

27th Annual Early Learning Conference – May 1st, 2021 – Virtual Conference

Workshop Descriptions

Session 1:

Creating Engaging Outdoor Spaces for Infants & Toddlers

Sarah Sun

Regional Coordinator, PITC Partners for Quality, Center for Child and Family Studies, WestEd

This workshop will include discussion of the importance of outdoor play experiences for infants and toddlers. Key considerations for designing outdoor play spaces for infants and toddlers will be discussed, such as flexibility of space and materials, safety considerations, providing movement opportunities and including sensory elements in the outdoor environment. Low-cost materials and resources for those materials will be shared.

Growing in the Garden

Rachel O’Neal, Child Health and Nutrition Specialist, CocoKids

Catherine Stafford, Child Health and Nutrition Manager, CocoKids

Early childhood educators will learn skills to play in the garden with young children. Simple, fun and creative ways to teach children science, literacy, responsibility, leadership, empathy/caring and teamwork can come from getting little fingers muddy! In this hands-on workshop participants will receive curriculum ideas and enjoy activities that can be modified to meet children’s varying skills and abilities. Growing vegetables in a garden is fun and increases children’s acceptance and enjoyment of fresh produce which promotes healthy eating!

Curriculum, Documentation and Design, Oh My!

Utami Setiyadi & Michelle Grant-Groves

Center of Gravity Early Education School

In this informative and interactive session, participants will explore how to build engaging and child-centered curriculum, using inquiry questions and design thinking strategies in planning. We will also discuss how to authentically include children and families’ input and ideas into curriculum planning and implementation. Presenters will share real examples of curriculum and web-based documentation. Connections will be made to the CA Preschool Learning Foundations, child observation and documentation (DRDP), inclusion, and family engagement.

27th Annual Early Learning Conference – May 1st, 2021 – Virtual Conference Workshop Descriptions

Trauma-Sensitive Mindful Movement

Ainka Fullani

Owner, Founder and Head Coach, BreakThrough Coaching

Whether designed for a specific class or integrated into one's personal practices, trauma-sensitive movement uses body, breath and focusing exercises providing opportunity to minimize stress, to notice and tolerate all kinds of experiences and to cultivate resilience. This building of our reserves can be used in our everyday lives, in our everyday surroundings, as a support to us and our communities. During this workshop, participants will learn about trauma-sensitive movement principles, through yoga, the ways in which they can bolster us and participate in exercises that can be done by anyone, anytime, anywhere. Participants will have the opportunity to leave with actionable items they can use and share with others.

It's All Connected: The Beauty of Blended Subjects

Cesyli Gaut

Founder, Voyager Academy

For some reason we tend to educate as though our subjects deserve their lane only, but in reality - concepts blend. Have you ever looked at a leaf or a flower under a microscope? I dare you to tell me that isn't art. Our subjects blend and our children deserve to see that flexibility. One of my first days of teaching, I called my aunt to tell her about our day and she said, "Well, my dear, a teacher's middle name is flexible. You must always be willing to be flexible." And so, I think I have come to know that the subjects in a similar way.

De Aquí Para Allá

Courtnaé Jakirlic

Inclusion Facilitator

¿Conoce a un niño al que le cuesta prepararse para salir de casa? ¿Conoce a un niño que tiene dificultades para regresar al salón después de jugar en el patio? Cuando un niño tiene que detener una actividad preferida para comenzar otra, puede ser difícil. Acompañeme para conocer algunas estrategias divertidas y consejos para ayudar a los niños en la transición de aquí para allá. ¡Hablemos de transiciones!

27th Annual Early Learning Conference – May 1st, 2021 – Virtual Conference

Workshop Descriptions

Session 2:

Creating Safe Spaces to Fail

Alex Dutton, Program Director, Old Firehouse School

Michele Bailey, Primary Caregiver, Old Firehouse school

As the problems in our world get more complex, we need to teach the next generation to be creative and innovative problem solvers. By utilizing growth mindset ideals, we can create learning spaces where failures and mistakes are valuable learning opportunities. Using intentional activities and language to reward experimentation and effort we can take the emphasis from having the “right” answers. A Reggio inspired curriculum project will be presented to demonstrate the power of the use of “failures and mistakes” as learning tools.

Teaching Children with Challenging Behaviors

Samantha Watson-Alvarado

Comprehensive Therapeutic Nursery School Program Director, Early Childhood Mental Health Program

Is there a child who refuses to join circle? One who acts out when it’s time to line up? One that runs around the classroom when everyone else is engaged? If this sounds like something you and your co-teachers are struggling with, this workshop is for you. Together we will discuss how to minimize the difficulties, increase your confidence as a teacher, and fill your teaching toolkit so that you are prepared to teach all children.

Using Communities of Practice to Support Leadership and Professional Learning

Tara Ryan, The i3 Institute: Inquiry, Intention & Innovation

Katherine Saribay, The I3 Institute: Inquiry, Intention & Innovation

In this interactive and practical session, participants will learn how communities of practice can be used to support leadership development and professional learning among educators. Facilitators will share key concepts of communities of practice (CoP) as well as their learning and experiences from facilitating CoPs with groups of early learning leaders and educators to plan and implement inquiry-based learning in their programs. Participants will have opportunities to practice CoP protocols and discuss implementation strategies with colleagues.

27th Annual Early Learning Conference – May 1st, 2021 – Virtual Conference

Workshop Descriptions

Playful and Intentional Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Shawn Bryant

Founding Director, The Teaching Excellence Center

Curriculum planning and implementation can be confusing. When we develop curriculum that focuses on the whole child, we create equitable learning experiences. This workshop will introduce you to Developmentally Appropriate Practice (known as DAP) and offer guidance on how to create developmentally appropriate curriculum. In developmentally appropriate classrooms, teachers assess children by what they already know, learn about each child's abilities, interests, needs, and help each child meet their goals. In this workshop, participants will explore all that is DAP, and its role in nurturing children's overall development through playful, intentional, and engaging planning, interaction, and follow-through.

Exploring the Guiding Principles of Language & Literacy

Gail Benson, M.Ed.

Professor of Early Childhood Education, Contra Costa College, Solano County Office of Education, Quality Improvement Coach

Preschoolers learn best from experiences that are interesting, useful, and fun. In this workshop we will learn how to engage children through fun language and literacy activities. We will discover easy techniques to help children feel empowered about their early reading skills. We will also explore setting up a Literacy rich environment that will encourage pre-reading and writing skills.

The Magic of Storytime: Cautivando a los niños con la maravilla de los libros

Cecilia Valdez

Tandem Partners in Early Learning

Las interacciones de servir y devolver desarrollan habilidades tempranas de lenguaje y alfabetización, y ayudan a formar cerebros fuertes y sanos! Revisaremos las últimas investigaciones y practicaremos estrategias específicas de lectura interactiva que provocan alegría y apoyan el desarrollo saludable del cerebro y el lenguaje temprano

27th Annual Early Learning Conference – May 1st, 2021 – Virtual Conference

Workshop Descriptions

Session 3:

Storytelling Through the Senses

Jessica Walsh

Early Childhood Special Educator

Join me to learn fun and creative ways to tell some favorite stories. This workshop will include props, media, reenactments, music, and more. If we get creative in the way we read books and tell stories to kids, they will learn to love books and storytelling, improving their literacy, communication and social skills.

The Importance of Being Playful for Children and Adults

Chelsea Bryson, Primary Caregiver, Old Firehouse School

Madison Montoya, Primary Caregiver, Old Firehouse School

Positive playful atmospheres make better learning environments for both adults and children. This workshop will provide a model for building such a culture for the staff and classrooms. We will focus on the adult relationships. Participants will get their over-analyzing self out the way by being silly and together, we will analyze the role of games in young children's lives.

Movement for Brain Development

Rossana Alves

Dance Consultant, Lotus Bloom Family Resource Center

The workshop shows how movement is important to create a strong foundation in the body for learning. We are going to explore the movement patterns that babies go through in the first year of life, which impact children's physical, cognitive and emotional development. Teachers will learn the Brain Dance, movement sequences that improve children's attention, cognitive learning, good behavior and self-regulation.

27th Annual Early Learning Conference – May 1st, 2021 – Virtual Conference

Workshop Descriptions

The Importance of Observation in Play

Shiva Behrouzi, Parent Educator & RIE Practicum Student, Bay Area Infant Toddler Network
Kristen Ring, Parent Educator & RIE Practicum Student, Bay Area Infant Toddler Network

As Magda Gerber, an early childhood educator once said, “Let the child be the scriptwriter, the director and the actor in his own play.” As Caregivers, we often feel the need to stimulate young children to ensure that they don’t miss a learning opportunity but have you ever wondered what would happen if we stopped and took a step back to see what the child would do if they were in control of their own play? We’ll demonstrate what that would look like and discuss the benefits of observation during a child’s play.

4 Steps to Calm Transitions

Lori Gibson-Washington
The Calming Communications Coach, Gibson Washington Consulting & Coaching

This workshop will breakdown four key points to achieve calm transitions in your program. Dreaming - conceptualizing about each person’s own purpose. Deciding what steps to take. Dealing with difficulties that always happen through using mindfulness techniques. Dancing, cheering and celebrating when everything comes together.

El Juego Como Intervención Para Comportamientos Difíciles

Juan Huerta Villicana
Professor of Early Childhood Education, Diablo Valley College

Niños que demuestran agresividad nos demuestran la necesidades que tienen con su comportamiento. El juego puede ser usado como una intervención para crear conexiones y cambiar su comportamiento. Ven y aprende cómo usar la imaginación de un niño, seguir su interés y hacer que el juego cambie la identidad, personalidad y comportamiento de un niño.