



Northwest Illinois Criminal Justice Commission

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Mobile Team Unit #1 is funded in partnership with the Illinois Law Enforcement Training & Standards Board

Protecting Innocence Symposium - 2026

DATE: October 23, 2026

Registration Ends: October 15, 2026

TIME: 8:00 AM—5:00 PM 8 Hours

LOCATION: UIC – Rockford, 1601 Parkview Ave., Rockford, IL

INSTRUCTOR: Stephen Mills, Dana Miller, Melissa Box and Patricia Lewis

COURSE OVERVIEW:

The topics covered in this symposium are:

- It Takes a Village: How Communities Enable Child Sex Predators
- Online Exploitation and Sextortion: Awareness and Response
- Strengthening Organizational Policies and Procedures
- The Family Strengthening and Family Safety: Transformation at Illinois DCFS

Participants will increase their knowledge and ability to:

- Apply evidence-based strategies for the prevention of child maltreatment, including recognizing protective factors and family-strengthening interventions.
- Identify clinical, behavioral, and environmental indicators of child abuse, grooming, child sexual exploitation, and barriers to disclosure using a trauma-informed approach.
- Evaluate opportunities to improve multidisciplinary collaboration and implement organizational and community-based strategies that enhance child safety and promote family well-being.

COURSE GOALS:

Following participation, learners are expected to:

- Incorporate prevention and family-strengthening strategies into routine clinical encounters when appropriate.
- Improve recognition of children at risk for abuse, exploitation, or neglect and respond with timely, evidence-based assessment, documentation, reporting, and referral.
- Utilize trauma-informed communication techniques that support children and caregivers, reduce re-traumatization and encourage engagement in care.
- Strengthen collaboration with multidisciplinary partners, including child advocacy centers, child protective services, behavioral health providers, schools, law enforcement, and community organizations, to improve coordinated care and child protection.



- Identify opportunities within their own organizations to improve policies, protocols, and quality improvement initiatives related to child maltreatment prevention and response.

Implementation of the knowledge and skills gained from this activity is expected to contribute to:

- Earlier recognition and intervention for children experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation, or trafficking.
- Improved access to timely medical, behavioral health, advocacy, and protective services.
- More consistent delivery of trauma-informed, family-centered care that supports healing and reduces the risk of re-traumatization.
- Enhanced collaboration among healthcare, child welfare, education, law enforcement, and community partners, resulting in more coordinated and effective responses to child maltreatment.
- Increased emphasis on prevention and protective factors, ultimately promoting safer environments, stronger families, and improved health and well-being for children

This course has been certified by the ILETSB and approved to meet the following mandates:

- Procedural Justice - 6.0 hours

REGISTRATION:

All registrations are received on the [MTU#1 website](#). Find Registration instructions [here](#)

Partial funding provided by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board.

THIS IS NOT A PUBLIC MEETING