors and judges should approach these cases. We will use the Brittany Phillips case study to demonstrate correct and incorrect techniques to show attendees how proper investigative techniques work in a real-world environment.

10:15 Break

10:30 **Munchausen by Proxy Abuse (Medical Child Abuse): A Multi- Disciplined Approach for a Successful Outcome continued**
Mike Weber

12:00 Lunch break

1:00 **Munchausen by Proxy Abuse (Medical Child Abuse): A Multi- Disciplined Approach for a Successful Outcome continued**
Mike Weber

2:15 Break

2:30 **Breaking Silos, Building Solutions: State Initiatives that Benefit Maine Children**
Nicholas Miles, MD & Sarah Labonte, APRN-CNP

Efforts from two collaborative partnerships will be shared including an overview of the practices of the Maine Child Death and Serious Injury Review Panel, and its most recent panel recommendations, and progress on an initiative with Mainely Teeth to improve access to dental care for children involved in child welfare.

3:45 Adjourn

The Speakers

Dr. Amanda Brownell, MD is the medical director of the Spurwink Center for Safe and Healthy Families, is a board-certified child abuse pediatrician and general pediatrician. She received her undergraduate medical degree from New York Medical College. She completed her pediatric residency training at the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center. She then pursued child abuse pediatrics fellowship training at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. In her role as medical director, she oversees the Center which also employs a second child abuse pediatrician Dr. Nicholas Miles and Sarah Labonte, APRN-CNP where children are assessed for possible physical and sexual abuse. The Center also provides comprehensive health assessments to children who have recently entered state custody. Dr. Brownell is also a clinical associate professor at Tufts University School of Medicine, educating the next generation of physicians across the state of Maine.

Ryan Brockway, has served with the Maine State Police for 25 years. He served 12 years as a road Trooper, 11 years as a detective in the major crimes' unit, and 2 years as a Detective Sergeant in the Major Crimes Unit. He has served most of his law enforcement career responding to child abuse complaints, sexual assault complaints, infant deaths, in-custody deaths, missing person complaints, suspicious deaths, and homicide investigations. Ryan is a trained Child Forensic Interviewer. He has completed several training courses from the National Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville, Alabama, and has been a backup interviewer for the Kennebec/Somerset Counties Children's Advocacy Center for 13 years. Ryan holds an associate's degree in criminal justice, a bachelor's degree in Applied Technical Leadership, and a master's degree in criminology. Ryan instructs classes on Criminal Law, Best Practices for interviewing Children and Trauma-Informed Interviewing.

Scott Kilpatrick boasts an exemplary 20-year service record within the Baltimore County Police Department, with 18 dedicated years as a detective showcasing his unwavering commitment to justice. Early in his illustrious career, he played a vital role in the Vice Narcotics Unit, employing innovative social media strategies to dismantle drug trafficking networks. His prowess was evident as he exposed a rogue unit within the Baltimore Police Department itself, a triumph chronicled in a book and TV series "We Own This City." Transitioning to the Special Victims Unit, Detective Kilpatrick's dedication remained resolute. In the Crimes Against Children Unit, he adeptly employs social media and open-source intelligence to locate suspects involved in heinous crimes such as sexual abuse and human trafficking. His journey is defined by a ceaseless pursuit of knowledge in OSINT and SOCMINT. Noteworthy is his commitment to professional growth, underscored by prestigious certifications as a Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission Certified Instructor and NWC3-accredited Certified Cyber Crime Intelligence Analyst, Investigator, and Examiner. He has completed diverse training programs on digital forensics, online investigations, and cutting-edge techniques. Detective Kilpatrick travels the United States sharing his love for online investigations. His desire to share his knowledge has earned him the honor of becoming a Nationally Certified Instructor and an NCJTC Associate Instructor. Detective Kilpatrick's remarkable contributions and unwavering commitment underscore his value within the Baltimore County Police Department. His journey, marked by exceptional achievements, positions him as a beacon of inspiration to peers and a guardian of justice within our community.

Sarah Labonte, APRN-CNP earned her undergraduate degree in nursing from Boston College. She completed her master's degree in nursing at the University of Southern Maine. She is board certified as a family nurse practitioner by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners. Sarah joined the Spurwink Center for Safe and Healthy Families in September 2010 where she specializes in the provision of forensic

child abuse evaluations. She previously worked as a pediatric registered nurse at the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital at Maine Medical Center before coming to Spurwink.

Nicholas Miles, MD received his undergraduate degree in integrative physiology from the University of Colorado and his medical degree from Florida International University's Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine in Miami, FL. He completed pediatric residency at Norton Children's Hospital through the University of Louisville in Louisville, KY, in addition to a fellowship in child abuse pediatrics and a master's in clinical investigation. He is board-certified in child abuse pediatrics. He joined the Spurwink Center for Safe and Healthy Families in July 2022

Ariel Piers-Gamble is an Assistant Attorney General at the Maine Office of the Attorney General and is Chief of the Child Protection Division. In that role, Attorney Piers-Gamble has the privilege of working with some of the most dedicated public servants in Maine, including twenty-six talented trial attorneys, a gifted appellate attorney and sixteen support staff members with an enduring commitment to child safety and well-being. Prior to becoming Chief, Attorney Piers-Gamble spent the better part of a decade as a trial and appellate attorney in the division. Attorney Piers-Gamble has served on many panels, workgroups and committees and has conducted training and presentations on child-welfare related topics, as well as trial techniques and legal strategies. She also provides direct legal services to the Director of the Office of Child and Family Services and her staff.

Lawrence R. Ricci, MD is a Child Abuse Pediatrician who practiced Child Abuse Pediatrics in Maine from 1985 until his clinical retirement from Spurwink in 2021. He continues to participate in state and national committees including the Ray Helfer Society and the Maine Child Death and Serious Injury Review Panel, a panel he started in 1991. In addition, Doctor Ricci continues to teach, participate in case discussions, testify in court, and write editorials and position statements for the news media and the legislature.

Jill Shapiro, LCPC, is a clinical mental health therapist and educator with over 25 years of experience providing support to children, individuals, and families. Her professional background includes 17 years at Spurwink Services, where she held various roles, including supervisor in residential care and therapeutic preschool, outpatient therapist and most recently, a private practice therapist affiliated with Spurwink Services. Jill has experience collaborating with Child Protective Services and other community partners to promote family safety and stability. She also serves as an instructor in the Behavioral Health program at Southern Maine Community College. Jill's therapeutic approach is strength-based and person-centered, emphasizing collaboration, empathy, and humor to facilitate healing and resilience

Detective Mike Weber has 40 years of law enforcement experience, including 15 years as a crimes against children investigator. Detective Weber has investigated over 50 reports of Medical Child Abuse that have led to 14 convictions, 3 cases pending trial. Detective Weber co-authored the APSAC best practice guidelines on Medical Child Abuse titled *Munchausen by Proxy: Clinical and Case Management* (APSAC Advisor journal March 2018). Detective Weber authored *Investigating Medical Child Abuse* for the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin journal (August 2018). Detective Weber was awarded the 2016 NCMEC Texas Hero for Children Award for the investigation of Geronimo Aguilar and Medical Child Abuse Cases. Weber is a recently retired detective that was assigned to investigate crimes against children for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office and handled all reports of medical child abuse in Tarrant County. Detective Weber contributes to the true crime/educational podcast "Nobody Should Believe Me," which examines medical child abuse through previous cases. Detective Weber co-authored the true crime/educational book "The Mother Next Door: Medicine, Deceit, and Munchausen by Proxy" with author Andrea Dunlop which details three cases of medical child abuse in Tarrant County.

Registration and Cost

The registration fee includes daily light breakfast, full lunch, and refreshment breaks. **If you have special dietary needs, please contact sally@seaglassevents.com.** There will also be free raffles and opportunities to network.

\$130.00

Conference Materials

All conference materials, handouts, PowerPoints, will be available at the online registration site about 10 days before the conference at spurwink.org/anneccm.

Professional CEU's/CME'S

CEU's will be provided after the conference. For information regarding receipt of CME's please contact sally@seaglassevents.com.

Refund and Cancellation Policy

Refund and Cancellation Policy: Participants who cancel their registration will incur an administrative fee of \$25.00. NO REFUNDS will be given if cancellation is less than ten business days prior to the conference.

Contact Us:

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