

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

FFTA 2026 Annual Conference
Hyatt Regency Chicago • July 7-10, 2026

**Proposals
Due
December 19,
2025**



“The overall vibe of the conference feels so great ... the conference is light, cheery, well organized, and folks generally are enjoying themselves. The networking opportunities were wonderful.”

For four decades, FFTA has convened leaders, practitioners, and partners to leverage shared knowledge and proven solutions, advancing wellness for families and communities. Our Annual Conference remains a dynamic space for collaboration, innovation, and empowerment—especially in a time when the sector faces new and complex challenges. We invite diverse voices to enrich our learning and champion equity, ensuring that all families can thrive. Join us in Chicago to contribute to this vital work.

FFTA's Annual Conference serves as a forum for innovation and a catalyst for advancing services towards greater equity and impact across the full spectrum of health and human services. We invite our extensive and diverse network of members and partners to join us in this important work by submitting a proposal to present at the FFTA 2026 Conference being held **July 7-10, 2026 in Chicago, IL.**

2025
Conference
Recap

Attendee Profile

- 28%** Executive and Senior Leaders
- 26%** Program Leadership
- 18%** Direct Practitioner, Trainers, Quality Assurance
- 28%** Other Human Service Professionals

Attendees From:

39 US States, Washington DC, Canada, Bermuda, Portugal, and Australia

Event App Engagement

140 Discussion Topics Posted
1693 Community Board Messages
232 Articles Shared

We welcome intermediate and advanced proposals and content in or relevant to the following Areas of Focus:



Area of Focus

Content may include, but is not limited to, the following:

Workplace Wellness:

Supporting and preparing our workforce is essential for the critical work of helping families.

- Creating an Organizational Culture of Caring
- Trauma-Informed Supervision Strategies
- Designing Employee Friendly Benefits
- Healthier Communities Start with Healthier Employees
- Coaching and Supporting Teams
- Virtual Supervision Best Practices
- Managing Through Turnover
- Career Development
- Developing Mental Health Supports for Employees
- Mind-Body Approaches to Mental Health and Stress Management



Supporting Families Within Their Communities:

Children and families thrive when they're connected to strong supportive communities with accessible mental health services and other vital resources.

- Early Childhood and Home Visitation Services
- Resource-Biological Family Partnerships
- Kin-First Focused Supports and Services
- Family Preservation and In-home Support Services
- Community Building Strategies to Prevent the Need for Formal Child Welfare Services
- Community-Based Family-Centered Mental Health Services
- Community-Based Targeted Resource Family Recruitment
- Community-Based Crisis Support Services



Community-Driven Policy and Engagement:

Family-serving organizations are most effective when they bring together community resources to uplift community voices for positive change.

- Federal Policy Needs and Impact on Community-Based Service
- Strategic Fundraising
- Mental Health Advocacy Through Community-Driven Policy Change
- Volunteer Engagement for Family Support Services
- Collaborating with Non-Traditional Community Partners
- Public Relations and Media Management
- Engaging Communities via Social Media
- Local Funding Initiatives Replicable in Other Areas



Equity in Child Welfare and Mental Health Systems:

Proactively addressing disproportionality, disparate outcomes, and inequity is critical for serving all families and communities effectively.

- Decolonizing Approaches for Working with Indigenous Families and Communities
- Effective Mental Health Service Delivery in Rural Communities
- Availability of Culturally Appropriate Mental Health Services
- Services for Unaccompanied Migrant Children
- Strategies for Addressing Disproportionality and Disparate Outcomes in Service Systems
- Transitions to Independence
- Elevating the Voices of Those with Lived Experience
- Developing Cross-Cultural Competencies



Cross-Sector Partnerships and Beyond:

To best serve all families, collaboration beyond the traditional child welfare sector is essential to eliminate silos, find solutions, and amplify positive impact.

- Partnership Beyond a Contract: Keys to Authentic Collaboration
- Effective Public/Private Partnerships for Child Welfare
- Partnering with Research Institutions to Drive Outcomes
- Keys to Effective Public/Private Sector Partnerships
- Mental Health Services in Schools
- Technology Solutions in Health and Human Services
- Universities and Their Faculty as Resources for System Improvements
- Developing a New Service vs. Partnering with an Existing Organization
- Collaborative Approaches to Community-Based Mental Health Services



Proven Solutions in Direct Practice:

Direct-service professionals are most effective in their work with children, families, and communities when they are equipped with proven solutions.

- Family and Individual Therapeutic and Clinical Services
- Trauma-Informed Interventions
- Differential Diagnostic Assessments
- Effective Psychotropic Medication Management
- Parenting Through Trauma
- Trauma-Informed Support for Foster, Kinship and Adoptive Families
- Integrated Physical and Behavioral Health Care Strategies
- Supporting Youth and Their Families Through Mental Health Crises
- Family Focused Substance Abuse Treatment Approaches
- Relationship-Centered Approaches to Support and Treatment
- Quality Assurance for Enhanced Service Delivery



Leading for Today and Tomorrow:

Health and human services leaders need hope, connections, and strategies to drive positive change into the future.

- New/Emerging Funding Trends
- Fostering an Equitable Organizational Culture
- Building a More Representative and Equitable Leadership Team
- Emerging Critical Issues for Sector Leaders
- Navigating Mergers, Acquisitions, and Partnerships
- Strategic Planning
- Liability Insurance and Risk Management
- Creating Space and Resources for Innovation
- Emerging Digital Strategies to Meet Business Needs
- Board Recruitment, Development, Engagement and Effectiveness
- Developing Organizational Capacity to Support the Mental Health Needs of Employees and the Broader Community

“Excellent conference with a variety of valuable content, difficult to select sometimes because there were so many good choices!”



Session Formats

The FFTA 40th Annual Conference offers many formal and informational opportunities for attendees to learn from and connect with one another. Presentations throughout the conference provide a formal structure for many of these connections. To promote and enhance these opportunities, FFTA is soliciting submissions in engaging and interactive formats in topics that fall under or are closely related to at least one of the identified Areas of Focus. All presentations should be directed towards an advanced or intermediate audience, and all presentations should engage attendees in the learning experience.

Session Formats include:

Workshops: Workshops make up the bulk of the conference schedule and serve as the backbone for the conference experience. Submit a proposal for a 60, 90, or 120-minute presentation. Along with traditional presentations, consider presentation styles that engage attendees more directly including:

Case Study Presentations: dive into real-world scenarios, giving participants a detailed look at challenges, strategies, and successes in industry applications. Presenters share lessons learned, outcomes, and the decision-making processes behind each project.

Skill-Building Workshops: focus on developing specific competencies through structured instruction. With a combination of guided practice and feedback, attendees should leave equipped with new tools and techniques ready for immediate implementation.

Experiential Showcase: These “show-and-tell” sessions allow presenters to exhibit items that represent meaningful parts of their programs—such as awards for team recognition, products from vocational programs, or cultural artifacts. Attendees circulate, view, and discuss the showcased items, gaining insights into creative strategies for engagement, morale, and community impact.

Roundtable Reflections: With a session cap of 30, engage attendees in a collaborative, inclusive, and in-depth conversation around a topic aligned with the Area of Focus Leading for Today and Tomorrow. This format should encourage participants to build on each other’s ideas, leading to a richer understanding of your chosen topic. Roundtable Reflections will be set with attendees in a circle. PowerPoint presentations will not be accepted for this session format.

Additional interactive session formats will also be considered. If proposing a more traditional style workshop, be sure to hold time for attendee engagement.

WHEN GRANDMA BECOMES MOM: NAVIGATING ROLE SHIFTS IN KINSHIP CARE

39th Annual FFTA Conference
New Orleans, LA
July, 2025



“Amazing quality of presenters. Love the focus on local artists and giving back to the community.”

Selection Criteria

Each proposal will be reviewed by the FFTA Conference Committee with the following criteria in mind:

- Alignment with conference Areas of Focus
- Innovation and originality
- Targeted to an experienced audience (intro- and beginner-level presentations do not qualify)
- Presentation content that can be replicated and adapted. If the proposal is based on programs specific to the presenter's agency, the proposal (and intended presentation) must indicate how this information can be adapted by other agencies
- Relevance: Proposals that tackle pressing issues for today's leaders in human services, such as workforce retention, technological adaptation, or equity, will be prioritized
- Training and professional experience of presenter
- Formats that are engaging and facilitate attendee participation, especially those that offer a unique, hands-on learning experience
- Engaging the voice of those with lived experiences in the presentation or material

Expectations of Presenters

- Presenters agree that peer-to-peer sharing of best practices is of benefit to all and moves our field forward for children and families. To support presenter participation in the conference, up to three presenters per workshop are eligible for a discounted conference registration rate of \$455.* Travel and hotel expenses are not included.
- Presenters of traditional workshops must submit PowerPoint Slides, if utilized in the session, and any supplementary handouts to FFTA electronically prior to the conference. Storyboard presenters must submit a PDF of their poster. These will be made available to Conference Participants.
- Presenters agree to interact with conference attendees on the Conference App WHOVA by responding to questions and initiating discussions.
- Using presentation time to sell or market a product, consultant, model or program is prohibited.
- By submitting a workshop proposal for consideration, each applicant acknowledges that they have read and agree to the terms listed above.

**Proposals
must be submitted
through our
submission portal.**

**Proposals are due
December 19, 2025 to
www.ffta.org/call26.**

** If registered by the early registration deadline of May 1, 2026. After the Early Registration deadline, the presenter rate increases to \$555.*



“Really appreciated the very solid and robust Presentation Offerings throughout the Conference. I liked having so many choices to choose from to be able to zero-in on the exact ones that fit our own particular needs.”

Prepare to Submit the Following Information

Primary Presenter:

- Contact information, professional title and agency, licensure, Resumé

Secondary Presenter(s):

- Contact information, professional title and agency, licensure, Resumé

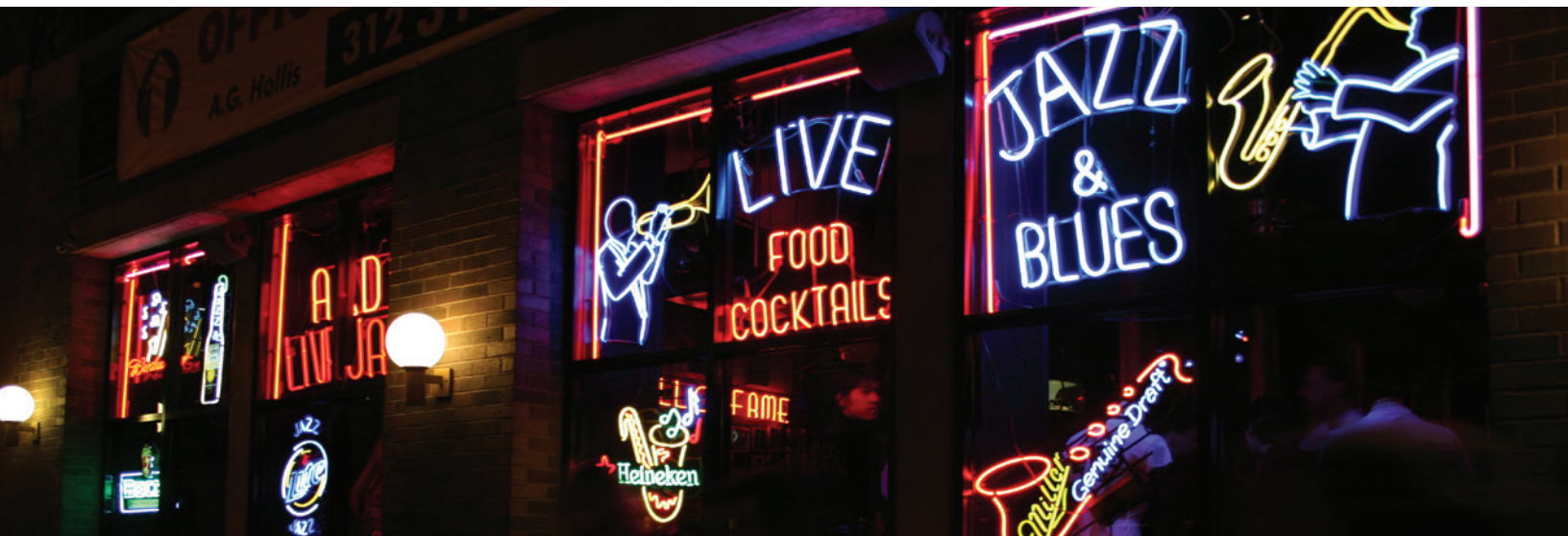
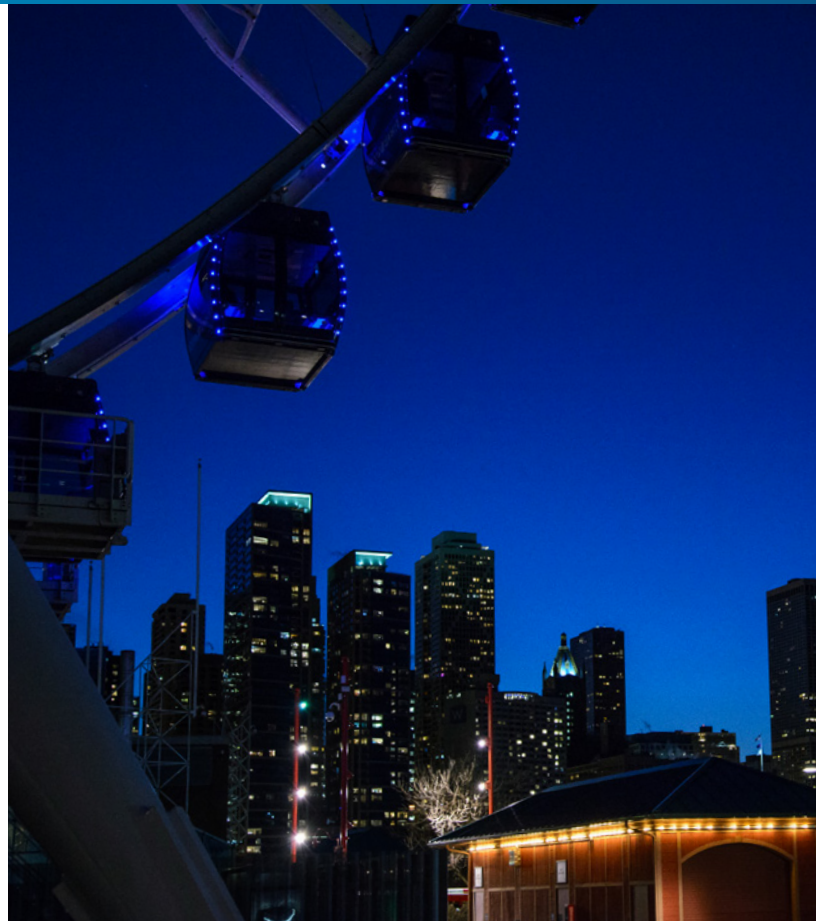
Workshop Information:

- Title (up to 80 characters)
- Short Description (up to 650 characters; to appear in conference brochure)
- Expanded Description (Our reviewers will decide on your proposal based on this expanded description. Include a timed outline, details about the benefits of your workshop, and strategies you will use to engage workshop attendees)
- Learning Objectives (provide 3 concrete, measurable learning objectives, 150 characters each)
- A short description of your experience presenting workshops.
- Most applicable Social Work CEU Track: Clinical, General, Ethics, N/A
- Session Length (60, 90 or 120 minutes)
- Area of Focus
- Audience Level (what level of professional is your workshop appropriate for) Intermediate (5-10 years of experience), Advanced (10-20 years of experience), Senior (21+ years of experience)

A Culture of Inclusion: The intent of the FFTA Conference is to provide meaningful opportunities to hear and learn from a multitude of groups, with a focus on elevating those voices that are often underrepresented.

FFTA asks for demographic information in the submission process. This information will not be used as selection criteria. The information will be utilized to help understand if our call for proposals is reaching a diverse audience representative of those served in the sector.





FFTA

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For questions about proposals, please contact Allie Koscielny, akoscielny@ffta.org.

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