



When: Thursday, April 16, 2026 & Friday, April 17, 2026

The 2026 Delaware Primary Prevention Conference, known as the Building Bridges Conference, is an event focused on strategies to prevent all types of substance use, especially among our youth populations.

The theme for this event is

“Resiliency Across the Lifespan”

Goals and Objectives

The 2026 Building Bridges Conference is Delaware's only statewide event for the substance use prevention field. People working to prevent the initiation of substance use should attend to:

1. **Enhance knowledge of substance use prevention initiatives and resources in Delaware:** Attendees will deepen their understanding of impactful substance use prevention services and initiatives across Delaware, fostering connection, safety, and an elevated quality of life.
2. **Strengthen Collaboration and Networking Among Substance Use Prevention Professionals:** Attendees will embrace the opportunity to collaborate, share innovative best practices, and build partnerships that unite sectors such as public health, education, law enforcement, and community organizations.
3. **Develop Practical Substance Use Prevention Strategies:** Attendees will leave this event empowered with actionable prevention strategies and evidence-based tools, ready to make a difference in their communities.

Intended audience

All people interested in building healthy communities are invited to attend the 2026 Delaware Building Bridges Conference. The information shared at this event will be most useful for:

- **Substance use prevention specialists:** People involved in the design and delivery of substance use prevention programs, including school-based programs, workplace initiatives, and community-based programs.
- **Public health professionals:** People who are responsible for tracking trends in substance use, including epidemiologists, health educators, and public health officials.
- **Public Safety officers, local community leaders, and local organizers:** People in elected positions, community activists, and organizers working to improve the health and well-being of their communities.
- **Treatment providers, criminal justice professionals, social workers, counselors, peer specialists, and recovery coaches:** Professionals in the mental health and substance use field who serve youth and families impacted by substance use.

- **School administrators, school resource officers, teachers, counselors, and other educators:** People working in a K-12 setting and higher education involved in educating young people about substance use risks and healthy behaviors as well as supporting students at risk for substance use.
- **Youth leaders, caregivers, and advocates:** People who are focused on promoting positive, healthy lifestyles among young people, and preventing substance use among young people.

While this event is geared toward people living and working in Delaware, people from other states are invited to attend.

Registration

Registration is required for this event.

In person

Clayton Hall, University of Delaware

Registration Opens: February 23, 2026

Registration deadline: April 3, 2026

If you need help with the registration process, contact DPBHS Prevention Services team, at pbhs_prevention_inquiries@delaware.gov.

Videography/photography: Organizers and attending news media may be videotaping or photographing portions of this event. By attending this event, registrants acknowledge these activities and agree to allow their image to be used by the organizers and news media in any way. Registrants may not videotape or broadcast any portion of this event without written permission from organizers.

Event materials: The Whova app will be used to share event materials with all in-person and virtual participants. Information on how to access the Whova app will be emailed to all registered participants several weeks before the event. Session recordings and materials will be available to all registered participants in the Whova app for three months after the conference.

Agenda

The agenda for this event includes a keynote presentation/a plenary session, and 14 breakout sessions.

The tracks for the breakout sessions include:

(P) Prevention Science and Core Competencies. Sessions in this track highlight the fundamentals of substance use prevention.

- *Risk & Protective Factors*
- *Prevention Science*
- *Ethics*
- *Workforce Development*
- *Evidence-Based Approaches*

(ET) Emerging Trends & Evolving Challenges in Prevention. Sessions in this track highlight trends in substance use prevention.

- *Readiness for Evidence-Based Prevention*
- *Suspension Alternatives (policy/environmental strategy)*
- *Criminal Justice Collaboration*
- *Bridging mental health and substance use*
- *School-based Tier 1 & Tier 3 supports*

(EI) Prevention Practice in Action: Tools You Asked For (prior conference feedback)

- *Evaluation sessions*
- *Data gathering & analysis*
- *Co-occurring disorders*
- *Trauma-informed EBP*
- *QPR*

(A) Alcohol Prevention: Shifting Culture & Protecting Youth. Sessions on this track highlight strategies and tools to address alcohol use in Delaware and its impacts.

(T) Commercial Tobacco Prevention: Strategies for Change. Sessions in this track highlight strategies and tools to address commercial tobacco use in Delaware and its impacts.

- *SYNAR and Delaware*

(Y) Rising Voices: Youth Prevention Ambassadors Showcase. Sessions on this track highlight strategies to support positive youth development as part of DPBHS' Year of the Kid initiative. (Friday Only)

- *Protective factors*
- *Upstream prevention*
- *Resilience building*

Lodging

Lodging is available at the Courtyard Marriott in Newark, Delaware at \$145 per night plus 11% occupancy tax, Government per diem rates are available with valid government ID, must be presented at check-in for single occupancy. You must call the hotel at (302)737-0900 or Central Reservations at (800) 321-2211 to book a room at this special rate. You will be asked to provide the code listed in your conference registration confirmation email.

The hotel room block for this event is open through 03/20/2026, or until sold out, whichever comes first.

Exhibitors

Whova Passport Contest

This event is organized by the Department of Services for Children, Youth, and their Families (DSCYF), Department of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (DPBHS), Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUPTRS) Team, with funding from The Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH).

Send questions about this event to pbhs_prevention_inquiries@delaware.gov

April 16, 2026 - 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.: Resource Table-Top Displays

- 8:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.: Registration/Walk-In
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.: Networking Continental Breakfast
- 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and announcements
- 10:00 a.m.: Opening Plenary – Kevin A. Sabet, PHD, President & CEO – Smart Approaches to Marijuana
- 11:00 a.m.: Break
- 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.: Breakout session 1
 - Sabra Collins, Sandi Syglowski & Peggy Enslin, DDOE - *Bridging Substance Misuse Prevention and Mental Health and Wellbeing*
 - Pat Chapman & Cynthia Jones, LMSW; DSCYF – *Brain Architecture*
 - Jerome Thompson, Lions International – *Building Character, Providing Hope, Changing Lives – Lions Quest*
- Dr. William Lynch – *Understanding Cannabis: Let's Have a Blunt Conversation About THC* 12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.: Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Breakout session 2
 - Dr. Rebecca Trent, Journeys LLC – *Co-Occurring Disorders and the Connection to Substance Use*
 - Kim Graham, M.A., LMSW; DESU Trauma Academy – *Building Bridges: Understanding Trauma's Legacy in Youth Spaces*
 - MJC Consulting, LLC - *Prevention + Law Enforcement: A Road Map to Positive Outcomes in Your Community*
 - Lt. Michael Loiseau - *Alcohol, Tobacco and Marijuana Enforcement in De*
- 3:00 p.m.: Break
- 3:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.: Breakout session 3
 - Jennifer Ford, Mental Health Association of Delaware- *Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training* *Certified training – attendees must pre-register for class to receive completion certificate
 - Kim Graham, M.A., LMSW; DESU Trauma Academy *Building Blocks for Thriving Youth: An Introduction to the 40 Developmental Assets & Developmental Relationships*
 - Shellene Bell - *Collaboration Opportunities for Substance Use Prevention and the Criminal Justice System*

- Dr. Amy Herb & Thomas Morrison Jr - *Prevention Science Foundation: Shared Risk and Protective Factors*

4:30 p.m.: Vendor Raffle Drawing/End of day

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- 8:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.: Registration/Walk-In
- 8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.: Networking Continental Breakfast
- 9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.: Welcome and Acknowledgements of Youth Prevention Ambassadors
- 10:00 a.m.: Opening Plenary – *Engaging the Power of Youth Voice in Prevention: Creating Prevention Influencers!* - Cedric L. Hall, E.Ds., Vice President of Education Innovation and Youth Programming for Carlton Hall Consulting.
- 11:00 a.m.: Break
- 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.: Breakout session 1
 - Rosemary Baughman - *Navigating Ethical Gray Areas in Prevention Practice*
 - Dr. Rochelle Brittingham - *Do You Have the Right Data to Create Your Recipe for Success?*
 - Youth Panel with Cedric – *What is Prevention? Jewels & Science of Youth in Pop Culture*
 - Pamela Seals – *Trauma and Substance Abuse Impact on Brain Development*
- 12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.: Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Breakout session 5
 - Carlton Hall - *Empowering Prevention Leaders: Strengthening Mentorship, Leadership, and Technical Assistance*
 - Mariann Kenville-Moore, LMSW - *Strengthening Community Response: NAMI Delaware and CIT's Role in Youth & Family Mental Health*
 - Dr. Shawn Stevens, Wilmington University – *Beyond a Checklist: What Readiness Means for the Prevention Workforce Engaging in Evidence-Based Prevention*
 - Youth Track - *My Reason Why Youth*
- 3:00 p.m.: Break
- 3:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.: Breakout session 6
 - Carlton Hall, *Finding the Perfect Match: Strengthening Logic Models through Line Logic and Local Conditions*
 - Laura Kuchmay - *Creative Self-Regulation Tools for Youth: Using Zentangle in Prevention Settings*

- Alyson Lang - *Vaping & Tobacco with Data from Youth Voices*
- 4:30 p.m.: Vendor Raffle Drawing/End of day