

Breakout Session Descriptions

Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry and First Things First College Scholarship

This session is an overview of the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry, a grant funded by First Things First. This session creates an awareness of all the benefits of being in the Registry in addition to providing information on the First Things First College Scholarship.

Collective Impact: Partnering Across ECE in Yavapai County

Early Childhood educators and administrators are faced with the enormous task of providing developmentally appropriate, high-quality education, a caring, safe environment, school readiness, and an array of social services. Being tasked with so much, the people who educate our youngest members of society need to be supported too! We will be highlighting best practices involved in partnering across local, state, and federal programs tasked with upholding ECE in Yavapai County. Come join us as we talk about the importance of community engagement with Early Childhood Education and our success stories around collective impact.

Developing Phonological Awareness in the Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Classroom

Intentional awareness of the sounds in language is a key indicator of how well children will master beginning reading skills in early elementary grades. In this session, literacy specialist, Destiny Chirello will provide information for supporting language and literacy development through purposeful phonemic awareness activities for the prekindergarten and kindergarten classroom. Participants will gain an understanding of the role of phonology on brain development and later literacy success. The session will also provide engaging and developmentally appropriate activities to stimulate phonemic awareness development in the classroom using word play and children's literature.

Early Childhood Education Assessment System and AZ Dash

In this session, participants will have the opportunity to explore the components of an early childhood education assessment system, understand how to utilize data to inform instruction, and connect to the AZ Dash. In addition participants will build an understanding of how AZ Dash can be used to see various levels of data to prepare conversations on school readiness, instruction, intervention and implementation.

Early Trauma and Adult Health: The ACE Study

Stress and trauma in childhood affects later adult health. This session focuses on the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study, an ongoing research study that demonstrates the link between early stress and adult disease. In addition, participants will learn ways to both prevent ACEs from occurring and build resilience to their negative effects.

Equipping Educators to Move from Chaos to Calm; Building a Supportive School Environment

This workshop is for staff who want to reduce challenging behaviors exhibited by children. Attendees will study SRPMIC's story of implementing a site-wide social-emotional program within a Head Start and Early Head Start program. Attendees will get easy, fun ideas to incorporate into the classroom and their entire school that help to promote a supportive environment. This workshop will highlight the importance of making a shift in how we see and respond to challenging behavior so we can move from chaos to calm.

Family Engagement and Support

Establishing a reciprocal relationship with families is critical to the development of healthy, successful learners. In a high quality early education program, frequent two-way communication is established and maintained, and families are presented with multiple opportunities to participate in activities and decisions that concern their children. In this interactive session, participants will explore how developing mutual respect, cooperation, and a shared responsibility for the child helps the family see that they are a valued partner within the learning community.

Fine Arts Standard Module

The arts nurture the imagination and creative spirit of all children. Sensory awareness is the foundation for all imaginative activity and creative expression. For young children, the importance of the arts is in the process of creating rather than the end result. In this interactive session, participants will actively explore the arts and how it connects to all areas of learning and how they are fundamental to children's development and education. Through hands-on activities, participants will gain practical ideas that will allow children to develop independence, self-esteem, and self-expression through the arts process which in turn will allow children to discover more about who they are and gain insight into their own culture and the cultures around them.

Helping Families Stay Strong: Strengthening Families Protective Factors

Strengthening Families is a research-based approach to working with families in a way that develops and enhances their strengths. It is based on engaging families, programs and communities in building five protective factors: Parental resilience; Social connections; Knowledge of parenting and child development; Concrete support in times of need; and Social and emotional competence of children. Through this introductory training, participants will learn an overview of the five Protective Factors, understand what it means to work with families in a strength-based way, and be able to identify strategies to help families cultivate protective factors.

Improving Quality for Young Children

Quality First is Arizona's Quality Improvement and Rating System and is designed to support early care and education programs in improving their quality and offering access to young children, ages Birth to five years old. To support these efforts, Quality First engages programs in receiving three primary areas of quality: Administrative Practices, Quality Environments, and Positive Interactions. With the support of a coach, objective data from an assessment, and financial incentives to overcome barriers, Quality First helps programs to achieve their highest quality possible. Learn more about Quality First and how to engage in continuous quality improvement efforts.

Program Administration and Qualifications

Effective program administration is one key ingredient in the successful implementation of an early education program. Through the development of a written philosophy, the identification of efficient operational policies, the hiring of competent and committed staff, and the provision of consistent supervision, program administrators lay the foundation for early education program staff to focus on implementing developmentally appropriate programs. In this interactive session, participants will explore the first Guideline Category of the Program Guidelines.

Ramps and Pathways

Learn how to promote children's scientific reasoning by engaging them in active experimentation through the use of Ramps and Pathways. In this interactive session you will see the benefits of using a constructivist approach to physical science learning in the early childhood classroom. You will learn

why ramp activities engage children deeply in reasoning about physical objects and phenomena such as force and motion and how to apply the 10 principals of constructivist teaching in your classroom.

Read On Arizona's Building Blocks to Becoming a Reader: What We Know Works

This session highlights Arizona's early literacy initiative, Read On Arizona, and critical success factors that support early language and literacy along the birth through age eight continuum. The key to literacy is a progression of skills that begins with the ability to understand spoken words and decode written words, and culminates in the deep understanding of text and written communication. This session will include information on an interactive mapping tool, MapLIT, that gives a holistic view of the community; everything from health, education, and family engagement data. This session gives an overview of the Continuum of Effective Literacy Practices and a deeper dive into the early language development, local examples of what works, and the Early Literacy Guide for families and other tools to help families focus on the early years, including language nutrition-making sure their child gets a healthy portion of words each day.

Seed to Read: Connecting Early Literacy, Health, and Gardening

Teachers know that reading aloud to students is one of the greatest teaching tools they have. Reading engaging and age-appropriate books builds more than children's vocabulary; it demonstrates what a good reader sounds like and constructs the world around them. Focusing on gardening and health-themed books that highlight early childhood literacy skills also allows for consistent and fun health and nutrition messaging. This session will demonstrate techniques for engaging children for more meaningful read alouds and for connecting readings to fun and interactive gardening, health, and nutrition activities that extend the story and promote both early childhood literacy and health.

Social Studies Standard Module

The inclusion of Social Studies in early childhood environments is important in order to nurture children's understanding of themselves and others. Through Social Studies children learn to become active, responsible citizens and what the expectations of these citizens are. In this interactive session, participants will delve into the Social Studies Early Learning Standard in order to gain practical ideas to help children acquire skills in problem solving, decision making, and critical thinking that can then be integrated in to all aspects of their world.

Supporting Kindergarten ELLs Learning Through Exploration and Inquiry

In this session, participants will learn how to bring inquiry-based learning strategies into instructional practice with English Language Learners. We will focus on the teacher's role in inquiry-based learning. The session will guide participants through the language structures required for academic discussion and the connection to English Language Proficiency Standards. Time will be spent focusing on what this approach would look like in a Structured English Immersion Kindergarten Classroom. Explore hands-on experiences which give young learners the opportunity to be active constructors of knowledge.

The Kindergarten Developmental Inventory

This session will offer a panel discussion to discuss the Kindergarten Developmental Inventory. In 2013, the Arizona Department of Education joined a multi-state consortium led by North Carolina to develop and implement a Kindergarten Developmental Inventory (KDI) that will be available in Arizona for all kindergarten classrooms in the 2017-18 school year.

The Kindergarten Developmental Inventory (KDI) is an assessment that kindergarten teachers will use to obtain an in-depth understanding of the developmental strengths and needs of every child. It is intended to be used as a formative assessment—as a tool used throughout the entire school year to help teachers identify the depths of each child’s knowledge and abilities in all areas of development: (1) Social and Emotional, (2) Language and Communication, (3) Approaches to Learning, (4) Cognitive Development, and (5) Physical Health and Development.

Why Classroom Management Isn’t Enough: Resiliency-based Practices that Support Children’s Foundation for Academic Success

During this session, we will explore the lifelong significance of resiliency-based social and emotional support in preschool and in kindergarten. With a focus on supporting children who have experienced trauma, we will identify approaches that help children develop necessary skills for lifelong success.

Your Words, My Meaning

Language is a powerful tool, especially when working with young learners. In this session, participants will learn why it is important for teachers to be cognizant of the words they choose to use with students and tips on how to do it better. The primary source of information is taken from the book, *Choice Words* by Peter H. Johnston.