



Michigan Association for the  
Education of Young Children

## 2025 ANNUAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE

# **LITTLE NOTES, BIG IMPACTS: THE POWER OF MUSIC IN EARLY YEARS**

April 13 - 15, 2025  
Amway Grand Plaza Hotel & DeVos Place  
Grand Rapids, Michigan



An Affiliate of **naeyc**



## A message from Governing Board President Cheryl Priest

Welcome to the 2025 Michigan AEYC Annual Early Childhood Conference! Once again, this premier event brings together thousands of early childhood professionals, and I'm thrilled you're here to share this time with us. With a rich tapestry of informative sessions, energizing events, and meaningful networking opportunities ahead, we extend a warm welcome to all—both familiar faces and first-time attendees.

Together, we'll explore new ideas, deepen our practice, and strengthen the connections that move our field forward. Here's to a memorable conference filled with inspiration, collaboration, and the collective joy of learning and growing together.

### Conference App

Download the Michigan AEYC (miaeyc) app in the Apple Store or Google Play. Manage session selections, receive training credit, download resources, engage with attendees and exhibitors, interactive maps, and more.

For Android and Apple users, search for MIAEYC in the App Store/ Google Play. Use the email your conference registration is tied to to login. Unique registration email is required.

**The App Help Desk is located near badge pick-up.**



You can also access the app from your web browser. Just visit the following URL to get the app on your smartphone, tablet, or PC:  
<http://app.resultsathand.com/miaeyc>

### Training Credit

To receive training credit for in-person sessions attended, you must be pre-registered for each individual session. To pre-register for your desired sessions in the app, click on the Agenda, click on the session you want to attend, and click 'Reserve Seat.' If the session is full, you will not be permitted to reserve a seat, receive training credit, or enter the room.

You may switch your reserved sessions using the app as needed. Keep in mind, you can only receive training credit for sessions you have reserved in the app. At the conclusion of each session, the presenter will provide you with a Check Out code. Enter the code in the session on the app to receive training credit.

To receive MiRegistry training credit, you must have included your MiRegistry ID Number during registration. To receive SCHECHs for those eligible, you must have included your PIC Number during registration.

Training sessions completed may take up to 30 days to appear in your MiRegistry Learning Record. Online sessions may take up to 48 business hours to appear on your MiRegistry Learning Record. SCHECHs may take up to 30 days to appear on your MOECS account regardless of session format.

**A Michigan AEYC representative will be available in the Amway Center Concourse for conference app and training credit assistance.**

Become a  
member of  
**YOUR**  
professional  
organization!



WWW.MIAEYC.ORG

# Schedule At-A-Glance

## MICHIGAN AEYC 2025 ANNUAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE

### SUNDAY

- 🎵 11:00 am - 8:00 pm  
Registration & Badge Pickup
- 🎵 12:00 pm - 4:30 pm  
Focus Sessions
- \* 12:00 pm - 4:30 pm  
Zumbini Training
- 🎵 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
Welcome Reception at Grand Rapids Children's Museum

### MONDAY

- 🎵 7:30 am - 4:30 pm  
Registration & Badge Pickup
- 🎵 8:30 am - 10:00 am  
Sessions
- 🎵 9:30 am - 5:30 pm  
Exhibit Hall & Silent Auction  
De-Stim in Secchia Hallway
- 🎵 10:15 am - 12:00 pm  
General Session
- 🎵 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm  
Exhibits & Lunch Break
- 🎵 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Sessions
- 🎵 6:00 pm - 6:45 pm  
Annual Membership Meeting
- \* 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm  
Gala: Light Up the Night!

### TUESDAY

- 🎵 7:00 am - 11:00 am  
Registration & Badge Pickup
- 🎵 8:30am-10:00am  
Sessions
- 🎵 9:30 am - 4:00 pm  
Exhibit Hall & Silent Auction  
De-Stim in Secchia Hallway
- 🎵 10:15 am - 12:00 pm  
Sessions
- 🎵 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm  
Exhibits & Lunch Break
- 🎵 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm  
Sessions
- 🎵 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm  
Closing Keynote
- 🎵 6:00 pm  
ACCESS Meet-Up (invite only)

### WEDNESDAY

8:30 am - 4:00 pm IHE Summit (invite only)



Requires pre-registration or additional add-on fee during conference registration. Zumbini Training is a PRE-REGISTERED EVENT on Sunday and is FREE for members and \$35 for non-members.

Statement of Co-sponsorship: Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) is an equal opportunity provider. Commercial products or services displayed or presented as a part of the conference are not considered endorsed by MiLEAP.

# Governing Board

## President

- Cheryl Priest

## Immediate Past President

- Heather Lucus

## Treasurer

- Bonnie Bonifield

## Vice President

- Lyndsay Carey

## Secretary

- Melissa Thiebaut Marinelli

## Member-at-Large

- Christian Boyer
- Kari Shepherd
- Jolene Charbeneau
- Aarie Wade
- Trisha Dart
- Erin Wilks
- LaTonya Redfearn
- Jennifer Wixson

## Student Member-at-Large

- Courtney Kalkman

## Advocacy Committee - Chair

- Kirsten Charnesky

## Awards Committee - Chair

- Jennifer Griffith

## Nominating Committee - Chair

- Holly Hoffman

## Finance Committee - Chair

- Bonnie Bonifield

## Membership Committee - Chair

- Lyndsay Carey

# Staff

## Executive Director

- Erica Willard

## Director of Accounting

- Kelly Williams

## Director of Professional Programs

- Kelsey Laird

## Director of Marketing & Membership

- Bridgett Jones

## Accounting Manager

- Nadav Shaari

## Executive Assistant

- Shannon Haight

## Program Manager

- Miranda Durham
- Dianna Erickson
- Paula Spencer

## Fiscal/Administrative Assistant

- Tony Hoerner
- Laura Laubenthal

## Program Coordinator

- Amy Bond
- Michelle Daniels
- Nikki LaMaster

## Program Assistant

- Kaitlyn Webster

## Program Specialist

- Jennifer Davis
- Matt Foster
- Alison Hoepfner
- Katherine Julson
- ShaRhonda Kelley
- Olivia Prichard
- Lindsay White

## Mission Statement:

The mission of the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children is to promote high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

Michigan AEYC provides a forum where individuals can gather and discuss issues vital to those who work on behalf of young children and their families. Although Michigan AEYC encourages the exchange of diverse opinions, the ideas presented do not necessarily reflect any of Michigan AEYC's official positions. Michigan AEYC assumes no responsibility for any statement of fact or opinion presented at this conference, nor does acceptance of advertising or exhibits imply endorsement of any products or services by Michigan AEYC.



## Year-Round Partners



\* Visionary Partner: Kaplan

\* Mission Driver Partners: CMU, MAISA, Bright Minds Training

## Conference Sponsors



FERRIS STATE  
UNIVERSITY



## Exhibitors

- Book Vine for Children
- Highlights Early Learning
- Special Olympics Michigan
- VanPeete
- Walden University
- Michigan AfterSchool Association
- Special Education Mediation Services (SEMS)
- MiRegistry
- hand2mind
- Ferris State University
- Bright Minds Training
- Mott Community College
- Oakland University
- Clinton County RESA - Office of Innovative Projects
- Jackrabbit Care
- Whimsicality, LLC
- REMC Association of Michigan
- Central Michigan University
- MDHHS Infant Safe Sleep Program
- The Magnetic Learning Company
- Discovery Toys Learning Products
- Michigan WIC
- Lakeshore Learning
- Environmental Health Bureau
- Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA)
- National Heritage Academies
- Nature Playscapes
- BodyBib
- Goldfish Swim School
- Policy Equity Group
- Shields Childcare Supplies
- MDE-Office of Educational Supports-Special Populations Unit
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- Grow By 1
- Allied Powers LLC
- Variquest LLC
- Rochester Christian University
- Delta Dental of Michigan
- Play with a Purpose
- School Specialty Childcraft
- Early Childhood Investment Corporation/Great Start to Quality
- MDHHS - Early Hearing Detection & Intervention
- ECE Subhub
- Superkid Capes
- Teaching Strategies
- Eastern Michigan University
- Northern Michigan University
- Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health
- Connect4Learning
- Zumbini
- Detroit Dye House
- Teachstone
- Early Childhood Investment Corporation (Child Care Innovation Fund)
- PEDALS Michigan
- Kids Gotta Play
- Detroit PBS
- Create 3 Architecture

## Registration and Badge Pickup

Online conference registration closes March 30th. Registration after that date must be done onsite during the registration times listed in the schedule at-a-glance. Onsite registration is located in Center Concourse, Concourse Level, Amway.

Badge pick-up for pre-registered attendees is located in Center Concourse, Concourse Level, Amway. You must wear your name badge for admission to all sessions, exhibits, and conference functions.

## Things to Do

The Grand Rapids Downtown Area Shuttle (DASH) offers downtown visitors a great way to get around. DASH buses pass every stop every 15 minutes.

### Downtown Conference Attendee Exclusives

Experience Grand Rapids has arranged discounts at a number of local restaurants, attractions and other businesses to help you truly experience the city while you are here. Redeem your discounts by presenting the digital coupon on your phone. Visit [www.experiencegr.com/exclusives](http://www.experiencegr.com/exclusives) for a full listing of discounts or use the QR code below:



## Become a member of YOUR professional organization!

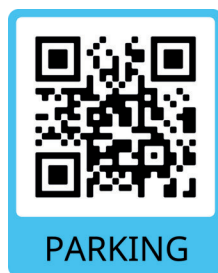
Join a network of over 4,000 statewide and 60,000 national and international peers. NAEYC and Michigan AEYC welcome YOUR voice in our mission to improve the quality and accessibility of early childhood education programs and services to enhance the development of children and families.



[WWW.MIAEYC.ORG](http://WWW.MIAEYC.ORG)

## Parking

- **Amway Hotel - \$41 self-parking.** Rates subject to change. Conference overnight guests receive a discount on self parking.
- **Marriott Courtyard - \$29 self-parking.** Rates subject to change. Conference overnight guests receive a discount on self parking.
- View a map with additional downtown parking options here:



## Food & Dining Out

Food service is not included in registration. A select number of sessions include breakfast or lunch service and **require pre-registration and an additional fee paid during conference registration to attend.**

Complimentary coffee/hot beverage service will be available each morning in Center Concourse/Amway.

Meal service is not included unless an add-on breakfast, lunch, or special evening session was purchased during registration. Concessions for meal purchase are available during the lunch period in the Exhibit Hall. Additionally, the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel offers several dining options and here are numerous options within walking distance. Access a map of dining options in and around the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel here

## Dining Options



# SUNDAY



**11:00 am - 8:00 pm**  
Registration & Badge Pickup



**12:00 pm - 4:30 pm**  
Focus Sessions

## FOCUS SESSIONS

- **Focus Session: Igniting the Leader Within: Empowering the Leadership Journey for Students and Young Professionals to Grow and Lead.** Presenter: Paula Spencer, Michigan AEYC. Co-Presenters: A Team of Current Early Childhood Leaders
- **Focus Session: Singing With Purpose: Leveraging Music in Early Childhood Education to Nurture.** Presenter: Carin McEvoy, MMEA Michigan
- **Focus Session: Effective Recruitment and Retention Strategies for Early Childhood Programs.** Presenter: Rhonda Meyers, ECE SubHub/ Heartfelt Impressions
- **Focus Session: Managing Behaviors that Challenge Us with Confidence and Compassion.** Presenter: Amy Bond, Michigan AEYC. Co-Presenter: Michelle Daniels, Michigan AEYC
- **Focus Session: Michigan AEYC Presents: CDA Resource Day! A Sponsored CDA Portfolio Prep Day.** Presenter: Jennifer Davis, Michigan AEYC. Co-Presenters: ShaRhonda Kelley, Alison Hoepfner, Olivia Prichard, Michigan AEYC
- **Make A Circle Film Viewing and Discussion: Learn How Academics and Advocates are Using the Film as a Tool for Change and How You Can Too!** Presenter: Lyndsay Carey, MARESA
- **Focus Session: Together We Grow: Supporting Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities in Child Care.** Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Champagne, CCRESA. Co-Presenter: Kris Kasperski, CCRESA



**12:00 pm - 4:30 pm**  
Zumbini Training



**5:00 pm - 7:00 pm**  
Welcome Reception at Grand Rapids Children's Museum



Requires pre-registration or additional add-on fee during conference registration. Zumbini Training is a PRE-REGISTERED EVENT on Sunday and is FREE for members and \$35 for non-members.

**\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\***

# MONDAY



**7:30 am - 4:30 pm**  
Registration & Badge Pickup



**7:30 am - 5:00 pm**  
CTE Homeroom



**8:00 am - 5:00 pm**  
MiRegistry, Licensing, and GSQ Help Desk



**9:30 am - 5:30 pm**  
Exhibit Hall & Silent Auction  
De-Stim in Secchia Hallway

## Session Information 8:30 am - 9:45 am



**Director Breakfast and Learn: The Art of Delegation: Building Stronger Teams in Early Childhood Education**

PRESENTER: Amy Bond, Michigan AEYC



**Documentation in the Classroom: Start Enriching Every Lesson Plan**

PRESENTER: Andrew Jones, Little Seeds CDC



**Curious Minds at Play: Engaging Young Learners with 3D Science Exploration**

PRESENTER: Gabriela Chulevski, Detroit Academy of Arts and Sciences

Co-Presenters: Angela Jones, Detroit Academy of Arts and Sciences; Dominique Pettway, Detroit Academy of Arts and Sciences; Sade Fortune, Detroit Academy of Arts and Sciences



**Multi-Sensory Math and Literacy**

PRESENTER: Angie Meredith-Ridgeway, hand2mind



**Screens, Kids, and Alternatives: How Technology Affects Behavior**

PRESENTER: Karina Scott, Freedom Inside: For Children, Parents, and Teachers



**Communication Starts with the Hands: The Impact of Simple Signing in Early Years**

PRESENTER: Jennifer Stewart, Signing Courses



**Decrease Stress, Enhance Joy, and Increase Your Success, Today!**

PRESENTER: Raelene Ostberg, Thriving Together, LLC

# MONDAY

## Session Information

8:30 am - 9:45 am



### Using Music and Sounds Intentionally to Support All Children in the Classroom and Avoid Sensory Overloads

PRESENTER: Karen Murillo, Highscope Educational Research Foundation



### Bringing the Drama to Dramatic play

PRESENTER: Zena Turner, Detroit Edison Public School Academy

Co-Presenters Aljeliki Williams, Detroit Edison Public School Academy; Breyonna Kallapure, Detroit Edison Public School Academy



### Creative Classroom Management: Not Your Regular Pocketful of Pixie Dust

PRESENTERS: Joanne Shango, The Montessori School Rochester

Co-Presenter: Magdalena Ponurska

8:45 am - 10:00 am



### Engaging Families: Building Stronger Partnerships with Technology

PRESENTER: Angela Hayworth, Jackrabbit Technologies



### Creating Environments That Create Change

PRESENTER: Taunya Sims, Jus Us KIDZ Early Care & Family Services, LLC



### Fabulous Feltboards

PRESENTER: Janice Zoerman, Lakeshore Little People's Place



### The Protection of Social Connection!

PRESENTER: Brittany Wright, Child Care Network

Co-Presenter: Brooke Rains, Child Care Network



Requires pre-registration or additional add-on fee during conference registration.

## Session Information

8:45 am - 10:00 am



### Neurodiversity Within Our Workplace and Field

PRESENTER: Annette Sobocinski, Child Care Network

Co-Presenters: Keegan Giffels, Student-University of Michigan; Uzo Nwauwa, Student-University of Michigan



### Teaching Through the Seasons- Nature Based Teaching

PRESENTER: Anna Fryer, Teddy Bear Daycare and Preschool

Co-Presenter: Alexa Cherup, Teddy Bear Daycare and Preschool



### Responding to the Response: Navigating Critical Conversations Around Challenging Topics with Young Children

PRESENTER: Kathryn Ohle, Grand Valley State University

Co-Presenter: Christine Kenney, Grand Valley State University



### The Harmony of Hardware: Explore the Music of Everyday Objects

PRESENTER: Jocelyn Prewett, Central Michigan University



### Preventative Practices Promote Positive Behavior

PRESENTER: Sally Mowers, Livingston Educational Service Agency

Co-Presenter: Ashleigh Mowers, Livingston Educational Service Agency

KEYNOTE Speaker  
10:15 am - 12 pm



### Connecting Through Song: Performing Songwriter and Teaching Artist

PRESENTER: Joshua Davis



# MONDAY

## Rhythmic Dialogues - Harmony Hub Devos Booth

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm



**Rhythmic Dialogues - Harmony Hub Devos Booth:** In depth conversations to connect, inspire and elevate the field of Early Childhood Education. Stop by and share your experiences, ask questions, and engage with your peers.

- **NAEYC Membership Journeys and Inquiries** – NAEYC and Michigan AEYC Staff
- **ECE Students** - What can Michigan AEYC do for you? Michigan AEYC Student MAL
- **Current Michigan AEYC Governing Board** - Do you have questions? Bring your questions for the Michigan AEYC Governing Board members.
- **Meet the Michigan AEYC Governing Board Candidates**- Stop by and meet the candidates for the upcoming election.
- **Michigan AEYC Advocacy Committee** - Discover opportunities with the Michigan AEYC Advocacy Committee!

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm



**CTE Student and Instructor Luncheon  
BY INVITE ONLY**



**Exhibits & Lunch Break**



**Requires pre-registration or additional add-on fee during conference registration.**

**\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\***

## Session Information

1:30 pm - 2:45 pm



### **From New Hire to Team Player: Elevating Staff Onboarding Practices**

PRESENTER: Walishya White,  
Kiddie Time Childcare Center



### **MiLEAP Directors' Panel**

PRESENTER: Courtney Adams, MiLeap

Co-Presenters: Sophia Lafayette-Lause;  
Lisa Brewer-Walraven, Cynthia Derby, MiLEAP



### **Loose Parts, Big Words: Building Literacy Through Playful Exploration**

PRESENTER: Amber Jones, Oakland County  
Co-Presenter: Jennifer Philleo, Wayne RESA



### **Thriving Together: Montessori and Great Start to Quality**

PRESENTER: Carey Wilson, Child Care Network  
CO-Presenter: Amy Moore, Child Care Network



### **Guiding Those Terrific Toddlers: Evidence- Based Strategies to Set Effective Limits and Get Toddlers to Follow Them!**

PRESENTER: Raelene Ostberg, Thriving  
Together, LLC



### **SOLUTION ROOM - DIRECTORS**



### **Dreaming up New Possibilities in Early Childhood Education**

PRESENTER: Dr. Katie Sloan, Oakland University  
Co-Presenter: Victoria Clark, Matrix Human  
Services



### **Music, Movement, Materials & Making Connections: Supporting Children's Self- Regulation**

PRESENTER: Heidi Foxworthy, Michigan State  
University  
Co-Presenter: Brooke Whiskin, Michigan State  
University

# MONDAY

1:45 pm - 3:00 pm



## Make It With Love

PRESENTER: Dr. Darya Owens, Reeword InsAnalysis



## Creating Inclusive Learning Spaces: Practical Strategies for Neurodivergent-Friendly Classrooms

PRESENTER: Kathy Gilbert, KMG Research



## Why does my kid do that?: Educating Caregivers through the Play Schemas

PRESENTER: Angela Aernouts, Play and Learn GRCC

Co-Presenter: Meighan Taylor, Play and Learn-GRCC



## Blueprints for Success: Harnessing Early Childhood Standards to Inspire Growth

PRESENTER: Whitney Schampers, Marquette Alger RESA

Co-Presenter: Lyndsay Carey, Marquette Alger RESA



## Scaling the Heights of Learning: Exploring Vertical Education

PRESENTER: Sarah Schmidt, Montrose Community Schools

Co-Presenters: Jamie Hayden, Montrose Community Schools; April Bowen, Montrose Community Schools



## Musically Inclusive and Emotionally Supportive Early Childhood Environments

PRESENTER: Thelma Carter, TLC Educational Associates

Co-Presenter: Ericka Taylor, Ph.D., Saginaw Intermediate School District



Requires pre-registration or additional add-on fee during conference registration.

\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\*

## Session Information



## Creating a Culture of Appreciation in Your Program

PRESENTER: Heidi Friedel ECE SubHub



## Top 10 Coaching Problems & How To Fix Them

PRESENTER: Michelle Burkhard, Grow By 1

## Spotlight

3:15 pm - 4:30 pm



## Let's play! Group Songwriting Workshop

PRESENTER: Joshua Davis



## Promoting Inclusive Care Practices for Infants and Toddlers

PRESENTER: Kris Kasperski, Clinton County RESA - Office of Innovative Projects

Co-Presenter: Jen Champagne, Clinton County RESA - Office of Innovative Projects



## SOLUTION ROOM - PRESCHOOL



## "Lifting as We Climb": Advocating for Black Males in K-16 Settings

PRESENTER: Brian Jonhson Ph.D., J.D. NAEYC

CO-Presenter: Anthony Broughton, Troy Hunter, Reginald Williams



## Unleashing the Power of Resilience: Thriving Through Self-Care

PRESENTER: Colette Masty, Child Care Network

Co-Presenter: Carey Wilson, Child Care Network

# MONDAY

3:15 pm - 4:30 pm



## **Loose Parts: A Refreshing Choice for Meaningful Experiences in the Classroom**

PRESENTER: Emily Blunt, Towsley Children's House



## **The Power of Positive Affirmations Through Raps, Rhymes, and Catchphrases**

PRESENTER: Camila Fowler, I Am Smart! I Am Strong! I Can Do It! L.L.C.



## **Help Me Grow: Empowering Early Childhood Providers Through Connection and Support**

PRESENTER: Courtney Gupta, Clinton County RESA Office of Innovative Projects

Co-Presenter: Christy Callahan, Clinton County RESA Office of Innovative Projects



## **Find Your Voice: Building Confidence Singing with Children**

PRESENTER: Joellen Lewsader, Central Michigan University

Co-Presenter: Jocelyn Prewett, Central Michigan University Child Development Learning Laboratory



## **What About Me?**

PRESENTER: Pepper Near, Clinton County RESA



## **Advanced Advocacy Strategies: Driving Systemic Change in Early Childhood**

PRESENTER: Annette Sobocinski, Child Care Network

Co-Presenter: Kirsten Charnesky, School Director & Administrator / Advocacy Committee Chair Somerset Academy / MiAEYC



## **The Risky Path**

PRESENTER: Liz Powers, University of Michigan Towsley Children's House

## Session Information



### **Move & Groove In Your Classroom**

PRESENTER: Julie Moore, Clinton Macomb Public Library

Co-Presenter: Lisa Mulvenna, Clinton Macomb Public Library



### **Expulsion Prevention: Determination, Skills and a Plan**

PRESENTER: Elizabeth Villaverde, Great Start to Quality Western Resource Center



### **Organized Chaos: Helping Children and Teachers Transition**

PRESENTER: Sinsery Gardner, ECE SubHub



### **Managing Enrollment Projections**

PRESENTER: Jessica Ossiff-Affholter, First Children's Finance

Co-Presenter: Angeliek Lopez, First Children's Finance



### **Regulators MOUNT UP!**

PRESENTER: Casey Sterle, Leslie Public Schools

Co-Presenter: Staci Cramer, Leslie Public Schools

**Annual Membership Meeting**  
**6:00 pm - 6:45 pm**



**Gala: Light Up the Night!**  
**7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**



Requires pre-registration or additional add-on fee during conference registration.

**\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\***



**7:00 am - 11:00 am**  
Registration & Badge Pickup



**7:30 am - 5:00 pm**  
CTE Homeroom



**8:00 am - 3:00 pm**  
MiRegistry, Licensing, and GSQ Help Desk



**9:30 am - 4:00 pm**  
Exhibit Hall & Silent Auction  
De-Stim in Secchia Hallway

## Session Information

### 8:30 am - 9:45 am



#### **TEACH Breakfast & Learn**

PRESENTER: Dianna Erickson,  
Michigan AEYC



#### **Advocacy for Impact: Strengthening Michigan's Early Childhood Systems**

PRESENTER: Amy Moore, Child Care Network  
Co-Presenters: Annette Sobocinski, Child Care Network; Trisha Dart, Child Care Network



#### **Creating Safety for All: Integration of Infant Mental Health Principals in Your Early Childhood Classroom**

PRESENTER: Erica Schrodtt  
Co-Presenter: Morgan Peterson, Gretchen's House



#### **A Music Educator's Guide - Grow your Musicianship to Support your Students' Musical and Social Emotional Learning**

PRESENTER: Lizabeth Desmet, Teacher Liz Music LLC  
Co-Presenter: Maria Schoon, Elementary Music Educator



#### **Harmony in the Workplace**

PRESENTER: Kymalee Gresh, JCISD  
Co-Presenter: Erica Bullinger, JCISD



#### **Calendar Isn't a Four Letter Word**

PRESENTER: Ashleigh Mowers, Livingston ESA  
Co-Presenters: Sally Mowers, Livingston ESA



#### **Sensory Awareness - Supporting Self-Regulation**

PRESENTER: Allison Caledonis, Allison Caledonis ECE Training

Co-Presenters: Elizabeth Villaverde



#### **Intentionally Using Music Throughout the Infant/Toddler Day**

PRESENTER: Danielle Yesner, HighScope Educational Research Foundation



#### **The Ready Child: Helping Every Child Thrive in Kindergarten and Beyond**

PRESENTER: Kathleen Sheridan,  
University of Illinois at Chicago

Co-Presenters: David Banzer, University of Illinois Chicago; Sarai Coba-Rodriguez, University of Illinois Chicago

### 8:45 am - 10:00 am



#### **Harmonious Education: Using Music and Your Gifts**

PRESENTER: Larramy Gatlin,  
Quintessential Educational Consulting



#### **New Hire Orientation: Ways to Reduce Mistakes with Training**

PRESENTER: Dr. Thomasa Bond, Early Childhood Education Growth LLC



#### **Meeting the Sensory Needs of Preschoolers**

PRESENTER: Laurie Winke, Carrollton Public Schools



#### **Cultivating an Inclusive Classroom**

PRESENTER: Jessica Ravineala, Therapy Spot and Bridges Development Center

Co-Presenter: Stefanie Maiuri, Bridges Development Center



#### **Stop, Think, Act: Using Music to Support Executive Function Skills at Large Group Time**

PRESENTER: Shannon Lockhart, HighScope Educational Research Foundation



# TUESDAY

8:45 am - 10:00 am



**A Quick Guide for Higher Education Institutions: Addressing Pre-Service Educator's Level of Preparedness Working in the Field with Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and Their Families**

PRESENTER: Jessica Grimone-Hopkins,  
Eastern Michigan University



**Following Children's Interests**

PRESENTER: Katelyn Campbell, Oakland Schools



**Confidentiality & Ethics: Navigating an Online Presence, Apps and Social Media for Providers**

PRESENTER: Margaret (Peggy) Kaczmarek,  
Child Care Network

Co-Presenter: Liz Fuss, Child Care Network



**Repairing the Harm: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution**

PRESENTER: Margaret (Peggy) Kaczmarek,  
Child Care Network

Co-Presenter: Liz Fuss, Child Care Network



**Repairing the Harm: A New Approach to Conflict Resolution**

PRESENTER: Karina Scott, Freedom Inside: For  
Children, Parents, and Teachers

10:15 am - 11:30 am



**All Together: Supporting Meaningful Inclusion in Preschool**

PRESENTER: Jennifer Champagne, Clinton  
County RESA Office of Innovative Projects

Co-Presenter: Noel Kelty, Clinton County  
RESA Office of Innovative Projects



**SOLUTION ROOM - INFANT/TODDLER**

## Session Information

### Spotlight

10:15 am - 11:30 am



**Rock, Rhythm, and Resilience: Elevating SEL Through the Power of Music!**

PRESENTER: Anthony Broughton - Mister B



**Supporting Rhythmic and Tonal Knowledge in Kindergarten**

PRESENTER: Karen Murillo, HighScope  
Educational Research Foundation



**Dodge Burnout in 10 Minutes a Day: Reflective Journaling to Lower Stress and Improve Child Interactions**

PRESENTER: Bonnie Bonifield, Child Care  
Network



**Staying Engaged in Outdoor Play**

PRESENTER: Jill Harrison, Delta College



**Supporting Instruction Through Math Values**

PRESENTER: Rachel St John, Kalamazoo  
RESA

Co-Presenter: Stacy Kambestad, Kalamazoo  
RESA



**Leveraging Interactions to Improve Outcomes for All Children**

PRESENTER: Sara Diamond, Teachstone

Co-Presenters: Christina Nystrom-Binger,  
Teachstone



**"Gates" and "Guardrails:" Empowering Children and Getting Out of the Way**

PRESENTER: Liz Powers, University of  
Michigan Towsley Children's House



**Ready to Read (Read, Write, Sing, Talk, and Play)**

PRESENTER: Jill Lansky, Kalamazoo  
Public Library



**An Overview of NAEYC's New Quality Assessment and Accreditation System and Revised Early Childhood Program Standards**

PRESENTER: Amanda Batts, NAEYC

10:15 am - 11:30 am



### **What's The Vibe in 2025? MiRegistry New System Features and Updates**

PRESENTER: Carlie McKinney, MiRegistry

Co-Presenters: Erin Matusinec, MiRegistry;  
Emily Finnerud, MiRegistry



### **The Power of Words**

PRESENTER: Heather Lucas



### **Harmonizing transitions: Intentionally using music to support preschoolers during transition times**

PRESENTER: Jessica Logan, HighScope Educational Research Foundation



### **Learning through play in preschool & kindergarten: what's a teacher to do?**

PRESENTER: Lori Farrer, Western Michigan University



### **Hiring and Onboarding for Success!**

PRESENTER: Michele Davis, Gretchen's House Child Care Centers

Co-Presenter: Tracey Elliott, Gretchen's House Child Care Centers



### **Why Trust and Respect in Early Learning Settings Are Important**

PRESENTER: Liz Fuss, Child Care Network/Great Start to Quality

Co-Presenter: Peggy Kaczmarek, Child Care Network, Great Start to Quality Southeast Resource Center



### **Supporting Dual Language Learners in Preschool**

PRESENTER: Rachel Bullock, Wacousta Cooperative Preschool



### **Ready to Read (Read, Write, Sing, Talk, and Play)**

PRESENTER: Jill Lansky, Kalamazoo Public Library



### **An Overview of NAEYC's New Quality Assessment and Accreditation System and Revised Early Childhood Program Standards**

PRESENTER: Amanda Batts, NAEYC



### **What's The Vibe in 2025? MiRegistry New System Features and Updates**

PRESENTER: Carlie McKinney, MiRegistry

Co-Presenters: Erin Matusinec, -  
MiRegistry; Emily Finnerud, MiRegistry



### **The Power of Words**

PRESENTER: Heather Lucas



### **Harmonizing transitions: Intentionally Using Music to Support Preschoolers During Transition Times**

PRESENTER: Jessica Logan, HighScope Educational Research Foundation



### **Learning Through Play in Preschool & Kindergarten: What's a Teacher to do?**

PRESENTER: Lori Farrer, Western Michigan University



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\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\*

# TUESDAY

10:30 am - 11:45 am



## Supporting Dual Language Learners in Preschool

PRESENTER: Rachel Bullock, Wacousta Cooperative Preschool

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm



## Early Foundations Lunch and Learn: Teacher Happiness and Positive Outcomes for Children

PRESENTER: Michelle Daniels, Michigan AEYC

## Poster Sessions

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm



**Strengthening Early Intervention Personnel Preparation: Tools and Resources from the Early On Center for Higher Education** - Kari Holmberg Coordinator, Early On Center for Higher Education



**Strong Beginnings: Preschool for 3-Year-Old Children** - Noel Kelty, Ph.D.; Joan Firestone Ph.D, Office of Innovative Projects, Clinton County RESA



**Michigan Division for Early Childhood** - Julie Ricks-Doneen, MiDEC Outreach & Engagement Committee, Chair



**Michigan AEYC Advocacy Committee** - Julie Ricks-Doneen, Member, Michigan AEYC Advocacy Committee



**Advocacy Projects in a Graduate EC Course: Meaningful Teacher Research** - Julie Ricks-Doneen, Associate Professor, Oakland University



**Trauma Informed Practice** - Ann Majchrowski, Assistant Director – Fenton



**Children's Identity** - Jenna VerCautren, student CMU; Hannah Gorham, student CMU

## Session Information



**Joyful College Teaching: An Early Childhood Learning Community** - Holly Hoffman, Professor, CMU; Katie Sloan, Assistant Professor, OU



**Supporting Multilingual Learners and Their Families** - Hailey Zack, Student, CMU; Madison Werner, Student, CMU



**OUIECE: Community Partnerships Foster Resilient Communities** - Shawna Boomgaard, OCC MHS Social Work Faculty; Canequia Moulder, Executive Director, Promise Zone; Tomoko Wakabayashi, Associate Professor, OU



**Empowering Young Minds to Lead** - Sweta Joshi



**Connecting Children and Families Through Nature Walks: Strengthening Bonds and Learning Together** - Tracy Donahue, Assistant Professor, CMU; Vivian Johnson, Student, CMU



**So Much to Teach, Little Time to Play: Bringing Play Back to Primary Grades** - Vivian Johnson, Student, CMU; Tracy Donahue, Assistant Professor, CMU



**An Examination of Children's Participation in Elite Extracurricular Activities on the Development and Maintenance of Relationships, Rituals and Routines in the Family** - Deb Teolis



**Early Intervention Relationship Skills: Use of Standardized Patient Feedback** - Denise Ludwig, Professor, SVSU



**Early Intervention Relationship Skills: Use of Standardized Patient Feedback** - Denise Ludwig, Professor, SVSU



**The Michigan Model of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC)** - Katie Wisniewski, Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant, MISD; Rose Pardiack



**Navigating Teacher Preparation: The Lived Experience of a Disabled Preservice Teacher** - Eleanor Dolata



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\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\*

# TUESDAY

## Poster Sessions

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm



**Of Mice and Misgendering: Teachers' Use of Gender to Refer to Ungendered Animals Characters in Children's Books** - Luci Davila, Doctoral Student, Research Asst.; Claire Vallotton; Madeline Klotz; Margaret Roney; Holly Brophy-Herb



**How do Early Childhood Teachers Perceive Play-Based Learning?** - Fei Xu, Ph.D. Student, OU



**Caring Starts with Us: How to Engage and Teach Students to Care** - Paige Streit

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm



Exhibits & Lunch Break

## Rhythmic Dialogues - Harmony Hub Devos Booth

12:00 pm - 1:30 pm



**Rhythmic Dialogues - Harmony Hub Devos Booth:** In depth conversations to connect, inspire and elevate the field of Early Childhood Education. Stop by and share your experiences, ask questions, and engage with your peers.

- **NAEYC Membership Journeys and Inquiries** - NAEYC and Michigan AEYC Staff
- **ECE Students** - What can Michigan AEYC do for you? Michigan AEYC Student MAL
- **Current Michigan AEYC Governing Board** - Do you have questions? Bring your questions for the Michigan AEYC Governing Board members.
- **Meet the Michigan AEYC Governing Board Candidates**- Stop by and meet the candidates for the upcoming election.
- **Michigan AEYC Advocacy Committee** - Discover opportunities with the Michigan AEYC Advocacy Committee!

## Session Information

1:15 pm - 2:30 pm



### Men at Work

PRESENTER: Kyle Lewandowski, Clare United Methodist Church Preschool and Child Care Center



### SOLUTION ROOM - EC Professionals (Support Staff)



### Healing Harmonies: Cultivating Relationships Through Music, Movement, Mindfulness

PRESENTER: Brenda Limaldi, North Brunswick Public Schools, North Brunswick, New Jersey/ Creator of Musically Mindful



### Supporting Children with Disabilities or Suspected Delays in Inclusive Child Care Settings

PRESENTER: Jennifer Koenigsknecht, Early On Michigan

Co-Presenter: Laura Goldthwait, M.Ed., MiLEAP



### Disrupting the Chain: A Community of Practice Around Preventing Expulsion of Black Boys

PRESENTER: Sharicka Bogan, Child Care Network

Co-Presenter: Melanie Gwizdala, Genesee Health System; Brooke Rains, Child Care Network



### Open Ended Art~Process versus Product!

PRESENTER: Molly Miller, Teddy Bear Daycare and Preschool

Co-Presenter: Anna Fryer, Teddy Bear Daycare and Preschool



### Strong Beginnings: Pioneering Preschool Success for Michigan's Three-Year-Olds

PRESENTER: Joan Firestone, Clinton County RESA

Co-Presenter: Noel Kelty, Clinton County RESA



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\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\*



1:15 pm - 2:30 pm



### **Solutions to Streamline your Food Purchases!**

PRESENTER: Brandi Sash, Food & Supply Source



### **Let's Eat!: Cooking and Eating Together with Music to Support Student Well-being and Build a Sense of Community in Teaching and Learning Environments**

PRESENTER: Christina Mirtes, Eastern Michigan University

Co-Presenter: Jessica Grimone-Hopkins, Eastern Michigan University



### **Building Intentional Routines for Infants and Toddlers**

PRESENTER: Jade Teachey, Gretchen's House Child Care

Co-Presenter: Kelly Lessard, Gretchen's House Child Care



### **You're Already Meeting Michigan's Early Math Standards "No, Really!"**

PRESENTER: Heather Lucas

Co-Presenter: Bonnie Bonifield, Child Care Network



### **Kindergarten Readiness - What Does This Really Mean?**

PRESENTER: Allison Trapp, Michigan State University, Child Development Laboratories

Co-Presenter: Danice Bailey, Michigan State University Child Development Lab



### **Phonological Awareness - the Phenomenal Foundation of Reading**

PRESENTER: Nanci Quartofierro, Stepping Stones Montessori School/Chaminade University of Honolulu

Co-Presenter: Laura Goldthwait, M.Ed., MiLEAP



### **Creating a Social Emotional Classroom for Young Children**

PRESENTER: Rose Pardiac, Miside



### **A Healthy, Happier You! Finding Work/Life Balance**

PRESENTER: Jennifer Philleo, Wayne RESA

Co-Presenter: Amber Jones, Oakland Schools



### **A Case Study of Collaboration: Working Together to Support Teacher Retention & Advancement through the MiEarly Apprentice program**

PRESENTER: Adrian Monge, Michigan Educator Workforce Initiative

Co-Presenter: K'Sandra Earle, Michigan Educator Workforce Initiative ; Beth Marshall, Washtenaw Community College



### **Who Coaches the Coach?**

PRESENTER: Betsy Spiker, Oakland Schools

Co-Presenter: Katelyn Campbell, Oakland Schools

**Silent Auction Pick-Up**  
**1:30 pm - 3:30 pm**

**Keynote Speaker**  
**3:00 pm - 4:30 pm**



### **Igniting Brilliance: Unleashing the Brilliance of Each and Every Child**

PRESENTER: Anthony Broughton - Mister B

**ACCESS Meet-Up (invite only)**  
**6:00 pm**

**\*\*Session Rooms May Change: Check Conference App for Room\*\***



## Betty Garlick Lifetime Achievement Award Honoring a Lifetime of Advocacy and Dedication

**Crystal Sanford-Brown**  
Founder, Emerging Young Leadership, Inc.

Crystal Sanford-Brown is a truly deserving recipient of the Betty Garlick Award, embodying the same tireless commitment to early childhood education and advocacy that defined Betty Garlick's legacy. With more than 30 years of service, Crystal has dedicated her career to ensuring that all children—regardless of background—have access to high-quality early childhood programs.

Much like Betty Garlick, Crystal has not only worked directly with children and families but has also played a significant role in shaping policy and advocating for systemic change. Through her leadership in organizations such as NAEYC and Michigan AEYC, she has walked the halls of Congress and the Michigan State Capitol, championing diversity, equity, and inclusion in early childhood education. Her impact extends beyond her professional role, as she has continuously volunteered, mentored, and led professional development efforts to elevate the field.

Crystal's advocacy is deeply personal. Having experienced child abuse and neglect, child sexual molestation, domestic violence, and special education challenges, she has used her voice to uplift and empower

others, ensuring that children and educators alike see their worth and potential. Her unwavering dedication is not just seen in her work but felt by all who know her—she is approachable, compassionate, and a relentless advocate for justice and quality education.

Even in the face of a devastating ALS diagnosis, Crystal continues to contribute to the field she loves. She remains an active speaker at conferences, inspiring others with her resilience and commitment, despite her rapidly progressing illness. Her impact is undeniable, and her legacy will endure in the lives of the children, families, and professionals she has influenced.

Michigan AEYC is honored to recognize Crystal Sanford-Brown, to celebrate a lifetime of service that has truly transformed the landscape of early childhood education in Michigan. She is a beacon of strength, advocacy, and compassion—making her a perfect and deeply worthy recipient of the Betty Garlick Award.

## Congratulations to all award winners.

### **Jacquelyn Miller Endowment Grant**

- U of M Dearborn Early Childhood Education Center
- The Sundrop School

### **Debbie Antone Memorial Fund Grant**

- Jenny Wagner/Riverside Rascals

### **Brian White Leadership Scholarship for Men in Early Childhood**

- Jeremiah Pettaway

### **Student Leadership Scholarship Award**

- Fariah Uddin



Michigan Association for the  
Education of Young Children

### **Michigan AEYC Event Code of Conduct**

Michigan AEYC is committed to providing a professional, collegial, supporting, respectful, friendly, safe, and welcoming environment for all participants and Michigan AEYC staff regardless of a person's race, color, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, age, religion, disability status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, genetic information, physical appearance or other characteristic and any other legally protected classes.

All participants, including, but not limited to attendees, speakers, volunteers, exhibitors, sponsors, staff, service providers and others are expected to comply with this Event Code of Conduct. Michigan AEYC expects participants and speakers to uphold the professional and educational purposes of NAEYC and its events by respecting the rights, privacy, safety, and dignity of everyone.

#### **Expected Behavior:**

- All participants are treated with respect and consideration, valuing a diversity of views and opinions.
- Strive for inclusive, transparent, and open communication.
- Be considerate, respectful, and collaborative in speaking and listening.
- Do not appropriate knowledge shared during this meeting or future collaborations.
- Acknowledge the contribution of others.
- Respect the rules and policies of the event.
- Comply with the safety protocols prescribed by Michigan AEYC and event venues including protocols in place for COVID-19.
- Participants will not bring any children under the age of 18 into the event including exhibit and session areas.

#### **Unacceptable Behavior:**

Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated during any portion of a meeting or event. Unacceptable behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Intimidating, harassing, abusive, discriminatory, derogatory, or demeaning speech or actions.
- Individual attacks on others.
- Harmful or prejudicial verbal or written comments or visual images related to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics, including those protected by law.
- Real or implied threat of professional or financial damage or harm.
- Inappropriate or repeated disruption of meetings or events.
- Deliberate intimidation of others.
- Photographing, video, or audio recording of slides, oral or poster presentations without presenter/author's permission.
- Presentations, postings, and messages should not contain promotional materials, special offers, job offers, product announcements, or solicitation for services. Michigan AEYC reserves the right to remove such messages and potentially ban sources of those solicitations.

**Reporting Harassment: Report harassment and disruptive behaviors to Michigan AEYC at [miaeyc@miaeyc.org](mailto:miaeyc@miaeyc.org).**

Violation of this Policy, as determined by Michigan AEYC in its sole discretion, is grounds for any action that Michigan AEYC deems appropriate, including but not limited to warning the offender, denying the offender access to a Michigan AEYC event and restrictions from future Michigan AEYC meetings and events. Michigan AEYC reserves the right to take whatever action it, in its sole discretion, deems appropriate, with respect to the investigation of any matters related to this Policy.



# BE PART OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

## Engage with a broader community

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Early childhood educators work hard every day to help young children thrive. It's important that these individuals and child care businesses have the support and resources they need as they make a difference in the lives of future generations. Members of the **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** and **Michigan AEYC** add their voices to a much broader community, advocating for children and each other. Members enjoy access to both national resources and local professional development and networking. Members receive registration discounts on both statewide and national events and trainings. It also offers members the chance to give back through advocacy and service opportunities. **But that's just the beginning.** We are committed to serving our members better than we ever have. Visit our website to learn about all of our member benefits, and join today.



There has  
never been a  
better time to  
**JOIN!**

**miaeyc**

Michigan Association for the  
Education of Young Children

An Affiliate of **naeyc**



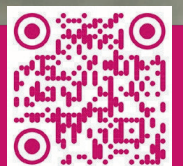
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