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Q&A w/ Shanterra McBride

*Keynote Speaker for 2020 Teaching Family Association Conference,
Hosted by Methodist Family Health*

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The Teaching Family Association is an international association that works with children and adults who have experienced trauma, and have developed an effective model for working with these vulnerable groups. Each year, TFA hosts an annual conference where professionals in the human and social services arenas come together for outstanding educational opportunities and learning experiences.

This year's conference, scheduled for Oct. 18 – 20, was intended to take place in North Little Rock but was upended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Methodist Family Health, which is a Teaching Family Association accredited organization, is the host of this year's event, which will now take place in a virtual setting.

The keynote speaker for the TFA conference is Shanterra McBride, an author, motivational speaker, educator and coach who works mainly with youth who have experienced trauma. Many in the Arkansas Conference might recognize her name as the keynote speaker for Veritas 2020.

Get to know more about Shanterra below, and learn more about TFA by visiting their website, <https://www.teaching-family.org/conferences>.

You're the founder of a life coaching organization, an author, a motivational speaker, and an educator. Where does your passion for helping people, specifically young people, come from?

I've been blessed with wonderful mentors and amazing teachers, in and out of the classroom. One of those teachers was my Girl Scout leader (Troop 1503). When I was in middle school, around 12 years-old, we volunteered at a foster home for babies and toddlers. We played games and read stories and just spent an afternoon thinking we were there to give. Instead, we walked away feeling so much love and joy and left talking about what we gained, even at that age. From there, I knew I wanted to work with young people in some kind of capacity. I always had wonderful teachers and mentors who saw me and that has always inspired me to make sure I let young people know I see them.

When you talk to young people, what are some topics that you usually cover and why?

When talking to young people I hope to meet them in the place that is relevant for them. Friendships, relationships, body image, and the impact of social media on all this. I also talk with them about making an impact on their communities, now. Here lately, with everything going on in the world with race relations, I have been in conversations with young people helping them understand the division and giving them tools to be the change they wish to see. The beautiful thing is most young people are disheartened by the division and want to create a culture where everyone is treated equally. They are teaching adults how to be more inclusive, loving and kind.

You're this year's keynote speaker for the Teaching Family Association Conference. What are some of the topics you will cover with the people attending the

conference?

I'm really looking forward to the Teaching Family Association Conference. I will be talking with participants on how You Are The Root: Strong, Planted and Purposed, where I'll share true-life stories and frameworks that have real power to motivate and mend the attendees and remind us how we're connected and do better together than alone. I hope people will leave inspired, equipped, and ready to make stronger connections.

What is one of the most important things for people who work with youth and young adults who have been through trauma or disruptive family situations to know?

Young people need to know that they are seen, heard, liked and loved. One of remnants of trauma or disruptive family situations is believing you're invisible, that no one else knows, no one sees or that no one cares. One of the fundamental youth needs is safety and structure. When a young person experiences trauma, that need is shaken. The people who get to create safety and structure with the young person who has experienced trauma will be tasked to remember young people may test our sincerity and even commitment to them before they trust the safety and structure is there. It's a constant reminder for us to see the young person, hear them, even when they aren't using words, find something to like about them and let them know, and love them for who they are, not for who they may become.

You were a youth director at a United Methodist Church in Dallas, and still serve in various capacities at your local UMC. How does your faith as Methodist shape the way you speak to and teach people?

My faith inspires everything I do. One of my favorite truths of the United Methodist Church is how we as believers cannot just be observers when it comes to seeking justice and liberty for everyone. God's love for me compels me to love others. God's love for me calls me to mend, motivate and empower people, young and young at heart, to believe they are without reservation, completely marvelous.

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