

ACRC in BOSTON

Intentional Practice: Aligning Innovation and Expertise to Meet the Holistic Needs of Children

Call for Papers



Hilton Boston Park Plaza
March 24-27, 2025

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INITIATIVE
TOGETHER, THE VOICE



**Association of Children's Residential &
Community Services**
69th Annual Conference
March 23-27, 2025
Boston, MA

CALL FOR PAPERS

Dear Interested Professionals,

ACRC's 69th Annual Conference, **Intentional Practice: Aligning Innovation and Expertise to Meet the Holistic Needs of Children**, will be held March 24-27, 2025. Though our various systems were designed to address single areas of need for children and families, we know that mental well-being, physical health, education, housing, and other social factors cannot be siloed. We seek to highlight the difference that individualized, comprehensive, and intentional approaches can make. Whatever our individual role, if we consider the needs of the whole child and provide seamless experiences of support when needed, we can increase the likelihood of long-term success as defined by youth and families themselves. ACRC is seeking abstract submissions from presenters willing to present an in-person or virtual **90-minute workshop session** and/or a **research poster** for our renowned poster presentation session. Presenters with the voice of lived experience and/or who reflect the diversity of the populations we serve are especially encouraged to submit.

Who We Are

The Association of Children's Residential and Community Services (ACRC), founded in 1956, is an international organization focused on best practices and innovation in the care and treatment of children and their families. ACRC envisions youth and families thriving in their homes and communities with uncompromised access to high-quality residential and community-based interventions in a robust continuum of care. We support the work of experts in the field of child and youth behavioral health and mental wellbeing, including provider organizations, researchers, and public agencies across the United States and in several countries.

Conference Audience

ACRC typically welcomes 600+ in-person and 1000+ virtual attendees from almost every state in the United States, with a smaller percentage attending from around the world. Conference attendees are practitioners, clinicians, administrators, executive directors, evaluators, lived experts, researchers, students, program managers, supervisors, policymakers, model developers, and innovators who support quality and effectiveness in mental and behavioral health services to children, youth, and families. Cross-sector content applies to child welfare, juvenile justice, education, and mental and behavioral health leaders interested in research, policy, and practice.

Summary of Process

We invite you to submit the following:

1. Abstract: up to 500-word abstract of your proposed presentation
2. Topic: Focus of presentation and how presentation relates to conference themes
3. Bio and Resume: A short (4-6 line ONLY) biographical statement and your resume (5 pages max) for each presenter.
4. Learning goals for participants.
5. Brief description of your presenting experience.
6. Photo of each presenter.

Proposals may be submitted through 11:59 pm PST on September 9, 2024.

Please review these suggested themes which ACRC's Program Committee requests be the focus of submissions:

- **Cross-sector solutions.** State, county, and local agencies partnering with families and communities; blended/braided funding; interagency collaboration; effective communication and true collaboration across provider networks and systems; coordinated transitions; shared data and accountability; and seamless experiences for children and families.
- **Collaborative Approaches.** Creative and unexpected partnerships and mergers; adjacent service delivery; organizational culture; shared learning and accountability; cadence of deep relationship building and maintenance; and effective communication.
- **Integrated Care Continuums.** Coordinated efforts to ensure youth awaiting treatment or step down are not incarcerated, sleeping in unregulated settings like offices and hotels, or overstaying medical necessity in higher levels of care; addressing the emergency department boarding crisis; eliminating waitlists; ensuring responsive, flexible service arrays; translating residential success and expertise into home/community; effective crisis continuums; and building/sustaining no wrong door systems.
- **Human-Centered Design.** Creative, customized approaches to addressing challenges and serving young people failed by multiple systems; trauma responsive care; engaging children, adolescents, and young adults presenting with higher acuity or complex needs; grief, trauma, ambiguous loss, loneliness, and other less-considered contributors to youth mental health; individualized or bespoke interventions; and effective storytelling for change.
- **Voice.** Authentically incorporating the voice of lived experience to shape service delivery; program and system co-design; youth and family choice; service/treatment planning; relational interactions; intersectional identities; cultural humility; and empowerment.
- **The Workforce of Tomorrow.** Recruiting, training, supporting, and retaining quality frontline staff, educators, clinicians; creating pipelines for key positions; new thinking about how we fill critical roles; incorporating youth and family peers; and inspired leadership.
- **Evaluating Quality.** Demonstrated effectiveness; harm reduction; quality standards; outcomes metrics; identifying what interventions work for whom and when; public dashboards; model fidelity; implementation science; transparency, accountability, and proximity to communities.
- **Innovating Approaches.** Use of technology; comprehensive and holistic practices; multi-generational impact; non-clinical approaches to healing; sleep, nutrition, exercise, and other elements of well-being; system transformation; and intersectionality.

Selection of Presentations

Presentations for our annual conference are carefully chosen by ACRC's Program Committee. The committee will be looking for engaging presentations that:

1. Share solutions, replicable best practices, innovations, and calls to action.
2. Use people-first language and incorporate family-driven, youth-guided values.
3. Include youth and/or family members as co-presenters.*
4. Demonstrate cross-sector and/or multiple agency collaboration.*
5. Incorporate outcomes data.
6. Do **NOT** market or sell a product, consultant, model, or program.
7. Embrace the principles outlined in ACRC's Redefining Residential Series as well as the Building Bridges Initiative, found on our website at www.togetherthevoice.org.
8. Demonstrate the specific, planned integration of the content of ACRC's position papers to improve service delivery. www.togetherthevoice.org/best-practices/position-papers.

*Extra weight will be given to these submissions during the vetting process

Presenter Attendance

ACRC extends a \$100 registration discount to the person identified as the primary presenter and a \$50 discount to any secondary presenters for anyone wishing to be a full conference attendee in person with us in Boston. Virtual presenters will receive a complimentary virtual registration.

Presenter Responsibilities

Should your presentation be selected*, you would be responsible for the following:

1. For in-person presenters, you will give all A/V, room set-up, and other logistical requirements to ACRC by **2/21/25** and work with ACRC to assure logistical requirements are met. Additionally, you will provide information about co-presenters (name, title, organization, contact information) to ACRC.
2. Virtual presenters will work with ACRC to meet logistical requirements.
3. You will give your presentation in the allotted time, allowing for questions, and will not use this opportunity to market any product or program to attendees.
4. You are giving ACRC permission to house your presentation on our website for attendee access. In-person presentations will be recorded for virtual use.
5. You will submit a sample power point no later than 8 weeks before the conference to support our request for NASW CEUs.
6. You will provide 15 questions for a post test with an answer key (only one may be t/f).

*Submission of a paper means that you understand and agree to these responsibilities.

Guidelines for Submission of Proposals

1. Complete the online submission with an abstract of up to 500 words prepared specifically for this request for papers and provide all requested information.
2. Designate a primary author in your proposal. Only that person will receive communication from ACRC and will then be responsible for informing any co-author/co-presenter(s).
3. **Deadline for receipt of proposals is Monday, September 9, 2024.**
4. Upload submissions to our website <https://togetherthevoice.org/engage/call-for-papers/>.

Questions may be directed to:

Amanda Prange (414) 359-6548 or aprange@togetherthevoice.org