

Ohio Early Childhood Conference | April 25-27 | Sandusky, OH

Thursday April 23rd – Nature Based Education Sessions

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Nature Supports Early Childhood Development and Learning 2 hours

Using nature as the basis of early childhood education has many benefits for both developmental needs but also cognitive needs in young children. This presentation will explore those benefits as well as helping educators see beyond themes and how playful learning in the outdoors can create an environment where all requirements of our job as early childhood educators present themselves naturally. Roadblocks and methodologies will be discussed, and participants will create a plan to take with them the day of the training.

Friday April 24th - Nature Based Education Sessions

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Creating a Natural Learning Environment in Early Childhood Settings: Ideas to Rethink your Outdoor Space

During this session participants will walk through the process of redesigning their outdoor playground space into a natural outdoor learning environment. The benefits of these changes will be discussed, such as increased physical activity, higher child engagement, increased opportunities for social interactions, extending learning in the outdoors in all areas of development and reducing (yes..reducing!) chances of severe injury. Participants will go home with the start of an implementation plan.

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Nurturing Nature: How One Preschool Program Shifted Attitudes about Outdoor Education

In this session participants will explore nature-based education and the elements to look for in a quality nature-based program. We will discuss and share how participants are currently implementing nature-based learning in their classrooms or school program. Come discover how one typical preschool program has gradually transformed an overgrown area into a functioning outdoor classroom. Take back ideas on how to add more nature-based elements to your classroom or school program.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Exposure to Nature Creates Resiliency!

In this training, participants will investigate why nature education is integral in early childhood education. Participants will explore their own history with nature and examine their own comfort levels. Together, we will create a continuum of nature usage in the classroom, identify where individuals currently fall on this continuum and where they want to be. Each participant will then create a plan to take back that includes setting a goal, identifying roadblocks, resources and success.

Saturday April 25th - Nature Based Education Sessions

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

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

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

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Growing Up Wild

Growing Up WILD is an exciting, hands-on workshop that will leave you with a multitude of ideas and information on how to integrate wildlife and the environment into your regular lessons in an inclusive preschool classroom or any classroom setting. 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 Childhood Content Standards in both science and social studies.

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

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