

# CLASS PRESENTERS BIOGRAPHIES

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## Fortifying our Kids - Suicide & Substance Abuse Prevention

### **Kimball Gardner, Director of the NAMI Utah Prevention Department**

Kimball is the Director of the NAMI Utah Prevention Department. The National Alliance on Mental Illness is a nationwide nonprofit organization whose mission is to help ensure the dignity and improve the lives of those impacted by mental illness and their families through support, education and advocacy.

As Director of the NAMI Utah Prevention by Design program Kim works with, supports and provides grant funding to local coalitions throughout Utah to implement and evaluate suicide prevention and mental health promotion strategies.

Kim is the Co-Chair of the Utah Suicide Prevention Coalition and is a retired trial lawyer.

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## Operation Safety - Citizen Response to Active Shooter

### **Jeff M. Johnson, School Readiness Coordinator, Division of Emergency Management, Utah Department of Public Safety**

Jeff has been employed with State of Utah Department of Public Safety for 11 years. During those years he has worked in the Division of Emergency Management as an adjunct FEMA instructor for National Incident Management Courses, the State Coordinator for the Citizen Corps & Community Emergency Response Team Program and is currently the State Coordinator for the School Readiness Program. Jeff is also assigned as the Division of Emergency Management Safety Officer, and is the Safety Officer for the State Emergency Operations Center.

Prior to working for the State of Utah, Jeff served as a Law Enforcement Officer for 25 years. 2 years in Ogden City and 23 years in Brigham City. Jeff retired from a Law Enforcement career in 2007. Prior to his law enforcement career Jeff rode ambulance as an EMT for 2 years, and also managed two Private Security companies.

Jeff has a background in School Resource Officer, SWAT, Hostage Negotiation, Interview & Interrogation, Major Crimes Investigator, Crime Scene Investigation, Active Shooter Training and is a certified instructor for the Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events course.

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## **Recognizing Student Success using Data and Assessments - Using Data to Assess our Children's Strengths & Weaknesses**

**Rebecca Peterson, M.Ed., College and Career Readiness Assessment Specialist  
for the Utah State Board of Education**

Rebecca Peterson, M.Ed., is the College and Career Readiness Assessment Specialist for the Utah State Board of Education. Rebecca earned her Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from Brigham Young University. She is dual licensed in special education with a mild/moderate endorsement and general secondary education with a biology endorsement. She completed her Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Weber State University and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Brigham Young University's Educational Inquiry Measurement and Evaluation program. Rebecca's classroom career includes secondary special education reading, math and science, general education biology, AP and IB biology. Her past leadership and administrative experience includes LEA teacher mentoring, LEA MTSS and PLC director, school principal, state MTSS systems coach, and state interim MTSS director. This set of implementation experiences gives Rebecca a unique perspective on the importance of well-aligned and evidence-based systems of support from the classroom level to the SEA. Rebecca's research interests include characteristics of effective organizations, supporting underrepresented students in advanced-level classes, collective teacher efficacy, implementation science, and factors that predict college and career readiness.

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## **Communities that Care - Families, Schools and Communities Working Together to Create Healthy Behaviors in our Children**

**Heidi Peterson, Certified Prevention Specialist and Program Manager, Utah  
Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health**

Heidi Peterson is a Certified Prevention Specialist, currently employed as a Program Manager for the Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health. She formerly oversaw prevention efforts through the coordination of a Communities That Care Coalition in Tooele City. Heidi is passionate about helping communities collaborate to make the best use of resources and partnerships to synergize prevention efforts.