

## ECCLPS/NJC ANNUAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE 2022



**SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 2022**

**FREE! VIRTUAL CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM!**

**8AM-4PM**

**Registration is required by January 26.**

**8:00-10:00 AM**

**KEYNOTE: YOU Are the Miracle!! Lisa Matter from EQIT, Infant Family Specialist**

Caring for and educating young children is a calling as well as really hard day-to-day work in a way that no other job, career, calling or vocation is. While this critical work is often unnoticed or not valued, it IS the most important work that can ever be done. Our session will include stories, reflections, and celebrations of all the ways in which early educators are so much more than just one thing in the lives of children, families, and the heartbeat of the community.

**Presenter Bio:** Lisa Matter began her work in early childhood at the age of two, when her mom began a cooperative preschool in order to get them both out of the house. Both her parents were role models in education, with her mom reviving and then chairing, the Parent Teacher Organization. Soon her father joined and then served as the chair for the school board for 8 years. She regularly travels with her wife and children to visit her parents in Washington state. Currently she manages the EQ Initiative at the Colorado Department of Human Services. She is deeply committed to improving experiences for all infants and toddlers and believes that our convictions need only exist equaled by our compassion in order to see the changes that will ensure a meaningful life for babies and all those who care for them.

**10:00-11:00 PM**

**SESSION 1: Destressing While Kiddos Are Stressing, Amy Nation and Cheryl Bills**

How can you find calm when the children in your care are just as stressed? What are some of the strategies you can use to keep your cool? How can you help the kiddos discover their stress as well? What are the signs of you getting stressed? We will give you some simple ways to calm your room and some ways you can incorporate destressing into your day.

**Presenter Bios:** Amy Nation, MA has been in a variety of positions in the early childhood field. She has been an early childhood mental health consultant with Centennial Mental Health for almost 5 years. She is endorsed from the CoAIMH, has training in DC-05, Touchpoints, and Trauma-Informed Care. Amy brings her experience in early childhood to add another perspective to the families and caregivers she serves. Amy serves Morgan and Logan counties. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, reading, and spending time with her family.

Cheryl Bills, BSSW, MSC has been a Social Service case manager, school counselor, and joined the early childhood mental health consulting team at Centennial Mental Health three years ago. She has DC 0-5 Training as well as trauma-informed care. Cheryl brings a lot of knowledge to the team around many family and child concerns. In her spare time, she is an author and enjoys spending time with her family and church. She serves Logan, Phillips, and Sedgwick counties.

**11:00-12:00 PM**

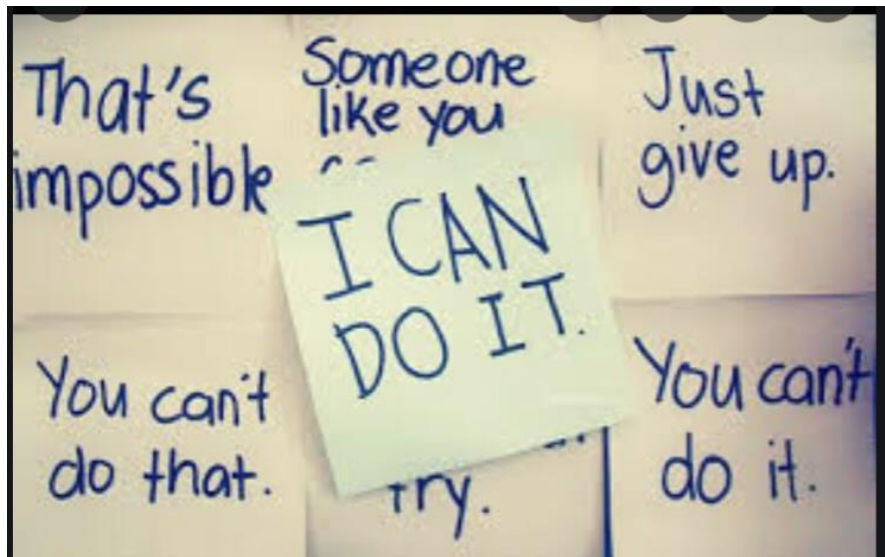
**SESSION 2: Inclusion for One Means Inclusion for All, Andrew Goff, CNCC ECE Professor**

Inclusion is an ideal in ECE. When surveyed, an overwhelming percentage of early childhood professionals believe that it is the right thing to do. They also believe that inclusion is not the best option for all children. Anecdotally, when teachers are asked to provide details, the responses often leave children with challenging behaviors, physical disabilities, and atypical sensory processing skills out of the classroom. This presentation will provide participants with knowledge and tools to argue the opposite response; inclusion for one child means inclusion for all children.

**PRESENTER BIO:** Andrew began his career as an early childhood educator in 2000. Through many professional experiences, he has since evolved from a teaching assistant in a childcare program to a leader in the field of early childhood special education/intervention. He now serves as the lead faculty and program coordinator of the early childhood program at Colorado Northwestern Community College where he focuses on developing the early childhood professional's skills and knowledge for leadership and teaching children with or at-risk of having developmental delays or disabilities. Andrew holds a bachelor's degree in child psychology and master's degree in early childhood education/early childhood special education from the University of Minnesota, and a Doctorate in early childhood special education from the University of Colorado Denver.



## LUNCH BREAK 12-1 PM



### 1:00-2:00 PM

#### **SESSION 3: Working with Children on the Autism Spectrum: You Can Do It! Michelle Kaiser**

This session will be a brief overview of signs and symptoms of infants and toddlers with autism (or sometimes referred to as neurodiversity). The referral process for infants and toddlers will be disseminated. Three strategies you can use right away will be shared with those in attendance as well.

**PRESENTER BIO:** Michelle Kaiser, MA, OTR is an occupational therapist and has been working with children birth to three years for nearly 30 years in northeastern Colorado. In November 2020 she completed her MA in Early Intervention with an emphasis in Autism and Sensory Impairment.

### 2:00-3:00 PM

#### **SESSION 4: Opportunity Knocks: Will You Open the Door? Donna Brady-Lawler and Val Sherman**

Have you ever considered taking college courses but weren't sure if you could make it work? Are you interested in earning a certificate, AA, or Bachelor's Degree? This is an excellent time to give it a try! This session will show how The Partnership for Rural Educator Preparation (T-PREP) Program at Northeastern Junior College and CU Denver gives you a way to earn a bachelor's degree and become a certified teacher without leaving your home or community. We will discuss courses, scholarships, and go over some of the nuts and bolts to help you start taking classes.

**PRESENTER BIOS:** Val Sherman is the Director of The Partnership for Rural Educator Preparation (T-PREP) at CU Denver. During her twenty-year career in education Valerie has served both in K-12 schools as a classroom teacher and literacy coach in higher education settings working to recruit, prepare, and retain quality educators for students learning throughout rural Colorado.

Donna Brady-Lawler is the ECE Coordinator and Professor at Northeastern Junior College where she has worked for 20 years. Prior to teaching ECE courses and Children's Literature, she worked in the field of early childhood in various preschool and childcare settings for 20 years. She is the academic advisor for ECE and Elementary Education Students.



**3:00-4:00pm**

**SESSION 5: Pyramid Model Teacher Starter Kits: Building capacity to meet the social and emotional developmental needs of infants and toddlers. Nicole Donatto**

Many professionals in Early Childhood have had the opportunity to attend 46 hours or more of professional development in both inclusive and social emotional practices. We can all agree that the training is invaluable but it's not always affordable, reasonable, or practical to make all of the materials necessary to implement this research and evidenced based practices. Join us for 1 hour to learn about how TES (The Edification Station) is making it possible for children, parents, teachers, and therapists to focus on the actual implementation of these practices and lightening the burden of putting it all together.

**PRESENTER BIO:** As a Developmental Interventionist (DI) – Social Emotional (SE) Specialist, Nicole utilizes best practices in evaluating and assessing children referred for Early Intervention services ages 0 to 3. She assists infants and toddlers to attain approximate, or comparable developmental milestones through the use of environmental adaptations, assistive technology and play. She facilitates play and interactions with same-age peers to encourage and promote friendship skills, and relationship building. Nicole assists families in community environments as well. She encourages them to grow their support system in the community and to grow a sense of belonging and support. Through coaching, she empowers parents to carry on learning all day and to use their natural supports. Nicole is bilingual in Spanish and English and charged with responding to the cultural and linguistic diversity of families and connecting them to the appropriate services. The physical and emotional safety of the children and families she serves is her highest priority. She is trained to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse, neglect, trauma, or developmental delay. Partnering with these families to better support their infants and toddlers from a more trauma informed lens has become a critical part of her duties.