



Fred Strahorn, Executive Director  
175 South Third Street  
Suite 580  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
[www.OHHN.org](http://www.OHHN.org)

## **OHHN 2025 Conference Program**

### ***Housing as a Safe Space: Creating Healthier Communities***

**8:30 Breakfast**

**9:00 Plenary:**

#### **Opening Remarks**

Recognition of Sponsors - Cari Stork, OHHN Conference Committee Chair

Welcome and announcements -Fred Strahorn, OHHN Executive Director

Introduction of Keynote - Phillip Bouton, OHHN Board Chair

**9:15 Keynote:**

#### **Pam Blais, R.S. of the Ohio Department of Health's Public Health Lead Investigation Program**

**10:10 Break**

**10:20 Breakout:**

Breakout 1: Jason Reece, PH.D.—Triangulating Housing, Neighborhood and Life Coaching for Health

Breakout 2: Dr. Roopa Thakur—A Clinical Perspective on Lead

Breakout 3: A Parent's Perspective: A Panel of Parents of Lead-Poisoned Children Discuss Their Experiences and Share Their Hard-Won Knowledge

**11:20 Break**

**11:30 Lunch**

#### **Awards Presentations**

Legislator of the Year, Community Service, Lifetime Achievement

**11:45am Keynote:**

#### **PlenaryLunch Keynote Speaker Tom Neltner, National Director of Unleaded Kids**

**12:50pm Break**

**1:00pm Networking**

#### **Connecting and Collaborating Networking Event—Phillip Bouton, OHHN Board Chair & Aaron Grant, PWC**

**1:40pm Break**

**1:50pm Breakout:**

Breakout 4: Joanie Calem - How to Make Your Home Safe and Sensory Friendly - Understanding Invisible Sensory Overload and Unapparent Disabilities

Breakout 5: Gayle Covington-Fowler—Dual Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences & Lead Poisoning on Children, Building Understanding and Solutions

Breakout 6: Scott Armour, M.S., OEHS — Three Things You Can Do About Mold and Mycotoxins to Assure a Healthier Home

**2:50 Break**

**3:00pm Plenary**

**Wrap-Up Session**

**3:30 Adjournment**

**Poster Presentations on Display During the Conference:**

**Exposure Assessment in the Pediatric Home Healthcare Environment**

Elizabeth McKinley, PhD, MSN, RN

**Understanding Environmental Triggers for Asthma in the Home Environment Via Novel Allergen and Mold Detection**

Olivia R. Farinas, Karen Dannemiller, PhD

**Hazards and Safety Strategies for High-Speed Consumer 3D Printing at Home**

Justin Morrow, PhD

**Observations of Occupational Exposures in Home Healthcare Workers**

Angela Thiel, BSN, RN

## Information about Our Presenters

### Morning Keynote Address by Pam Blais of the Ohio Department of Health



**Pam Blais, R.S.**

Pam Blais has been employed with the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) for 28 years in the lead poisoning prevention field. She has served as a Program Manager for the ODH Lead Licensure Program and now oversees the Public Health Lead Investigation Program within the Bureau of Environmental Health and Radiation Protection. She is Project Director for the agency's HUD Lead Hazard Control Grant Program, manages the SCHIP Lead Hazard Abatement Project, and assists in overseeing the ODH's Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) grant. She has also taken on several smaller lead related projects including expanding the lead abatement industry workforce and managing the lead in demolition and Middle-Income lead hazard control projects. Ms. Blais received a BS in Environmental Health from Purdue University and is a registered sanitarian. She also earned green belt certification in Lean Six Sigma for Government. She is a member of ODH's Performance Management and Quality Improvement Committee and serves on the PHAB reaccreditation team.

### Plenary Keynote Address, "Advancing Healthy Homes When Federal Funding Dries Up and Uncertainty Abounds" by Tom Neltner



**Tom Neltner, National Director of Unleaded Kids**

Mr. Neltner is a chemical engineer and attorney dedicated to chemical safety issues. He is using his quarter century of experience in government, industry, academia, and non-profit advocacy to protect kids from harmful exposure to lead.

## Breakout Session 1: Jason Reece, PH.D.—Triangulating Housing, Neighborhood and Life Coaching for Health



**Jason Reece, PH.D.** is an associate professor of city and regional planning at the Knowlton School and Vice Provost for Urban Research & Community Engagement in the Office of Academic Affairs. His research seeks to understand the role of planning in fostering a built and social environment which supports a just city and healthy communities. He is a community engaged scholar, collaborating directly with local community leaders in co-creating knowledge that serves our community.

In his role as Vice Provost, Jason Reece focuses on building support systems and relationships to support community engaged scholarship in Central Ohio’s urban communities.

Working on behalf of the office of academic affairs, he collaborates with internal and external stakeholders to create a

strategic vision for academic partnership with Ohio State’s local communities. His work in health equity seeks to understand the role of housing and community development in supporting both physical and mental health in marginalized communities. At the Knowlton School Jason Reece teaches courses in equity planning, community development, land use law, planning theory and planning history.

## Breakout Session 2: Dr. Roopa Thakur—A Clinical Perspective on Lead



**Roopa Thakur, M.D., FAAP** is a practicing pediatrician at Cleveland Clinic Independence Family Health Center. She is board certified in general pediatrics. She earned her medical degree from The Ohio State University College of Medicine in Columbus, Ohio and completed her post-graduate training at Cleveland Clinic Children’s in Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Thakur’s interests include resident education and healthcare advocacy. As a lifelong resident of Ohio, she is committed to improving living conditions for our community’s children and serves as the Medical Director of the Lead Safe Ohio program, operated by the Ohio chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She also serves as Medical Director of School-Based Health Clinics and Medical Director of Youth Strategies for Cleveland Clinic.

### **Breakout Session 3: A Parent's Perspective: A Panel of Parents of Lead-Poisoned Children Discuss Their Experiences and Share Their Hard-Won Knowledge**

This panel discussion will include parents of children who experienced lead poisoning. The parents will offer their first-hand perspective on the harmful effects this toxin had on their children's health and development. The panel will discuss the lessons they learned because of their experiences and provide insights and advice on how to prevent, detect, and address lead and other indoor environmental hazards.

### **Breakout Session 4: Joanie Calem – How to Make Your Home Safe and Sensory Friendly: Understanding Invisible Sensory Overload and Unapparent Disabilities**



**Joanie Calem** is a folk musician, singer/song-writer, storyteller and inclusion advocate for audiences of all ages. Joanie writes songs and sings about life's different twists and turns, angles and perspectives, telling stories through her songs of the ups and downs of reality. She performs regularly at festivals, retirement homes, shelters, libraries and schools throughout the U.S. and abroad.

### **Breakout Session 5: Gayle Covington Fowler of Just A Minute to Care (JAM) – Dual Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) & Lead Poisoning on Children**



**Gayle Covington Fowler** provides consulting for family engagement, responsible fatherhood and two-generation program approaches. She offers guidance to professionals and organizations to increase the significance of family education, community, school and parent engagement, school readiness, family literacy and early intervention and prevention. Her expertise includes cultivating collaborative programs and partnerships to maximize social capital and increase return on investment as well as creating promotion, recruitment and data management structures for successful outcomes and organizational growth. She's called to speak at national family and relationship conferences, Head Start programs, universities, schools and community agencies. Her experience includes over twenty years of board and community

involvement, family advocacy, program management, public speaking and training. She is a certified Nurturing Parenting Facilitator Trainer and Consultant, Nurturing Fatherhood Trainer and evidence-based instructor for several relationship and abuse prevention programs. Additionally, she is a certified Mental Health First Aid Trainer.

#### **Breakout Session 6: J. Scott Armour, M.S., OEHS, of MoldLogic – Three Things You Can Do About Mold and Mycotoxins to Assure a Healthier Home**



**Scott Armour, M.S., OEHS** has a Master of Science degree in Health Science specializing in Occupational and Environmental Health and a sub-specialty in Industrial Hygiene.

His professional experience is both broad and deep going back almost 30 years and includes classic industrial hygiene for a wide range of environmental and occupational hazards and exposures. His work has also included workplace safety and OSHA compliance, ISO-14001 Environmental Management, lead-paint poison research, adjunct faculty at University of Findlay, and of course the reason he is here today – over 20 years of contributing to the mold remediation Standards of Care.

Scott was the Vice-Chair of the 2024 edition of the Professional Mold Remediation Standard written by the ANSI accredited IICRC. This edition was published in May 2024 and includes all new language and methods for the safe effective removal and remediation of mold hazards. He served on the committees of all four published versions of the S520.

He is also currently a contributing member of the soon-to-be-completed S530 Mold Assessment Standard. Scott is active with AIHA including the recent ad hoc Committee on Ohio Mold Legislation; he is a member of ASTM D-22 Indoor Air Quality committee which includes the Post Remediation Verification sub-committee; and was Chair of the IICRC Mold Removal Specialist Certification and Exam Program.

With regard to his mold expertise, Scott provides mold assessment and consulting for all types of buildings and situations - including commercial building owners and management, insurance companies, lawyers, health departments, boards of education, and 100's of patients referred from a large hospital-based medical group as well as naturopaths and health coaches from all over the United States.

# OHHN 2025 Conference Program Description and Learning Goals

## I. **Keynote: Pam Blaise of the Ohio Department of Health**

Pam Blaise, R.S. of the Ohio Department of Health Public Health Lead Investigation Program will give an overview of the work the Department is conducting with regard to lead poisoning prevention. She will talk about the tools available to local communities to address the problem of lead poisoning. She will also discuss issues such as blood testing for lead, lead hazard control orders, Lead Safe Home Fund grant updates, contracting certification and licensing, workforce development. and more.

## II. **Breakout**

### **Breakout Session 1: Families Flourish: Triangulating Housing, Neighborhood and Life Coaching for Health with Jason Reece, PH.D. Vice Provost and Associate Professor at Ohio State University, and team**

While the direct link between housing and health is well established, less research has identified how housing interventions that improve mental and physical health impact other aspects of family wellbeing, such as economic security or education. We will present our case study which utilizes a unique housing intervention, Families Flourish, which provides three years of housing assistance, aligned with life coaching and access to housing units in safe, well-resourced neighborhoods. Our analysis identifies distinct pathways in which housing stabilization improves mental and physical health. We find that these initial health improvements are then leveraged by families to improve family economic and educational outcomes.

*Learning goals:* Participants will understand the role of short/midterm housing assistance programs for health. They will be introduced to emerging research on the role of housing mobility for family health. They will understand the benefits of life coaching in tandem with housing assistance on family health.

### **Breakout Session 2: Healthcare: A Clinical Perspective on Lead with Dr. Roopa Thakur of the Cleveland Clinic**

Dr. Roopa Thakur is a practicing pediatrician at Cleveland Clinic Independence Family Health Center. She will discuss her professional experiences in treating children suffering from lead poisoning and her perspectives on the healthcare response to the problem.

*Learning goals:* Participants will develop an understanding of the importance of linking stronger quality control measures to the delivery of care to children suffering from or exposed to lead poisoning. They will learn the limitations of the current healthcare delivery

system and ideas to improve it to drive a higher standard of care for patients poisoned by lead. They will develop an understanding of lead poisoning as a social determinant of health.

**Breakout Session 3: A Parent's Perspective: A Panel of Parents of Lead-Poisoned Children Discuss Their Experiences and Share Their Hard-Won Knowledge**

This panel discussion will include parents of children who experienced lead poisoning. The parents will offer their first-hand perspective on the harmful effects this toxin had on their children's health and development. The panel will discuss the lessons they learned because of their experiences and provide insights and advice on how to prevent, detect, and address lead and other indoor environmental hazards.

*Learning Goals:* Participants will gain insight into the perspective of parents whose children have experienced lead poisoning. They will learn about the short and long-term effects lead poisoning had on the children and their families. They will hear first-hand accounts and perspectives about how to prevent, detect, and treat lead poisoning in the future.

**III. Plenary Keynote: Tom Neltner of Unleaded Kids**

The tumult within the federal government the past few months has left many healthy homes programs uncertain, especially with HUD, EPA, and CDC facing unprecedented cuts to staff and funding. Yet, housing-related hazards such as lead, mold, roaches, mice, carbon monoxide, and asbestos continue unabated. More than ever, the path forward for healthy homes will depend on leadership and innovation at the state and local levels among all stakeholders. Tom Neltner will provide an update on the federal changes, share his perspective on next steps, and engage in a discussion of what Ohio may do.

**IV. Connecting and Collaborating**

This interactive collaborative learning session will provide participants with insight into current healthy homes practices and resources while increasing valuable connections through meeting new colleagues working in the healthy homes field. Participants will rotate through tables with set topics and time allotments. Participants will be asked to introduce themselves and provide a short introduction of their work and interests in the healthy homes field and any work that touches on the table topic. Each table topic will be facilitated, providing best practice information and resources and to fill in conversational gaps.

*Learning goals:* Participants will learn current healthy homes practices, policies and resources while increasing their professional network of experts and practitioners.

**V. Breakout**

**Breakout Session 4: Joanie Calem - How to Make Your Home Safe and Sensory Friendly - Understanding Invisible Sensory Overload and Unapparent Disabilities**

According to recent NIH statistics, between 5-16.5% of the population suffer from SPD



(Sensory Processing Disorder), either from their own brain wiring, from a TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury), from progressive dementia, or from ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences/Trauma). As an unapparent disability, SPD is widely unrecognized, and people with SPD are instead often seen as simply spoiled, unfairly demanding or high maintenance. Being able to recognize the behaviors that are a result of SPD provides parents and caretakers with the understanding of the struggles someone with SPD experiences, and is the first step to structuring a home in a sensory friendly manner, where inhabitants can feel safe and secure. This session will provide an overview of the behaviors that could be a result of SPD, strategies to help alleviate sensory overload in the home, and time for Q&A.

*Learning goals:* Participants will become sensory "fluent" by recognizing the eight central areas of Sensory Processing Disorder, they will be able to explain the connection between SPD and ACES and trauma-informed care, and they will develop a strategy toolbox to share with individuals experiencing sensory overload.

**Breakout Session 5: Gayle Covington Fowler of Just A Minute to Care (JAM) – Dual Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) & Lead Poisoning on Children**

In this session, Gayle Covington Fowler of JAM - Just a Minute to Care - explores the dual impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and lead poisoning on children's health and development; Participants will learn how these issues intersect, their compounded effects, and strategies to address and prevent them.

*Learning goals:* Participants will be able to define ACEs and their effects on children's physical, emotional, and cognitive development. Participants also will be able to identify how ACEs and lead poisoning overlap and amplify adverse outcomes.

**Breakout Session 6: Scott Armour, M.S., OEHS, of MoldLogic – Three Things You Can Do About Mold and Mycotoxins to Assure a Healthier Home**

This presentation will touch on topics related to mold such as myths and misinformation about mold, the many health effects associated with mold, mold inspections, mold remediation specifications, and contract writing. Scott will discuss how the new standard of care for mold remediation professionals affects not just the mold remediation industry, but also how it assists individuals, like you, who may need mold remediation services.

*Learning goals:* Session participants will learn about proper remediation methods spelled out in the "Professional Mold Remediation Standard, IICRC/ANSI S520-2024". They will gain an understanding about the health effects of mold and its numerous chemical hazards, including mycotoxins and allergens, odors and VOC's. They will also gain an awareness of potential pitfalls related to product scams, fake science, bad science, and other bad actors.