



2026 VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 16-17, 2026

CONFERENCE BROCHURE



nasw
NORTH CAROLINA



nasw
SOUTH CAROLINA



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2026 VIRTUAL FALL CONFERENCE AGENDA AT A GLANCE

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2026

8:00am-8:30 am: Welcome and Announcements

8:30am-10:30am: Opening Keynote Address (2 Ethics CE Hours) 

Protecting the Profession: Smart Ethics, Risk Management, and Digital Privacy in Social Work

10:30am-11:00am: Break

11:00am-12:30pm: Breakout Sessions (1.5 CE Hours)

M1: Uncovering the Teenage Brain: Looking Beyond Defiance

M2: Documentation That Protects You: Writing Clinical Notes with Confidence

M3: "When Faith Hurts": Supporting clients and communities in the healing from Religious Trauma and Spiritual Abuse

12:30pm-1:30pm: Lunch Break – Please visit our sponsors & exhibitors in our LIVE Virtual Exhibit Hall!

1:30pm-3:00pm Breakout Sessions (1.5 CE Hours)

M4: Access Isn't a Ramp: The Ethics of Genuine Accessibility in Clinical Social Work

M5: So, you want to work with Military-Connected Populations? Basic Considerations for Social Workers

M6: Trauma-Informed Care for High-Achieving Clients: Clinical Strategies for Anxiety, Burnout, and Imposter Syndrome

3:00pm-3:30pm: Break

3:30pm-5:00pm Breakout Sessions (1.5 CE Hours)

M7: The Ethics of Practicing Under Pressure: Social Work Obligations to LGBTQ+ Clients in a Shifting Legal Landscape

M8: Grassroots to Statewide Impact: Bridging the Gap Between Policymakers and Communities

M9: Halo & Healing: Resilience, Suicide Assessment, and Culturally Responsive Intervention in Human Services

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2026

8:30am-10:00am Breakout Sessions (1.5 CE Hours)

T1: The School Social Worker as a Systems Leader: A Comprehensive Approach to Student Success

T2: Regulating the Storm: Somatic Interventions for Staying Inside the Window of Tolerance

T3: Promoting Brain Health through Treatment of Depression to Reduce Dementia Risk

10:00am-10:30am: Break

10:30am-12:00pm Breakout Sessions (1.5 CE Hours)

T4: Beyond the Survivor: Evidence-Informed Strategies for Integrating Loved Ones into Clinical Trauma Work

T5: Identifying and Treating Dissociative Stimming

T6: When Motherhood Meets Fury: Understanding & Treating Postpartum Rage

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T7: From Survival to Stability: Financial Social Work with Unhoused Individuals Through an Empowerment Framework

T8: Building Resilience: Therapist Insights for Supporting Immigration Advocates and Activists

T9: When Joy Returns: Helping Clients Navigate Joy, Guilt, and Healing After Loss

2:30pm-3:00pm: Break

3:00pm-5:00pm: Closing Keynote Address (2 Ethics CE Hours) 

Leading with Ethics, Courage, and Civic Power: Social Work Leadership for a Changing World

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

NASW-NC/SC is not responsible for lost or delayed registrations by mail. For quicker registration and to be sure you meet all deadlines, please register online at www.naswnc.org and pay with a debit/credit card. Payment for registration via check or money order should be made to NASW-NC. Registration will close on November 9, 2026. Conference log-in instructions will be sent to paid registrants by email on the Thursday before the conference.

Refunds are NOT available for this conference! As the conference proceedings will be recorded and available to all registrants for one month after the conference, NASW-NC/SC will not be issuing refunds of any kind.

CE CREDIT INFORMATION

Each attendee who participates in the entire live event will receive a transcript of CE reflecting **13 live contact hours** of Continuing Education, including up to 4 hours of Ethics CE.

Opportunities for Bonus CE!

Sessions from the 2026 Virtual Fall Conference will be recorded. If you missed a session due to internet outages, etc, or would like to watch additional breakouts, the recorded sessions will be available until December 16, 2026. **For these sessions, attendees can receive up to 18 additional hours of asynchronous CE.** You will receive CE credit for the sessions you attend. The conference platform will track your attendance.

Registrants will receive an email after the conference with instructions on how to access their final CE transcript for the live hours, as well as how to access recording sessions for the bonus CE credits.

VIRTUAL CODE OF CONDUCT

NASW-NC/SC is dedicated to providing a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), nationality, level of experience or technology choices. We do not tolerate harassment of program participants in any form, nor do we tolerate behavior that would reasonably lead to another participant being made to feel unsafe, insecure, or frightened for their physical or emotional well-being. All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience. Program participants, including stakeholders, violating these rules may be expelled from the program without a refund at the discretion of the conference organizers. By registering for the conference, you are agreeing to follow the code of conduct.



The views and opinions expressed in this conference are those of the speaker(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of NASW-NC/SC.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

**OPENING KEYNOTE
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2026
8:30AM-10:30AM ET**

KN1: PROTECTING THE PROFESSION: SMART ETHICS, RISK MANAGEMENT, AND DIGITAL PRIVACY IN SOCIAL WORK

Ami Lynch, LCSW, LICSW

The digital world has created a new set of risks for social workers, many of which were barely on our radar a decade ago. Scams have become more sophisticated, AI is changing how information is created and shared, and the devices and platforms we use every day collect more about us than most of us realize. These issues affect social workers across the profession, regardless of where or how we practice, and raise important questions about privacy, ethics, and professional risk. This keynote looks at some of the digital risks hiding in our everyday professional lives and, more importantly, what we can actually do about them. Using real-world examples, we'll look at how social workers can better recognize scams and other vulnerabilities, think more critically about the technology we use, and know when to slow down before clicking, responding, sharing, or trusting. You do not need to become a cybersecurity expert. Understanding digital risk is now part of protecting ourselves, the people we serve, and our profession.

**CLOSING KEYNOTE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2026
3:00PM-5:00PM ET**

KN2: LEADING WITH ETHICS, COURAGE, AND CIVIC POWER: SOCIAL WORK LEADERSHIP FOR A CHANGING WORLD

Victor Manalo, Ph.D., MSW

Social workers lead across behavioral health, child welfare, healthcare, education, nonprofits, public agencies, and government. This two-hour keynote reframes leadership not as a title, but as an ethical practice grounded in relationships, systems thinking, moral courage, and collective responsibility. Drawing on the NASW Code of Ethics, social work history, public leadership, and real-world examples, participants will explore how professional values guide supervision, advocacy, organizational change, community engagement, and public decision-making. Through storytelling, reflection, and practical tools, attendees will leave better prepared to lead with integrity, advance equity, and strengthen their organizations and communities.

Monday, November 16, 2026

11:00AM-12:30PM ET BREAKOUT SESSIONS

01

M1: Uncovering the Teenage Brain: Looking Beyond Defiance

Brittaney Ratzlaff, LCSWA, Triple P Certified Practitioner

This session is designed for social workers and child-serving providers. Participants will explore how trauma impacts adolescent brain development, attachment, regulation, and behaviors that may appear defiant, oppositional, withdrawn, or resistant. The training will help professionals respond more effectively to teens while also coaching parents and caregivers in trauma-informed strategies that support safety, connection, accountability, emotional regulation, and relationship-based discipline. Participants will leave with practical tools to strengthen engagement with both teens and families.

M2: Documentation That Protects You: Writing Clinical Notes with Confidence

Cassandra Chaney, LCSW-C

Documentation is one of the most important—and most scrutinized—aspects of clinical social work. Whether working in private practice, schools, hospitals, behavioral health, or community agencies, social workers are expected to create documentation that is clinically sound, ethically appropriate, and able to withstand legal, licensing, and insurance review. This informative lecture-style presentation equips participants with effective strategies for producing clear, concise, and legally defensible clinical documentation. By analyzing and breaking down real-world examples, attendees will gain insights into enhancing their SOAP notes, risk assessments, treatment plans, and documentation of medical necessity. The session aims to help participants avoid common charting mistakes and foster confidence in creating ethical, audit-ready documentation.

02

03

M3: "When Faith Hurts": Supporting clients and communities in the healing from Religious Trauma and Spiritual Abuse

Brittany Patterson, LCSW

Religious trauma results from an event, series of events, relationships, or circumstances connected to religious beliefs, practices, or structures experienced by an individual as overwhelming or disruptive and has lasting adverse effects on a person's physical, mental, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. While faith can be a protective factor for many clients, for some, religious organizations and religious practices can do more harm than good. In this workshop, we will discuss the latest religious trauma research and explore the impacts on a person's individual faith and sense of safety in faith communities. Participants will learn practical steps to facilitate healing and assist clients with rebuilding a connection to spirituality after trauma.

Monday, November 16, 2026

1:30PM-3:00PM ET BREAKOUT SESSIONS

04

M4: Access Isn't a Ramp: The Ethics of Genuine Accessibility in Clinical Social Work

Erica Smith, MSW, LCSW, C-DBT, EMDRIA Approved Consultant

Most "accessible" practices are accessible the way a building with a ramp around back is: technically compliant, quietly othering. We treat access as a checklist – an ADA line, a symbol on the intake form – rather than an ethical stance woven through how we schedule, communicate, charge, and decide who gets to stay in care. This session names the difference between compliance-based and justice-based accessibility, locates both inside the NASW Code of Ethics, and exposes where ableism hides in ordinary, well-meaning policies. You'll leave with concrete, sustainable changes you can make in your own practice.

M5: So, you want to work with Military-Connected Populations? Basic Considerations for Social Workers

Katrice Byrd, DSW, MSW, LCSW

This session will provide a basic understanding of Military culture, including concepts and hierarchies, as it relates to providing behavioral health care. Participants will learn tips to make assessments more inclusive for military-connected populations. Finally, participants will learn about Risk Assessments and be given a high-level overview of safety planning.

05

06

M6: Trauma-Informed Care for High-Achieving Clients: Clinical Strategies for Anxiety, Burnout, and Imposter Syndrome

Jason Phillips, DSW, LCSW

High-achieving clients often appear successful while silently struggling with anxiety, burnout, perfectionism, and imposter syndrome. This interactive workshop explores how trauma, chronic stress, and cultural expectations contribute to these experiences and how social workers can recognize what is often hidden beneath achievement. Participants will learn trauma-informed, culturally responsive assessment and intervention strategies that can be applied across clinical, healthcare, school, military, and private practice settings. Attendees will leave with practical tools to help clients reduce shame, build resilience, and improve emotional well-being.

Monday, November 16, 2026

3:30PM-5:00PM ET BREAKOUT SESSIONS

07

M7: The Ethics of Practicing Under Pressure: Social Work Obligations to LGBTQ+ Clients in a Shifting Legal Landscape

Christien Harden, MSW, MATC, LCSW, LCAS, CCS

Social workers are navigating an increasingly fractured legal landscape for LGBTQ+ clients, with state laws, federal policy, and licensing expectations often pointing in different directions. This keynote examines how core NASW ethical principles, including social justice, dignity and worth of the person, competence, and integrity, apply when the legal ground itself keeps shifting. Drawing on real regulatory and clinical examples, from gender-affirming care restrictions to cross-state telehealth complications, this session equips attendees with a practical ethical decision-making framework for maintaining competent, affirming practice under legal uncertainty, without compromising client dignity or professional integrity.

M8: Grassroots to Statewide Impact: Bridging the Gap Between Policymakers and Communities

Max Shafir MSW, LCSW & Julia Husk, MSW, LCSW

For nearly 50 years, North Carolina's Legislative Breakfast on Mental Health has brought lawmakers, providers, advocates, and consumers into the same room to turn personal stories into policy change. What started in 1978 as a four-county gathering has grown into a statewide model, now drawing over 500 attendees and backed by more than 40 partner organizations across the state. This session examines what happens when the field convenes in one room: policy priorities that might otherwise take a year to surface get raised directly with legislators, professional networks thicken across regions, and mental health stays visible on the legislative agenda year after year.

08

09

M9: Halo & Healing: Resilience, Suicide Assessment, and Culturally Responsive Intervention in Human Services

Witni Jackson, DSW, LCSW, MAC

Suicide prevention requires more than identifying risk; it requires understanding the cultural, relational, and systemic experiences that shape despair and hope. This interactive training explores suicide prevention through a culturally responsive lens, integrating evidence-based assessment and intervention strategies with resilience-building practices that strengthen belonging, identity affirmation, and community connection. Using themes reflected in Beyoncé's body of work as cultural case studies, participants examine how representation, agency, and collective resilience function as protective factors against suicide. Participants will learn foundational suicide assessment skills, practice culturally humble responses to suicide disclosures, review referral and safety-planning procedures, and identify strategies for strengthening protective factors among diverse populations.

Tuesday, November 17, 2026

8:30AM-10:00AM ET BREAKOUT SESSIONS

01

T1: The School Social Worker as a Systems Leader: A Comprehensive Approach to Student Success

Loretta Massey, Ed.D, LCSW

School social workers play a critical role in creating equitable learning environments by addressing barriers that affect student achievement, attendance, and behavior. Their work extends beyond individual support to leading collaborative systems that connect students, families, schools, and community partners. This interactive session explores how school social workers use a systems approach to improve student outcomes through attendance initiatives, multidisciplinary collaboration, family engagement, and community partnerships. Participants will gain practical tools and strategies that can be implemented immediately within their schools and districts.

T2: Regulating the Storm: Somatic Interventions for Staying Inside the Window of Tolerance

Danielle Whittington, LCSW

Traditional talk therapy provides excellent cognitive insight, but deep-rooted trauma lives in the nervous system. When clients with complex trauma intellectualize their pain, they often remain stuck in overwhelming hyper-arousal or dissociation. This advanced session equips seasoned clinicians with fast-acting somatic and experiential frameworks drawn from cutting-edge modalities like EMDR, ART, and RRT. Attendees will learn to track real-time physiological indicators of dysregulation and implement targeted somatic interventions. Focus heavily on the "Window of Tolerance" to safely and rapidly desensitize traumatic memory without flooding or retraumatizing the client.

02

03

T3: Promoting Brain Health through Treatment of Depression to Reduce Dementia Risk

Sarah Chambers, MSW, LCSW

Dementia is a growing global public health concern. This workshop will explore the prevention of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), with an emphasis on the role of Depression as a risk factor. Participants will examine the relationship between mental health and brain health, including how depression across the lifespan may affect cognitive aging and dementia risk. The session will highlight evidence-based approaches to optimizing the clinical management of depression—particularly the importance of early intervention during young adulthood (ages 18–39)—to support long-term brain health and reduce dementia risk. Attendees will also discuss the importance of equitable access to brain health interventions and strategies to address disparities in dementia prevention and treatment.

Tuesday, November 17, 2026

10:30AM-12:00PM ET BREAKOUT SESSIONS

04

T4: Beyond the Survivor: Evidence-Informed Strategies for Integrating Loved Ones into Clinical Trauma Work

Crystal Emerick, Founder & Katie Overcash, LCSW, RYT-200

Social workers often focus solely on the survivor, leaving loved ones overwhelmed and unsupported. This session presents new evidence on the relational impacts of sexual trauma and shares pre/post data from a structured loved-ones intervention. Attendees will learn practical, trauma-informed strategies for engaging supporters in ways that strengthen survivor outcomes and reduce clinician burnout. Participants will leave with concrete tools including communication anchors, role-mapping and boundary-clarity exercises that can be immediately integrated into clinical practice across settings.

T5: Identifying and Treating Dissociative Stimming

Lacey Allene Cottingham, LCSW

Clients walk in the door every day engaging in behaviors to increase regulation. Sometimes they feel distressed by them. Other times they report they feel good, but worried about being "addicted" to them. What do you do when the behaviors look almost but not quite like maladaptive daydreaming? You want to be neuroaffirming, let your clients be themselves in session, but also can't allow harmful dynamics to continue. In this session, we will dive into what self-stimulatory behaviors (stims) are, their purpose, what they look like when they are helpful, and what they look like when it's a sign of dissociation. Treatment options for the underlying cause will also be suggested.

05

06

T6: When Motherhood Meets Fury: Understanding & Treating Postpartum Rage

Karen Durham, DSW, LCSW, PMH-C

Postpartum rage, the sudden anger, irritability, and intrusive aggressive thoughts many new parents experience, is common but rarely discussed. This session unpacks what current research reveals about postpartum rage, why the DSM-5-TR often fails to capture it, and how bias and structural barriers shape whose anger gets recognized and treated. Attendees will leave with evidence-informed interventions, including CBT, DBT-informed skills, and IPT, along with practical takeaways for screening, validating, and safely supporting postpartum clients navigating this under-recognized symptom.

Tuesday, November 17, 2026

1:00PM-2:30PM ET BREAKOUT SESSIONS

07

T7: From Survival to Stability: Financial Social Work with Unhoused Individuals Through an Empowerment Framework

**Ashley Garrick, MSW, MBA, LISW-CP &
Anthony J. Hill, Ph.D., MBA, LISW-CP/S, CFSW, CFT™, CSWM, ACSW**

Although homelessness is often viewed as a housing crisis, it is also rooted in financial trauma, economic exclusion, systemic inequities, and psychological distress. This interactive workshop introduces Financial Social Work as an empowerment-based framework for addressing the intersection of financial hardship, housing instability, and well-being across diverse practice settings. Grounded in Empowerment Theory, participants will learn practical strategies for financial assessment, trauma-informed financial conversations, resource navigation, advocacy, and systems change. Through case studies and interactive activities, attendees will develop skills to promote financial empowerment, housing stability, self-determination, and economic justice for individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

T8: Building Resilience: Therapist Insights for Supporting Immigration Advocates and Activists

Sandra Olarte-Hayes, LCSW & Monica Romo, LCSW-S

Advocates and professionals working with immigrant communities often carry profound emotional, relational, and systemic burdens. This workshop will equip Social Workers with practical tools to support the mental health and longevity of immigrant rights advocates. Participants will learn strategies to promote grounding, resilience, and sustained engagement in challenging work. The session emphasizes reflective practice, storytelling, and connection to professional purpose as key elements of sustainability. Through guided discussion and shared learning, participants will have opportunities to exchange ideas, explore common challenges, and identify supportive strategies to remain effective, compassionate, and connected in their values.

08

09

T9: When Joy Returns: Helping Clients Navigate Joy, Guilt, and Healing After Loss

Shantel Robinson, LCSW

Grief is often associated with sadness, yet many clients eventually experience moments of laughter, hope, and joy that can bring unexpected guilt or confusion. How can social workers support clients through this often-overlooked stage of healing? Drawing from Worden's Tasks of Mourning, the Dual Process Model, Continuing Bonds, Meaning Reconstruction, and acceptance-based principles, this session explores how grief and joy can coexist. Participants will gain practical, culturally responsive interventions, clinical language, and reflective strategies to help clients honor their loss while embracing renewed meaning, connection, and hope across a variety of practice settings.

MAIL IN REGISTRATION FORM

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Credentials: _____ NASW Membership # _____

Address: _____

**required in order to receive member-only discount.

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Daytime Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

** Please include a valid email address as registration confirmations will be sent via email only.

**Because NASW-NC staff is working remotely, there may be a delay in processing registrations that are mailed in. NASW-NC is not responsible for lost or delayed registrations by mail.

**For immediate registration,
please register online at
www.naswnc.org**

If paying by check or money
order, please complete a
registration form and mail it to:

**NASW-NC
Attn: CE (Fall Conference)
PO Box 27582
Raleigh, NC 27611**

NASW Members

_____ \$125.00 Full Conference

Not Yet a Member?

_____ \$ 250 Full Conference

2026 FALL CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Times in Eastern Time Zone

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16 SESSIONS

Monday, 8:30am-10:30am, Keynote Address (2 Ethics CE Hours)

☐ KN1: Protecting the Profession: Smart Ethics, Risk Management, and Digital Privacy in Social Work

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Select Only ONE Session from this section.

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