

All Sessions Announced Mid-February

Earn Ohio
Approved
Credit!

2026

Ohio Early Childhood Conference

April 23-25, 2026
Sandusky, OH

Conference Preview

www.aoeayc.org/conference

Featuring 145+ Sessions and
100+ Presenters!

Plus Dedicated Tracks Including
Play

Music & Movement
Leadership Development
Challenging Behaviors
Conscious Discipline

Español
and more!

ohioaeyc

Ohio Association for the
Education of Young Children

Sponsors

Thank You To The Following Sponsors For
Making The Conference Possible!

More sponsors announced soon!

Partner Level



Platinum Level



Department of
Children & Youth



THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

ONLINE

Gold Level



Help Me Grow



RCL Benziger®
A Kendall Hunt Company



Silver Level



Who Should Attend?

If your work impacts the lives of children ages 0-8, you don't want to miss this opportunity!

Join thousands of fellow educators from across the great state of Ohio, the country, and even as far away as Europe and Africa for strategies, support, and solutions!

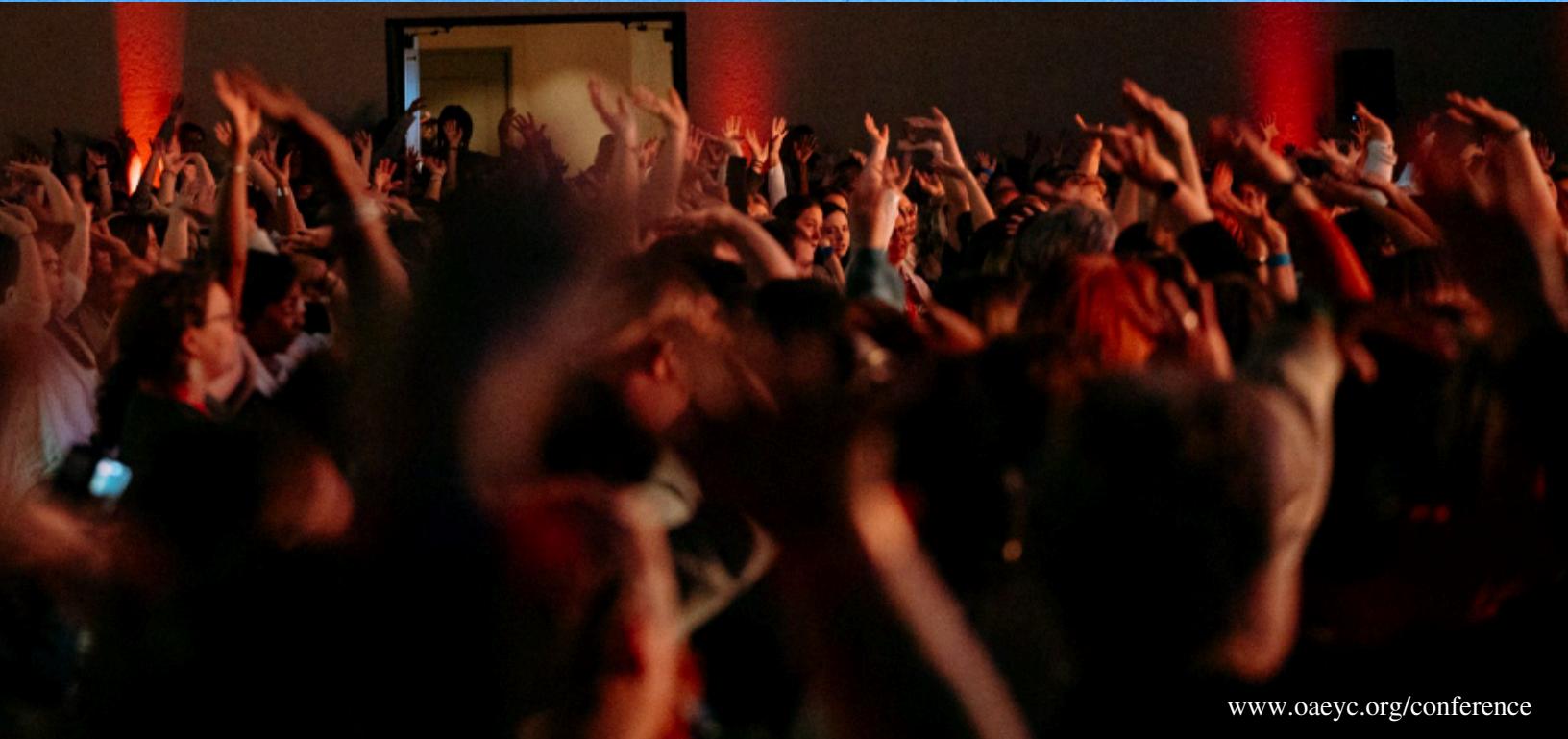
- Center Directors
- Teachers
- Assistant Teachers
- State Agency Staff
- Family Care Providers
- School Principals
- Early Intervention Specialists
- College Faculty/Students
- Social Workers
- R+R Staff



Thanks to our dedicated, and wonderful attendees...

Did You Know?
The Conference Was
Named
“Best Conference”
in the Country!

-American Business Awards



Why Attend?

The Ohio Early Childhood Conference is designed to strengthen your practice, renew your energy, and reconnect you to the work that matters most.

Professional Growth

- Earn Ohio-approved professional development hours
- Learn from nationally recognized speakers and trusted early childhood education leaders
- Explore current research, emerging trends, and proven best practices you can use right away

Personal Impact

- Reconnect with your passion, purpose, and “why”
- Build confidence, resilience, and professional pride
- Set meaningful goals and leave motivated to continue to serve those in your programs

Program Benefits

- Strengthen staff effectiveness, engagement, and collaboration
- Support retention, morale, and a positive workplace culture
- Discover practical strategies that improve quality and outcomes

Community Connection

- Build relationships with early childhood professionals
- Share ideas, problem-solve, and learn alongside peers who understand your work
- Leave feeling supported, inspired, and ready to make a difference





**An experience that inspires the heart.
Enriches the mind.
And rejuvenates the soul.**

The Ohio Early Childhood Conference brings educators together to connect, learn, laugh, and grow. Through engaging sessions, powerful speakers, and hands-on learning, attendees gain practical strategies, fresh perspective, and renewed energy they can take straight back to their classrooms, programs, and communities.

(Plus... it is a TON of fun.)



145
Sessions
+
50 Topic
Areas

Up to 21+
Hours of
Credit

Learn,
Laugh,
Connect,
Be Inspired!

Every
6th
Registration
is
FREE!

Keynote Speakers

Made possible by the generous support of



Rachel Giannini

Early Childhood Specialist, Educator, Content Creator, and Advocate

“Your Tuesday, Their Forever!”

Thursday, April 23, 10:45AM

Chicago Parent

The New York Times



Educator, National Speaker, Humorist, and Advocate for Teachers

“Be The Educator You Are: Finding Your Authentic Voice in Early Childhood Education”

Friday, April 24, 10:45AM

Joe Dombrowski
(Mr. D)



Educational Leader and Mindfulness in Education Specialist

“Let Joy Be Your Compass: Reclaiming Our Direction, Purpose, and Well-Being”

Saturday, April 25, 10:45AM

Dr. Nefertiti Poyner



Featured Speakers

We are excited to welcome the very best presenters in the country to the Ohio Early Childhood Conference!

145+ Sessions in over 50 topic areas including but not limited to:

Play + Nature-Based



Rachel Giannini

Early Childhood Specialist,
Educator, Content Creator,
and Advocate



The Play Coaches

(Dani Svantner &
Wendy Turcott)
Nationally Recognized
Play Experts



Kisa Marx

Founder of The Play Lab
and
Play-Based Learning
Specialist



Sharron Krull

Early Childhood Educator,
Author, and Play-Based
Learning Specialist



**Mimi Brodsky
Chenfeld**

Queen of Fun



Kathleen Bryan

Nature-Based Learning Expert,
Professor,
University of Cincinnati



Dr. Kathleen Harris

Dean of School of Education
and Applied Social Sciences,
Professor of Education,
Seton Hill University

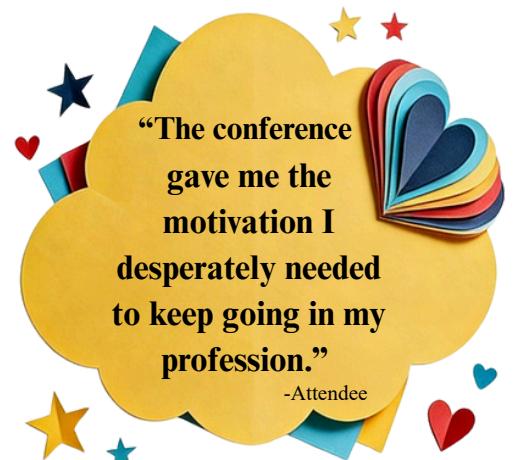


Dr. Laura Kelley

Early Childhood Education
and Language
Development Specialist,
Professor, University of
Cincinnati

Proudly Made Possible By

Discount School Supply



Conscious Discipline



Rozlyn Grant

Certified Conscious
Discipline Instructor



Tonya Byous

Certified Conscious
Discipline Instructor



Tanyelle Hannah

Certified Conscious
Discipline Instructor



Latoria Marcellus

Certified Conscious
Discipline Instructor



Featured Speakers Continued

Music & Movement



Eric Litwin
Song Singing, Guitar Strumming, # 1 New York Times Best Selling, Award Winning Author (*Pete The Cat*)



MISTER G and MISSUS G
(Ben Gundersheimer and Katherine Jamieson)
Latin Grammy Award Winning Musicians, Authors, & Educators



Mr. Jeff
(Jeff Klemm)
Award Winning Children's Music Artist and Educator



Red Grammer
Children's Music Icon and Educational Entertainer



David Kisor
Musician, Songwriter, and Early Childhood Music Expert



Joanie Calem
Musician, Storyteller, and Inclusion Advocate



Risa Cohen
Musician, Educator, and Literacy Through Music Specialist



Ken & Georgia Frawley
Songwriter, and Disability Awareness Advocate



Pam Perrino
Early Childhood Curriculum Specialist and Educational Consultant

Leadership



Gigi Schweikert
Early Childhood Program Leadership and Business Strategist



Anisha Angella
Early Childhood Specialist, Speaker, and Educator Empowerment Expert



Dr. Meghan Sales Atwell
(NAEYC)
Early Childhood Systems and Professional Practice Leader



Jerletha McDonald
National Speaker, Trainer & Thought Leader of All Things Family Child Care



Choose from
145+
incredible
sessions!



Featured Speakers Continued

Challenging Behavior



Dr. Nefertiti Poyner

Educational Leader and Mindfulness in Education Specialist



Patrick McKelvey

Early Childhood Specialist, Speaker, and Educator Empowerment Expert



Lance Reed

Early Childhood Curriculum and Assessment Specialist

Teaching Strategies



Michelle Salcedo

Director of Professional Development at Teaching Strategies



Lesley Jennings

Manager of Teaching Strategies' new Early Literacy Certification Program

Plus Amy Fain and Jennifer Quincey!

Join Us at the Ohio Early Childhood Conference!

The conference brings educators together in a dynamic, inspiring environment designed for learning, sharing, and growth.



The conference fosters collaboration and creativity, offering a space where early childhood professionals can connect, exchange ideas, and build lasting relationships.

Registration

Before February 15: Discounted Early Bird Rates

Ohio AEYC/NAEYC Member

1 Day Registration: \$155

2 or 3 Day Registration: \$235

Non-Member

1 Day Registration: \$227

2 or 3 Day Registration: \$305

Before April 1

Ohio AEYC/NAEYC Member

1 Day Registration: \$165

2 or 3 Day Registration: \$245

Non-Member

1 Day Registration: \$235

2 or 3 Day Registration: \$315



After April 1 - Late Registration

Ohio AEYC/NAEYC Member

1 Day Registration: \$185

2 or 3 Day Registration: \$265

Non-Member

1 Day Registration: \$255

2 or 3 Day Registration: \$335

Helpful Tip:

Not a member?

Become a member when you register and save!

Bring your entire team for an unforgettable experience!

Every 6th Registration is

FREE!

Yes, seriously!



**“Just what
my team
needed!”**

-Conference Attendee

"The BEST professional development conference I've ever attended!"

-Conference Attendee

"It felt like a party for educators! It was a great, fun learning experience!"

-Conference Attendee

"Attending the conference was an enriching experience that seamlessly blended insightful discussions, networking opportunities, and moments of inspiration against the backdrop of a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere. It was truly a gathering where ideas converged, connections were forged, and possibilities felt limitless."

-Zandra P., Attendee

"We left with full hearts and minds!"

-Emma S., Attendee

The conference is always amazing and I look forward to it every year. I went once in 2007 when sent by my employer. Then started going every year on my own since around 2013. I haven't missed a conference since, because it truly is the best experience!

-Conference Attendee

"It's a one stop shop! Our center becomes inspired, team builds, and gets in professional development hours all in one weekend!"

-Conference Attendee

"The best 3 days in education!"

-James D., Attendee

"So much fun! The energy is amazing!"

-Olivia G., Attendee

"The conference is our annual 'professional development time' as a team and we love being able to socialize outside of work as well!"

-Conference Attendee

"I was able to bring my staff of 27 this year and it was a fabulous learning and team building experience!"

-Natalie L., Attendee

"Walked in an exhausted teacher and came out excited to get back in my classroom! The enthusiasm for this profession is contagious"

-Conference Attendee

"You will leave feeling inspired, empowered and ready for a fresh start in the job you love!"

-Lauren L., Attendee

"Before going to the OAEYC conference, I was contemplating leaving the education field. The conference re-ignited my fire for education and affirmed that I am in the right field. I'm excited to change lives with all the takeaways from the conference!"

-Katie T., Attendee



"We will be back for all three days next year!"

-Shawna D., Attendee

"We laughed, We cried, We learned"

-Heather S., Attendee

I've been in the field over 25+ years and the conference is something you have to experience for yourself!! The energy it brings is unbelievable, and it's rejuvenating to be in a space with so many like minded early childhood professionals!"

-Brandy T., Attendee



Schedule

Wednesday

April 22

Registration

6:00pm-8:00pm

Thursday

April 23

Registration

7:00am-5:00pm

Leadership Retreat

8:30am-4:30pm

Breakout Session #1

8:00am-10:00am

8:30am-9:30am

8:30am-10:00am

Exhibit Hall

10:00am-5:00pm

Keynote:

Rachel Giannini

10:45am-11:45am

Lunch On Own/Exhibits

11:45am-1:00pm

Breakout Session #2

1:00pm-2:00pm

1:00pm-2:30pm

Breakout Session #3

3:00pm-4:30pm

3:00pm-5:00pm

3:00pm-6:00pm

Bonus Sessions

5:00pm-6:00pm

5:00pm-6:30pm

Night of Laughter Comedy Show

7:00pm | \$15

7.5 Possible Credit Hours

Friday

April 24

Registration

7:00am-5:00pm

Breakout Session #1

8:00am-10:00am

8:30am-9:30am

8:30am-10:00am

Exhibit Hall

8:00am-5:00pm

Keynote:

Joe Dombrowski (Mr.D)

10:45am-11:45am

Lunch On Own/Exhibits

11:45am-1:00pm

Breakout Session #2

1:00pm-2:00pm

1:00pm-2:30pm

Breakout Session #3

3:00pm-4:00pm

3:00pm-4:30pm

3:00pm-5:00pm

3:00pm-6:00pm

Bonus Session

5:00pm-6:00pm

5:00pm-6:30pm

Party! A Night of Fun

(Karaoke with a live band, Dancing, Cash Bar, Prizes)

FREE

8:00pm-10:30pm

8 Possible Credit Hours

Saturday

April 25

Registration

7:00am-5:00pm

Breakout Session #1

8:00am-10:00am

8:30am-9:30am

8:30am-10:00am

Exhibit Hall

9:30am-1:00pm

Keynote:

Dr. Nefertiti Poyner

10:45am-11:45am

Lunch On Own/Exhibits

11:45am-1:00pm

Breakout Session #2

1:00pm-2:30pm

1:00pm-3:00pm

Breakout Session #3

3:00pm-4:00pm

3:00pm-4:30pm

6.5 Possible Credit Hours



More info on credit, including Ohio Approved, and College credit. Visit: www.oaeyc.org/professional-credit

Kalahari + Hotel Information

Learn, Relax, & Enhance Your Skills For The Children You Serve!

All meetings and events will take place at:

Kalahari Resort & Convention Center
700 Kalahari Drive
Sandusky, OH 44870

Join us at the beautiful and fun Kalahari Resort, home of America's largest indoor waterpark!

- Free Parking
- Free Wi-Fi
- Limited Discounted Water Park Passes will be available!

Hurry!
Almost
Sold Out!



Bring your family and friends to Kalahari!

More hotel options announced soon that fit every budget!

www.oaeyc.org/travel--hotel

Exhibit Hall

Be sure to set aside time to visit more than 50 friendly and helpful exhibitors offering useful tools and resources to help implement the new skills you will learn at the conference!

- Check out the latest learning materials
- Build your professional library
- Visit the photo booth
- Network with the nation's leading educational consultants
- Relax in the Ohio AEYC Booth
- and more!



Play the
hunt game
for your
chance
to win
\$\$\$\$



Space Is Limited!

Leadership Retreat

An inspiring and transformative
experience for both seasoned
and emerging leaders.

Schedule

Part 1: 8:30AM-10:00AM

Supervise with Confidence: Using your Teacher Skills to Guide Adults

Keynote Speaker: 10:45AM-11:45AM (Rachel Giannini)

Lunch: 11:45AM-12:45PM

Part 2: 1:00PM-2:30PM

Good Enough Never is: The Benefits and Challenges of Change

Part 3: 3:00PM-4:30PM

10 Steps to a Winning Team: Positive Staff Relations

Thursday, April 23, 2026

Ticketed Add-On Only \$60

Includes 4.5 hours of Ohio Approved Credit



Featuring Leadership Expert
Gigi Schweikert

**Includes
Lunch!**

Special Event

A Night of Laughter

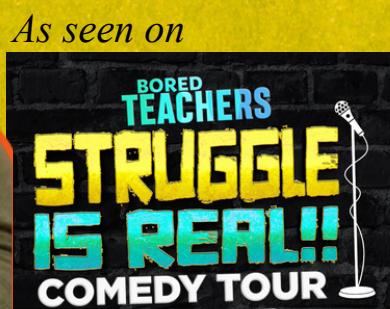
A Hilarious Evening for Early Childhood Educators

Thursday, April 23, 2026 | 7:00PM

Tickets Only \$15!

*Hurry, Space Is Limited and
this event will Sell Out!*

*Featuring
Comedy Superstar
Tell Williams
Plus a special guest yet to be announced!*



Special Event

FREE!



A Night of Fun:
For A Purpose!
A Benefit for the Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld Scholarship Fund

Karaoke with live band
Dancing
Cash Bar
Lots of Prizes!
Tons of FUN!

Friday, April 24th
8:00PM-10:30PM



Proudly sponsored by

Lakeshore®



Special Conference Tracks

The conference features over 50 topic areas plus entire topic tracks!
Tracks are dedicated topics presented throughout the conference in great detail.

Conscious Discipline & Challenging Behaviors



Language & Literacy

Self-Care & Mental Health



Leadership & Professionalism

Learning Through Play



Music & Movement

Inclusion



Infant & Toddler

And much more!

“The conference is my one-stop shop for my professional development! I look forward to it every year for not only the classes, but also the chance to celebrate our profession.”

-Conference Attendee



April 22-24, 2027

Kalahari Resort

www.oaeyc.org/conference