

*Earn Ohio  
Approved  
Credit!*



April 23-25, 2026  
Sandusky, OH

*Conference Preview*

[www.oaeyc.org/conference](http://www.oaeyc.org/conference)

Featuring 145+ Sessions and  
100+ Presenters!

*Plus Dedicated Tracks Including*  
Play

Music & Movement

Leadership Development

Challenging Behaviors

Conscious Discipline

Español

*and more!*

# Sponsors

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

More sponsors announced soon!

## Partner Level

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## Platinum Level

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

ONLINE

SHORES & ISLANDS OHIO

## Gold Level

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LEARNING Without Tears



## Silver Level

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# 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

 University of  
**CINCINNATI** | ONLINE



**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



**Joe Dombrowski**  
(Mr. D)

*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



Dr.  
**Nefertiti Poyner**

*Educational Leader and Mindfulness in Education Specialist*

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

Saturday, April 25, 10:45AM



# 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

## Literacy

*Proudly Made Possible By  
Discount School Supply*



**Kathleen Bryan**

Nature-Based Learning Expert,  
Professor,  
University of Cincinnati



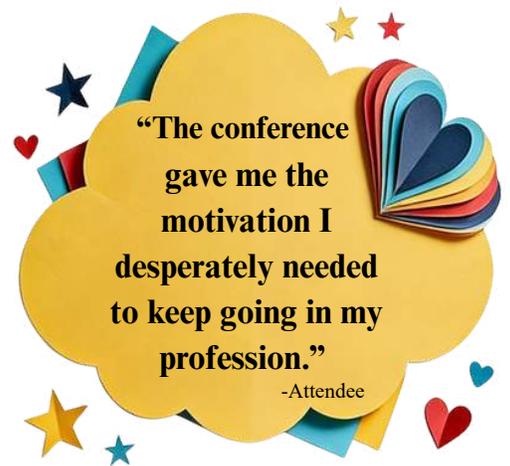
**Dr. Kathleen Harris**

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



## 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

## Music & ASL



**Joanie Calem**

Musician, Storyteller, and Inclusion Advocate



**Risa Cohen**

Musician, Educator, and Literacy Through Music Specialist



**Ken & Georgia Frawley**

Songwriter, and Disability Awareness Advocate

## Family Connections



**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!

[www.oaeyc.org/conference](http://www.oaeyc.org/conference)



# 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



**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 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

"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!"

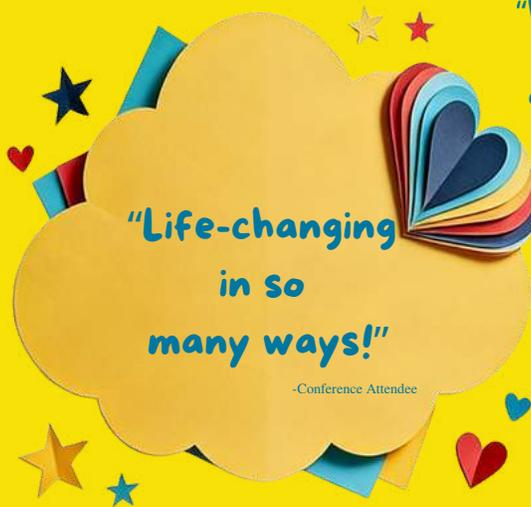
-Natalie L., Attendee

"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



"Life-changing in so many ways!"

-Conference 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 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



**Total  
Possible  
Ohio Approved  
Hours: 21+**

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

Bring your family and friends to Kalahari!

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!



More hotel options announced soon that fit every budget!

[www.oaeyc.org/travel--hotel](http://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.**

This retreat offers you the chance to step away from daily demands and immerse yourself in a supportive environment dedicated to reflection, collaboration, and growth. Through expert-led workshops, engaging discussions, individual reflections, and peer networking, you will connect with a community of resilient and innovative leaders and be inspired to bring fresh energy to your leadership work.

By the end of the retreat, you'll leave with a clear roadmap for fostering strong relationships and creating a positive, respectful, and supportive environment for both children and adults.

## **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

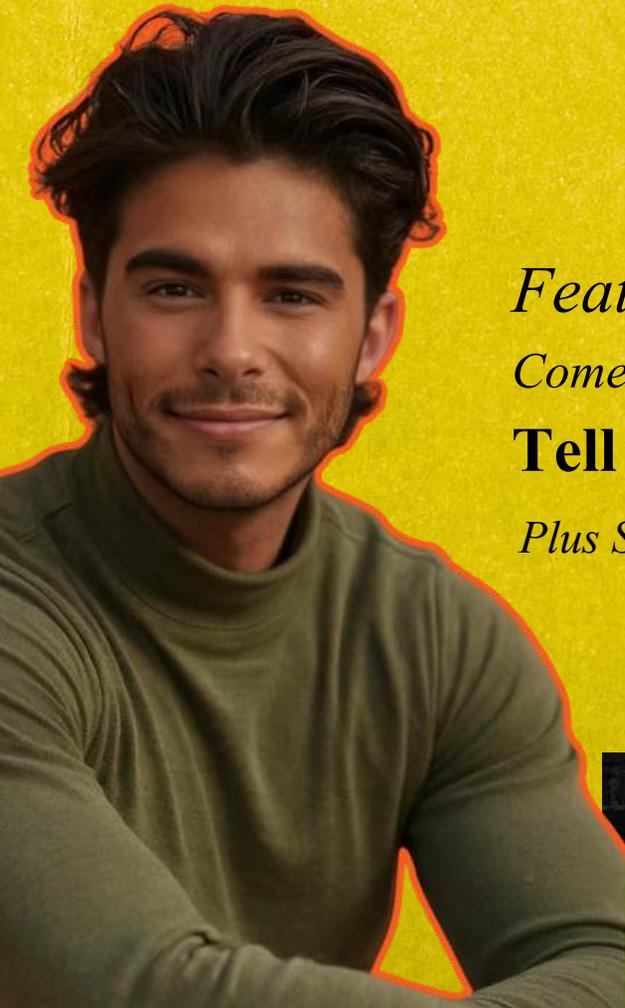
# A Night of Laughter

## 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 Special Christy Conder*



*As seen on*



**DRYBAR**  
COMEDY+

Special Event

**FREE!**



**A Night of Fun:**

**A Benefit for the Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld Scholarship Fund**

*For A Purpose!*

**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!



April 23-25, 2026  
Sandusky, OH

# Sessions

Note: Some session descriptions are edited for space - see full descriptions online during session registration.

*Note On Multi-part sessions: In order to receive Ohio Approved credit, you must attend all parts.*

I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age

**ohioaeyc**

[www.oaeyc.org/conference](http://www.oaeyc.org/conference)

**"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

### Meet Your Conference Concierge

With 150 sessions across 50+ topic areas, choosing the perfect ones can feel overwhelming. That's where we come in.

Your concierge is here to help you:

- ♥ Discover sessions tailored to YOUR interests
- ♥ Build a personalized schedule that flows seamlessly
- ♥ Find sessions you might have missed
- ♥ Balance learning with networking time

Whether you're a first-time attendee or a conference veteran, we're ready to help you get the most out of your conference experience.

Call Lisa at 419-946-6693 ext. 204



## Gentle Yoga with Crystal Singing Bowls (Not for Credit)



Session Code: TYOGA  
Session Time: 7:00 AM-7:45 AM

Begin your day with a movement practice enhanced by the soothing vibrations of crystal singing bowls. This class combines slow and gentle stretches, and breathwork with sound healing to promote deep relaxation and balance. No prior yoga experience needed. A yoga mat is recommended, and any yoga props you wish to bring to aid in your practice.

**Presenter: Nancy Fisher**

Age Focus: All  
Main Topic: Self-Care  
Ohio Approved Credit: 0

## Alliance Employment Promise: Early Childhood Centered on Workforce Solutions

Session Code: T101  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This hands-on session equips early childhood professionals to apply knowledge of the Alliance Employment Promise (AEP) to enhance family stability and children's access to high-quality care and education in their communities. Participants will discover how the AEP works, who qualifies, and how to partner with employers—then leave with ready-to-use tools that create real solutions to the child care crisis in their own communities. In team-based design sprints, you'll build a stakeholder map, craft targeted "asks," and design a pilot to introduce and implement in your area.

**Presenter: Elizabeth Hibbs**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Deep Dive  
Main Topic: Community Partnerships  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age

\*Note: Attendees must pre-register for this all-day session at an additional cost.

## Coaching Through Challenging Behaviors: How Interactive Talk Supports Social-Emotional Development

Session Code: T102  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session equips directors and educators with evidence-based strategies to address challenging behaviors through interactive talk in the classroom. Participants will explore how increasing interactions can reduce challenging behaviors and will leave with new strategies and resources to support social-emotional development.

**Presenters: Marlo Parlin, Luis Bernal**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/  
Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Developmentally Appropriate Technology Use in Pre-K

Session Code: T103  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This interactive session provides early childhood educators with practical guidance for the developmentally appropriate technology use in prekindergarten settings. The session highlights how technology can enhance, rather than replace, high-quality teaching and learning interactions with young children. Participants will examine key guidelines for using technology appropriately with young children, including limiting screen time and selecting age-appropriate, educational content that supports learning goals. Emphasis will be placed on encouraging active engagement rather than passive consumption, ensuring that technology use involves collaborative learning opportunities.

**Presenters: Jessica Lane, Abby Carlson**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Technology & Digital Media  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Exploring Nature-Based Programs Around the World



Session Code: T104  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session aims to explore the remarkable surge in Nature-Based Early Learning (NBEL) programs across the United States over the past decade. With a nearly 25-fold increase, these programs have become a transformative force in child care and early education. The session will delve into the trends, benefits, and challenges associated with integrating nature into early learning environments, especially since the influential publication of Richard Louv's "Last Child in the Woods."

**Presenter: Kathleen Bryan**



Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Nature Play & Outdoor Spaces  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## LEADERSHIP RETREAT- Supervise with Confidence: Using Your Teacher Skills to Guide Adults (Part 1)\*



Session Code: T105  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session reveals how the same practices you use to guide children—building relationships, setting clear expectations, redirecting behavior, and encouraging self-sufficiency—are the foundation for effective staff supervision. Explore how coaching using honest communication and providing meaningful support will help to create a culture that encourages new ideas and allows for mistakes. You'll leave ready to set the tone for trust and open communication, delegate effectively, and supervise with confidence.

**Presenter: Gigi Schweikert**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Making the Home to School Connection: Building Family Strengths Through Play

Session Code: T106  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session discusses strategies for creating learning opportunities through family engagement. Joyful learning happens when educators are intentional in their practice, program culture, and plan environments that promote play and create home-to-school connections.

**Presenters: Heather Reister, Marie Economos**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Family Connections & Support  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Music for Infants and Toddlers: Songs of Security and Stepping Out



Session Code: T107  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Participants will explore how songs can be used to build a secure bond between caring adult and infant, preparing the way to build positive motivation and self-regulation skills in toddlers. Participants will become familiar with appropriate key research findings, listen to research-based songs and identify ways to use the songs in an infant/toddler learning environment.

**Presenter: David Kisor**



Age Focus: I/T  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Pivotal Practices for Early Childhood: Creating Effective Practices to Support All Children

Session Code: T108  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session is designed to enhance the participant's knowledge of evidence-based strategies specifically in the areas of schedules, routines, transitions, engagement, and instructional practices. Participants will receive an overview of the Inclusive Pivotal Practices Rating Tool. We will utilize the IPPRT to reflect on real-life scenarios and discuss how to enhance engagement for children of all abilities.

**Presenters: Alexa Nunnari, Katie DeSmith, Jody Baile**

Age Focus: T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Teaching & Instructional Practices  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

Made Possible By ElevateDD

## Song to Story: Fostering Expansive Creativity in Early Learning Settings



Session Code: T109  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

Drawing on their bilingual song and best-selling picture book, *Señorita Mariposa*, Ben Gundersheimer, M.Ed and Katherine Jamieson, MFA (Latin Grammy Award-winning artists and authors) will use the metaphor of a butterfly transforming from a crawling caterpillar to a flying pollinator as a model for cultivating creativity in early learning settings. Educators will leave with a 20-page teaching guide for *Señorita Mariposa*, online resources and videos, and cutting-edge research about the importance of developing children's creativity.

**Presenters: MISTER G and MISSUS G (Ben Gundersheimer and Katherine Jamieson)**



Age Focus: PRE,SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Supporting Muslim Children in an Early Childhood Setting

Session Code: T110  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

Inclusive classrooms ensure every child and family feels seen, valued, and respected. This session explores what inclusion looks like for Muslim children and families in early childhood settings, offering a clear overview of key Islamic practices and considerations. Participants will gain practical, actionable strategies to support Muslim children's needs and build strong, trusting relationships with families.

**Presenter: Yunus Brevik**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Diversity & Equity  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Strengthen Your Work: Using NAEYC's Revised Code of Ethics for Early Childhood Educators



Session Code: T111  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

NAEYC's revised Code of Ethics for Early Childhood Educators reflects three years of collaboration with early childhood educators across states and settings, along with leadership from the revision workgroup, staff, Senior Advisors, and the Governing Board. In this session, we'll explore how educator voices shaped the revision, what's changed from the previous version, and how you can use this updated position statement to guide and strengthen your work as an ethical early childhood educator—plus a preview of the resources and supports you can expect moving forward.

**Presenter: Dr. Meghan Salas Atwell**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## **Trauma-Informed Classroom Management: A Practical Application of Compassion with Boundaries**

Session Code: T112  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This deep-dive session equips early childhood educators with actionable strategies for managing classrooms through a trauma-informed lens. Participants will explore how to balance empathy and structure, creating safe, predictable environments that support emotional regulation and learning. Through real-world examples and practical tools, educators will discover how to implement compassionate boundaries that foster resilience, connection, and positive behavior in young children.

**Presenter: Dr. Beth Trammell**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Trauma-Informed Care  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## **Universal Practices to Support Social Emotional Needs in the Classroom**

Session Code: T113  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session will focus on establishing an early childhood environment that fosters social-emotional development and positive behavior through universal practices and structured PBIS Tier One practices. Explore how to create effective classroom setups, predictable schedules, and routines that support emotional security and behavioral consistency. Key topics include building strong teacher-student relationships, directly teaching behavioral expectations, and using acknowledgment systems to reinforce positive actions. These practices empower teachers to support each child's unique needs in a well-organized, supportive environment.

**Presenters: Emily Humphrey, Allyson Heiney**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## **Unlocking Literacy: Science of Reading in the Early Childhood Classroom**

Session Code: T114  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

This session introduces educators to the foundational principles of the Science of Reading—a body of research that explains how children learn to read and the most effective ways to teach literacy. Participants will explore the five essential components of reading—phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension—with an emphasis on how these skills develop. Leave with a clear understanding of how to align their literacy practices with the Science of Reading, along with practical tools and techniques to support all learners.

**Presenter: Jennifer Ervin**

Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## **Want Them to Learn? Then Let Them MOVE!**

Session Code: T115  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

This session focuses on easy movement and active learning activities and resources that you can take back and use in your setting. Participants will move, have fun, and learn instructional strategies for safe and meaningful movement for their preschool children. Come experience lesson plans that incorporate movement to foster cognitive, social, self-regulation, language, and physical development. Discover how movement and active learning can transform your teaching through engagement and participation.

**Presenter: Laurie Gombash**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Cognitive Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

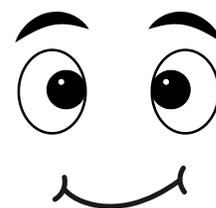
## **You're Teaching Too Hard: Stop Rescuing, Start Observing**

Session Code: T116  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session explores intentional observation as a teaching strategy in place of all the “doing” teachers often feel overwhelmed by. You're Teaching Too Hard encourages attendees to reflect on their role in the classroom and to make observation a priority. Watching, listening, and getting out of the way fosters a child's creative journey and is essential to nurturing children to be independent problem solvers. It is not our job to save them—it is our job to let them learn that they can save themselves!

**Presenter: Leah Anastasakis**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Assessment of Young Children  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



# Thursday, April 23 | Keynote



## KEYNOTE:

### Your Tuesday, Their Forever

Session Code: KEYNOTE1

Session Time: 10:45 AM- 11:45 AM

Every second, a child's brain forms over one million new connections—and the moments you create help shape which ones last. This powerful keynote reminds educators that what feels like an ordinary day can become a moment a child carries forever. Through stories, reflections, and practical takeaways, teachers will reconnect with their purpose, feel validated in their impact, and leave re-energized to make the most of every minute.

#### **Presenter: Rachel Giannini**

Age Focus: ALL

Instructional Level: Relevant to ALL

Main Topic: Cognitive Development

Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

#### **About Rachel**

Rachel Giannini is a nationally recognized early childhood specialist, speaker, and advocate who brings real talk, heart, and humor to early learning. She understands the transformative power of play, relationships, and joyful learning, and with over a decade of experience in the classroom as a preschool educator and museum teacher, Rachel brings authentic storytelling to every stage she steps on.

Before she became known as the star of the documentary *No Small Matter* and for her work with Chicago Children's Museum and Teachstone®, Rachel stood where you stand—witnessing the magic of young minds, building meaningful relationships, and discovering purpose in the everyday moments that matter most.

Rachel is also the creator of the *Show & Tell Me More* professional development series, host of the hit podcast *Teachers, Toddlers & Tissues*, and the mind behind the traveling phenomenon *Tats & Chats*. Through her dynamic, research-backed approach, she empowers educators to rediscover the joy and meaning in their work. When she speaks, audiences laugh, cry, reflect—and leave feeling seen, recharged, and reminded of why they chose this profession.

*Made possible by*



## Assess to Impress-Shaping Instruction, Guiding Learning, and Making Every Moment Count



Session Code: T201  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Assessment is more than just measuring what students know—it's about unlocking their potential. This session will explore the assessment process and formative assessment. Educators will identify ways to gather meaningful evidence of learning, provide feedback to families that promotes growth, and adjust instruction on the spot—creating a classroom where every child thrives.

**Presenter: Amy Fain**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Assessment of Young Children  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours  
Made Possible By  TeachingStrategies®

## Bridging the Gap: Partnering Between Early Intervention and Child Care to Support Children with Disabilities

Session Code: T203 Made Possible By  ElevateDD  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Early Intervention (EI) and child care programs often work with the same families, but in silos. When EI and child care providers collaborate intentionally, children with disabilities experience stronger developmental gains, families feel supported, and programs build inclusive capacity. This session equips participants with practical tools and Ohio-specific pathways to link EI services with daily child care routines. We'll demystify eligibility, funding, and service delivery, then model how to build effective communication systems, joint goals, and shared plans. Participants will leave with a concrete "Partnership Blueprint" to use immediately with their local EI teams or child care partners.

**Presenters: Troy Hunter, Wendy Grove**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Beyond Buzzwords: Leading with Belonging, Consistency, and Coherence

Session Code: T202  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Belonging isn't just for children—it's a leadership strategy. This session introduces a framework for building programs where staff feel valued, expectations are consistent, and systems are coherent. Participants will explore practical strategies to design leadership practices that strengthen culture, reduce fragmentation, and intentionally align program priorities to powerful outcomes for children and families.

**Presenter: Melissa Adipietro**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Create Effective Teamwork By Navigating Work Styles

Session Code: T204  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

In this session we will look at a variety of work styles and how each style can influence a team. These working styles affect how people make decisions, deal with change, treat risks and respond to each other. Participants will identify their dominant work style and discuss examples of what they need based on that work style and how to work with others who have different styles. Participants will leave understanding how all approaches to work can add value and enhance teamwork and collaboration.

**Presenter: Carrie Shockey**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

*Note On Multi-part sessions: In order to receive Ohio Approved credit, you must*

## Stretching Creativity, Not Your Wallet



Session Code: T205  
Session Time: 1:00-2:30 PM

Tired of feeling like great classroom ideas come with a personal price tag? In this high-energy session, educators will explore clever, realistic ways to transform their classrooms—without spending their own money. Together, we'll dive into three classroom explorations, breaking down real costs and budget-friendly alternatives. Expect practical takeaways, lively discussion, and an interactive game show-style experience that proves creativity doesn't have to be expensive.

**Presenter: Rachel Giannini**

Age Focus: T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Learning Environment  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## Cultivating Joyful Learning: Strategies to Spark Wonder, Bravery, and Belonging in Early Childhood (Part 1)



Session Code: T206  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Joyful learning starts with us. This interactive training invites early learning professionals to explore foundational concepts such as curiosity, play, bravery, and emotional safety, that ignite a child's natural love for learning. Participants will reflect not only on how to design joyful environments for children but also how to model and embody these concepts themselves. Walk away with practical tools, strategies, and self-reflection prompts to create learning environments that are not only rich in content - but also in joy, connection, and authenticity.

**Presenter: Patrick McKelvey**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Social/Emotional Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## Enlivening the Multi-Sensory Classroom with Music, Movement and Story



Session Code: T207  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

In this dynamic, interactive workshop, Ben and Katherine (MISTER and MISSUS G) will share how educators can use music, movement, and storytelling to enliven their classrooms, story times, and other learning environments. Regardless of background, participants will come away with an understanding of how to incorporate musical techniques and storytelling to enhance experiential learning, facilitate language acquisition, and support early learning and developmental standards.

**Presenters: MISTER G and MISSUS G**  
(Ben Gundersheimer and Katherine Jamieson)



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## From Stress to Strength: Functional Tapping for Early Childhood Professionals

Session Code: T208  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

Functional Tapping (FT), a simplified version of EFT Tapping, offers a fast and effective way to calm the body, reset the mind, and restore balance even in the middle of a busy day. In this hands-on session, you will experience FT through guided demonstrations, role play, and real-time practice so you can start using it right away. You will leave with practical tools to reduce stress, prevent burnout, and strengthen your ability to keep showing up for the children and families who need you most.

**Presenter: Tijana Coso**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Health & Mental Health  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Growing Teachers Throughout the Seasons: Healthy Learning Environments through School Year Garden-Based Education (Part 1)

Session Code: T209  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session engages participants in hands-on activities about three fun and easy growing methods (seed starting, raised beds with season extension, and hydroponics), curriculum integration, and yummy taste testing techniques. The new Growing Teachers Throughout the Seasons (GTS) guide and free online modules walk teachers through indoor and outdoor growing activities. Explore how GTS encourages young children to observe, explore, and discover the world around them, while supporting outcomes across early learning domains and developmentally appropriate practice.

**Presenters: Carol Smathers, LaVanya Watkins**

Age Focus: T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Nature Play & Outdoor Spaces  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Respect: What, Why, and How

Session Code: T211  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

This session focuses on supporting educators to intentionally teach respect in age-appropriate ways. Participants will explore research-based strategies, clear language, and everyday classroom practices that support respectful interactions, collaboration, and social-emotional growth. Educators will leave with tools to create meaningful opportunities for children to learn, practice, and experience respect in group settings.

**Presenter: Marie Diniaco Economos**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Social/Emotional Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## LEADERSHIP RETREAT- Good Enough Never Is: The Benefits and Challenges of Change (Part 2)



Session Code: T210  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

In this session, you'll explore how a positive attitude, flexibility, and openness to growth are the keys to continuous improvement in your early childhood program. Discover how to move beyond grumbling and burnout, build on what's already working, and approach every task as an improvable skill. Identify practical ways to seek feedback, push through learning ruts, and create a mindset where change feels energizing. You'll leave ready to step out of your comfort zone, embrace new ideas, and prove that in your program, good enough never is.

**Presenter: Gigi Schweikert**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

\*Note: Attendees must pre-register for this all-day session at an additional cost.

## Rethinking Play



Session Code: T212  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session challenges early childhood professionals to rethink traditional approaches to play, emphasizing its role in promoting equity, creativity, and agency. By embracing culturally responsive and developmentally informed practices, participants will explore how intentional play can honor diverse identities and foster inclusive, meaningful learning experiences. Together, we will reimagine play as a foundation for holistic child development and family engagement.

**Presenter: Kisa Marx**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Scrambled Eggs & Icebergs! Physical Activity That Promotes Self-Regulation



Session Code: T213  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30PM

The most important life skill to teach children is self-regulation! And the prime time for its development is between the ages of 3 to 5. Explore how to integrate movement and self-care activities that support the development of impulse control, focus, and well-being. Playing self-control games, such as "Scrambled Eggs & Icebergs," can help children learn the necessary skill to self-regulate while keeping it fun!

**Presenter: Sharron Krull**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Physical Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## The Communication L.A.B: Strengthening Co-Teacher Partnerships

Session Code: T214  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

Strong communication is the foundation of a thriving classroom team. Just like in any well-run organization, when teachers share ideas openly, listen respectfully, and work together toward solutions, everyone benefits — especially the children. In this interactive "lab," participants will practice hands-on strategies for building clear and collaborative communication. Attendees will leave with simple conversation tools and frameworks they can use right away to strengthen co-teacher partnerships.

**Presenter: Emily Gessner**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## The Social Resilience Model and the Brain Body Connection

Session Code: T215  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00PM

The Social Resilience Model, founded by Dr. Laurie Leitch, Threshold GlobalWorks, was created to accelerate leading-edge initiatives, informed by neuroscience, that amplify social resilience, health literacy, and human potential. SRM is based on four Core Concepts: Attachment, Safety, Attention, and Activation. Together we will discuss the human nervous system, considering how stress, distress, and trauma affect us and how we can build our capacity for the skills of Tracking, Grounding, Resourcing, and Shift and Stay to widen our resiliency zone.

**Presenters: Libby Wagner,  
Linda Richmond**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Family Connections & Support  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Under Construction: Finding Joy on Your Journey Through Conscious Discipline©



Session Code: T217  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM



Transformation is powerful-but it is also messy. In this interactive session, participants will explore how Conscious Discipline© begins with us, the adults, and how meaningful change often looks more like a construction zone than a finished product. Using the 7 Powers and Skills of Conscious Discipline© as our blueprint, we'll uncover practical strategies to navigate chaos, manage stress, and build stronger connections with children and colleagues. Together, we'll celebrate the imperfect, the in-progress, and the "still learning" moments as opportunities for growth.

**Presenter: Latoria Marcellus**

Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## Tiny Bodies, Big Feelings: Trauma Support for Toddlers

Session Code: T216  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session provides early childhood professionals with a foundational understanding of trauma in toddlers, highlighting its impact on brain development, emotional regulation, and behavior. Participants will learn to recognize missed or misunderstood trauma signs, apply co-regulation strategies, and engage families with trauma-sensitive communication. The session emphasizes the use of predictable routines, calming tools, and reflective practice to support healing and resilience. Participants will leave with practical tools to create emotionally safe environments and stronger connections with children and families.

**Presenter: Colleen Wallace**

Age Focus: T  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Trauma-Informed Care  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## El Arte Como Herramienta De Afrontamiento Para Los Niños Pequeños En Duelo

Código de Sesión: T301

Tiempo De Sesión: 3:00 PM-6:00 PM

Esta sesión explorará el profundo impacto del arte como herramienta de afrontamiento para niños pequeños que experimentan duelo. Los participantes aprenderán cómo la expresión creativa puede facilitar el procesamiento emocional y la sanación en niños de 3 a 12 años. Examinaremos investigaciones clave que indican que las actividades artísticas pueden reducir la ansiedad y promover el bienestar emocional en niños en duelo. Los estudios demuestran que participar en la expresión artística puede ayudar a los niños a expresar sus sentimientos, facilitándoles afrontar la pérdida. Los participantes participarán en actividades prácticas, aprenderán estrategias prácticas para implementar técnicas de afrontamiento basadas en el arte y crearán un plan individual para un niño que pueda experimentar duelo. Al final de la sesión, los asistentes estarán equipados con herramientas para apoyar a los niños en duelo mediante la expresión creativa, fomentando un entorno seguro para la sanación.

**Presenter: Margeric Gonzalez**

Enfoque de edad: Prescolar, Edad escolar  
Nivel de instrucción: Relevante para todos  
Tema principal: Arte, relevancia al trauma  
Aprobado por Ohio (Ohio Approved): 3 horas

*Note On Multi-part sessions: In order to receive Ohio Approved credit, you must attend all parts.*

I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age

## Creating the School Family: Using the T.E.A.C.H. Method in Your Classroom (Conscious Discipline®)



Session Code: T302

Session Time: 3:00 PM-5:00 PM



Ready to build a classroom culture rooted in connection and emotional intelligence? In this session, participants will explore the components of the Conscious Discipline® Brain Smart Start and practice integrating them into daily routines. We'll focus on shifting motivation from rewards to relationships and creating a strong school family. Attendees will practice using a reflective rubric to measure success, reflect on progress, and identify areas for growth. Explore using the T.E.A.C.H. method to plan intentional daily interactions with children, ensuring meaningful engagement and consistency across classrooms.

**Presenter: Tonya Byous**



Age Focus: I/T, PRE

Instructional Level: Intermediate

Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/

Challenging Behaviors

Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## Cultivating Joyful Learning: Strategies to Spark Wonder, Bravery, and Belonging in Early Childhood (Part 2)



Session Code: T303

Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

See part 1 for description.

**Presenter: Patrick McKelvey**



Age Focus: ALL

Instructional Level: Relevant to All

Main Topic: Social/Emotional Development

Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Equity and Inclusion in Schools... Invisible Barriers to Learning



Session Code: T304

Session Time: 3:00 PM-5:00 PM

Most classrooms now include children with invisible barriers to learning, such as Autism, Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD), Adverse Childhood Experiences/Trauma (ACES) and Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD). Explore practical tools, background information on invisible barriers, and successful classroom strategies. Come ready to experience songs, stories and activities to help build compassionate classrooms.

**Presenter: Joanie Calem**



Age Focus: ALL

Instructional Level: Relevant to All

Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion

Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

Made Possible By ElevateDD

## Every Teacher's Best Friend: MUSIC!



Session Code: T305

Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

In this session, Red Grammer will engage educators in discovering how music can joyfully uplift and improve the function of almost every aspect of their early learning environment: establishing standards of behavior, building community, adding excitement to curriculum, aiding content retention, building vocabulary, helping challenged readers, offering brain breaks/transitions, reducing stress, and deepening relationships with parents. No musical talent required.

**Presenter: Red Grammer**



Age Focus: ALL

Instructional Level: Relevant to All

Main Topic: Music

Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## From Policy to Practice: Empowering Early Childhood Professionals to Advocate for Children, Families, and Themselves

Session Code: T306  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-5:00 PM

This interactive session will explore how state and federal early childhood policies impact programs, the workforce, and the children they serve. Groundwork Ohio will break down Advocacy 101: how to speak up effectively, how to identify policymakers to target, and why your voice matters. Participants will learn how to advocate for the supports they and their programs need — while also championing the needs of children and families. A highlight of the session will be an interactive role-play activity where participants practice meeting with a “legislator” to make their case for early childhood investments. This hands-on experience will leave attendees feeling prepared, confident, and ready to advocate.

**Presenters: Malissa Harris, Brittany Boulton**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Advocacy/Public Policy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## Growing Teachers Throughout the Seasons: Healthy Learning Environments through School Year Garden-Based Education (Part 2)

Session Code: T308  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM  
See part 1 for description.

**Presenters: Carol Smathers, LaVanya Watkins**

Age Focus: T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Nature Play & Outdoor Spaces  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Getting Down and Dirty with Potty Mastery - Helping Early Childhood Educators Support Children's Independent Toileting

Session Code: T307  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Are you ready to flush away the confusion around children's toilet learning and transform their potty challenges into potty triumphs? Join this interactive session where you'll learn to navigate the twists and turns of this important developmental milestone. Together we'll explore effective strategies, debunk common myths and share practical tips for creating a supportive and empowering classroom environment that supports children's potty learning. You'll leave with the tools you need to confidently guide your students on their toilet learning journey.

**Presenter: Joan Morgenstern**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Developmentally Appropriate Practices  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Harnessing Wonder & Promoting Deep Learning through the Power of Investigations



Session Code: T309  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Deep learning happens when young children engage in project-based investigations. These studies enable preschool children to actively explore topics that reflect their interests and are relevant to their lives. As they dig deep into interesting ideas, they build content knowledge and process skills that children need in today's world and set them up for success in tomorrow's world. This session explores the power of study-based learning and guides teachers through planning an engaging study for their classroom.

**Presenter: Jennifer Quincey**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Curriculum - Theories & Approaches  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## LEADERSHIP RETREAT- 10 Steps to a Winning Team: Positive Staff Relations (Part 3)



Session Code: T310  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

A supportive work environment doesn't happen by accident—it happens when staff members choose to be respectful, encouraging, and professional with one another every day. This session identifies ten simple, yet powerful steps to cultivating a cohesive and high-performing workplace culture. Explore how avoiding gossip, communicating directly, sharing resources, showing initiative, and participating in professional development strengthens your entire team. You'll leave with practical steps to help make your “work family” terrific and build a winning team.

**Presenter: Gigi Schweikert**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

\*Note: Attendees must pre-register for this all-day session at an additional cost.



## Navigating Tough Conversations: Addressing Developmental Concerns with Preschool Families

Session Code: T311  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:00 PM

This interactive and practical session equips educators with the tools and strategies needed to navigate sensitive conversations with families about their child's developmental progress and challenges. From laying a strong foundation of trust at the beginning of the school year to delivering difficult news with empathy and professionalism, participants will gain confidence in fostering productive, respectful, and ongoing partnerships with families.

**Presenter: Pamela Caruso**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour  
Made Possible By 

## Strategies for Preventing Power Struggles

Session Code: T313  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Participants will explore the definition of power struggles and practical strategies that can be used to prevent them. The session encourages reflection on personal backgrounds and beliefs to better understand how their own thinking might make them more susceptible to being in a power struggle. We will examine the idea that power struggles are an attempt by a child to meet a need and that all behavior is a form of communication.

**Presenter: Ava Lucky**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Teaching with a BANG!

Session Code: T314  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-5:00 PM

This session invites educators to reflect on their own values and biases while gaining a deeper understanding of weapon, rough-and-tumble, and superhero play. Participants will identify why children engage in this type of play and how to observe, guide, and respond in developmentally appropriate ways. Educators will leave with practical strategies to move beyond a simple “no” and create safe, respectful environments that honor children's need to explore power and conflict through play.

**Presenters: Malori McCloskey, Paige Pray**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## Playing with Sounds: Using Rhythm, Rhyme, and Song to Build Phonological Awareness

Session Code: T312  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

This session will help educators of all experience levels understand the technical vocabulary related to emergent literacy (e.g., phonological and phonemic awareness). Participants will discover how they already support these skills within their existing, developmentally appropriate practice as well as opportunities to enhance skill support. These practices complement—not replace—a literacy curriculum by building educator confidence and strengthening children's phonological and early literacy skills through songs, rhymes, and read-alouds.

**Presenter: Dr. Laura Kelley**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## The Power of Play — Living Your Why, Building Brains, and Bringing Joy



Session Code: T315  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

In The Power of Play, participants will rediscover the deep purpose and joy behind playful teaching and caregiving. This session explores how joyful, attuned, and intentional adults are the most powerful tool in a child's development. Educators will learn how play is not “just enough” — it is exactly what the brain needs. Through interactive reflection, storytelling, and brain-based strategies, participants will reconnect with their why, renew their sense of purpose, and see how simple, joyful moments shape strong neural pathways for learning and lifelong well-being. This session includes strategies for children 0-5, but has a strong focus on ages 0-3.

**Presenters: Dani Svantner, Wendy Turcott (The Play Coaches)**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



**Your Space Matters: A Look into Why Classroom Space and Design Matter**

Session Code: T316  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Explore the power of a Reggio-inspired classroom and discover why the environment truly acts as the “third teacher.” In this session, participants will reflect on their own classroom spaces, see inspiring examples, and uncover how intentional design and thoughtful material placement can invite children to wonder, play, and make sense of the world. Through hands-on reflection and discussion, educators will explore what makes a classroom developmentally appropriate, engaging, and responsive to children’s needs—and leave with fresh ideas to reimagine their own learning environments.

**Presenter: Abby Bucher**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Reggio Emilia Inspired  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

**Battling Burnout!**



Session Code: TBNUS1  
Session Time: 5:00 PM-6:00 PM

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines “burnout” as a syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that’s characterized by exhaustion or lack of energy, job-related negative or cynical feelings, and reduced effectiveness. Burnout is common in the field of early childhood education. It takes a special type of person to do our work. You will need a lot of patience, love, solid communication skills, an organized mind, boundless energy, strength, and soul. It’s not for everyone, and it is certainly not easy. Discover how to apply practical burnout-prevention and self-regulation strategies to protect your mental health, restore balance, and sustain long-term success and joy in your role as an educator.

**Presenter: Anisha Angella**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Health & Mental Health  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

**Hello Gorgeous! Brains! Hearts! Porridge!**



**(Still Teaching in the 'Key of Life')**

Session Code: TBNUS2  
Session Time: 5:00 PM-6:30 PM

A total participation, active, and interactive celebration of the best ways young children learn—through music, movement, story, play, and joy! Reduce stress over academic standards by reconnecting with how the arts, fun, and developmentally appropriate practice support all meaningful learning. Reclaim the creativity, spontaneity, and delight of teaching—and of loving children. "Before I teach others, I must teach myself." This session is for YOU to enjoy! As the Talmud reminds us, “The lesson that is not enjoyed is not learned.”

**Presenter: Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Developmentally Appropriate Practices  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

**Mindfulness in 5 Songs!**



Session Code: TBNUS3  
Session Time: 5:00 PM-6:00 PM

Eric Litwin, *New York Times* best-selling original author of the beloved children’s series *Pete the Cat*, has created a simple, direct mindfulness program that uses his children’s books to explain a mindfulness philosophy/mindset, and five original meditation songs to help teachers and students begin and maintain a successful mindfulness practice. With this pragmatic approach, all you need to do is play one song each day. It takes five to ten minutes. Songs help make mindfulness meditations time-realistic, compelling, and effective. They also help us remember the ideas and apply them in real-time situations.

**Presenter: Eric Litwin**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour



**Gentle Yoga with Crystal Singing Bowls (Not for Credit)**



Session Code: FYOGA  
Session Time: 7:00 AM-7:45 AM

Begin your day with a movement practice enhanced by the soothing vibrations of crystal singing bowls. This class combines slow and gentle stretches, and breathwork with sound healing to promote deep relaxation and balance. No prior yoga experience needed. A yoga mat is recommended, and any yoga props you wish to bring to aid in your practice.

**Presenter: Nancy Fisher**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Self-Care/Exercise  
Ohio Approved Credit: 0 Hours

**From Rules to Relationships: Emotional Intelligence and Compliance for Child Care Leaders**

Session Code: F101  
Session Time: 8:00 AM-10:00 AM

This high-energy interactive session will show child care owners, directors, and administrators how to use Emotional Intelligence (EI) to improve staff relationships, prevent compliance violations, and turn stressful licensing visits into smooth experiences. Identify Ohio's top 10 compliance violations and how to avoid them, master EI-driven communication techniques, and practice real-life scenarios to boost your leadership skills. Plus, walk away with a FREE Compliance & EI Resource Booklet full of practical tools! Make compliance easier, improve staff engagement, and lead with confidence.

**Presenter: Garri Davis**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

**Learning to Lean In: A Conversation in Rethinking Taking Care of Ourselves and Others**



Session Code: F102  
Session Time: 8:00 AM-10:00 AM

What if stress wasn't something to avoid—but something to embrace? We all know self-care is important, but it takes more than bubble baths and hydration to truly sustain ourselves in this work. This isn't your typical self-care session—it's a mindset shift. Develop a new understanding of stress and how we can use it to deepen our work with others and apply in-the-moment strategies to use when engaging in difficult situations to mitigate the effects of stress, secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue and burnout.

**Presenter: Patrick McKelvey**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Health & Mental Health  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

**Little Learners in a Digital World**

Session Code: F103  
Session Time: 8:00 AM-10:00 AM

Participants will explore the impact of technology on brain development in infancy and early childhood, including effects on attention, language development, imagination, creativity, and play. The session addresses how technology influences physical health, mental health, behavior, and family relationships. Potential risks and benefits of incorporating technology in early childhood education are discussed, along with guidance on developmentally appropriate technology use for young children.

**Presenter: Erin Finley**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Technology & Digital Media  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

**Aprendizaje Atravez Del Juego Para Estudiantes Neurodiversos De Edad Temprana**

Código de Sesión: F104  
Tiempo De Sesión: 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Este sesión está diseñado para educadores, cuidadores y profesionales que trabajan con estudiantes neurodivergentes (por ejemplo, estudiantes con autismo, TDAH, dislexia u otras diferencias de aprendizaje). Se centrará en la importancia del aprendizaje a través del juego como una estrategia eficaz e inclusiva para apoyar el desarrollo cognitivo, emocional y social de los jóvenes estudiantes neurodivergentes. El sesión cubrirá estrategias prácticas, actividades y recursos que se pueden utilizar en varios entornos educativos para ayudar a los estudiantes neurodivergentes a prosperar.

**Presenter: Karen Miranda**

Enfoque de edad: Prescolar  
Nivel de instrucción: Relevante para todos  
Tema principal: Niños con Discapacidades/Intervención Temprana  
Aprobado por Ohio (Ohio Approved): 1.5 horas

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**Count Me In: Encouraging Number Sense in Preschool**

Session Code: F105  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

This session will cover the mathematical area of number sense, and will offer lots of activities that encourage number sense for preschool children. Filled with pictures of materials and descriptions of the activities, you'll walk away with great ideas on how to create materials on a budget. As a bonus, you'll have access to a few downloadable games that you can print out to use with your children.

**Presenter: Dr. Jenni Jacobs**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Mathematics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Enlivening the Multi-Sensory Classroom with Music, Movement and Story



Session Code: F106  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

In this dynamic, interactive workshop, Ben and Katherine (MISTER and MISSUS G) will share how educators can use music, movement, and storytelling to enliven their classrooms, story times, and other learning environments. Regardless of background, participants will come away with an understanding of how to incorporate musical techniques and storytelling to enhance experiential learning, facilitate language acquisition, and support early learning and developmental standards.

**Presenters: MISTER G and MISSUS G (Ben Gundersheimer and Katherine Jamieson)**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## FLIP IT® Overview

Session Code: F108  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Are you interested in supporting the social and emotional development of young children and reducing their instances of challenging behaviors? This overview session of FLIP IT® will introduce you to the strategy that offers a simple, kind, strength-based, and effective four step process to address children's day to day challenging behavior. The four steps are embodied in the FLIP mnemonic which stands for F – Feelings, L – Limits, I – Inquiries and P – Prompts. FLIP IT is nothing new, but transforms best practice into a strategy that is easy to remember, applicable in a variety of challenging situations and portable.

**Presenters: Carrie Shockey, Holley Turner**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Family Child Care: A Vehicle for Economic Mobility



Session Code: F107  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session explores how family child care can be a pathway to financial independence and economic mobility for educators, families, and communities. Participants will examine the vital role family child care CEOs play in entrepreneurship, job creation, and community impact. Blending professionalism with business strategy, this session equips family child care CEOs with practical tools to run sustainable, wealth-building programs. Leave with actionable strategies to grow their programs, increase stability, and create generational economic opportunities through high-quality family child care.

**Presenter: Jerletha McDonald**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Joyful & Engaging Early Reading!



Session Code: F111  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Eric Litwin, *New York Times* best-selling original author of the beloved children's series *Pete the Cat*, shares how to transform our classrooms and homes into "reading playgrounds" where children read, sing, dance, and celebrate words and texts. He also demonstrates that when children are immersed in joyful, engaging shared reading experiences throughout the day, they come to love books and are prepared for successful reading instruction.

**Presenter: Eric Litwin**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## I'M GONNA FIND A WAY: Introduction to Songs for Coping with the Effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences



Session Code: F110  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session will examine research on the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on our physical and mental health. Participants will be introduced to songs that offer hope and healing through the social-emotional messages in words and music, and discuss ways to use the songs with children and adults.

**Presenter: David Kisor**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## From Possible to Practical: Supporting Children with Disabilities and Their Families in Child Care

Session Code: F109  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session translates Ohio's current landscape: subsidy access, Early Intervention, inclusive environments, and program capacity, into practical, doable steps for child care programs and leaders. Drawing on family voice data, we'll identify the most common barriers (accepting subsidies, accommodating medical/developmental needs, and navigating service systems) and show how programs can start, strengthen, and sustain inclusive care. Participants leave with concrete strategies for building trust with families, so inclusion moves from "we want to" to "we are doing it."

**Presenters: Troy Hunter, Wendy Grove**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## Legacy Work: Using Conscious Discipline® to Build a Legacy That Inspires and Builds Others Up

Session Code: F112  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM 

Every interaction we have leaves a mark- on children, on colleagues, and on the communities that we serve. In this session, we'll explore how Conscious Discipline® can help us intentionally shape a legacy rooted in connection, empowerment, and lasting impact. Legacies are not what we leave behind. A legacy is how you live every day.

**Presenter: Latoria Marcellus**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/  
Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Mud Kitchens: Why You Need One and How to Make One

Session Code: F113  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Research shows that just putting your hands in soil has many health benefits and improves your mood! In this session we will explore mud kitchens, their benefits, how to approach families and administrators, and design a mud kitchen that will work in your space!

**Presenter: Emily Benjamin**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Nature Play & Outdoor Spaces  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Prime Time for Infants and Toddlers: Giving Children Individual Attention

Session Code: F114  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Caring for infants and toddlers can be busy and exhausting. How do you help every child reach their fullest potential when there are so many little ones? How can you give each child the time and attention they need while managing the rest of the group and fishing Legos out of the toilet? In this humorous and practical session, you'll learn easy ways to effectively give every infant and toddler individual attention by making care times, prime times.

**Presenter: Gigi Schweikert**



Age Focus: I/T  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Social/Emotional Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Start Your Engines! Active Play Sparks Brain Growth and Physical Development

Session Code: F115  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Ready, Set, Go! Jump start your body and brain as we get moving. Participate in cooperative group games, dance to the music, and use simple equipment to promote motor skill development, increase physical activity and boost cognition. Discover how the brain works, what affects brain development, and how children learn best.

**Presenter: Sharron Krull**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Physical Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## The Power is in Your Hands (ASL)

Session Code: F116  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Communication is one of the most important aspects of working with others; however, it is often misunderstood. Many view communication solely from a verbal lens and discount the other ways people tend to communicate such as body language, facial expressions, sign language and beyond. In this session, we will look at the power of communication that all of us hold within our own hands through the use of American Sign Language with young children. We will discuss common myths surrounding the use of ASL with young children, the benefits of its usage, and have some time to practice some common signs to take outside of this session and begin implementing immediately.

**Presenter: Paige Pray**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



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# Friday, April 24 | Keynote



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## KEYNOTE:

### Be the Educator That You Are! Finding Your Authentic Voice in Early Childhood Education

Session Code: KEYNOTE2

Session Time: 10:45 AM-11:45 AM

In this engaging and humor-filled keynote, Joe “Mr. D” Dombrowski challenges early childhood professionals to stop comparing themselves to others and start embracing the educator they already are. Drawing from his years as an elementary school teacher and his national platform as a comedian and speaker, Joe helps participants reconnect with their purpose, strengths, and authentic teaching style. Participants will explore how authenticity builds stronger relationships, improves classroom climate, and supports social-emotional development in young children. This session blends storytelling, research-aligned practice, and practical strategies educators can immediately apply to their classrooms and professional lives.

**Presenter: Joe Dombrowski (Mr. D)**

Age Focus: ALL

Instructional Level: Relevant to All

Main Topic: Professionalism,  
Leadership and Ethics

Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

#### About Joe

Joe Dombrowski is a former classroom teacher who understands firsthand, the heart, pressure, and emotional weight that come with working in early childhood education. Before he ever stepped on a stage, Joe stood where you stand—managing big feelings, impossible expectations, endless energy, and the deep responsibility of shaping young lives.

While Joe first gained national attention through a viral spelling test prank, his truest connection has always been to education and the educators who show up for children every day—often pouring from a cup that feels way too empty.

Drawing from his own years in the classroom, Joe speaks honestly about burnout, comparison, and the exhausting pursuit of being the “perfect” teacher. Through humor, storytelling, and real-life moments, he instantly recognizes educators and reminds audiences that their presence matters, their personality matters, and who they are is not only enough—it’s powerful.

At the Ohio Early Childhood Conference, Joe will deliver an affirming, energizing message educators need to hear: children don’t need flawless educators. They need real ones.



**Are the Children Well? Moving Our Children from Surviving to Thriving (Conscious Discipline®)**



Session Code: F202  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

In this session, we will explore how united, intentional adult action creates the safety, connection, and consistency children need to truly thrive. Using the principles of Conscious Discipline®, participants will examine how collaboration, shared responsibility, and emotional regulation among adults directly influence the experience of the most vulnerable children in our care. We will identify practical strategies to strengthen adult teamwork, build supportive school and community cultures, and model the behaviors we want children to internalize.

**Presenter: Latoria Marcellus**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/  
Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

**Challenging Behaviors in the Classroom (Biting, Running, Throwing, Hitting, Oh My!)**

Session Code: F203  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Biting, running, throwing, and hitting are all developmentally appropriate - in some children, in some environments. This session will help teachers and supervisors recognize the difference between developmentally appropriate challenging behavior and that which might be a sign of a deeper issue. We will also discuss specific ways to minimize problem behavior regardless of its origin (either developmentally appropriate or something deeper). Join this session for practical, implement-tomorrow strategies, as well as reflective and engaging content.

**Presenter: Dr. Beth Trammell**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/  
Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

**American Sign Language Combined with Music for Interactive Learning with Infants and Toddlers**



Session Code: F201  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Babies can talk! During this hands-on session, participants will enjoy songs and activities incorporating ASL that will benefit infants and toddlers in areas of communication, language development, and focused listening and watching, all of which support bonding. Participants will practice over 80 signs and determine how to incorporate them into their daily routine. Come discover how to analyze and adapt songs and activities to meet the developmental abilities of all children.

**Presenters: Georgia Frawley, Ken Frawley**



Age Focus: I/T  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## Embracing the Science of Reading



Session Code: F204  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

In this interactive session, discover how the science of reading can best shape practices and policies in your early childhood programs, so that children are primed for success in elementary school. The good news is that many early childhood programs are already laying much of the essential foundation, of which the importance is verified by the science of reading. And here's a hint: it's a complex equation that phonics alone cannot solve—but that early childhood educators implementing a comprehensive curriculum can.

**Presenter: Lesley Jennings**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour  
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## From Pebbles to Potential, Inspiring Early Learners through Loose Parts Play

Session Code: F205  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session explores the many benefits of loose parts play and how open-ended materials support creativity, problem solving, motor development, and social-emotional growth in young learners. Participants will identify what qualifies as a loose part, examine developmentally appropriate types of loose parts for indoor and outdoor environments, and explore safe, effective ways to introduce them in your setting. The session also provides strategies for collecting loose parts, involving families, and addressing budget concerns, empowering educators to confidently advocate for loose parts in their programs.

**Presenters: Jamie Taylor, Stacey Reed**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Learning Environment  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Growing Up WILD

Session Code: F206  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Growing Up WILD is an exciting, hands-on session that will leave you with a multitude of ideas and information on how to integrate wildlife and the environment into your regular lessons in all preschool classroom settings. Participants will receive the Growing Up WILD guide, which includes over 25 lessons designed to lead children through activities that incorporate science, reading, art, math, music and more in a fun, hands-on way. Each lesson includes an opportunity to use nature and the outdoors for an even richer experience for your children. All lessons have been correlated to NAEYC, Head Start and Ohio Early Learning Content Standards in both science and social studies.

**Presenters: Phoebe Atkinson, Nora Sindelar**

Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Nature Play & Outdoor Spaces  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## How to Build the Young Scientist

Session Code: F207  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

In this session, attendees will identify ways infants, toddlers, and preschoolers naturally engage in inquiry, reasoning, and problem-solving through everyday routines and learning opportunities. Discover practical ways to build the young scientist by creating an appropriate learning environment.

**Presenter: Samantha Whatley**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Science  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Inspiring Generations: Cultivating Your Legacy in Early Childhood



Session Code: F208  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Are you aware that early childhood professionals are the architects of legacies? Every day, they weave the threads of influence that shape our future. From the families they connect with to the young minds they nurture and the new educators they inspire, their impact resonates for generations. The legacy they leave is etched not just in the books but in the hearts and minds of those they touch. Now, envision yourself as a legacy builder, crafting an indelible mark on the world of early childhood education. Imagine leaving a powerful imprint that future educators will look up to. If you're eager to harness the true potential of your role as an early childhood professional and learn how to sculpt a legacy that's both powerful and impactful, then this professional learning experience is tailor-made for you.

**Presenter: Anisha Angella**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Deep Dive  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age

## It's Cool to be Kind: Teaching Compassion Through Songs, Stories and Music Games



Session Code: F209  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Using songs, games, and dramatized musical stories, participants will actively explore ways to expose children to the beauty and challenge of kind, compassionate communities. Take back resources to build an inclusive classroom where kindness is cool.

**Presenter: Joanie Calem**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Mischief Managed! - A Conversation About Addressing Post-Pandemic Behavior!

Session Code: F211  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session is designed to broaden the understanding of educators and caregivers on children's behaviors post pandemic. Many of these behaviors existed prior to Covid, although Covid seems to have magnified them greatly. Let's take a deep dive into the root causes of these behaviors, and discover methods to manage the mischief.

**Presenter: Mandy Young**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## Ohio's ASQ Online and Sparkler

Session Code: F210  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Recently, Ohio launched "Sparkler: Play for Parenting," a free app for families with children birth through five. Sparkler helps families and early care and education providers learn how their children are developing through observation of age-based play activities and through the leading child development screening questionnaires (ASQ). Join this session to learn how to become a Sparkler Program Partner, navigate the Sparkler dashboard, and view ASQ summary reports and follow-up forms for children in your program. You will also learn how to remain in compliance with SUTQ requirements associated with developmental screenings and ways Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education programs can use Sparkler.

**Presenter: Julia Babcock**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Assessment of Young Children  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Singing Our Way Outside



Session Code: F213  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Being in nature is a powerful brain stimulant, an almost instant reliever of stress, a risk-free anti-depressant, and much more. In this fun, interactive session, we'll explore how getting more of this important "nutrient" invigorates our early learning settings and improves our children's concentration, focus, and social and mental health. Experience the power of music that leads us out the door and into a wild and wonderful world!

**Presenter: Red Grammer**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Process over Product Art: Creative Expression for Regulation, Release, and Joy



Session Code: F212  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session invites educators into the joyful, freeing world of process art, the kind of art that celebrates exploration over perfection and the child over the product. Together, we'll dive into how sensory-rich creativity helps little bodies regulate, release tension, and express what words often can't capture. Participants will experiment with simple, open-ended art invitations that honor each child's pace, curiosity, and inner world. Through hands-on practice, reflection, and collaborative idea-sharing, educators will discover how to build art experiences that support calm, confidence, and connection. Expect to get inspired, get messy, and gather practical ideas you can use the very next day.

**Presenters: Dani Svantner,  
Wendy Turcott  
(The Play Coaches)**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Arts (Performing and Visual Arts)  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Teaching and Afraid

Session Code: F214  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Teachers face classroom challenges on a daily basis and it is our mindset that guides us. This professional development experience parallels the perils and achievements in early childhood settings with the popular series *Naked and Afraid* for a fun and reflective experience. Come and explore how skills and mindset come together for teaching success and share a laugh with your fellow survivalist.

**Presenters: Sherry Roush, Todd Mays**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Health & Mental Health  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Teaching PLAY: Engagement and Fun to Support Autistic Students in the Classroom

Session Code: F215  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Autism is on the rise, and many teachers are feeling overwhelmed by the unique and varying needs of each child. Teaching P.L.A.Y. is an educator training program that offers a new lens for engaging the hard to engage child. Based on The P.L.A.Y. Project®'s evidence-based, child-centered model, school personnel learn how to promote the functional development and social and emotional skills of children with autism to support them socially and academically. Teaching P.L.A.Y. helps school staff integrate The P.L.A.Y. Project's approach into classroom routines without disrupting or changing the educational curriculum. The session includes many videos examples, and attendees will leave with practical techniques to apply right away in the classroom.

**Presenter: Katie Scott**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## Beautiful Stuff: Reggio Inspired Learning with Loose Parts

Session Code: F301  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:00 PM

Inspired by the Reggio-Emilia philosophy, this session explores the transformative role of loose parts in early childhood education. Using everyday materials, we will discuss what we often call "beautiful stuff" and how it can become powerful tools for creativity, problem-solving, and expression when placed in the hands of young learners. We'll discuss how loose parts support the "hundred languages of children," foster inquiry-based learning, and create environments that speak to children's natural curiosity. Through real classroom examples, hands-on inspiration, and practical strategies, educators will be equipped to intentionally curate and integrate loose parts to promote deeper thinking, collaboration, and joy in their classrooms.

**Presenter: Robin Burns**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Reggio Emilia Inspired  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Best New Children's Books on DEI and SEL and More!

Session Code: F302  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Let's read! Discover the best new children's books on social-emotional learning, STEAM, stories, cultural diversity, and more. This presentation for all levels will review the best new picture books of the year, with an emphasis on how picture books can be used to foster connections and relationship-building: between adult and child, among children socially, in the community, to nature, and between families and teachers.

**Presenter: Amy Vandament**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## Come On In! Partnering with Families to Create Authentic Learning Communities



Session Code: F303  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Partnerships between educators and families are critical in helping to ensure positive outcomes for children. They are also good for families, programs, and communities as a whole. However, developing these partnerships is sometimes easier said than done. Join us as we examine the barriers that can prevent families from bringing their whole selves to an education partnership. We will explore innovative strategies that cultivate positive educator/family partnerships and encourage all families to “Come on in!”

**Presenter: Michelle Salcedo**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Family Connections & Support  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## Exploring Behavior through the Context of Sensory Systems

Session Code: F306  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-5:00 PM

This session will explore how an individual's over- or under-responsivity to sensory input may impact behaviors and how challenging it can be to decipher these cues in the early learning setting. Participants will explore the overlap of sensory integration development and social and emotional development, and how supporting these areas is best done within the context of a safe and secure relationship. We will take an in-depth look at what behaviors or triggers early learning professionals can look for and how to support these needs in their classrooms.

**Presenter: Katlin Carpenter**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Social/Emotional Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## Enhancing Memory Retention and Learning Rates for STEAM Concepts: A Neurodevelopmental Approach (K-3)

Session Code: F305  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-6:00 PM

This presentation will provide an overview of the neurological techniques that can be easily implemented in K-3 classrooms to enhance the development of strong, retrievable memories and improve learning and retention rates for STEAM-related concepts. Content is directly applied to current Ohio Learning Standards and uses video, simulations, group discussion, and curriculum examples for all techniques and STEAM content areas. Intervention strategies, meeting diverse neurological learning profiles, data management, and addressing higher level concepts while maintaining DAP classrooms are also addressed.

**Presenter: Dr. Maria Sargent**

Age Focus: SA  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 3 Hours

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## Creativity and Joy in Teaching: How to Spark the Joy in Teaching!



Session Code: F304  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

The value of educating the holistic child is not new to early childhood professionals, yet it often gets lost in our efforts to achieve what we must measure instead of the interests of each child in our learning setting. This session will explore and reflect on several components of creating a culture of enlightenment, wonder, and gratitude. With developmentally appropriate practice as our guide, educators will explore why we need a culture of joy in our early childhood settings today!

**Presenter: Dr. Kathleen Harris**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Growing Up WILD

Session Code: F307  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Growing Up WILD is an exciting, hands-on session that will leave you with a multitude of ideas and information on how to integrate wildlife and the environment into your regular lessons in all preschool classroom settings. Participants will receive the Growing Up WILD guide, which includes over 25 lessons designed to lead children through activities that incorporate science, reading, art, math, music and more in a fun, hands-on way. Each lesson includes an opportunity to use nature and the outdoors for an even richer experience for your children. All lessons have been correlated to NAEYC, Head Start and Ohio Early Learning Content Standards in both science and social studies.

**Presenters: Phoebe Atkinson, Nora Sindelar**

Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Nature Play & Outdoor Spaces  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## M.A.P. It Out! - The Power of Attention & Skill of Assertiveness (Conscious Discipline®)



Session Code: F308  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:00 PM

This session focuses on building and modeling the assertive voice, the voice of no doubt, to support children's safety and confidence. Participants will identify the three classroom voices (passive, aggressive, and assertive) and practice using assertive language grounded in Conscious Discipline®. The session also explores how to design learning environments using visuals and the M.A.P. approach (model, add visuals, practice) to strengthen the survival state of the brain through assertiveness.

**Presenter: Rozyln Grant**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Social/Emotional Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## (Not) Waiting to Exhale: Emotional Management Skills for Leaders



Session Code: F309  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-5:00PM

If you are like many early childhood professionals, you've been taught that self-care is the answer to managing stress. While we know that self-care is essential for wellness, we must go beyond bubble baths to develop skills for real-time self-management to re-teach our brains to take a "cognitive breath" during the day, so our bodies get back into rhythm. In this session we will explore how self-care and self-management are two different yet intertwined concepts. Develop a new understanding of stress and how we can use it while responding to others and learn to apply real-time strategies to use when engaging in difficult situations.

**Presenter: Patrick McKelvey**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Health & Mental Health  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## Leveraging Social Media & AI for Marketing: Boost Enrollment & Community Engagement for Family Child Care



Session Code: F310  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

In today's digital landscape, social media and AI-powered tools are essential for growing and sustaining a thriving family child care business. This dynamic session equips participants with practical strategies to attract new families, build a loyal online community, and clearly communicate the unique value of their programs. Discover how to create compelling content, use AI to save time and increase consistency, and optimize social media platforms to boost visibility and enrollment. By the end of the session, each attendee will have a customized, easy-to-follow marketing plan to strengthen their online presence and deepen connections with families.

**Presenter: Jerletha McDonald**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## So, Is This Problem Solving?



Session Code: F311  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Conflict resolution and problem solving are essential skills educators must master to effectively guide and support children's behavior. This session will help participants understand and recognize children's different perspectives in conflict situations and identify and use HighScope's 6 Steps to Conflict Resolution.

**Presenter: Lance Reed**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Storytime Techniques for Early Childhood Programs (0-3)

Session Code: F312  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

This session is interactive and includes a make-it--take-it activity that will enhance story time in any early childhood environment. We will look at how to select books, introduce stories, make and use a wide variety of props and how to involve children with story time in your setting.

**Presenters: MaryBeth Bush, Corienne Dippel**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Supporting a Child's Unique Developmental Journey (0-3)

Session Code: F313  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

This session will provide an overview of Ohio's Early Intervention program, including the services and supports available to families with children from birth to age three. Participants will review key developmental milestones in the areas of social communication, motor skills, and cognition, along with identifying when a referral may be necessary. Practical strategies to encourage early development will also be shared, equipping educators with tools to support children and families effectively.

**Presenters: Heather Knoble, Stephanie Bondra**

Age Focus: I/T  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## The H.O.P.E (Healthy, Opportunities, Partnerships, Empowerment) of Family Engagement



Session Code: F314  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Are you struggling to get families involved in your programming at the level that you desire? Join us for a reflective conversation about where to begin planning to move your programming from family involvement to family engagement. What tools do you need, and what strategies allow you to build healthy opportunities and partnerships with families that empower them to be their child's first and most important teacher?

**Presenter: Pam Perrino**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Family Connections & Support  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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A Kendall Hunt Company

## The Seeds of Happy Healthy Living: Songs for Emerging Character Strengths



Session Code: F315  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Positive psychology informs us that we all have a set of character strengths that, when practiced in our daily lives, become the basis for health and happiness. Many of these character strengths emerge in early childhood. Participants will review the basic concepts of positive psychology, learn how to recognize emerging character strengths in young children, and explore the use of songs and related activities to enhance this positive development.

**Presenter: David Kisor**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## The Toddler Challenge: The Joys and Struggles of Toddlerhood

Session Code: F316  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Calling all toddler teachers! Toddlerhood is a time of extraordinary growth and development, but how do we support that? In this session, we will discuss why toddlerhood presents a challenging and often misunderstood adventure to care providers. Through discussions of development, play schemas, and child-centered learning, we will explore how to support toddlers and their teachers. Join us for a whole lot of laughter and conversation as we take a deep dive into toddlerhood and why we toddler teachers love them so much.

**Presenters: Karen Crockett, Anne McGlamery**

Age Focus: T  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age



## **"Everybody Here Has A Bucket!" – Singing Our Way to Kinder, Happier Classrooms With Bucket Filling**



Session Code: FBONUS1  
Session Time: 5:00 PM-6:30 PM

In this session participants will be given an introduction to Bucketfilling, a simple but profound model for positive social development. Red will use music, drama, and stories to inspire and empower educators to use Bucketfilling to enhance the social learning in their early learning settings. Participants will leave with a treasure trove of related classroom tested activities. No musical talent required.

**Presenter: Red Grammer**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age

## **Taming the Tiger – Understanding and Nurturing Big Emotions**



Session Code: FBONUS2  
Session Time: 5:00 PM-6:30 PM

Every child (and adult) has a “tiger” inside — the part of the brain that roars when we feel scared, frustrated, or overwhelmed. Taming the Tiger helps participants understand the neuroscience of emotion and regulation, equipping them with tools to calm their own nervous system and guide children through theirs. Through storytelling, movement, and reflective practice, this session invites educators to move beyond behavior management to emotional coaching. Participants learn how to help children feel safe, seen, and soothed — transforming chaos into connection.

**Presenters: Dani Svantner,  
Wendy Turcott  
(The Play Coaches)**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic:  
Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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



## GIGGLES & WIGGLES! It's Circle Time



Session Code: S101  
Session Time: 8:00 AM-10:00 AM

A child's brain undergoes an amazing period of development from birth to three- producing 700 new neural connections every second. This growing brain development is influenced by many factors, including a child's relationships, experiences and environment. Discover more about our crucial role in building the baby's brain and discover many fun "brain-building" activities that promote emotional, cognitive, language, physical and social competence. Early experiences matter!

**Presenter: Sharron Krull**



Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

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## Haz Que Esos Dedos Se Muevan Con Pompones

Código de Sesión: S102  
Tiempo De Sesión: 8:00 AM-10:00 AM

Las habilidades motoras finas son muy importantes para que los niños se desarrollen ya que ayudan a los niños con todos los aspectos de la vida. Comer, escribir, manipular objetos y vestirse no sería posible sin habilidades motoras finas. Esta sesión se centrará en el desarrollo de la motricidad fina utilizando un elemento cotidiano en su entorno de aprendizaje temprano... pompones. Tendrá al menos 12 actividades intencionales que apoyan las Normas de Aprendizaje y Desarrollo Infantil en el desarrollo de la motricidad fina.

**Presenters: Margeric Gonzalez, Marisol Torres**

Enfoque de edad: I/T, Prescolar  
Nivel de instrucción: Relevante para todos  
Tema principal: Desarrollo físico  
Aprobado por Ohio (Ohio Approved Credit): 2 horas

## Influencing Our Future: Early Learning Activities for Preschoolers

Session Code: S103  
Session Time: 8:00 AM-10:00 AM

This session prepares the early childhood professional to plan and implement learning activities with preschoolers. Discover how to incorporate hands-on learning experiences and creative activities into your daily routine and leave with resources that promote life-long learning.

**Presenter: LaToya Dixon**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## Belonging in the Circle: Creating an Engaging and Inclusive Circle Time

Session Code: S104  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

In this session, participants will explore information and strategies to help them design and implement a more inclusive circle time that engages all learners, including those with developmental delays and disabilities. Participants will examine tools and approaches to initiate new circle time routines or enhance existing ones. These activities will foster greater opportunities for participation and interaction during circle time. The strategies and tools discussed can be adapted and applied across other classroom routines and learning experiences.

**Presenters: Megan Arnold, Heather Knoble**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

Made Possible By 

## Big Feelings, Little Teeth: Exploring Safe Ways to Express



Session Code: S105  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This interactive session equips early educators with research-informed strategies to understand, prevent, and reduce biting behaviors in children. Participants will examine how to assess biting through a developmental lens, identify the function of biting behavior, and apply prevention, anticipation, and substitution strategies that promote safety, emotional regulation, and social-emotional development. The session integrates interdisciplinary research and practical tools to help educators support children's developmental needs and create nurturing classroom environments.

**Presenter: Patrick McKelvey**



Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline /Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Family Child Care Homes: Creative Spaces for Children to Learn

Session Code: S106  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Do you want to be inspired to make your learning environment creative and exciting so that it captures the feeling of HOME in your family child care program? We will explore practical suggestions on how to implement changes in arrangement, storage, and selection of educational materials and equipment that meet the needs of all children in your care, both inside and out.

**Presenters: MaryBeth Bush, Carrie Shockey**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Learning Environment  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Inspiring Creativity and Creative Play in Early Childhood Classrooms



Session Code: S107  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

Creativity is self-expression that arises out of an interaction and exploration of self, others, culture, and environment. In children, creativity develops through playful experiences rather than concern for the final project. Creativity is nurtured through creative arts, activities, and experiences that engage the whole child. In this session, we will explore how to encourage creativity and creative play among young children and will learn to create a classroom environment where creative play can thrive.



**Presenter: Michelle Salcedo**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Arts (Performing & Visual Arts)  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour  
Made Possible By  TeachingStrategies®

## It Starts with Us: The Leadership Key to Teacher Retention

Session Code: S108  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

In early childhood education, children flourish when teachers remain, creating stability that fosters stronger relationships, smoother transitions, and improved behavior. This session empowers everyone to recognize how their daily actions, communication, and decisions influence whether educators feel valued, supported, and motivated to stay. We will explore the real reasons behind teacher turnover and focus on practical steps to prevent it. Building a respectful, consistent, and growth-focused workplace culture is a team effort because when retention starts with all of us, everyone wins.

**Presenters: Jennifer Sprafka, Ellen Plesotis**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Math- It All Adds Up!

Session Code: S109  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This hands-on session is designed to deepen early childhood educators' understanding of foundational math concepts and how they naturally occur throughout the daily lives of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Participants will explore key early math ideas—including number sense, spatial awareness, and patterns—and discover how these concepts emerge through play and everyday routines. Together, we will identify moments in the day where math talk can be intentionally embedded, such as during diapering, block play, or clean-up time. Through collaborative group work, participants will design and share a developmentally appropriate math experience tailored to their assigned age group, using simple materials and aligning each activity with a targeted math concept. Educators will leave with practical strategies and renewed confidence in supporting young children's mathematical thinking in meaningful, playful ways.

**Presenters: Lori Kowitz, Kassie Matamoros**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Mathematics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Songs for Encouraging Social-Emotional Development in Early Childhood



Session Code: S111  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

As educators, part of our job is to encourage social-emotional development, and songs can help us achieve this goal. In this session, we will define social-emotional development, why it is important, and what healthy development looks like in early childhood. We will study the CASEL wheel, learn and sing songs to reinforce social learning and promote self-control, following directions, and cooperation. With the help of these songs, children will hopefully learn to accept themselves, appreciate others, and be open to new experiences.

**Presenter: Risa Cohen**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Nature Play with Fairy Gardens



Session Code: S110  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

This session explores make-believe outdoor play in nature with fairy gardens and contemplative photography illustrating how joyful, whimsical, and calming child-centered outdoor play can be for children. Make-believe outdoor play invites young children to awaken to an awareness of community and purpose in the world around them. Fairies represent the childlike sense of wonder and imagination that often fades as we grow older, and by connecting with their essence, teachers and families can reawaken the ability to marvel at the beauty of nature. Discover how to help children become guardians of the natural world.



**Presenter: Dr. Kathleen Harris**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Storytime Bootcamp

Session Code: S112  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

Storytime Bootcamp is a session that helps rejuvenate your classroom storytime through intentional planning, purposeful play, and music. Designed for both new and experienced educators, it provides practical strategies to increase engagement while supporting early literacy development.

**Presenters: Stacy Corll, Benjamin Corll**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Supporting Curriculum Implementation through a Comprehensive Approach

Session Code: S113  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

This session will highlight ways program leaders can plan for successful curriculum implementation through thoughtful planning and ongoing professional development. Explore research-proven strategies on preparing staff for implementation, establishing non-negotiables as well as assuring autonomy for staff, and the role of on-going professional development, collaboration, and coaching to ensure fidelity of a curriculum. We will also examine a case study from Pittsburgh Public Schools with time for discussion.

**Presenter: Lisa Baker**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Program Administration, Evaluation & Financial Management  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Teaching the Imagination Generation: Songs to Build Creativity



Session Code: S114  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM

Music is a natural vehicle for promoting imagination and creativity. This session will promote an understanding of how to help young children realize that the mind is both a toy and a tool. We can have fun creating worlds that are wacky and wonderful, but we can also use our imagination to craft creative solutions to complex problems. Participants will learn songs to achieve three creative thinking skills: fluency, originality and adaptability thus showing the value of arts in education.

**Presenter: David Kisor**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Virtues For Little Disciples-Connecting School with Home



Session Code: S115  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-9:30 AM

Explore how virtues help us connect school and home meaningfully and respectfully to create a strong framework between the educators and families. When virtues are used to build the foundation for expectations, interactions, and mutual understanding, educators, families, and children have a strong guide to help them navigate communicating with each other.

**Presenter: Pam Perrino**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Family Connections & Support  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## You Were Chosen for This MISSION: Rise to the Challenge with Perseverance and Grit (Conscious Discipline®)



Session Code: S116  
Session Time: 8:30 AM-10:00 AM



In this inspirational session, we'll delve into the critical attributes of grit and perseverance that enable achievement in the face of adversity. We'll discuss the neuroscience behind what fuels passion and sustains persistence over the long haul. Attendees will leave understanding tangibly how to cultivate grit - both individually and collectively within teams - to tackle challenges and accomplish missions with courage and conviction. By examining inspirational examples and applying research-based strategies, participants will uncover their "why", gain tools to shift mindsets, and tap into the uplifting power of community. This talk brings the science of success to life by revealing how purpose, practice and perseverance unite to expand the realm of possibility.

**Presenter: Tanyelle Hannah**



Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



# Saturday, April 25 | Keynote



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## **KEYNOTE: Let Joy Be Your Compass: Reclaiming Our Direction, Purpose, and Well-Being**

Session Code: KEYNOTE3

Session Time: 10:45 AM-11:45 AM

Early childhood professionals are navigating increasing demands, emotional labor, and systemic pressures that can disconnect them from the joy that first called them to this work. Let Joy Be Your Compass is a reflective and energizing keynote that invites participants to reconnect with joy as a guiding force for decision-making, professional boundaries, and daily interactions with children and families. Participants will explore how adult well-being directly influences learning environments, relationships, and child outcomes. Through storytelling, reflection, and practical strategies, this session offers a renewed sense of direction that supports both personal sustainability and high-quality care.

**Presenter: Dr. Nefertiti Poyner**

Age Focus: ALL

Instructional Level: Relevant to All

Main Topic: Health & Mental Health

Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

### **About Nefertiti**

Dr. Nefertiti B. Poyner is a nationally recognized speaker, author, and expert in early childhood education and educator well-being. With a career spanning over two decades, she's on a mission to help those who care for children rediscover their purpose, build resilience, and lead with joy.

For 24 years, Nefertiti served with distinction at the Devereux Center for Resilient Children, where she helped shape national conversations around social-emotional learning, staff retention, and trauma-responsive education. After nearly a quarter-century of service, she followed a divine nudge to launch Mighty Works Education Group in 2025, a consulting and professional development firm devoted to strengthening "the village"—the educators, caregivers, and leaders who nurture young children from birth through third grade.

Known for her calm yet commanding presence, Nefertiti is a sought-after keynote speaker who weaves evidence-informed strategies with soulful storytelling. Whether on stage, in workshops, or behind the scenes as a coach or consultant, she delivers practical tools wrapped in compassion and clarity. Nefertiti is the author of *She Knows What She's Doing*, co-author of *Building Your Bounce: Simple Strategies for a Resilient You* (2nd Edition), and *Socially Strong, Emotionally Secure*. Her work is a reflection of her deepest truth: nurturing joy, resilience, and intention in the earliest years.



## Bringing the Ukulele into Your Classroom



Session Code: S201  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-3:00 PM

Every teacher knows how much children respond positively to songs and singing, and many of the songs that we sing throughout the day are very simple to play on ukuleles. In this session, attendees will practice playing 2-3 simple chords on the ukulele and be introduced to a long list of traditional children's songs. The kids will love it! Songs can be used to enhance any part of your curriculum. This session is for anyone who has longed to figure out how to play a simple instrument and add more music into their classroom.



**Presenter: Joanie Calem**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## From Classrooms to Communities: Advancing Equity and Advocacy in Early Childhood

Session Code: S202  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-3:00 PM

This interactive session is timely and essential as early childhood professionals navigate increasingly diverse classrooms, evolving family dynamics, and shifting policies. Attendees are invited to reflect, connect, and act as they explore cultural competency, cultural humility, and advocacy through storytelling, case studies and group activities. Participants will gain practical tools and reflective strategies to build inclusive partnerships and influence policies that directly impact children and families. Leave inspired, equipped with practical tools, and ready to deepen your impact inside and beyond the classroom to help create thriving, connected communities where every child, family, and educator matters.

**Presenter: Crystal Ann Hall**

Age Focus: PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Diversity & Equity  
Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## How to Talk to Infants & Toddlers While They Play: Language that Fosters Connection, Confidence and Creativity

Session Code: S203  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session explores foundational early language development in preverbal children, the role of language during play, and the four types of pro-social play. Using call-and-response activities, interactive video examples, and scripted conversational role-play we pull apart sentences learning which words are 'openers' and which are 'closers'. Openers build communication bridges, supporting listening and learning. Conversely, closers create an emotional block between adult and child stunting the ability to learn through play. We then assign each part of speech a purpose as we craft comprehensive, meaning-based sentences that align with the perspective of infants and toddlers. Come play as you learn to speak toddler!

**Presenter: Cara Tyrrell**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## "I Like You Just The Way You Are!" Reflecting on Fred Rogers' Six Fundamentals of Learning and Growing to Awaken Essential Life Skills in Early Childhood Settings



Session Code: S204  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

Essential life skills help young children navigate everyday experiences with confidence and joy. Drawing on the executive function of the brain and Fred Rogers' Six Fundamentals of Learning and Growing, this workshop explores key skills that support children in managing emotions, behaviors, and goals. Participants will gain practical strategies to spark curiosity, inspire engagement, and help young children feel secure, open to learning, and joyful throughout the early years.



**Presenter: Dr. Kathleen Harris**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Social/Emotional Development  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour



## It's What You "NO"! The Importance of a YES-Driven Environment

Session Code: S205  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Are you finding that you are using the word NO more often than you would like? Does everything seem to be a power struggle in your classroom? Discover the power of the word YES. This session will challenge you to let go of some of those preconceived notions of what needs to be a no. It will encourage you to think about how you can say yes to create a more positive environment. In doing so you will help build up your students to be explorers, problem solvers and more confident learners.

**Presenter: Barbara Pedigo**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Curriculum - Theories & Approaches  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## JOY in the Journey: How to Keep My Heart in it When it's HARD (Conscious Discipline®)



Session Code: S206  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM



Teaching is often described as a calling, not just a career. But even the most dedicated educators can struggle to keep their passion and joy alive in the face of everyday challenges. In this inspirational and empowering session, attendees will explore practical strategies to rediscover meaning, purpose, gratitude and joy no matter the obstacles. Participants will leave feeling re-energized, empowered and equipped with fresh tools to foster their own well-being and meaningful relationships with colleagues and scholars.

**Presenter: Tanyelle Hannah**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Professionalism, Leadership & Ethics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## "Let's Play Principal..." (Still Teaching in the 'Key of Life')



Session Code: S207  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

A total participation celebration of simple and effective ways to magically turn your program or school into a loving community of learning. Like a family! This session invites administrators of early childhood programs to share, through active experiences and ideas that turn policies into realities. How do administrators, shape the climate, mission, and spirit of your programs? How do you create life-affirming, loving, safe and joyous environments for our children, staff, families and communities? The responsibility for such a challenge is in your hands (and in your heart). Be ready to move and be moved!

**Presenter: Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

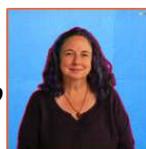
## Mathematics in Early Childhood: Supporting, Observing, and Documenting Mathematics in the Preschool Classroom



Session Code: S209  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Does the word "math" bring a little shiver to your spine? For some early childhood educators, teaching math can feel intimidating and just not that fun. This session explores mathematics concepts and how they can play out in preschool classrooms in authentic, meaningful (and yes-fun) ways.

**Presenter: Michelle Salcedo**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Mathematics  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours  
Made Possible By TeachingStrategies®

## Lights On, Joy Up: Reframing Challenging Behaviors and Reigniting Your Purpose



Session Code: S208  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

Responding to children's challenging behaviors can feel overwhelming, leaving educators stressed and unprepared. Yet every day in the classroom is like stepping onto a stage, full of movement, emotion, and unpredictable moments. Lights On, Joy Up introduces the PERFORM approach, a practical and empowering way to rethink challenging moments with children so educators can move from reacting to responding, protect their well-being, and create opportunities for growth and connection.

**Presenter: Dr. Nefertiti Poyner**



Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Preventing, Approaching, & Responding to Typical and Challenging Behavior (Part 1)

Session Code: S210  
Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

In this session, participants will identify typical and challenging behaviors in children ages 3-5 and explore how trauma can impact behavior. The session introduces trauma-informed strategies, highlights the importance of adult self-regulation, and provides practical tools for managing personal responses. Participants will also gain strategies to support children's emotional regulation and positive behavior in early care settings.

**Presenter: Erin Finley**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Purposeful Play in Early Childhood Education

Session Code: S211

Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

Play is a powerful learning tool for children across all backgrounds and abilities. For preschool educators, it can be a challenge to balance standard-driven benchmarks and specific learning objectives with opportunities for child-led play. This session takes a closer look at ways educators can intentionally support opportunities for child-directed play that hit on key early learning concepts and skills. Discover easy-to-implement strategies that guide student inquiry and create meaningful, play-based learning experiences aligned with educational standards.

**Presenter: Debby Spitzer**

Age Focus: PRE

Instructional Level: Intermediate

Main Topic: Curriculum - Theories & Approaches

Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

## Ramps and Pathways

Session Code: S212

Session Time: 1:00 PM-3:00 PM

Ramps intrigue children and inspire ideas for exploration. Exploration provides children opportunities to create and test hypotheses. This process of testing their beliefs and discovering contradictions allows them to modify their understanding of how the world works (mental relationships). In this session, we will explore the constructivist approach to learning and help educators develop the skills necessary to support children's development of mental relationships.

**Presenters: Corriene Dippel, Jennifer Scott**

Age Focus: PRE, SA

Instructional Level: Intermediate

Main Topic: Cognitive Development

Ohio Approved Credit: 2 Hours

## Speech and Language Development

Session Code: S213

Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session provides a comprehensive overview of speech and language development from birth through early childhood. Participants will explore the major milestones for receptive and expressive language, speech sound production, and social communication. They will gain a clear understanding of what is typical at each stage and discuss factors that can influence language development, concerns for delays, and the importance of early identification and intervention.

**Presenter: Kimberly Ohl**

Age Focus: I/T, PRE

Instructional Level: Back to the Basics

Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/

Early Intervention & Inclusion

Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## Wonderful Play! Using Music to Support Early Childhood Development (Part 1)



Session Code: S215

Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

In this high-energy, interactive session educators in attendance will recognize the value of their engagement in music play with children to promote regulation, connection, and community. Participants will discover how to implement music activities as transition tools and brain breaks to support classroom attention and management. Attendees will leave with strategies to incorporate using books, puppets, props and movement to enhance accessibility and engagement for all learners while also aligning to the Ohio Early Learning & Development Standards.

**Presenter:**

**Mr. Jeff (Jeff Klemm)**



Age Focus: ALL

Instructional Level: Relevant to All

Main Topic: Arts (Performing & Visual Arts)

Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Supporting Young Minds: Creating Balance in the Classroom

Session Code: S214

Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:30 PM

This session will provide research and theory on how mental wellness techniques and yoga help children and teachers regulate emotions to create calm in the classroom. It will also highlight how various yoga tools will equip educators to relate to children. Providing suggestions for self regulation, co-regulation, communication, neurodiversity and classroom tools they can use for themselves and their students. Explore an array of yoga skills appropriate for infants to early school-agers.

**Presenters: Nancy Secrest, Amy Hamilton**

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA

Instructional Level: Relevant to All

Main Topic: Health & Mental Health

Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Working with Multilingual Families

Session Code: S216

Session Time: 1:00 PM-2:00 PM

This session offers practical strategies for working effectively with multilingual families. Participants will discover how to overcome language barriers, use culturally responsive communication, and build strong, inclusive relationships. Attendees will leave equipped with tools to engage families from diverse linguistic backgrounds, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met.

**Presenter: Jessica Burchett**

Age Focus: PRE, SA

Instructional Level: Back to the Basics

Main Topic: Diversity & Equity

Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

*Note On Multi-part sessions: In order to receive Ohio Approved credit, you must attend all parts.*

## **Beyond Worksheets: Embracing Play and Natural Curiosity to Document Organic Learning in Early Childhood**

Session Code: S301  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Discover the power of play as the foundation of meaningful learning in early childhood. This session explores how child-led experiences and a preschooler's natural curiosity drive deep, authentic learning that aligns seamlessly with developmentally appropriate standards. Participants will gain practical strategies for observing, documenting, and assessing learning without relying on worksheets or teacher-directed activities. Educators will leave empowered as "play detectives," equipped to recognize, capture, and celebrate the rich learning already happening in early childhood classrooms.

**Presenters: Kaitlyn Pecherkiewicz,  
Lesley Perlberg**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Play  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## **Beyond the Calendar: Circle Back to Circle Time**

Session Code: S302  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Rethink circle time and make it work for every age. This interactive session explores developmentally appropriate circle time practices through hands-on activities. Participants will roll play circle times tailored to a specific age group and explore hands-on alternatives to commonly used circle time practices, with a focus on developmentally appropriate expectations. By the end of the session, participants will walk away with practical ideas to design circle time experiences that are meaningful, effective, and truly developmentally appropriate.

**Presenters: René Orozco,  
Kassie Matamoros**

Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Developmentally Appropriate Practices  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## **Exploring Narratives in the 0-3 Space**

Session Code: S303  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Within 36 months, babies go from no language at all to becoming storytellers. In this session, we will discuss how we can support children at each stage of development: young infants, older infants, toddlers, and early preschool. We will also discuss how we can encourage and engage families by presenting meaningful resources to extend this learning in to the home.

**Presenter: Hayley Venturino**

Age Focus: I/T  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## **Introducing Puppets In Your Classroom**

Session Code: S304  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

A classroom puppet is a valuable tool to enhance development across multiple domains. This session will highlight the Early Learning and Development Standards, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes, and Teachstone CLASS domains strengthened by the use of puppets. The tips and tricks of classroom puppetry will encourage even the most reluctant participants to add this tool to their repertoire.

**Presenters: Pamela Caruso,  
Shannon Smith**

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Arts (Performing & Visual Arts)  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

*Note On Multi-part sessions: In order to receive Ohio Approved credit, you must attend all parts.*

I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age



## Keeping Joy at the Core: Singing Our Way Through DAP's Three Core Considerations



Session Code: S305  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Join us as we explore the NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) and the Three Core Considerations. We will engage in reflective discussions, lively conversations, and songs to further our knowledge and skills, supporting all of us in becoming the best early childhood professionals in our planning and implementation of classrooms that support the unique needs of young children and their families.

### Presenters:

**Risa Cohen, Pam Perrino**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Developmentally Appropriate Practices  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## Make Your Classroom Work for You: If You Do Nothing Else, Do THIS

Session Code: S306  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:00 PM

Educators have a lot on their plates. When days start to feel overwhelming or you start questioning your strategies, it is time to focus on making your classroom work for you. We will discuss 10 things to do and remember that will set you and your students up for success. The information in this session is not profound. However, when implemented consistently, will have a profound impact on your students and your confidence in leading your classroom. For some this will be new information; for others it will be a reminder to get back to the basics and reaffirm that you've got this! Administrators may find this session helpful when training or coaching their staff.

### Presenter: Leah Anastasakis

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Learning Environment  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1 Hour

I/T=Infant/Toddler | K=Kindergarten  
PRE=Preschool | SA=School-Age

## Pebbles and Prose: The Storytelling Power of Loose Parts

Session Code: S307  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

This engaging, hands-on session introduces early childhood educators to the storytelling potential of loose parts play. Participants will explore how open-ended materials like pebbles, fabric, and wood pieces can act as powerful catalysts for oral language development, narrative thinking, and collaboration. This session immerses attendees in exploratory provocations, embedded research insights, and dialogue-rich reflection. Aligned with play-based pedagogy and developmentally appropriate practice, this session equips educators with practical, evidence-informed strategies to inspire language growth in inclusive, creative ways.

### Presenter: Elizabeth Fields

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Intermediate  
Main Topic: Language & Literacy  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## Preventing, Approaching, & Responding to Typical and Challenging Behavior (Part 2)

Session Code: S308  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM  
See part 1 for description.

### Presenter: Erin Finley

Age Focus: PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Guidance/Discipline/  
Challenging Behaviors  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

*Note: This is a multi-part session. In order to receive Ohio Approved credit, you must attend all parts.*

## Re-Thinking Early Childhood Learning Environments

Session Code: S309  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

Are you wondering why some parts of your learning environment work well, while others seem to lead to behavior and other challenges? Frustrated when children don't help with clean-up? Do you feel conflicted about how to maintain safety while also allowing children to explore? Come and join in our conversation as we explore these and other issues by "Re-Thinking the Early Childhood Learning Environment".

### Presenters: Karen Crockett, KayCee McElroy

Age Focus: I/T, PRE  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Learning Environment  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours



## Say, Sing & Sign! How ASL Combined with Music Benefits Infants and Toddlers



Session Code: S310  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

This fun hands-on session will provide participants with powerful concepts and insights on how to use American Sign Language combined with songs and activities to foster early communication and strengthen early learning for babies and toddlers. American Sign Language is used across the U.S. to provide hearing children with a way to communicate, increase their vocabulary, and stimulate brain development. This session offers practical information based on research and real life experience. No previous signing or singing ability is necessary.

### Presenters:

**Georgia Frawley, Ken Frawley**



Age Focus: I/T  
Instructional Level: Back to the Basics  
Main Topic: Music  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

## The DEC Recommended Practices: How To Support Students with Special Needs In Your Classroom

Session Code: S311  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

At the heart of early childhood education is meeting students where they are, supporting their individual needs, and guiding their development to the next level. However, it can sometimes feel overwhelming, as if no matter how much effort and heart you put into your work, you're just staying afloat. Join us in this interactive session to explore effective, research-based strategies and interventions that empower you to create a high-quality, equitable, and inclusive environment for all students. You'll gain valuable resources to help identify and implement effective strategies, as well as tools to collect and share meaningful information with caregivers, professionals, and administrators. In addition, participants will be encouraged to recognize and celebrate their own professional skills, while receiving support to document the effective strategies they are already successfully implementing.

### Presenter: Elizabeth Diedrick

Age Focus: T, PRE, SA  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Children with Disabilities/  
Early Intervention & Inclusion  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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## Wonderful Play! Using Music to Support Early Childhood Development (Part 2)



Session Code: S312  
Session Time: 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

See part 1 for description.

### Presenter:

**Mr. Jeff (Jeff Klemm)**



Age Focus: ALL  
Instructional Level: Relevant to All  
Main Topic: Arts (Performing & Visual Arts)  
Ohio Approved Credit: 1.5 Hours

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-Lauren L. Attendee





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