

STAR NET REGION VI
EARLY CHILDHOOD TODAY CONFERENCE
MARCH 19, 2025

How Early Is Too Early? AAC Under 5

Sayard Bass
Hours: 2.0
DEC Strand: Instruction
EI: 2.0 INT

Description:

"Wait and see. Give it some time. Some kids talk late. My cousin had a son who..." these are the things our parents hear before they turn to us. I've sat on living room floors, too small plastic chairs, and at conference room tables and heard it many times. They come to us for the answer of "When will my child talk?" And the great thing is, I don't know either? With intervention some children become verbal communicators, others develop some words and stall, while others remain quiet. So, when do you introduce the idea of AAC? Alternative and Augmentative Communication is still an unfamiliar area to many SLPs and it has a negative view in many parents' minds. Today's session is to provide you with information on how AAC can help, even at this very young age. Learn information you can use for your practice with children and clients, information you can use to coach caregivers and others, and have the opportunity to connect and ask questions in this caffeine fueled AM session.

Mindfulness Games: Tools for Emotional Regulation and Calming Strategies for Young Children

Priscilla Boyd
Hours: 2.0
DEC Strand: Interaction
EI: 2.0 INT

Description:

Mindfulness is being used in many settings and research is supporting the use of mindfulness with children and schools. This experiential workshop will be full of activities that promote emotional regulation for children and, of course, adults will benefit also. Come ready to play!

Multilingual Learners: Strategies and Resources for Providing Care and Support in Early Childhood Environments

Adelicia Brienzo
Hours: 2.0
DEC Strand: Instruction/Family
EI: 1.0 INT, 1.0 WWF

Description:

*Unlock the keys to engaging your multilingual students and empowering their families: * Classroom tools to enhance learning for diverse language backgrounds * Effective family engagement resources to strengthen home-school connections * Inspiring perspectives to drive systemic change within your diverse learning communities.*

Occupational Therapy in An Early Childhood Classroom

Jackie Budwitis

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Teaming and Collaboration

EI: 2.0 INT

Description:

Occupational Therapy intervention in an Early Childhood classroom takes flexibility, collaboration and spur of the moment thinking. Providing therapy in a play-based environment will be discussed through the personal experiences of the presenter.

Creating Literacy Opportunities for All

Samantha Conklin

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Instruction

EI: 1.0 INT, 1.0 WWF

Description:

The International Literacy Association asserts that “every child, everywhere, has access to the education, opportunities, and resources needed to read.” But what do those early literacy experiences look like for students with the most complex needs? This training will review tools and strategies that will improve student access to language, books, and writing to increase participation in instructional literacy activities. Participants will walk away with strategies to improve access for all students and resources that they can immediately implement to support literacy instruction in their classrooms.

Joy of Connection: The Power of Play Begins With Us

Tara DeWolfe

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Interaction

EI: 1.0 INT, 1.0 WWF

Description:

This inspiring session delves into the transformative power of play in developing safe, stable, and nurturing relationships during early childhood. Discover how meaningful play experiences can build authentic

connections, foster trust, and holistic growth. This session invites caregivers to explore creative and joyful ways to craft playful experiences and routines that not only encourage connection but also support vital social- emotional wellbeing for the children and families they serve, as well as themselves. You'll leave equipped with practical strategies to enrich lives, ensuring this journey is filled with joy and hope. This uplifting session will help you unlock the magic of play, creating lasting bonds and deepening connections.

Healing Hearts: A Healing Centered Approach to Support Families Who Have Experience Trauma

Benton Johnson

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strands: Interaction

EI: 0.5 ATY, 1.0 INT, 0.5 WWF

Description:

This session focuses on supporting children and families impacted by trauma through a healing-centered lens. Participants will explore practical, trauma-informed strategies that promote resilience, emotional well-being, and meaningful engagement. Emphasizing relationships, cultural responsiveness, and the power of joy, the session will provide tools to foster safe, nurturing environments that empower both children and caregivers to heal and thrive.

Putting It All Together: Practices and Tools for High Quality Inclusion

Ann Kremer and Faith Knocke

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Interaction

EI: 2.0 INT

Description:

This overview of inclusion in early childhood will define inclusion for participants. The participants will learn to assess the quality of the learning environment, create a plan for embedded learning opportunities, and identify the what, when, and how of individualized inclusive instructional practices. Children do best when served in inclusive settings and have better outcomes over time.

Creating Joy and Hope with Families, Every Step of The Way

Susan Nevin, M.Ed.

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Family

EI: 1.0 INT, 1.0 WWF

Description:

One of the most special parts of being an Early Childhood Provider and/or Early Interventionist is that you hold great power to create lasting change for children and families. This does not only include working toward outcomes and achieving developmental milestones, but also in co-creating joy, hope, and strength

with families. Your interactions, your words, and your attitude all impact families' relationships and hopes for the future. Have you ever wondered how your interactions with children and families ripple outward to create such an impact? How your professional exchanges with children and families carry power to pave the way for joy-filled parent-child relationships? In this interactive session, participants will share in open discussion, engage in activities, hear from parents, and explore the ripple effect of our intervention as we strive to create joy and hope with children and families.

Nature's Magic: Sensory Play That Builds Social Skills for All Abilities

Marilyn Peterson

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Instruction

EI: 1.0 INT, 1.0 WWF

Description:

Daily contact with nature is linked to better health, less stress, increased attention span, decreased impulsivity, improved mood, and lower obesity rates. Refresh your knowledge on the "why, where and how" of integrating nature into children's lives, especially through sensory play. In this interactive training, you will learn strategies and engaging activities for both indoor and outdoor settings that encompass all domains of learning while involving children in nature-based sensory play. This significantly boosts their behavioral skills and emotional well-being. You'll also leave with activities and resources on sensory disorders, enabling you to support children when they need to feel calm or more energetic. Let's help ALL children feel successful!

Healing Centered Classroom

Jennifer Rosinia

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Interaction

EI: 0.5 ATY, 1.0 INT, 0.5 WWF

Description:

The impact of trauma on person's life is well documented and understood. So much so that the term "trauma informed" has become a standard of care that has permeated all domains of social services including education. Trauma informed care refers to guiding principles that address the impact on mental, physical and emotional health. In schools, trauma informed care has replaced traditional behavior management approaches suggesting that disruptive behavior is a symptom of harm rather than willful acting out. But more recent thinking has suggested that a trauma informed approach is incomplete centering a child's identity on their trauma rather than on their healing. In this session we will explore how the term "healing centered" expands our thinking and service delivery to embrace a more holistic approach that fosters well-being once again changing our question from "What's happened to you?" to "What's right with you?"

It's All Fun and Games: Individualizing and Scaffolding Skills Using Board Games to Support All Learners

Katie Suchy

Hours: 2.0

DEC Strand: Teaming and Collaboration

EI: 2.0 INT

Description:

Participants at this workshop will explore the importance of play in early childhood, what it looks like, and how to scaffold and individualize instruction to support all children. In this workshop, participants will work in groups using board games commonly found in early childhood classrooms to brainstorm ways to use each game to support the different levels of development of all students.