



APRIL 2026

NEXUS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM CONNECTIONS, INC.



A Matrix Course in Action: Stopping The Bleed



With the generous grant support from the IN Department of Health and the tireless dedication of our Department of Defense Licensed Instructors, Nathan Martin and Alexandra Matusiak, **Connections hosted 57 classes & taught 436 teens how to stop life threatening bleeding!!**

Another giant step towards fulfilling our mission of keeping children & teens empowered with their own safety.

Want to become STB certified yourself??

Join us at one of our monthly complimentary 1.5 hour courses or invite our trainers to any of your youth events for free!! Email info@connections-inc.net to learn more.

ALIGNED IN PURPOSE, UNITED IN IMPACT. WE REMAIN ALWAYS GRATEFUL FOR OUR COMMUNITY SUPPORT & PARTNERSHIPS.

Now Launching:



Connections Inc., in partnership with the City of Indianapolis Office of Public Health and Safety – Division of Re-entry (OPHS), is excited to introduce **The Wrap- a new pilot care coordination and community navigation program supporting youth & young adults ages 16 to 21 in Marion County, Indiana.**

The Wrap was created to proactively support young people navigating complex teen and young adult life challenges. This program serves individuals who have had prior involvement with Indiana's juvenile or adult justice systems but who are not currently engaged with the Indiana Department of Child Services or on probation. They may however be actively preparing to close from either system and can benefit from transitional supports offered from The Wrap.

Offered at no cost to participants, The Wrap provides individualized support to help participants meet immediate and long-term needs, such as obtaining stable housing, accessing food or legal documents, securing medical or mental health care, preparing for employment, healthy parenting education, and/ or returning to school or enrolling in a vocational program. Participants are connected with a dedicated Connections care coordinator to help them identify their needs, navigate services and build practical solutions that support their stability, safety, progress and achievement of their personally meaningful goals.

To learn more or refer a participant, visit:
<https://connections-inc.net>
email: thewrap@connections-inc.net.

Due to the often urgency of needs, services typically begin within 24hrs of referral. Spanish speaking providers available upon request.



Office of Public Health and Safety

During April, we recognize National Child Abuse Prevention month and the importance of communities working together strategically to strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment.

LET'S
DISCUSS



Dr. Cassie Douglas, Psy D. HSPP
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Understanding Complex Trauma

by: Cassie Douglas, Psy.D. HSPP
Connections, Inc.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a relatively well-known disorder for those who have experienced trauma and whose behavior, emotions, and functioning have been impaired due to the experience. In the official manual (DSM-V-TR) that is used to diagnose mental health conditions, PTSD has specific guidelines regarding what constitutes a traumatic event and specific symptom criteria that must be met to render a diagnosis. PTSD, however, per the DSM-V-TR, primarily describes singular events, such as an attack or bad car accident. For many individuals, especially those involved with child protective services, their trauma consists of multiple experiences over time, such as several instances of abuse or years of neglect. While the criteria for PTSD may be applicable, it misses important considerations for those with repeated exposure to trauma.

These chronic traumatic experiences and their impact on individuals is referred to as Complex Trauma. Complex Trauma is not a diagnosis available in the current diagnostic manual, but rather a concept for understanding the ways these experiences impact people, especially children. Repeated traumatic experiences in early life prevent children from developing a sense of safety with adults because their caregiver is either inflicting the abuse or unable to protect the child from the abuse.

Chronic trauma generally leads to more functional impairment than singular traumatic events. Many symptoms of Complex Trauma overlap with PTSD, such as flashbacks, nightmares, and feelings of emotional numbness. With Complex Trauma, however, the symptoms tend to be more pervasive. Children who have experienced Complex Trauma often behave in chaotic, confusing, and unpredictable ways. They often have low self-esteem and a negative outlook on the world. Interpersonal relationships and attachment is often a concern and these children may be highly disconnected from others, come on too strongly in attempts to connect with others, or may fluctuate between these approaches. Further, these children are often easily overstimulated and struggle with attention, concentration, and being still – which can lead to a misdiagnosis of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Treating children with Complex Trauma requires rebuilding the child's sense of secure attachment through patience and persistent compassion.

If you are working with someone who has endured multiple traumatic experiences, look for warning signs they may not be adjusting well, such as inattention, poor school/ work performance, rapid shifts in moods, and being easily upset. Psychological testing can help determine if symptoms are due to their trauma or another condition, such as ADHD. For youth still connected with their parent, child-parent therapy is recommended to improve their relationship and help the child work through their trauma. For those in which that is not an option, individual therapy will likely be necessary and trauma therapists have several tools and approaches to fit with each person's needs. Among the most effective treatment modalities, TF-CBT and EMDR are considered top-tier approaches. Group therapies are also available to connect traumatized individuals and help them process their experiences together.





Dr. Heather Savage, DSW, MSW, LSW
Executive Director, Let Them Talk
Clinical Consultant, Connections, Inc.
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Connections, Inc. is excited to welcome Dr. Heather Savage, DSW, MSW, LSW and the entire team of Let Them Talk Inc. as a valued partner in delivering behavioral health, clinical and parenting assessments, visitations, father engagement, mentoring and education services across the State of Indiana on our behalf.

Let Them Talk is a mission-aligned non-profit organization dedicated to serving all youth, with an intentional focus on addressing disparities that impact Black and historically marginalized young people. Their work reflects a deep commitment to equity, access, and meaningful outcomes for the communities they serve.

Dr. Savage is a published author and respected advocate whose leadership continues to advance inclusive, community-centered care. Together, our partnership strengthens the depth and reach of services available to youth and families, while reinforcing a shared commitment to equitable, high-quality ethical services. As such, we are honored to collaborate with Dr. Savage and the Let Them Talk team as we continue building stronger, healthier communities together.

To learn more about their agency, visit: letthemtalkindy.com

**BRINGING
SOLUTIONS &
PEOPLE
TOGETHER AT
OUR NEW
WEBSITE WWW.
CONNECTIONS -
INC. NET**



CONNECTING PEOPLE, IDEAS & DISCOVERY

The Matrix Groups at Connections, Inc. provide structured, community-based education designed to help children, teens, adults, and families build stronger, more stable homes and communities.

These virtual and in person courses and groups offer a practical and cost-effective way to access guidance, develop skills, and receive support in a group setting. Through engaging instruction, relevant topics, and interactive learning, participants gain tools to navigate real-life challenges related to emotional wellness, pediatric behavioral health, community and domestic violence, substance use, and trauma recovery.

**NOW
ENROLLING
FOR ALL
MAY & JUNE
COURSES**



Let Us Know How We Can Help. Email: info@connections-inc.net Phone: 317.423.1000