



May 2023—Issue No. 16

Association Newsletter

Empowering Members To Empower Us All

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Spotlight On...

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

A truly sustainable ESD movement will address mental health issues openly and without judgment.

This month, the Association is focused on the health of ESD practitioners, specifically their mental health. But what does that mean? In this space, it means bringing awareness to the importance of caring for and openly discussing our mental health. And for us, it always means offering tools, resources, community, and connection.

Supporting the mental well-being of our peers can mean many things. For some it will be finding resources and tools that make running their ESD practice more easeful, leading to greater peace of mind. For some, it may mean seeking out opportunities to connect with others practicing and advocating for ESD, finding like-minded community and a network of support. For others, it may mean meeting with a therapist or maintaining pre- or post-class rituals.

Maybe it's having friends or co-workers who remind you take some time in your garden or take a walk in the woods. Perhaps participating in a mentorship program is just the thing. Maybe you just need help asking for help? Let's normalize conversations about mental health in ESD circles!

We are here for you and for each other, to support the well-being of our movement on every level. Something you would like to see? Write to hello@esdprofessionals.org!

A NOTE FROM ASSOCIATION MEMBER TASHA INA CHURCH

Aloha e na hoa Hawaiii!

The Pacific Islands, known as Polynesia from the Greek word poly ‘many’ and nēsoi ‘islands’, encompass a broad area of the east-central Pacific Ocean. With the Hawaiian Islands in the north and its base angles at New Zealand (Aotearoa) in the west and Easter Island (Rapa Nui) in the east, this is one beautiful triangle. It also includes (from northwest to southeast) Tuvalu, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna, Samoa (formerly Western Samoa), American Samoa, Tonga, Niue, the Cook Islands, and French Polynesia (Tahiti and the other Society Islands).

The indigenous people of these islands have strong ties to oral traditions over written ones. Each element of nature has a story and a moral lesson behind it. Living in the Hawaiian Islands, I have found that time is different, stories are cherished, elders are honored, and food, art, dance, and culture are everything to the people. They celebrate their traditions and each other.

With the rise of anti-Asian hate crimes during the pandemic, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is an especially important time for both celebration and raising awareness. This is a time to show love and support across the many cultures within the AAPI community as well as solidarity with non-Asian communities—turning grief and injustice into activism and joy.

From May 1 to May 31, we are reminded that Asian and Pacific Islanders should neither be lumped together into a single East Asian monolith, nor boxed into the stereotype of a model minority. They are proud peoples who love their cultures and lands.

In ESD, we honor different cultural backgrounds and traditions. When working with people from storytelling backgrounds, it is important to add in space and time to allow for everyone to share openly. The more we listen, the more we learn.

Let’s talk stories and share experiences working with a variety of populations! If you have a story, please reach out to [Hello@ESDProfessionals.org](mailto>Hello@ESDProfessionals.org)! We would love to highlight your contributions in our social media & on our website!

Tasha Ina Church
Social Media Marketing Specialist, Association of ESD Professionals
Founder, [ElleLiveAction](http://ElleLiveAction.com)

ASSOCIATION NEWS



FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024
GROWING ESD, THRIVING TOGETHER

Join us in April 2024!

WHO: Association of ESD Professionals
WHAT: First Annual Conference
WHERE: San José, Costa Rica
WHEN: April 19-20 (w/Member Meeting & Reception April 18 @5pm)

We are excited to announce that registration for the Association's First Annual Conference will be opening this month. **Stay tuned for Super Early Bird Pricing!**

The Annual Conference will be held April 19–20, 2024 in Costa Rica. And for Association members, we are hosting the Annual Meeting and Reception the evening before, on April 18.

Please join us for two days of connection and community building:

- Share experiences and learn from peers.
- Hear dynamic keynote speakers and panels.
- Grow together with member-led skill shares.
- Enjoy unique cultural and culinary experiences.
- Have fun with ESD professionals from all over the world!

You will have the opportunity to showcase your work, connect with friends new and old, and dive deep into ESD, all in beautiful Costa Rica.

See you there!

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Credentialing in 2023

We think your incredible work in ESD deserves recognition and celebration, don't you?

The Association Credentialing Exam will be offered twice in 2023. Applications for both Exam Periods are now open!

- Exam Period 2: August 15-22, 2023
- Exam Period 3: October 17-24, 2023

Visit the [Credentialing Page of our website](#) to learn more and apply!



Teaching ESD 4/17/23

Why Boundary Setting is at the Core of my ESD Work

It is critical that we understand the indispensable role of communication in self-defense.

The Importance of Boundaries in ESD

Read our latest blog!

"I choose to center boundary setting and assertive communication in my ESD classes; I believe it is one of our first lines of self-defense—but perhaps even more important, I believe it makes our lives and relationships healthier and happier."

—Toby Israel

[This month's blog](#) is all about one of our favorite topics in ESD: boundaries!

Have something to share? We would love to publish your words as a feature or guest blog! Feel free to reach out to toby@esdprofessionals.org with a pitch!

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Our Career Center is Live!

Find Mission-Aligned Work & Workers

Are you looking for work (or new employees) aligned with your mission? We invite you to utilize the [Association's Career Center](#) as you seek your next job or hire. We know that empathy and ethics are key deciding factors for many ESD professionals, so we have sought to create a values-oriented career center where you can connect with your future employer or employee.

Check it out [here](#).



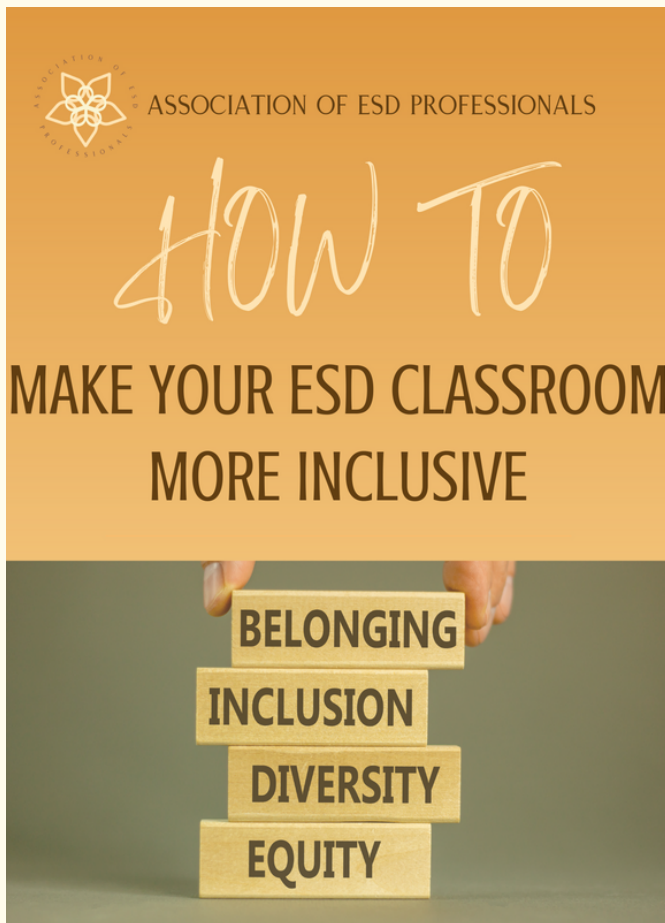
Make Your Practice More Inclusive

Our Latest How-To Guide is Available!

As ESD professionals, we try to bring ESD principles into all areas of our lives and our personal values into our ESD practices. Equity and inclusion aren't just talking points for us; they are foundational concepts that we believe will make for a truly transformative ESD movement.

If you want to bring more equity and inclusivity into your ESD practice but aren't sure where to begin, this guide is for you. We explore how to adapt ESD to suit different cultures, abilities, and needs, allowing participants to guide their own empowerment.

Visit our [resources page](#) to download our latest How-To Guide.



ASSOCIATION NEWS



ESD Biz Tips of the Month

- Stay focused on what inspires you.
- Learn how to motivate yourself.
- Be genuinely you!

These suggestions are part of our weekly series on business tips for ESD professionals! [Follow the Association on Instagram](#) for more tips, tools, and strategies to run your ESD practice with ease!

Members' Networking Event!

Thursday, May 25th, 1pm EDT | Online

This month, we will be hosting a special event for Association members to meet, take a deeper dive into issues they are facing in their practices, share, forge new connections, and ask questions about the Association. Don't miss this opportunity to network with other Association members and give and receive the support you crave. Stay tuned for an email invitation to register.

Not an Association member yet? Reach out to Modupe to learn more:
Poku@ESDProfessionals.org



ESD WORLDWIDE

If we could wave our magic wand and be in all places at once, we would be training with all of you, everywhere, all the time! The next best thing is sharing these events, celebrations, and opportunities with the ESD community. Think something or someone should be included in next month's newsletter? Reach out at hello@esdprofessionals.org.

ESD Summer Experience

August 20-26 | Camp Echo, New York

This is an invitation for the greater ESD community to come together to generate ideas, share success and struggles, and, most importantly, dream.

We all share the one common goal: scaling violence prevention programs while changing social systems and doing it based on the principles of Empowerment Self Defense.

Learn more and apply [here!](#)



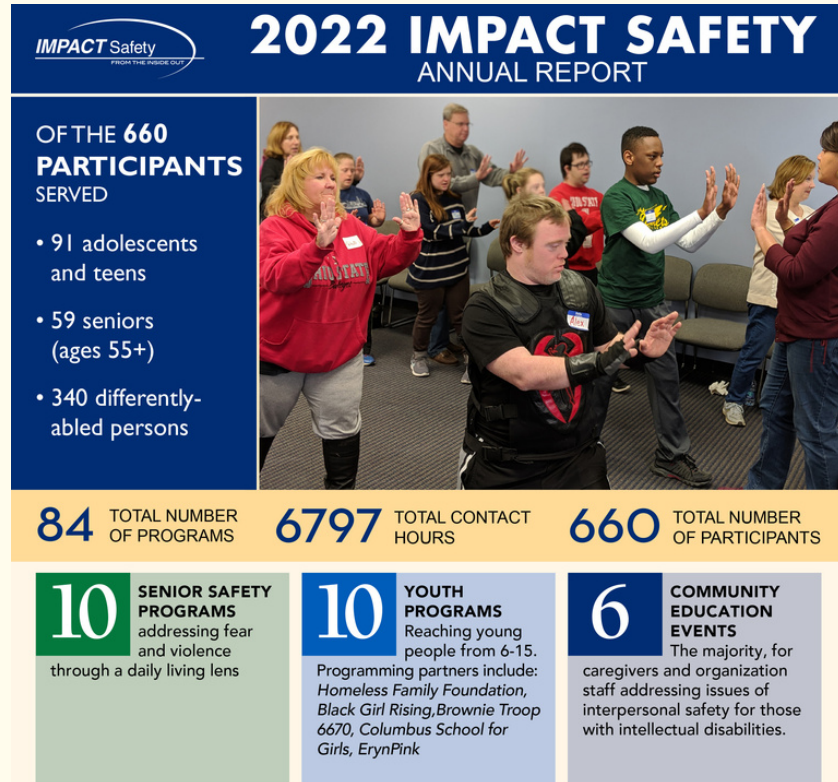
Weaving Connection in LAC

Online Training for New Instructors in Latin America

New ESD instructors from Costa Rica, Mexico, LA, and beyond came together last month for a webinar with Dani Lizano on the topic of "De-escalation Strategies." Member Toby Israel initiated the workshop in an effort to bring new perspectives to her graduates in Costa Rica. The suggestion was made to open up the workshop to the whole region, and even better! We are mightier together!



ESD WORLDWIDE



IMPACT Safety believes everyone can be safer!

Celebrating a year of huge IMPACT in 2022

Director Julie Harmon and the Impact Safety team in Ohio are pleased to share some of the results of their work in 2022. Learn more at the [IMPACT Safety website](#).

"Numbers themselves do not tell the whole story. Each individual that now sets healthy boundaries, feels empowered to use their voice and embodies confidence in their interactions, impacts so many others. From a systems' perspective, when one part of the system changes, the rest of the system is forced to adapt. One vocalized "don't touch me" can manifest change in so many ways. We know that even just one person setting healthy boundaries makes a difference and has a ripple effect.

In 2023 we will continue our work and efforts to be part of a tidal wave of change. And none of this work would have been possible without the passionate work of the IMPACT Safety staff and our partners. Without their willingness, grace, creativity and passion, we would not be where we are."

ESD WORLDWIDE

Assume Nothing: A Story of Intimate Violence

A Report on Last Month's Berkshire One Book Event

Member Kim Rivers shares that on April 13th, Elizabeth Freeman Center, the Berkshire Domestic & Sexual Violence Task Force, and the Berkshire District Attorney's Office held an online author event with Tanya Selvaratnam to discuss her Book, "Assume Nothing: A Story of Intimate Violence."

"In the United States, one in three women experiences physical or sexual violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in her lifetime. One of the most common ways victims seek safety is relying on law enforcement officers as the first step to getting help.

But what does one do when the abuser is a police officer? Domestic violence among police officers is 15 times the rate of the general population. Abuse has been and continues to be an open secret among officers, perpetuated in a culture of silence and traditional bonds of loyalty within law enforcement communities. Police officers tend to protect their own, so victims facing this type of domestic violence often don't know where to go.

This is what film producer and activist Tanya Selvaratnam came up against in her relationship with New York Attorney General, Eric Schneiderman. In her book, "Assume Nothing: A Story of Intimate Violence." Selvaratnam shares her story about being in an intimate relationship with a man perceived as a feminist hero for going after Harvey Weinstein and advocating for domestic abuse victims, who would then go home and slap his girlfriend. As the top law enforcement officer of New York State, Schneiderman wielded a lot of power, telling Selvaratnam he could tap her phone or easily track her down. Several times he told her that if they broke up, he would have to kill her. These types of comments will sound familiar to any abuse survivor, yet it becomes even more frightening with the discretion granted to law enforcement in responding to allegations of abuse.

This is why it's so difficult for victims to seek help. Even when the woman is also a law enforcement officer, she is likely to be regarded as having broken the bond of loyalty by reporting the abuse. **Selvaratnam offers two pieces of advice for survivors: Tell the stories of experiencing violence, so that the shame and stigma is taken out of them. Second, call out the enablers. Abuse thrives in silence and secrecy, which can only continue with others complicity.**

— Kim T. Rivers

The writer is a staff member of Elizabeth Freeman Center and President of the Board of Trustees for the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pittsfield, and a Member of The ESD Association. Follow Kim's work with [Labrys Empowerment Self-Defense](#) on Facebook.

ESD WORLDWIDE

ESD on the Road

Around the World with Tom Rose

Member Tom Rose has been busy visiting new ESD practices across the globe. Recently, Tom traveled from Bucharest, Romania to Albania to Madrid, Spain to Jerusalem, Israel to Kazakhstan to attend workshops and meet with NGO, government, and school officials (such as the UN and Red Cross) about the growth of ESD Global and IMPACT Personal Safety.

Way to go, Tom! What's next? We'll be staying tuned for more exciting reports from the world tour.



Women Deliver 2023 Conference

July 17-20 | Kigali, Rwanda

"With sexual and reproductive health and rights at our core, we will center intersectional feminist principles, to address compounding issues impacting girls and women – from climate change, to gender-based violence, to unpaid care work – and collectively identify and action evidence-based solutions."

The theme of WD2023 is Spaces, Solidarity, and Solutions. WD2023 will enable inclusive and co-created spaces that foster solidarity for sustainable solutions on gender equality.

Learn more and register [here](#).

WE ARE ESD PROFESSIONALS

Have you seen our ESD professionals [video](#), featuring many of you?!



We are passionate about supporting this movement by uplifting the amazing work you are doing around the world. Curious to know more about how the Association can support you? Reach out to Membership & Operations Lead Modupe Poku at Poku@ESDProfessionals.org to start a conversation.



LET'S STAY CONNECTED!

Don't be a stranger! The Association of ESD Professionals is here for you.

Have a comment? Please contact us at [Hello@ESDProfessionals.org](mailto>Hello@ESDProfessionals.org) if you would like to share a celebration about your ESD work, learn more about the Association Credentialing Program, become a member, or explore other opportunities for collaboration. We always love to hear from you!

Be sure to stay in touch with us wherever you like to connect virtually, too:

