

Ohio Early Childhood Conference | April 23-25 | Sandusky, OH

Thursday, April 23rd - Learning Through Play Sessions

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Music, Movement and Science: Wow, this is Fun!

Featured Speaker

Science experiences for young children should be and can be exciting and meaningful! Music, movement and science are perfect companions based on a young child's interest, curiosity and natural love to move. Discover how to integrate music and movement activities to promote meaningful experiences that will develop science concepts and vocabulary. Take back ideas to create neural pathways in young brains and foster interest in the world of science.

Supporting Children Who Color Outside of the Lines – (Toddler – School Age)

Featured Speaker

How do we ignite children's creativity? This presentation will discuss what discourages children from being creative and identify practices that support environmental and curriculum ingredients to nurture creative development.

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Essential Elements for Designing an Inclusive Classroom

Featured Speaker

Does your early childhood environment meet the needs of ALL children? Through engaging activities, discussion, and knowledge sharing, participants will explore the various components of a high-quality early learning environment, including characteristics of a high-quality inclusive environment, DAP, the importance of play, Universal Design, Universal Design for learning, and least restrictive environments. Additionally, participants will explore specific strategies and supports to enhance the classroom environment.

Hip-Hop to Rock and Literacy: That's Exciting! (Toddler – School Age)

In this interactive session participants will discover how to use songs, music and movement to support literacy development. By incorporating kinesthetic activities with sing-along songs children develop auditory discrimination, vocabulary, fluency, and coordination. Most important of all, it promotes the natural love for reading. Take back strategies to integrate text through song-card, chart tablet, or pocket-chart phrases to nurture confidence in your young readers.

3:00 PM -4:30 PM

Circle Time Makeover- Creative Spins on Classic Favorites!

Effective communication is one of the most important social skills. Communication is more than just talking. Participants will discuss the three aspects of communication: talking, listening and body language. Interactive activities will be presented to help the participants understand their own communication style. A discussion on how to use strategies and specific activities when designing the

temporal, physical and interpersonal environments and how they will support children in becoming effective communicators.

Kids Count: Math Across the Curriculum

Featured Speaker

This session will help participants identify brain states, triggers and how to help children self-regulate. We will explore developmentally appropriate areas of math that can be used throughout the curriculum and the learning environment. We will consider strategies for centers, small groups, and transitions throughout the day. Among other areas, we will look at matching, classifying, patterning, sequencing, and measuring and how they can be used to engage children with authentic math experiences.

Sing and Sign: Bring Joy to Education!

Featured Speaker

Singing and signing engage young children in meaningful and exciting multi-language experiences. Singing songs is a powerful way to be introduced to a language while developing confidence and fluency. Signing (ASL) serves as the bridge that connects the three languages within our brain. Research findings state that integrating ASL into your literacy component accelerates letter and sound identification while promoting and motivating the natural love for reading. Music—and movement—bring JOY to education!

5:00 PM -6:30 PM

Preventing the Extinction of Childhood

Featured Speaker

Do you remember playing “hide go seek” as a young child? Did you take a class to learn how to play this game? In this session we will identify the benefits of play and discuss why it is disappearing. Come and learn how to play again!

THE MAGIC OF MUSIC: Release the Stress, Calm the Room, Focus the Energy!

In this inspiring, hands-on, and fun workshop, award-winning musician, songwriter and music educator Kira Willey will teach you how to incorporate music, rhythm and song seamlessly into your classroom in order to completely engage (and keep!) children's attention, create predictable, calming structure, boost mindfulness, and help children focus and learn. Kira will demonstrate her teaching methods using original music from her five award-winning CDs of kids' yoga songs, as well as playing live. Attendees will have a blast while being guided to create their own rhythm games, call & response activities, and songs to use in their own classrooms! There's absolutely no musical experience necessary—Kira's an expert at making these techniques immediately accessible for everyone.

Friday, April 24th

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

I Am a Toddler What Do You Expect?

Featured Speaker

Toddlers are at a very exciting, curious and creative stage of development. Conscious educators in the field of early childhood are aware of the individual needs and dreams of each of the children in their care. This presentation will discuss the developmental stages of toddlers and practices that help support toddler development.

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

CALM YOUR CLASSROOM: The Magic of Music, Movement & Mindfulness for Kids Featured Speaker

In this dynamic, inspiring, and FUN workshop--full of immediately actionable ideas--we'll try lots of techniques together (be ready to move)! Kids' yoga and mindfulness expert, author, TEDx speaker, and award-winning musician Kira Willey will teach attendees how to incorporate music, movement and mindfulness easily and seamlessly into the classroom in order to give children tools to calm themselves, empower them to release anxiety and stress, and create calming, predictable structure. Attendees will learn the critical role each of the "3 M's" - music, movement, and mindfulness - play in helping kids self-regulate and focus their energy, and in getting the frequent brain breaks they need to be ready to learn. Kira will teach an arsenal of practical, quick, and easy-to-use tips and techniques to calm your classroom (and yourself!), focus your children, and help them let go of anxiety. Kid-friendly breathing, focus and mindfulness exercises, and simple songs which incorporate movement will be included.

DAP- the "Doing and Playing" that Supports Early Learning

Find out how DAP, the tried and true approach for every child in every classroom, stands up to the new standards. In this workshop, you will discover that play is still the foundation that sparks the love for learning and helps children enter school ready to succeed. Discuss strategies used to engage children's thinking, participate in discussion and reflection of DAP experiences.

Transforming Your Classroom through Play and Project Based Learning

While research continues to support play-based learning in early childhood classrooms, teachers at all levels of experience may continue to wonder how to go about making that powerful pedagogy a reality in their own classroom yet still address state standards and other requirements. During this session, attendees will discover the importance of play-based learning through exciting hands-on experiences, developed through the personal experience and practice of a preschool teacher. We will analyze the importance of play and project-based learning, while viewing images of learning in action. Experience the excitement and interest of children as they build new knowledge and develop skills in authentic settings. Come take an adventure with us and explore how to provide authentic meaningful learning experiences! Take back a list of everyday items to transform your classrooms to make learning fun, exciting, teachable, hands-on, and mind-on!

3:00 PM -4:30 PM

Exploration and Play: Why These Superfoods Should Dominate PK-3 Curricula

Exploration and play are two of education's superfoods, but they are getting squeezed out of classrooms to make time for less-nourishing academic instruction. We'll learn the research and reasons why exploration and play are so beneficial and how to better advocate for making them central to PK-3 curricula.

Let's Say it In Song! Adding Rhythm to Your Routine

This session is for everyone, both the talented and the "vocally challenged"! Our FIRST objective is to build your confidence and help you to believe in your ability to engage the children in learning through music. By the conclusion, we will have paved the way for everyone to return to the classroom with simple, tried and true, effective learning tools to use immediately based on rhythm, movement and

singing. We will sing, clap and move throughout the session, and learn how, when and where to use the new ideas during your work day... in circle, transitions, clean up, hello/goodbye, special days, cheers and affirmations, and intentional times of learning.

7:00 PM -8:30 PM

Music, Movement & Engaging Children

This high energy interactive, participatory musical keynote will provide attendees with quality educational music that will enhance the early childhood curriculum. Expect BIG FUN!

Saturday, April 25th

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Brains! Hearts! Porridge! (Still Teaching in the 'Key of Life')

Featured Speaker

Total participation, active, interactive celebration of accessible, practical, successful ways young children BEST learn- through music, movement, story, play, and joy! Reduce stress over academic standards by reaffirming your belief in how the arts, fun, DAP connect to all meaningful learning. Reclaim the creativity, spontaneity, and delight of teaching and loving children. "Before I teach others, I must teach myself." This session is for YOU to enjoy! "The lesson that is not enjoyed is not learned." (Talmud)

So Much More than Sticks and Stones: An Introduction to Nature Based Learning

During this hands-on session, participants will explore concepts of 'nature pedagogy' or nature based learning and how to incorporate more nature based activities into the daily curriculum. This session is for early childhood educators interested in incorporating more nature related play and experiences into their program, and especially for programs that have or are hoping to have a nature based outdoor space. Strategies shared apply to children of all ages.

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Art That's From the Heart!- Activities That Promote Creativity and Thinking

Are you tired of doing the same art projects every year? When chosen carefully, art activities can promote and generate creative and critical thinking. Learn the many uses of paper, paint, crayons, tools, hands, feet, and partners to inspire engagement in young children. Participants will participate in activities and apply principles to determine the thinking skills involved. This workshop will explore the relevancy of 'thinking outside the box' and how art activities can be used in every academic domain.

Featured Speaker

Risk -Taking Through Play

While many adults may be risk-averse, children need to experience and experiment with risk in order to learn about themselves, their peers and the world around them. Think about the role relationships have in providing children with a safe place to take risks. Learn the difference between risk and hazard, and ways to minimize hazards while allowing children the space they need to be risky. Consider ways that children in your preschool setting can take physical risks such as rough-housing, working with tools, and climbing, and what children hear when we say, "Be careful!". Learn to see social risk-taking such as rejection and not-sharing as valuable and healthy learning experiences. Examine ways that children take emotional risks in our presence when they separate from their loved ones or get mad, and ways that we can both help the children through those feelings while letting them know that they and their feelings

are acceptable to us. Hint: it's not by saying, "You're okay!" Through anecdotes, videos, and photos, the presenters will share how The School for Young Children in Columbus, the model school for the parenting book by Heather Shumaker, *It's Okay Not to Share*, supports children as they take risks, and supports teachers as they grow to be comfortable with those risks.

3:00 PM -4:30 PM

Essential Elements for Supporting Teachers in Play

Participants will explore the different forms of play and why some children struggle to engage in cooperative purposeful play. Developmentally appropriate strategies will be shared that you can use with your children to successfully engage them in play with their peers.

Faster Than a Speeding Bullet: Supporting Superhero Play

What superhero character did you play as a child? This presentation will discuss why children need to play superhero characters and the benefits of superhero play. Take back positive strategies to support children attaining POWER.

Featured Speaker