Opioid abuse and addiction has become an epidemic in the US and the number of babies suffering opiate-related addictions and symptoms of opiate withdrawal has tripled in the past decade. Every hour a baby in the US is born with symptoms of withdrawal from opiates, roughly 13,500 babies a year, with 4.5% of pregnant women using illegal drugs. Opioid addicted children have difficulties with behavior, self-regulation, self-soothing, attachment, attention, and academic performance. Little has been written about or presented on Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) and how best to work with children and their caregivers. In this workshop, Dr. Athena Drewes, will fill that gap by offering critical information about pre-natal opioid addiction in children, its impact on the polyvagal and neurological systems, long term consequences of NAS, and what play based treatments and techniques are useful. She will present a variety of child/play therapy and play-based treatment approaches and techniques.

Dr. Athena Drewes is a licensed psychologist, certified school psychologist, and Registered Play Therapist and Supervisor with over 40 years of clinical experience working with children and adolescence with complex trauma. She is a frequently invited guest presenter nationally and internationally, and has written extensively and edited/co-edited over 12 books on a variety of topics addressing play therapy in the treatment of children and adolescents.