



Gigi Schweikert



Leadership Retreat

The 2026 Ohio Early Childhood Conference Leadership Retreat: Empowering Leaders to Build Effective Programs for Young Children

We are excited to bring this special elevated experience to the conference!
A transformational process that will launch your program to greater success.

*****For registered attendees of The Ohio Early Childhood Conference only!*****
\$60 | Thursday, April 23, 2026 | Featuring Leadership Expert Gigi Schweikert
Includes 4.5 hours of Ohio Approved Credit!

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

In the dynamic and ever-evolving field of early childhood education, leadership presents both inspiring opportunities and complex challenges. Our Early Childhood Leadership Retreat will empower you with the skills, insights, and connections needed to lead with clarity, purpose, and lasting impact.

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.



www.oaeyc.org/conference

Schedule:

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

Supervise with Confidence: Using your Teacher Skills to Guide Adults

What if the key to supervising adults isn't learning something new—but using what you already know? 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. Discover how to communicate clear expectations, build on the skills and talents of each employee, and eliminate the barriers that keep staff from succeeding. 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.

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

What if “the way we’ve always done it” is the very thing holding your program back? 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 (or at least manageable) instead of overwhelming. You’ll leave ready to step out of your comfort zone, embrace new ideas, and prove that in your program, good enough never is.

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

10 Steps to a Winning Team: Positive Staff Relations

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. Discover how small daily actions—being organized, prepared, and willing to help—make a big difference in staff morale and collaboration. You'll leave with practical steps to help make your “work family” terrific and build a winning team.

About Gigi

Gigi Schweikert is CEO of Lightbridge Academy overseeing 58 open centers in seven states. Gigi is an international thought leader in early childhood education and supervision. With 30 years of experience and 18 published books, in three languages, Gigi has appeared on CBS, NBC, Fox, and the Wall Street Journal Lunch Hour News. Ms. Schweikert has been quoted in The New Times, Entrepreneur, and Forbes.

Ms. Schweikert was the former Director of the United Nations Child Care Centre. Gigi developed and managed on-site employer-sponsored child care programs for Fortune 500 companies including, Johnson & Johnson, Bank of America, and SC Johnson Wax. Gigi was the host of the TV show, “Today’s Family,” but her greatest accomplishment is being the mother of her four children.

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