



# NEBRASKA

— Young Child Institute —

## 2024 CONFERENCE PROGRAM

June 25 & 26, 2024 | Kearney, NE

A statewide conference for multidisciplinary professionals to connect on issues to improve the outcome of young children.



#NYCI2024

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[www.NEYoungChildInstitute.com](http://www.NEYoungChildInstitute.com)

# 01

## Agenda at-a-glance

### Tuesday, June 25, 2024 | Day 1

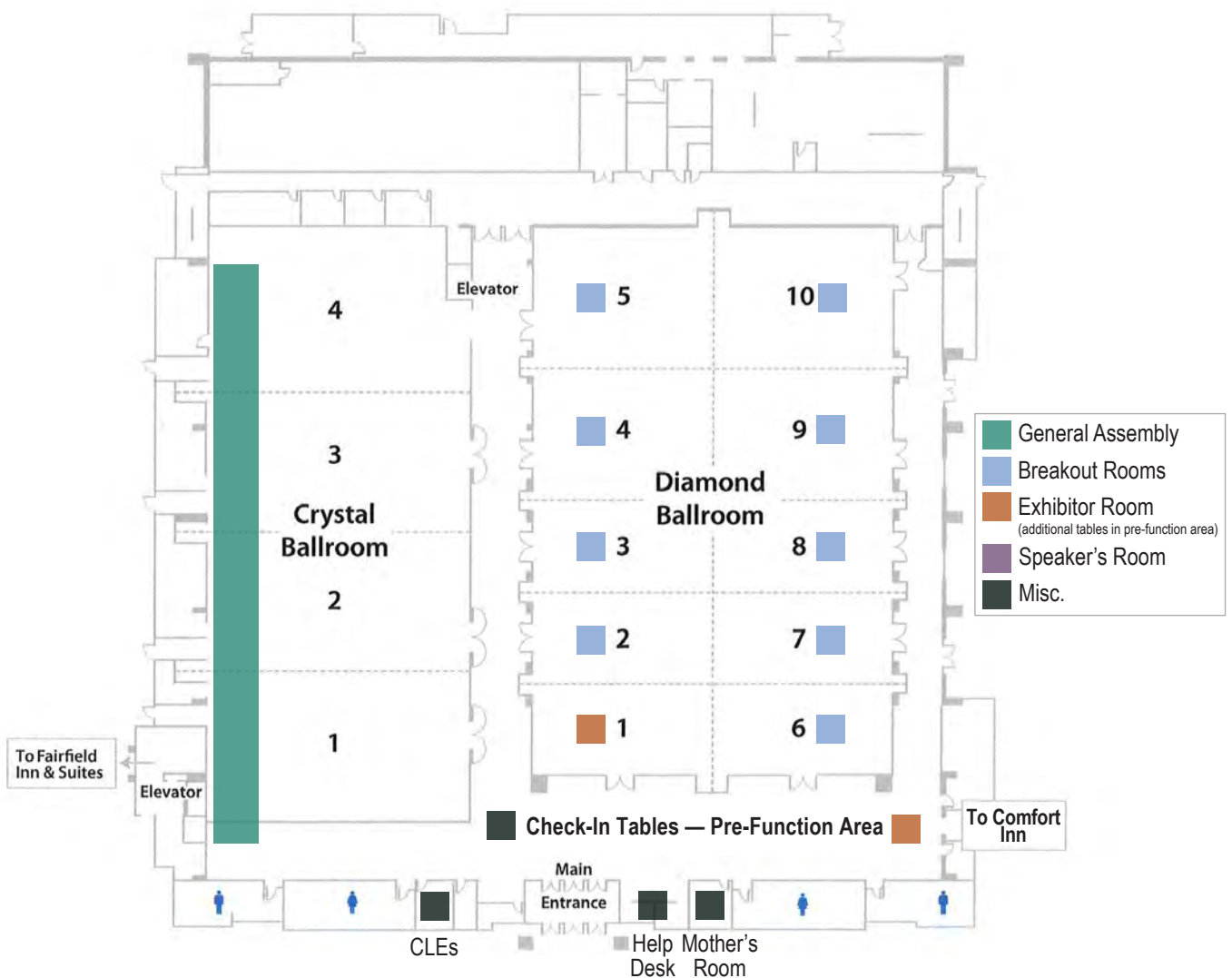
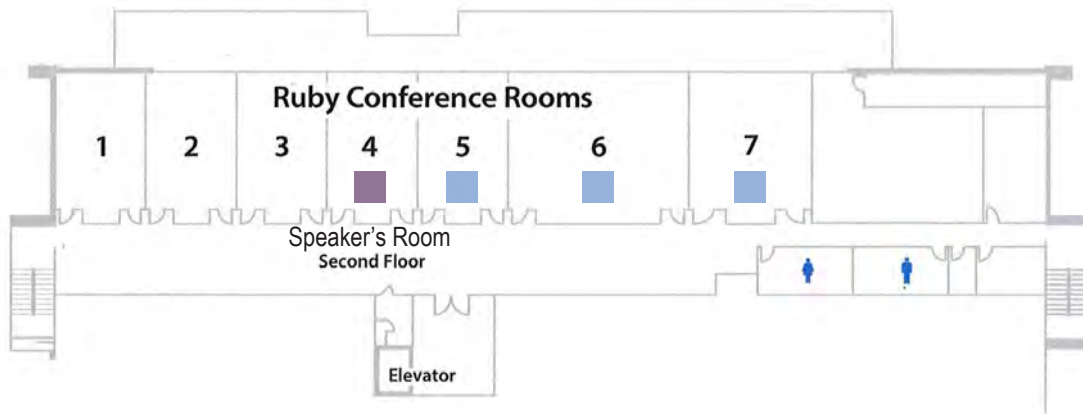
8:00–9:00 am	Conference Check-In
9:00–9:30 am	Welcome & Opening Remarks <b>DR. HOLLY HATTON</b>
9:30–10:30 am	Opening Plenary <b>DR. JOY OSOFSKY</b> <i>The Effects of Trauma on Young Children and Ways to Support Resilience</i>
10:30–10:40 am	Break & Networking
10:40–11:50 am	Breakout Session A
11:50 am–12:40 pm	Lunch & Panel Discussion moderated by <b>MELISSA POLINOSKI</b> Panelists: <b>DR. WALTER GILLIAM, BETH BUHR, DR. MARK HALD</b> <i>Advocating within Systems</i>
12:40–12:50 pm	Break & Networking
12:50–2:00 pm	Breakout Session B
2:00–2:20 pm	Break & Networking
2:20–3:30 pm	Breakout Session C
3:30–3:50 pm	Break & Networking with Snacks
3:50–5:00 pm	Breakout Session D

### Wednesday, June 26, 2024 | Day 2

8:30–9:00 am	Start of Day 2: Networking & Visiting Exhibitors
9:00–10:10 am	Breakout Session E
10:10–10:30 am	Break & Networking
10:30–11:40 am	Breakout Session F
11:40 am–1:35 pm	Lunch & Closing Plenary <b>STEVE PEMBERTON</b> <i>The Lighthouse Effect: How Ordinary People Can Have an Extraordinary Impact in the World</i>
1:35–1:45 pm	Closing
1:45–2:45 pm	Optional: Book Signing

# 02

## Location where to go



# 03

## Conference essentials

### Wi-Fi Available

Wi-Fi will be available during this conference. No password required.

### Mother's Room

Should you require access to the mother's room or have any specific requests, please don't hesitate to reach out to our onsite staff or visit the information desk. Your comfort and well-being are of utmost importance to us.

### Feedback

Please fill out a brief, online survey after each breakout session to provide feedback. There will also be an overall survey at the conclusion of the conference.

### Conference Materials

We will not be distributing hard copies of the session PowerPoints and handouts onsite. These materials and additional session information, including descriptions and speaker bio, can be found online (not all session have handouts).

Find Feedback Surveys and Conference Materials on our website. Scan the QR code or visit:



[NEYoungChildInstitute.com](https://www.NEYoungChildInstitute.com)

### Help Desk

For seamless support at NYCI, visit our help desk. We're here to assist with registration, program info, and speaker guidance. Tech issues? Lost something? Need accessibility support? We've got you covered.

### Conference Hashtag

We encourage you to share your thoughts about NYCI2024 on social media. Be sure to use the hashtag #NYCI2024 in your posts! Follow NYCI on X (formerly Twitter) for news and updates during the conference!

#NYCI2024

### Photo Opportunities

Step right up and take your photo(s) in front of our conference banners. We have several banners located throughout the conference, the largest banner is located in the Crystal Ballroom. Snap photos during breaks or at lunch and share on social media!



# 04

## Plenary speakers

**BOOK SIGNING** with **STEVE PEMBERTON** in the **CRYSTAL BALLROOM** on **JUNE 26**, immediately following the conference. Copies of his latest book will be available for purchase.



**DR. JOY  
OSOFSKY**

Clinical and  
Developmental  
Psychologist

### **THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON YOUNG CHILDREN AND WAYS TO SUPPORT RESILIENCE**

Tuesday, June 25 | 9:30 am – 10:30 am

Joy D. Osofsky, Ph.D. is a clinical and developmental psychologist, Ramsay Endowed Chair and Barbara Lemann Professor of Child Welfare at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in New Orleans where she has been director of the Harris Center for Infant Mental Health. She has published widely and authored or edited eight books on trauma in the lives of children. Currently, with three colleagues, she is editing the two volume WAIMH Handbook of Infant and Early Childhood Development. Dr. Osofsky is Past President of ZERO to THREE and of the World Association for Infant Mental Health. She currently serves on the Board of Zero to Three. She has served as Co-Principal Investigator of four Centers within the National Child Traumatic Stress Network since 2003. In 2007, she received the Sarah Haley Award for Clinical Excellence in work with trauma by the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. In 2010 she was recognized with the Lourie Award for leadership and outstanding contributions to the health and welfare of children and families. In 2020, she was awarded the Translational Research Award from the International Congress on Infant Studies and in 2021, she received the ZERO TO THREE Lifetime Achievement Award.



**STEVE  
PEMBERTON**

Chief Human  
Resources Officer  
& Best Selling  
Author

### **THE LIGHTHOUSE EFFECT: HOW ORDINARY PEOPLE CAN HAVE AN EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT IN THE WORLD**

Wednesday, June 26 | 11:40 am – 1:35 pm

Steve Pemberton's story is about defying seemingly insurmountable odds to become an award-winning author, trail-blazing corporate executive, world-renowned speaker and life transformation coach. His first book, *A Chance in the World* became a USA Today best-seller and made him the subject of a film about his life. He has been profiled in numerous publications and talk shows, from CBS Evening News and People Magazine to The Today Show. The many stories of overcoming that he so often receives led him to write his best-selling follow-up, *The Lighthouse Effect*, which recounts the lives of ten seemingly ordinary people he met along his life journey. The overwhelming response to *The Lighthouse Effect* is what led Steve to create The Lighthouse Academy, the inspiring life-coaching platform that is transforming lives each and every day. Steve also brings another perspective to his work. In his professional life, he has served as a senior human resources executive in companies and organizations whose mission was to help people better their lives. From Monster.com to Walgreens, he was immersed in the daily work of driving higher levels of organizational performance while helping employees achieve a healthy work-life balance and develop the leadership skills that would advance their career. For his extraordinary courage and his selfless commitment to helping others, Steve has earned extensive national recognition, from several honorary doctorates to the coveted Trumpet Award and the prestigious Horizon Award bestowed by the United States Congress. Steve is also the husband of Tonya Renee and the loving father of their three children, Quinn, Vaughn and Kennedy.



# Full Agenda conference details

Tuesday, June 25 | Day 1

7:30-8:30 am	Exhibitor Setup	Diamond Room 1
8:00-9:00 am	Registration and Check-In	Pre-Function Area
9:00-9:30 am	Welcome and Opening Remarks with <b>Dr. Holly Hatton</b>	Crystal Ballroom
9:30-10:30 am	Plenary with <b>Dr. Joy Osofsky</b> : <i>The Effects of Trauma on Young Children and Ways to Support Resilience</i>	Crystal Ballroom
10:30-10:40 am	Break and Networking	

10:40 – 11:50 am BREAKOUT SESSIONS A	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Traffic Stop: Human Division</b> <i>Stacey Cahill, Lisa Pereya-Molina</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Early Development Network: Your guide to early intervention services in Nebraska</b> <i>Sue Bainter, Jennifer Calahan, Janice Lee</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Developing Professional Skills to Promote Family Engagement: The Getting Ready Approach</b> <i>Dr. Tamara Hechtner-Galvin, Katie Zabel</i> Room: TBD						
<b>How Does Language Justice Impact Your Community</b> <i>Mariana Schell, Mariella Resendiz Alvarado</i> Room: TBD						
<b>EUREKA!! Discovering Your Data Treasure Trove in Teaching Strategies GOLD</b> <i>Amy Colwell Williams, Kristina Norwood</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Understanding Preschool Environments to Promote Inclusion in Nebraska</b> <i>Amy Bunnell, Dr. Vera Stroup-Rentier</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood</b> <i>Ingrid Lindal</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Connecting the Dots: Applying the Enhanced Resource Guidelines and the Safe Baby Court Approach to enhance the safety for Nebraska's most vulnerable</b> <i>Moriah Taylor</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Celebrating Seven Years: The journey of reflective practice in Nebraska</b> <i>Kelli Hauptman, Jamie Bahm</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Attuning to Yourself</b> <i>Tracey Kock</i> Room: TBD						

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# Full Agenda conference details

Tuesday, June 25 | Day 1

10:40 – 11:50 am BREAKOUT SESSIONS A (CON'T)	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>What Children Do Remember: Disruptions in attachment and why adoption and kinship is not the final answer</b> <i>Stacy Varouh</i> Room: TBD						
<b>The Impact of COVID on Young Children and Families and Ways to Support Resilience</b> <i>Dr. Joy Ososky</i> Room: TBD						

<b>11:50 am-12:40 pm</b>	Lunch and Panel Discussion moderated by <b>Melissa Polinoski</b> with panelists <b>Dr. Walter Gilliam, Beth Buhr, and Dr. Mark Hald: <i>Advocating within Systems</i></b>	Crystal Ballroom
<b>12:40-12:50 pm</b>	Break and Networking	

12:50 – 2:00 pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS B	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Safe &amp; Healthy Families Court: Nebraska's framework for DV-informed practice</b> <i>Dr. Pamela Jordan, Judge Elise White, Lindsey Turner, Elizabeth Buhr</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Reasonable Efforts: Practical application for judges, lawyers, caseworkers, CASAs and all involved in child welfare</b> <i>Judge Douglas Johnson</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Infant Mental Health Endorsement is Good for Babies!</b> <i>Samantha Bradley, Tana Goosic</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Playing Around: Strategies for engaging children and families in everyday play</b> <i>Dr. Sarah Westerlin</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Post-Pandemic Home Visitation: Supporting staff and families</b> <i>Jennifer Durand, Deanna Schlautman</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Changing the Way We Look at Challenging Behaviors: An adult-first intervention</b> <i>Hayley Jackson, Erin Kampbell, Emily Manning</i> Room: TBD						

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# Full Agenda conference details

Tuesday, June 25 | Day 1

12:50 – 2:00 pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS B (CON'T)	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Supporting Young Children within the Learning Environment: Inclusivity and assistive technology</b> <i>Stacey Hauser, Brian Wojcik, Kim Bowen, Jeri Johnson</i> Room: TBD						
<b>The ABC's of Equity in Early Childhood (Acknowledgement, Belonging, and Commitment)</b> <i>Becky Dunlap-Morton, LeLynda Briggs-Linstadt</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Ready to Learn: Innovative early childhood multimedia resources to support partnership with families and caregivers</b> <i>Jessica Mitchell-McCollough</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Keeping the Baby in Mind: Advocating for infant and early childhood mental health in the child welfare system</b> <i>Samantha Byrns, Lori Rodriguez-Fletcher</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Reflective Practice: Looking at your work from the inside out</b> <i>Dayna Goff</i> Room: TBD						
<b>10 Creative Tools for Building and Maintaining Your Resiliency</b> <i>Kay Glidden, Beth Reynolds Lewis</i> Room: TBD						

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<b>2:00-2:20 pm</b>	Break and Networking
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2:20 – 3:30 pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS C	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Traffic Stop: Human Division</b> <i>Stacey Cahill, Lisa Pereya-Molina</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Tips for Guardians ad Litem and CASA Volunteers Working with Young Children</b> <i>Tana Fye</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Circle of Security in Nebraska</b> <i>Samantha Bradley</i> Room: TBD						

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# Full Agenda conference details

Tuesday, June 25 | Day 1

2:20 – 3:30 pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS C (CON'T)	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Home Visiting Programs: Healthy Families America and Child Welfare Prevention</b> <i>Jamie Kramer, Jennifer Auman</i> Room: TBD		Foundational				
<b>Creating an Oasis in a Childcare Desert: How rural districts are address the need for high-quality childcare programs for their families</b> <i>Amy Kroll, Randy Geier, Jackie Anderson, Rachel Sissel, Amy Colwell Williams</i> Room: TBD			Foundational			
<b>Part C to Part B Early Childhood Transition Resources</b> <i>Jessica Anthony, Amy Bunnell</i> Room: TBD			Foundational			
<b>More Than Words: Using augmentative and alternative communication with young children</b> <i>Jessica Broderick</i> Room: TBD			Advanced			
<b>Connecting the Dots: Applying the Enhanced Resource Guidelines and the Safe Baby Court Approach to enhance the safety for Nebraska’s most vulnerable</b> <i>Moriah Taylor</i> Room: TBD				Foundational		
<b>There’s Grief There: The importance of recognizing and treating unresolved grief in our clinical work of non-death related symptoms</b> <i>Tiffany Eisenbraun</i> Room: TBD					Foundational	
<b>Applied Educational Neuroscience - The Importance of Adult Regulation</b> <i>Sunny Edwards, Becky Jo Wylie</i> Room: TBD					Advanced	
<b>Understanding the Basic Concepts of Attachment and the Application of the Attachment Lens in Early Childhood Intervention</b> <i>Dr. Mark Hald</i> Room: TBD						Foundational
<b>Generational Trauma - A Case Study</b> <i>Machaela Hackendahl</i> Room: TBD						Foundational
<b>3:30-3:50 pm</b>	Break and Networking with Snacks					

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Tuesday, June 25 | Day 1

3:50 – 5:00 pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS D	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Treatment and Incarceration Issues for Parents of Young Children</b> <i>Tana Fye</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Therapeutic Time-Outs for Behavior Management in Young Children</b> <i>Dr. Corey Lieneman</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Parents Interacting With Infants (PIWI) in Nebraska</b> <i>Nikki Roseberry, Christen Million</i> Room: TBD						
<b>IDEA Part C Procedural Safeguards: Introducing a module for families</b> <i>Dr. Vera Stroup-Rentier, Mark Smith, Connie Shockley</i> Room: TBD						
<b>A Comprehensive Competency Framework for Early Childhood Educators in Nebraska to Facilitate Career Advancement</b> <i>Dr. Victoria Johnson, Dr. Julia Torquati, Dr. Dawn Mollenkopf, Dr. Soo-Young Hong, Dr. Alexa Yunes-Koch, Simin Kazemi</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Impact from Infancy: A model of court intervention</b> <i>Elizabeth Straham, Heather Werthmann</i> Room: TBD						
<b>The Enhanced Resource Guidelines: Improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases--Quality hearings make all the difference in the lives of the children and parents we serve</b> <i>Judge Douglas Johnson</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Children's Justice Attorney Education Fellowship Program: Preventing legal deserts in our rural communities</b> <i>Michelle Paxton</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Nebraska's Implementation of Prenatal Plans of Safe Care</b> <i>Mikayla Wicks</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Attuning to Yourself</b> <i>Tracey Kock</i> Room: TBD						
<b>What Children Do Remember: Disruptions in Attachment and Why Adoption and Kinship is Not the Final Answer</b> <i>Stacy Varouh</i> Room: TBD						

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# Full Agenda conference details

Tuesday, June 25 | Day 1

3:50 – 5:00 pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS D (CON'T)	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Ten Creative Tools for Building and Maintaining Your Resiliency</b> <i>Kay Glidden, Beth Reynold Lewis</i> Room: TBD						

5:00 pm	End of Day 1
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Wednesday, June 26 | Day 2

8:30-9:00 am	Start of Day 2   Networking and Visiting Exhibitors	Pre-Function Area
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9:00 – 10:10 am BREAKOUT SESSIONS E	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Beyond the NICU: A collaborative, family-centered approach to NICU follow up in Nebraska</b> <i>Dr. Kerry Miller, Dr. Paige Hardy</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Overview of ECMH Services in Nebraska</b> <i>Lindsey Ondrak</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Playing Around: Strategies for engaging children and families in everyday play</b> <i>Dr. Sarah Westerlin</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Transitions Matter!</b> <i>Barbara Jessing, Melanie Anderson</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood</b> <i>Ingrid Lindal</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Special Care: Quality Inclusive Care in Early Childhood Settings</b> <i>Janice Lee, Susan Borchert</i> Room: TBD						
<b>AT 101 for Young Children: Let's explore assistive technology!</b> <i>Kim Bowen, Brian Wojcik, Stacey Hauser, Jeri Johnson, Kala Lococo</i> Room: TBD						
<b>If I Knew Then What I know Now: Lessons learned from problem-solving</b> <i>Jamie Bahm, Judge Roger Heideman, Judge Elise White, Dr. Pamela Jordan</i> Room: TBD						

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# Full Agenda conference details

Wednesday, June 26 | Day 2

9:00 – 10:10 am BREAKOUT SESSIONS E (CON'T)	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Successful Collaboration Between DHHS and EDN Services</b> <i>Cherish Lienemann, April Christensen</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Self Care and Resiliency</b> <i>Jennifer Auman</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Early Childhood Mental Health and Early Intervention</b> <i>Samantha Bradley</i> Room: TBD						
<b>How to Talk to Kids About Body Safety, Boundaries and Sexual Abuse</b> <i>Christy Prang</i> Room: TBD						

10:10 - 10:30 am	Break with Snacks	
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10:30 – 11:40 am BREAKOUT SESSIONS F	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Treatment and Incarceration Issues for Parents of Young Children</b> <i>Tana Fye</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Reasonable Efforts: Practical application for judges, lawyers, caseworkers, CASAs and all involved in child welfare</b> <i>Judge Douglas Johnson</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Introduction to Parent-Child Interaction Therapy</b> <i>Dr. Corey Lieneman, Dr. Rachel Schumacher</i> Room: TBD						
<b>How Does Language Justice Impact Your Community</b> <i>Mariana Schell, Mariella Resendiz Alvarado</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Feeding/Sleeping Issues in Young Children: Strategies to share with families</b> <i>Sue Bainter, Janice Lee, Christina Kilgore</i> Room: TBD						

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# Full Agenda conference details

Wednesday, June 26 | Day 2

10:30 – 11:40 am BREAKOUT SESSIONS F (CON'T)	Advocating for Young Children	Early Childhood Services	Early Education	Improving Systems to Support Young Children	Provider Wellbeing	Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child
<b>Early Childhood Professionals' and Students' Experiences and Supports Needed to Complete Degrees and Certification: A mixed-methods study</b> <i>Dr. Julia Torquati, Dr. Victoria Johnson, Dr. Alexa Yunes-Koch, Tracey Gordon, Nancy Engen-Wedin, Simin Kazemi</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Changing the Way We Look at Challenging Behaviors: An adult-first intervention</b> <i>Hayley Jackson, Erin Kampbell, Emily Manning</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Community Connections - The Story of Home Visitation Agencies Coming Together to Better Serve Our Families</b> <i>Sarah Roesler, Jesse Meints-Harms, Angela Johnson, Kelly Erikson</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Applied Educational Neuroscience - The Importance of Adult Regulation</b> <i>Sunny Edwards, Becky Jo Wylie</i> Room: TBD						
<b>There's Grief There: The importance of recognizing and treating unresolved grief in our clinical work of non-death related symptoms</b> <i>Tiffany Eisenbraun</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Survivor Voice: Implementing survivors' perspectives during domestic violence MDTs</b> <i>Elizabeth Straham, Heather Werthmann</i> Room: TBD						
<b>Understanding the Basic Concepts of Attachment and the Application of the Attachment Lens in Early Childhood Intervention</b> <i>Dr. Mark Hald</i> Room: TBD						

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<b>11:40 am -1:35 pm</b>	Lunch and Closing Plenary with <b>Steve Pemberton</b> : <i>The Lighthouse Effect: How Ordinary People Can Have an Extraordinary Impact in the World</i>	Crystal Ballroom
<b>1:35-1:45 pm</b>	Closing and Send Off	Crystal Ballroom
<b>1:45 - 2:45 pm</b>	Optional: Book Signing	Crystal Ballroom

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## Conference contributors

### Exhibitors

We invite you to visit our exhibit tables that are located in Diamond Room 1 and the Pre-Function Area of the Younes Center. Vendors include:

- Answers4Families
- Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska (BHECN)
- Central Nebraska Lifespan Respite Network
- Early Development Network/Childfind
- Foster Care Review Office
- NDE - Assistive Technology Partnership (ATP)
- Nebraska Association for Infant Mental Health
- Nebraska CASA
- Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
- Nebraska Department of Education
- Nebraska Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program
- Nebraska Extension
- Nebraska Family Helpline
- Nebraska Head Start Collaboration Offices
- Nebraska Partnership for Mental Health Care Access and Pediatrics (NEP-MAP)
- Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children
- PTI Nebraska
- Sixpence
- Step Up to Quality
- UNK
- We Care for Kids

### Planning Committee

- Kelli Hauptman, Cassandra Roberts, and Ashtyn Beck, *Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children*
- Machaela Hackendahl, *Project Harmony*
- Lynne Brehm, Sara Weber, Nikki Roseberry-Keiser, and Stephanni Renn, *Nebraska Children and Families Foundation*
- Kelli Wood, *Judicial Branch Education*
- The Honorable Doug Johnson, *Retired from the Douglas County Separate Juvenile Court*
- Deb VanDyke-Ries, *Nebraska Court Improvement Project*
- Darla Johnson, *Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (Judicial Branch Education at the Supreme Court of NE)*
- Stephanie Knust, *Nebraska Head Start State Collaboration Office*
- Amy Bunnell and Jessica Anthony, *Early Development Network*
- Jessica Cook, Allison Jones, and Charlie Lewis, *UNL-Center on Children, Families and the Law*
- Tammi Ohmstede, *UNK-Counseling & School Psychology and Family Science*



# Session descriptions

## A COMPREHENSIVE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN NEBRASKA TO FACILITATE CAREER ADVANCEMENT

**Dr. Victoria Johnson, Dr. Julia Torquati, Dr. Alexa Yunes-Koch, Simin Kazemi, Dr. Dawn Mollenkopf, Dr. Soo-Young Hong**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Intermediary

In this session, we will introduce the Responsive Equitable System for Preparing Early Childhood Teachers (RESPECT) Competency Framework and the processes involved in its development. Specifically, we will explain the processes used to cohesively integrate and build on the strengths of multiple competency frameworks into a single comprehensive framework that defines common expectations while addressing current needs for our early childhood workforce. We will then share how this Comprehensive Competency Framework will be used to support early childhood educator preparation and credentialing in Nebraska. We will further explain how trauma-informed and culturally-sustaining practices have been embedded in this framework and the intentionality for this integration. Approximately 15 minutes each will be allotted to these points of discussion (total 45-50 minutes), with the remaining 20-25 minutes reserved for audience discussion. This will involve discussions to solicit points of reflection and questions that will inform the successful implementation of the Competency Framework in Nebraska.

**Intended audience:** Head Start personnel, School representatives, Early childhood educators

### Learning objectives

After this presentation, participants will

- Be familiar with the Comprehensive Competency Framework for Early Childhood Educators developed by the RESPECT across Nebraska project
- Identify the processes employed by the RESPECT team to integrate multiple competency frameworks into a new Comprehensive Competency Framework for Early Childhood Educators
- Understand how the RESPECT competency framework will be used in Nebraska to support early childhood educator preparation and credentialing
- Recognize how trauma-informed and culturally-sustaining practices in early care and education have been intentionally integrated into the competency framework

## APPLIED EDUCATIONAL NEUROSCIENCE: THE IMPORTANCE OF ADULT REGULATION

**Sunny Edwards, Becky Jo Wylie**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Provider Well-Being | **Audience level:** Advanced

We will dive into Applied Educational Neuroscience and the importance of adult regulation and connecting with each student. I will share resources and strategies from Dr. Lori Desautels's research. The need for the educational system to shift away from punitive punishment, seclusion, and restraint is now. Becoming a trauma-informed educational system starts with the educator and the regulation of our nervous system.

**Intended audience:** This session is designed for anyone who wants to learn about this groundbreaking framework

### Learning objectives

- Educators will understand how understanding their nervous system is the key to classroom regulation
- Educators will know where to locate resources and strategies for implementation

## AT 101 FOR YOUNG CHILDREN: LET'S EXPLORE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY!

**Kim Bowen, Brian Wojcik, Stacey Hauser, Jeri Johnson, Kala Lococo**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

Want to learn more about assistive technologies that may help the young children with whom you work? Then this session is for you! In this session, participants will have hands-on experiences with different assistive technology tools. We will explore tools that may already be available in your school and more specialized technologies that can be used to help young children who may need additional support as they develop. Participants will learn how to access these tools and

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## Session descriptions

supports in Nebraska.

**Intended audience:** IFSP/IEP teams or anyone working with young children who experience disabilities

**Learning objectives**

- State a functional definition of AT that defines the scope and purpose of AT
- Explain at least 2 compensatory functions of a given AT tool
- Explore at least 4 new Assistive Technology tools that support a child's developmental goals

### ATTUNING TO YOURSELF

**Tracey Kock**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT & Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Provider Well-Being | **Audience level:** Foundational

Working in a helping profession can be very rewarding, however, can also be physically and emotionally draining. In this session, we will discuss the importance of self-awareness and dive into how to care for yourself or provide "self-care" in the moment to reduce your feelings of stress in your day-to-day work.

**Intended audience:** Anyone

**Learning objectives**

- Develop a basic understanding of how stress can affect us and the work we do
- Develop some basic Mindful Self-Regulation strategies
- Understand the importance of Mindful Self-Compassion
- Leave with an understanding of how to care for yourself "in the moment"

### BEYOND THE NICU: A COLLABORATIVE, FAMILY-CENTERED APPROACH TO NICU FOLLOW UP IN NEBRASKA

**Dr. Kerry Miller, Dr. Paige Hardy**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Advocating for Young Children | **Audience level:** Foundational

Infants who spend their first days, weeks, or months of their life in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) are at greater risk for developmental delays and disabilities than their healthy peers, and the risk for mental health issues is heightened in parents of NICU graduates. The concerns for child and parent outcomes in this population make it imperative that NICU graduates and their parents be monitored closely to ensure optimal growth, developmental, and behavioral outcomes, and psychosocial support for parents are in place. The Developmental Tracking Infant Progress Statewide (TIPS) program offers comprehensive family-centered follow-up care and connects high-risk infants and children and their families with needed support services and serves as a consultant for primary care providers. This session will provide an overview of common medical conditions requiring NICU admission, describe the Developmental TIPS program model and the program's role in Child Find in Nebraska, and discuss professional roles of conference attendees in supporting continued program success.

**Intended audience:** Judges Caseworkers Parents attorneys Guardians ad litem CASAs EDN providers Head Start personnel School representatives Early childhood educators Home visitors Medical/health and mental health professionals Service providers Family member

**Learning objectives**

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand common medical conditions requiring NICU admission
- Recall potential impacts on growth, development, and behavioral outcomes in NICU graduates
- Understand the impact of a NICU admission on parent mental health
- Understand the aim, structure, and function of the Developmental TIPS program
- Reflect on their professional role may interface with the Developmental program and how they can support continued program success

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### CELEBRATING SEVEN YEARS: THE JOURNEY OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IN NEBRASKA

**Kelli Hauptman, Jamie Bahm**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Foundational

Reflective practice can be a powerful tool for people in helping professions. It can help you become more aware of your internal processes, it can help you in interactions with difficult people and it can help make you and others more effective in your work. Over the past seven years, the Nebraska Center on Reflective Practice (NCRP) has partnered with other organizations in bringing the FAN model of reflective practice into Nebraska. With nearly one thousand people having participated in training and four hundred people attending reflective consultation, the NCRP continues to expand its reach to provide this tool to people who work in sometimes challenging environments helping children and families. In this session, participants will learn about the journey the NCRP and its partners have taken over the past seven years in these efforts. Participants will also hear directly from people who have participating in reflective practice training and consultation about their experiences and the impact it has made on their lives.

**Intended audience:** This session is intended for any audience who work in the helping professions and has daily interactions with others

#### Learning objectives

- Participants will learn about the history of reflective practice in Nebraska
- Participants will hear about the impact reflective practice has had on Nebraskans

### CHANGING THE WAY WE LOOK AT CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS: AN ADULT-FIRST INTERVENTION

**Hayley Jackson, Erin Kampbell, Emily Manning**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

This session will dive into working with children who exhibit challenging behaviors in a classroom setting. Historically challenging behaviors have been seen as a “child problem” that an adult needs to fix. This session will reframe the way we look at challenging behaviors. Instead of seeing them as a child issue, we will look at challenging behaviors as a form of communication and how we as adults can support identifying the “why” of the behavior. We will also introduce strategies to support the child while reducing the likelihood that the challenging behaviors continue. In addition, this session will explore the idea of adult-first intervention which focuses on ensuring the adult is regulating their own emotions prior to supporting the child utilizing Bruce Perry’s 3R (Regulate, Relate, Reason) framework.

**Intended audience:** Educators, parents of young children, administrators of early childhood programs- anyone that has direct interactions with young children

#### Learning objectives

- Participants will understand the idea that behavior is a form of communication and that in order to reduce instances of challenging behavior, we must first identify what the behavior is communicating
- Participants will gain strategies on how to identify what the challenging behavior is communicating and strategies they can use to best support the child while also reducing the likelihood that the challenging behavior continue
- Participants will gain knowledge on the importance of regulating their own emotions in order to best support all children
- Participants will be introduced to the idea of adult-first intervention and gain knowledge on Bruce Perry’s 3R framework

### CHILDREN’S JUSTICE ATTORNEY EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: PREVENTING LEGAL DESERTS IN OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES

**Michelle Paxton**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Foundational

Rural communities severely lack access to attorneys is a phenomenon known as legal deserts. In child welfare, the challenges are even greater given the number of attorneys often required and the unique skill set necessary to provide high quality representation. In response, the University of Nebraska launched the Children’s

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Justice Attorney Education fellowship program to increase interest, competency, and commitment among rural attorneys practicing in Nebraska's juvenile courts. This innovative approach to continuing legal education provides fellows eight months of education, expert case consultation, and reflective practice. This presentation will discuss the unique challenges for rural child welfare attorneys and how innovative programming improves advocacy.

**Intended audience:** Attorneys, judges, child welfare professionals

**Learning objectives**

- Understand the unique needs and challenges for rural attorneys working in child welfare
- Be familiar with a model of legal education designed to increase interest, capacity, competency, and commitment among rural attorneys working in child welfare

### CIRCLE OF SECURITY IN NEBRASKA

**Samantha Bradley**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

Circle of Security Parenting(COSP) and Circle of Security Classroom(COSC) are 8-week evidence based programs based on decades of attachment research that are available throughout the state of Nebraska. Come hear about what Circle of Security is, why it is effective, and some of our most current data from Nebraska. You will have the opportunity to hear from state leads, current facilitators, and participants in the program about the impact that it has had on them.

**Intended audience:** Home visitors, parents, child care providers, anyone that works with young children/families

**Learning objectives**

- Understand what is Circle of Security Parenting/Classroom
- Be able to access the Nebraska COSP website and resources
- Develop an awareness of the potential impact of COS on parents, caregivers, and other early care professionals

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS– THE STORY OF HOME VISITATION AGENCIES COMING TOGETHER TO BETTER SERVE OUR FAMILIES

**Sarah Roesler, Jesse Meints-Harms, Angela Johnson, Kelly Erikson**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Planning Region Team 5 identified the need to work closely together with area home visiting agencies to best serve the Beatrice/Gage County area families. Starting in 2021, when referrals for home visiting services had hit a high, it was identified that there was confusion on home visitation services available and the referral process for young families by medical professionals, child protective services, and even within the home visitation agencies. EDN Services Coordinator Jesse Meints-Harms and Angela Johnson, Health Families America Program Coordinator decided to reach out to other home visiting agencies to work together to help clear up confusion as well as discuss curriculums used, best practices, and challenges the agencies face doing home visits. This panel of members of the Community Connections group will discuss the steps we took to create the group, determine our purpose, challenges we faced and highlight activities we have done to better serve families in Gage County.

**Intended audience:** Home Visiting Agencies

**Learning objectives**

- To discuss the steps taken in the creation of home visitor agencies collaborative meetings
- To identify the purpose, challenges the group faced and collaborative activities done to meet the needs of the families
- To suggestions on how to replicate this collaborative approach to assist agencies in meeting the needs of the community and families

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### CONNECTING THE DOTS: APPLYING THE ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES AND THE SAFE BABY COURT APPROACH TO ENHANCE THE SAFETY FOR NEBRASKA'S MOST VULNERABLE

**Moriah Taylor**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 – 3:30pm CDT & Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 – 11:50am CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Intermediary

This session will provide an overview of the foundation of effective court practices using lessons from The Enhanced Resource Guidelines (ERGs), NCJFCJ's blueprint for affecting meaningful systems change to improve case management and outcomes for families in need. The faculty will focus on how that foundation of the ERGs and the Safe Baby Court Approach help build collaboratives to best serve the youngest children. The session offers an opportunity to learn about approaches that support the well-being of families now and therefore, promote healthy families and communities in the future.

**Intended audience:** Court professionals, Child Welfare agency workers/leadership, community partners, attorneys

**Learning objectives**

- Understand the foundational principles of the Enhanced Resource Guidelines
- Identify key approaches to effective case management, family engagement, and court practice to support better outcomes for families
- Understand the Safe Baby Court Approach and how communities can leverage the work being done to better support the youngest children in care

### CREATING AN OASIS IN A CHILDCARE DESERT: HOW RURAL DISTRICTS ARE ADDRESS THE NEED FOR HIGH-QUALITY CHILDCARE PROGRAMS FOR THEIR FAMILIES

**Amy Kroll, Randy Geier, Jackie Anderson, Rachel Sissel, Amy Colwell Williams**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 – 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

This will be a panel discussion how rural districts have tackled the issue of offering childcare for their families as well as their staff. Each story is unique and will describe what funding sources may be available.

**Intended audience:** School district personnel interested in pursuing a childcare center at their districts

**Learning objectives**

- Attendees will be able to identify funding sources available to support the development of childcare programs
- Attendees will know that childcare programs are as unique as the school districts
- Attendees will gain knowledge of the requirements to operate a center-based program within a school setting

### CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

**Ingrid Lindal**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 – 11:50am CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 – 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

Children bring a variety of cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds to the classroom. To create a classroom that welcomes and respects all children's culture, values and beliefs, teachers need to consider this information when developing a curriculum that builds on the children's previous experiences. In this session we will explore the importance of teacher's self-awareness of their perspectives, values, and cultural practices and how those influence their teaching practices and views of others. This session will provide teachers with resources on first and future steps into implementing culturally responsive practices in their classroom.

**Intended audience:** Early Childhood Educators, School Representatives, Head Start Personnel

**Learning objectives**

- Learn about Cultural Diversity and how it impacts early childhood settings
- Understand how to support children and adult caregivers in a culturally diverse environment

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## DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TO PROMOTE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT: THE GETTING READY APPROACH

**Dr. Tamara Hechtner-Galvin, Katie Zabel**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

Professionals who work with families have unique opportunities to build partnerships that will contribute to children's healthy development. Professionals must work intentionally and strategically to build partnerships, but are often uncertain how to do this. Getting Ready is an approach that provides specific guidance for promoting family partnerships. Getting Ready was developed in Nebraska and has strong evidence of effectiveness. This session will introduce four Getting Ready family engagement strategies that professionals can intentionally integrate into family interactions to enhance partnerships. Participants will gain skills to enhance their work with families.

**Intended audience:** This session will inform professionals who work with families in some capacity. This includes front-line staff (e.g. home visitors, teachers, child care providers) as well as program leaders who work with families indirectly

### Learning objectives

- Identify the difference between parent involvement and parent partnership
- Increase knowledge of four strategies that can be used by professionals to promote family engagement
- Develop an action plan that includes practices for supporting family engagement

## EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH AND EARLY INTERVENTION

**Samantha Bradley**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Foundational

Many think of Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) as something separate from the work they do, however all fields that work in Early Childhood have an impact on ECMH! This session will focus on connecting Part C Early Intervention and ECMH, and giving practitioners the opportunity to think of ways to enhance the work they are already doing.

**Intended audience:** Early Interventionist, home visitors

### Learning objectives

- Describe what Early Childhood Mental Health is
- Explore how it intersects and can be integrated with Part C
- Determine other available resources

## EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS' AND STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AND SUPPORTS NEEDED TO COMPLETE DEGREES AND CERTIFICATION: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

**Dr. Julia Torquati, Dr. Victoria Johnson, Dr. Alexa Yunes-Koch, Tracy Gordon, Nancy Engen-Wedin, Simin Kazemi**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Nebraska is not immune to the widespread shortage of early childhood educators currently occurring across the United States. This lack of highly qualified teachers and care providers prevents parents and families from accessing quality, affordable care and education for their young children hampering the developmental potential during the critical years of early childhood. Unfortunately, this shortage is further constrained by a lack of accessible and equitable systems of learning that can qualify early childhood educators from multiple and diverse communities around the state. To address the developmental needs of young children, and to address childcare scarcity and early childhood workforce shortages, changes are necessary to design adequate, equitable, and accessible pathways for early childhood degrees and credentialing. The Responsive Equitable System for Preparing Early Childhood Teachers (RESPECT across Nebraska) project was organized to strengthen Nebraska's early childhood workforce by creating more inclusive, accessible, and culturally-sustaining pathways to teacher preparation, certification,



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and credentialing. Its mission involves three key strategies designed to support and facilitate early childhood educators in degree completion and credentialing by (1) removing barriers to facilitate completion; (2) designing accessible and equitable pathways to higher education and credentialing; and (3) building systems of support to ensure equitable opportunities for all of Nebraska's early childhood workforce. To address and implement this mission, the RESPECT team adopted a data-informed approach to understand and identify key facilitators and barriers to advancing education for early childhood educators. These findings are crucial to recruit and retain a diverse, skilled, and informed workforce. In this session, we will introduce the RESPECT across Nebraska project aims and the challenges that the project is working to address such as ECE workforce shortage, childcare scarcity, inadequate pathways, and limited accessibility. We will also report on the facilitators and barriers to early childhood education preparation identified through interviews and surveys with early childhood professionals and students. Moreover, we will introduce the ways in which the RESPECT project will facilitate the education and career advancement of ECE professionals, leverage the support mechanisms that currently exist within communities and the state, and design and develop new support systems. Approximately 15 minutes each will be allotted to these points of discussion, with the remaining 25 minutes reserved for audience discussion, feedback, and brainstorming on how to apply the information to their roles and further the impact on their communities. This will involve discussions to solicit points of reflection and questions that will inform the successful implementation of the project, having in mind that the project is striving to be guided by community-based and culturally-sustaining practices, and echoing the voices of the ECE professionals and students in order to build the pathways in a way that will address their needs and challenges in a more equitable, inclusive and culturally-sustaining manner.

**Intended audience:** Head Start personnel, school representatives, early childhood educators, service providers

### Learning objectives

After this presentation participants will:

- Be familiar with the aims of the RESPECT across Nebraska project
- Know the key facilitators and barriers to advancing education and teacher certification reported by early childhood students and professionals in Nebraska
- Understand how the RESPECT across Nebraska project is removing barriers and building pathways to address them
- Brainstorm how to apply the information to their roles/communities

## EARLY DEVELOPMENT NETWORK: YOUR GUIDE TO EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES IN NEBRASKA

**Sue Bainter, Jennifer Calahan, Janice Lee**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

The Early Development Network is Nebraska's early intervention program available to families who have infants and toddlers with delays or disabilities birth through age 3. Local school districts are responsible for providing supports and services to families and their child, if the child is found eligible, at no cost to the family.

**Intended audience:** Families, Early Headstart/Headstart, childcare, home visitors, school district administrators

### Learning objectives

- Explain why early intervention services are crucial
- Identify what services and supports are available
- Describe how families can access the program

## EUREKA!! DISCOVERING YOUR DATA TREASURE TROVE IN TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD

**Amy Colwell Williams, Kristina Norwood**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Advanced

Why do we use Teaching Strategies GOLD to assess young learners? What information does it give us and how can we then use it to make learning more powerful for our students? This session will explore the developmental trajectories of our youngest learners, how and why we document their development, what we do with the information that we gain from observational data, and finally what learning we are laying the foundation for in the future. As a bonus, there may even be

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some tips and tricks on how to make collecting observation notes a bit easier!

**Intended audience:** Teachers, Paras, Childcare providers, Administrators, Coaches

**Learning objectives**

- Describe the developmental trajectories of learning objectives
- Explain three reasons for the use of observational data
- Analyze developmental trajectories and recognize the K-12 learning objectives that link to them
- Interpret data gained from observational notes in order to execute high level instruction

## FEEDING/SLEEPING ISSUES IN YOUNG CHILDREN: STRATEGIES TO SHARE WITH FAMILIES

**Sue Bainter, Janice Lee, Christina Kilgore**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Challenges with feeding or getting a child to sleep can cause stress in a family's day. Home visitors are often asked by families for ideas about these areas of development. Often, difficulties with eating or sleeping are related to the child's responses to their sensory environment. Tips and techniques that modify or adjust the infant or toddler's environment or routine will be shared.

**Intended audience:** Home visitors, Early Headstart/Headstart, childcare, families

**Learning objectives**

- Identify components of the child's sensory environment and routine that may be problematic
- Develop strategies that can help families make adjustments in their child's sensory environment

## GENERATIONAL TRAUMA- A CASE STUDY

**Machaela Hackendahl**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Foundational

Working with families it is not uncommon to encounter trauma within their lives and treatment plan around that. However, generational trauma is often overlooked, and all too often plays a very important role into how that adult functions in daily life. This session will utilize a case study to look at the importance of acknowledging generational trauma and process through what can be done about it to help bring healing to that family unit.

**Intended audience:** Any professional who works with families

**Learning objectives**

- What is generational trauma?
- How can multidisciplinary teams be utilized to identify generational trauma
- Participants will learn about therapeutic modalities and interventions to address generational trauma
- Participants will learn how untreated generational trauma within a family unit can harm the attachment and development of young children

## HOME VISITING PROGRAMS: HEALTHY FAMILIES AMERICA AND CHILD WELFARE PREVENTION

**Jamie Kramer, Jennifer Auman**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Intermediary

An overview of the early childhood HFA program and its use for children who are at risk for maltreatment or adverse childhood experiences.

**Intended audience:** Judges, county attorneys, CASA, EDN medical/health and mental health professional, providers, family members

**Learning objectives**



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- target population
- length of program
- goals of the program
- use and effectiveness of the program in Nebraska

## HOW DOES LANGUAGE JUSTICE IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITY

**Mariana Schell, Mariella Resendiz Alvarado**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

Join us for an interactive session on understanding the barriers our non-English students and caregivers face on a daily basis and what we can do as a community to support them. When schools and organizations create a space where people can be seen, heard, and valued for their skills and talents, we create community connections that impact the learning, earning, and living of our Nebraska people. Learn what you can do to include the voices and community impact non-English people can bring to your community.

**Intended audience:** Anybody that has interaction with individuals that do not speak English or are not proficient in English

### Learning objectives

- How we can all impact and help our non-English speaking community members
- Making a difference is not as overwhelming as originally thought. Small steps make a huge difference
- Community well-being include feeling heard and supported. Those communities thrive and bring economic development and overall growth

## HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT BODY SAFETY, BOUNDARIES AND SEXUAL ABUSE

**Christy Prang**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Intermediary

People who sexually abuse children specifically target children who don't have the skills to talk about it. They use this lack of knowledge to keep them silent, shamed, and compliant. Having age-appropriate, open conversations about our bodies, sex, and boundaries is an important step in protecting children. This presentation will teach participants how to talk with and listen to children about sexual abuse and personal safety. This presentation will also teach adults how to react responsibly to a child if they make the choice to disclose and how to make a report.

**Intended audience:** Any professional working with children and, also designed for parents

### Learning objectives

- Participants will learn proper body safety terminology to use when teaching children and parent
- Understand normal to problematic sexual behaviors
- Discuss participants experiences with disclosures with young children and how to react responsibly to a disclosure
- Identify resources within the community, print materials and websites professionals and parents can access

## IF I KNEW THEN WHAT I KNOW NOW: LESSONS LEARNED FROM PROBLEM-SOLVING

**Jamie Bahm, Judge Roger Heideman, Judge Elise M. W. White, Dr. Pamela Jordan**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Intermediary

There is no shortage of lessons to be learned working in child welfare. Families and systems, alike, present with complex circumstances for which often there is no clear solution. Problem solving courts provide an alternative method of practice for juvenile courts that can improve case outcomes, and also better the experiences of families and professionals while enhancing relationships. The Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children has partnered over the years with Judge Roger Heideman, Judge Elise White, and other juvenile court judges to provide needs assessments and program evaluation for juvenile court

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communities and problem-solving courts. During this session, presenters will reflect on lessons learned through their juvenile court and problem-solving court experiences and discuss how these lessons can be applied to child welfare cases outside of the problem-solving court context. Program evaluation data from throughout the years will be presented to highlight key findings to help stimulate conversation around applying our data-informed lessons learned to our overall child welfare practice.

**Intended audience:** Child welfare professionals, legal professionals

### Learning objectives

- Reflect on lessons learned from child welfare and problem-solving court experiences
- Discuss key findings from community needs assessments and problem-solving court program evaluation data
- Apply problem-solving court best practices and lessons learned to general child welfare practice

## IDEA PART C PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS: INTRODUCING A MODULE FOR FAMILIES

**Dr. Vera Stroup-Rentier, Mark Smith, Connie Shockley**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

This presentation provides an overview of Nebraska's IDEA Part C Procedural Safeguards module. We will review the features of the module and the sections covered including prior written notice, confidentiality of information, conflict resolution, and the due process provisions under Part C. Resources and a glossary for families, embedded in the module, will also be shared. Lastly, we will focus on strategies for sharing this module with the families you support in Part C.

**Intended audience:** Professionals and families from early intervention programs (PRTs) in Nebraska

### Learning objectives

- Participants will increase their knowledge of the Part C Procedural Safeguards module
- Participants will develop strategies for sharing the procedural safeguards modules with families
- Participant will learn more about more resources to help families access support when they need more information about their protections under IDEA

## IMPACT FROM INFANCY: A MODEL OF COURT INTERVENTION

**Elizabeth Straham, Heather Werthmann**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Foundational

This training will provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the Child Welfare System on children under 5. You will gain a better understanding of the effect that trauma has on a young child's ability to develop secure attachments. You will also gain insight into how Project Harmony, through the Impact from Infancy program, is specifically assisting children under 5 in the Douglas County Juvenile Court System. This training will look at the history of the Impact from Infancy program, the goals of the program, and how this program is implemented within Douglas County. Participants will walk away with a greater understanding of how trauma impacts children under 5 and with a model of court intervention that they can implement within their county.

**Intended audience:** Anyone who works with young children in the Juvenile Court System

### Learning objectives

- Describe the effects that trauma has on young children within the child welfare system
- Recognize the importance of attachment in a child's early development
- Explore the development of the Impact from Infancy Program in the Douglas County Juvenile Court System
- Discover how the Impact from Infancy program is implemented in the Douglas County Juvenile Court System and how this can be transitioned into other counties

## INFANT MENTAL HEALTH ENDORSEMENT IS GOOD FOR BABIES!

**Samantha Bradley, Tana Goosic**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

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When we talk about Infant Mental Health Endorsement, many in the early childhood field don't think that it applies to them. However, anyone that works with and supports young children and families are able to apply for endorsement! Come learn about the Nebraska Association for Infant Mental Health and how Infant Mental Health Endorsement may be right for you.

**Intended audience:** All

**Learning objectives**

- Connect the Nebraska Association for Infant Mental Health's mission and activities to your work
- Explain how the IMH-E® is relevant to the infant and early childhood workforce
- Identify the steps necessary to begin the IMH-E® application process

### INTRODUCTION TO PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY

**Dr. Corey Lieneman, Dr. Rachel Schumacher**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is an evidence-based intervention for a wide variety of child mental, behavioral, and emotional challenges. Its effectiveness has been demonstrated through clinical research with thousands of families around the world for the past 40+ years. Children and families who participate in PCIT have stronger relationships, better emotion regulation, less parenting stress, decreased risk of abuse, and better psychosocial outcomes. PCIT is delivered in two phases, Child-Directed Interaction (CDI) and Parent-Directed Interaction (PDI), and is typically completed in about 12-20, 1-hour sessions. Unfortunately, a shortage of qualified providers and other barriers to treatment limit many families' abilities to access this vital intervention. As a behavioral parent training approach, the goal of PCIT is simple: to train parents and caregivers to incorporate therapeutic skills into their everyday caregiving practices. Through this talk, participants will receive an introduction to this training. The basic therapeutic skills of CDI will be taught, modeled, and practiced in role play situations. The steps of PDI will be described and demonstrated through video modeling. Finally, options for further training and next steps for expanding the PCIT provider roster in Nebraska will be discussed.

**Intended audience:** Anyone who interacts directly with children, especially:

- Caseworkers
- EDN providers
- Head Start personnel
- Early childhood educators
- Home visitors
- Medical/health and mental health professionals
- Service providers
- Family members

**Learning objectives**

- Participants will be familiar with the evidence base and outcomes of Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)
- Audience members will identify and practice the basic skills of PCIT
- Attendees will better understand barriers to treatment for young children in Nebraska

### KEEPING THE BABY IN MIND: ADVOCATING FOR INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

**Samantha Byrns, Lori Rodriguez-Fletcher**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Mental health clinicians play an important role in the lives of children and families. Their role is even more important when the children and families are involved with the child welfare system and, especially, when the children are too young to speak for themselves. Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) clinicians work to advocate for the needs of young children impacted by abuse and neglect or other traumatic experiences by collaborating with child

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welfare workers, GALs, the Courts and other key professionals. They provide developmental and psychoeducation and support throughout the case to help seek meaningful outcomes in the best interest of the child. They can also provide assessments and recommendations on the young child's socioemotional health and treatment while keeping overall wellbeing in mind. This session will also address the effects of secondary traumatic stress on clinicians as well as the team that can occur while working with such a vulnerable population who have experienced trauma.

**Intended audience:** County Attorneys, GALs, CASA, Caseworkers, Judges, therapists and other professionals working with Courts and the Child Welfare system

### Learning objectives

- Participants will be able to discuss infant and early childhood mental health and advocacy while working with court-involved cases
- Participant will be able to recognize the importance of building relationships and safe spaces with children and families who have experienced trauma
- Participants will be able to identify ruptures and repairs that occur in the therapeutic relationship when working with court-involved cases
- Participant will be able to summarize the impact of working with trauma and court-involved cases, including the impact of secondary traumatic stress
- Participant will be able to acknowledge the importance of reflective supervision, consultation, and self-care when working with court-involved cases

## MORE THAN WORDS: USING AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

**Jessica Broderick**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Advanced

All children are born ready to learn a language, but what do we do if that language development looks different than what we expect? Many children benefit from the use of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) in order to communicate and engage with the world around them. There are no thinking skills, test scores, or other milestones that need to be in place before a child can start exploring the world of AAC. This session will present basic information about the different types of AAC, considerations for where to start, and examples of evidence-based teaching strategies.

**Intended audience:** Parents, services coordinators, early childhood educators, specialists (SLP, OT, PT, etc)

### Learning objectives

- Identify the difference between types of alternative communication methods
- Define core vs fringe vocabulary and the purpose of both
- Learn at least 2 strategies for teaching language using AAC

## NEBRASKA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF PRENATAL PLANS OF SAFE CARE

**Mikayla Wicks**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Foundational

Instead of waiting until a child is born affected by prenatal substance use, Nebraska has taken the approach of implementing Prenatal Plans of Safe Care. By introducing a Prenatal Plan of Safe Care Binder to a pregnant woman and her family, she will have more opportunity to build a network to address her substance use/misuse, care for her child and gain a support network. The goal of our work shouldn't be to penalize a family for trauma or struggles they have endured, but give them the resources to build a better future. The Prenatal Plan of Safe Care Binder is a preventative tool to strengthen the family, help mother's have a healthy pregnancy, and keep children safely at home. The Binder also gives families an organized way to help them demonstrate and communicate their strengths, needs and accomplishments with others.

**Intended audience:** Caseworkers, Parents Attorneys, Guardian ad litem, CASAs, EDN Providers, Head Start Personnel, School representatives, Early childhood educations, Home Visitors, Medical/Health and Mental Health Professionals, Service Providers, Family Members, and Prenatal Care Providers

### Learning objectives

At the conclusion of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Interpret the goal of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, including Plans of Safe Care
- Summarize the purpose of Prenatal Plans of Safe Care
- Summarize the benefits and outcomes of a community utilizing Prenatal Plans of Safe Care



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### OVERVIEW OF ECMH SERVICES IN NEBRASKA

**Lindsey Ondrak**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

The Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children (NRPVYC) created a video and companion guide to learn more about Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Services in Nebraska. This overview will present these resources while helping attendees understand each of the three services: Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), and Circle of Security™-Parenting (COS™-P).

**Intended audience:** All professional who works with infants or young children, including child welfare, CASA, home visiting, educational services, childcare, early development, GALs, and more

**Learning objectives**

- Participants will analyze the importance of dyadic treatment for young children
- This session will help you understand the core treatment process for CPP and PCIT and components of COSP classes
- Participants will be able to identify when to make a referral for CPP, PCIT, and COSP

### PARENTS INTERACTING WITH INFANTS (PIWI) IN NEBRASKA

**Nikki Roseberry, Christen Million**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

Parents Interacting With Infants (PIWI) is an evidence-based set of practices based on a philosophy about families, children, and helping relationships. The objectives of PIWI are to increase confidence, competence, and positive relationships for parents and children ages 0-2. The primary use of PIWI is in parent-child play groups and in home visitation, but it has also been used successfully in other settings such as library story time. This session will help participants understand what PIWI is, receive an overview of the skills used in PIWI implementation, and learn the process of getting trained as a facilitator and implementing in their community.

**Intended audience:** All

### PART C TO PART B EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITION RESOURCES

**Jessica Anthony, Amy Bunnell**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Intermediary

The Early Development Network Co-Leads will review the transition planning process, including new guidance documents, for children who are preparing to transition from Part C Early Intervention into Part B Preschool Special Education.

**Intended audience:** Early Development Network Services Coordinators, Early Intervention Service Providers, Early Childhood school district representatives/administrators

**Learning objectives**

- Participants will become familiar with the newly issued Transition Guidance document and know how to utilize the information
- Participants will increase their understanding of a quality, individualized transition plan for children receiving early intervention
- Participants will be able to identify the regulatory requirements of a transition plan for children receiving early intervention.

### PLAYING AROUND: STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN EVERYDAY PLAY

**Dr. Sara Westerlin**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Foundational

Play serves as a means of learning for all children, helping them to make sense of the world, and is essential to all aspects of their development. It helps promote

## Session descriptions

mastery as children practice skills and furthers cognitive, language, social, physical, emotional, and creative development (Essa & Burnham, 2020). This session will describe the different types and stages of play, developmentally appropriate play, as well as play environments. Participants will explore practical strategies for providing play opportunities and tips for helping caregivers and families nurture children's imagination through play experiences.

**Intended audience:** Early childhood teachers, family members, caseworkers, school personnel and representatives, service providers, school administrators

### Learning objectives

- Recognize different types of play and stages of play
- Discuss and explore strategies for guiding children with play
- Learn practical tips for nurturing children's imagination and play experiences

## POST-PANDEMIC HOME VISITATION: SUPPORTING STAFF AND FAMILIES

**Jennifer Durand, Deanna Schlautman**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Advanced

This session will discuss the unique experience of supporting staff as they transitioned away from fully remote work to in-person home visits following the COVID-19 pandemic. Presenters will discuss the challenges staff experienced adjusting to their roles, meeting agency expectations, and serving communities highly impacted by the pandemic. Presenters will share their reflections on the importance of staff development amidst both agency and community-wide changes, as well as strategies to retain staff working with families experiencing a multitude of psychosocial stressors.

**Intended audience:** Professionals interested in the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on home visitation, staff members who work in supervisory roles

### Learning objectives

- Participants will identify challenges that are unique to home visitors following the COVID-19 pandemic
- Participants will describe opportunities for staff development amidst agency and community change
- Participants will reflect on staff retention strategies within their own agencies and consider next steps for supporting staff who provide services to high-needs families

## READY TO LEARN: INNOVATIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES TO SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

**Jessica Mitchell-McCollough**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

Early math and functional literacy skills can unlock powerful opportunities for children. Nebraska Public Media Family Math and Ready to Learn multimedia resources bring the whole family together to build a positive culture, knowledge and confidence through fun, hands-on learning experiences as part of everyday activities. This presentation will help educators, parents and caregivers plan and partner together to support development of math literacy, functional literacy, and other foundational skills in children ages 2-8.

**Intended audience:** Early childhood teachers, administrators, home-based providers, parents and caregivers

### Learning objectives

- Attendees will be able to access, use, and adapt Nebraska Public Media and PBS KIDS free and research based resources to support school readiness and success for children ages 2-8
- Attendees will be able to access, use, and adapt Nebraska Public Media and PBS KIDS free and research based resources to support strong learning partnerships between home, school, and community environments

## REASONABLE EFFORTS: REASONABLE EFFORTS: PRACTICAL APPLICATION FOR JUDGES, LAWYERS, CASEWORKERS, CASAS AND ALL INVOLVED IN CHILD

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### WELFARE

#### Judge Douglas Johnson

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Advocating for Young Children | **Audience level:** intermediary

Lawyers and non-lawyers who work in Child Welfare need to know the importance of the reasonable efforts laws, how they are applied and how they impact the children and parents we serve.

**Intended audience:** All involved in Child Welfare--judges, lawyers, case workers, CASAs, foster parents, legislators and anyone else who works on these matters

#### Learning objectives

- Know the reasonable efforts laws
- Understand why the reasonable efforts laws are important
- Understand how the reasonable efforts laws are applied
- Understand how these laws impact the children and parents we serve

### REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: LOOKING AT YOUR WORK FROM THE INSIDE OUT

#### Dayna Goff

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Provider Well-Being | **Audience level:** Foundational

Professionals who work in human services and the court system are engaged in work that is both rewarding and emotionally intrusive. Reflective Practice is a relationship-based practice that assists in mitigating the effects of the emotionally intrusive nature of the work by helping individuals examine their current and past actions, emotions, experiences, and responses in order to evaluate their work performance and learn to improve in the future. This presentation will cover: why reflective practice is important for helping professionals, an overview of the core components of the Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) Model of Reflective Practice, a summary of the work that the Nebraska Center for Reflective Practice does and its training program.

**Intended audience:** We believe all helping professionals can benefit from Reflective Practice and apply it to their work with children and families

#### Learning objectives

- Basic understanding of what Reflective Practice is and how it can influence the work of helping professionals
- Basic overview of the Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) Model of Reflective Practice
- Basic understanding of the Nebraska Center on Reflective Practice and its services and training program

### SAFE & HEALTHY FAMILIES COURT: NEBRASKA'S FRAMEWORK FOR DV-INFORMED PRACTICE

#### Dr. Pamela Jordan, Judge Elise M. W. White, Lindsey Turner, Beth Buhr

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Advocating for Young Children | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Nebraska child welfare stakeholders come together to showcase the development of the "Safe and Healthy Families Court" team (SHFC) in Lancaster County, Nebraska. SHFC and this multi-disciplinary team are creating and experiencing a paradigm shift in how child welfare cases involving domestic violence are approached in their county. The presentation will analyze the history of the project, justify the application of a Problem-Solving Court framework to domestic violence child welfare cases, propose strategies for engaging key stakeholders in order to create a team of court professionals sharing the vision and mission for change, and finally, share evaluation data demonstrating positive changes for families that are part of SHFC.

**Intended audience:** Child Welfare professionals, Courts, Therapists working with Domestic Violence Survivors and Families

#### Learning objectives

- Develop an understanding of how the Safe and Healthy Families Court Team aimed to change how child welfare cases involving domestic violence are managed in Lancaster County, Nebraska, through an analysis of the project's history and current data

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- Through our collected data, justify the application of a Problem-Solving Court framework to domestic violence child welfare cases
- Propose strategies for engaging and training key stakeholders so the whole team of court professionals can then create a shared vision and mission for change

## SELF CARE AND RESILIENCY

**Jennifer Auman**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Provider Well-Being | **Audience level:** Foundational

The workforce crisis as a result of the pandemic has created a tremendous amount of stress for those in positions that “do it for the joy” and not the money. Burnout is a serious issue and combined with the economy, we need to put steps into place to preserve the direct service providers and caregivers that bring the experience and knowledge to families across the state. This presentation uses humor, interactive activities, and engaging presentation to bring us all back to a place of resiliency. Utilizing the theory and many activities in the book *Building Your Bounce, Simple Strategies for a Resilient You* by Mary Mackrain and Nefertiti Bruce Poyner, my presentation takes on the complex emotional state of Compassion Fatigue in early childhood home visitors, teachers and caregivers. The differences in Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma and Burnout are examined, signs and symptoms are identified, and active participation in activities to build resilience through the Protective Factors of relationships, internal beliefs, initiative and self-control are exemplified.

**Intended audience:** Early childhood home visitors, teachers, caregivers

### Learning objectives

At the end of the session, the participant will be able to:

- Understand the difference between Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma and Burnout
- Identify signs and symptoms of Compassion Fatigue
- Learn how Protective Factors, as described in *Building Your Bounce* by Mary Mackrain and Nefertiti Bruce Poyner, work for grown-ups too in building and recognizing resiliency!
- Accept a compliment (or at least know the basics of learning how)

## SPECIAL CARE: QUALITY INCLUSIVE CARE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS

**Janice Lee, Susan Borcher**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

Including young children with diverse needs in childcare settings can be both challenging and rewarding. Building collaborative partnerships with families and other early childhood professionals can be key to improving child outcomes. During this session the presenters will share ideas on how to develop those strong partnerships. They will provide information about early intervention services provided in Nebraska and what childcare professionals can expect from early intervention providers serving children in their care. Participants and presenters will explore ideas for having difficult conversations with families when necessary. Together, in partnership we can make a difference.

**Intended audience:** Childcare providers, Early Head Start Home Visitors, Six Pence

### Learning objectives

Participants will have an increased understanding of:

- Routines Based Early Intervention services in homes and childcare
- Expectations of Early Intervention services in homes and childcares
- Ways to collaborate with families and early intervention professionals to best meet the needs of young children
- How to have difficult conversations with families when discussing child development concerns

## SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION BETWEEN DHHS AND EDN SERVICES

**Cherish Lienemann, April Christensen**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

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**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Foundational

This session will discuss how DHHS and EDN can collaborate together successfully. We will discuss the process in which DHHS receives referrals and how they provide information about the EDN program to families during their intake process. We will share how EDN collaborates with DHHS once they receive the referral and both support the family through the entirety of a family's case. We will highlight the ongoing collaboration between DHHS, EDN and other community partners to build positive relationships.

**Intended audience:** Caseworkers, CASAs, EDN providers, Head Start Personnel, School representatives, Early childhood educators, Home visitors, and Family members

**Learning objectives**

- The process between DHHS receiving an intake for a child and making a referral to EDN
- The Collaboration between CFS and EDN
- Building strong community relationships

### SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN WITHIN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: INCLUSIVITY AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

**Stacey Hauser, Brian Wojcik, Kim Bowen, Jeri Johnson**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 – 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Foundational

Have you ever wondered how you might structure your Early Childhood learning environment to support the needs of ALL children? Did you know there are simple, low-tech modifications that you can make to ensure an inclusive environment for every child regardless of ability?

Children with disabilities have the right to play and participate in everyday activities with their typically developing peers. However, they may face barriers and obstacles related to access within their environment. Join us to learn more about how Assistive Technology and Inclusive Environments can go hand in hand and how even small changes can help level the field for every child!

**Intended audience:** Professionals working with young children

**Learning objectives**

- Participants will gain a better understanding of how access can prevent barriers for children with disabilities
- Participants will be able to identify at least four easy, low-tech modifications using everyday items that can be made within a classroom environment to benefit ALL children
- Participants will gain knowledge about Assistive Technology (AT) and supports available in Nebraska

### SURVIVOR VOICE: IMPLEMENTING SURVIVORS' PERSPECTIVES DURING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MDTs

**Elizabeth Straham, Heather Werthmann**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 – 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Foundational

This training will provide an example of how to implement Survivor Voice, the perspective of the non-offending parents in domestic violence cases, into 1184 Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs). You will gain a better understanding of the benefit of Survivor Voice and the collaborative efforts used when staffing child abuse and neglect cases on MDTs. This training will provide a brief overview of 1184 Multi-Disciplinary Teams, the impact that domestic violence has on families, the importance of looking at cases through a domestic violence informed lens, and how to partner with the survivor during MDT case reviews. Participants will walk away with a greater understanding of the important of looking at cases from a survivor first perspective.

**Intended audience:** Anyone who works with families in the Juvenile Court System

**Learning objectives**

- Recognize the effects that domestic violence has on families within the child welfare system
- Discover the importance of staffing domestic violence cases on 1184 Multi-Disciplinary Teams

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- Understand the necessity of implementing Survivor Voice into the case reviews
- Exploring case reviews where Survivor Voice has been used and how that reveals the influence of domestic violence on the case

### TEN CREATIVE TOOLS FOR BUILDING AND MAINTAINING YOUR RESILIENCY

**Kay Glidden, Beth Reynolds Lewis**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT & Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Foundational

You hear difficult stories daily and are frequently exposed to traumatic details from the families you are working with. Using the most recent research in the field, this interactive, evidence-based, and trauma informed presentation will explore assumptions about compassion fatigue, secondary trauma, burnout, and resiliency. Ten creative and hands-on tools will be discussed for building and maintaining your health and resiliency.

**Intended audience:** This session is applicable to any professional that works with families that are experiencing emotional trauma

**Learning objectives**

- Define and discuss the impact of emotional trauma, compassion fatigue, secondary trauma, and burnout on personal and professional well-being
- Identify compassion fatigue, secondary trauma, and burnout warning signs and symptoms
- Review 10 tools for building and maintaining resiliency including mindfulness, grounding, and debriefing skills

### THE ABC'S OF EQUITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD (ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, BELONGING, AND COMMITMENT)

**Becky Dunlap-Morton, Lelynda Briggs-Linstadt**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 12:50 - 2:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Intermediary

In communities that serve young children and families, it is important for service providers to recognize how historical inequities in the American education system have impacted and continue to impact marginalized communities. In order to do this work, service providers need to explore their own identity markers and increase awareness of culturally relevant practices.

**Intended audience:** Service providers and educators

**Learning objectives**

- Participants will recognize how historical inequities in the American education system have impacted marginalized communities
- Participants will explore personal identity markers and how they impact interactions in educational settings and communities that serve young children and families
- Participants will increase awareness of culturally relevant and trauma-informed educational practices

### THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON INFANTS, YOUNG CHILDREN, AND FAMILIES AND WAYS TO PROMOTE RESILIENCE

**Dr. Joy Osofsky**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 9:30 - 10:40am CDT

Young children continue far too often to be exposed to ongoing traumas of abuse and neglect, exposure to domestic violence and substance use. In the past three years, the additional traumas from COVID-19 including death of parents or caregivers, financial hardship, and increased stress in families have contributed to more child distress. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been estimated that in the United States, more than 240,000 children lost a parent or caregiver to COVID-19. In comparison with natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in many more losses without needed support. These losses can be devastating for development and long-term well-being of young children leading to emotional and behavioral dysregulation, regression in sleeping, eating, toileting, difficulties with attachment and separations, and mental health issues that may increase over time without supportive interventions. Racial and ethnic disparities in caregiver loss have also been identified. Relationships with caring adults are very important to support resilience. Support for caregivers and children accompanied by positive early childhood and community settings can play key roles in supporting resilience by being present, emotionally available, and listening to the children.



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## Learning objectives

- Participants will learn about the effects of trauma on young children including the significant impact of losses during the COVID-19 pandemic including the inequities in losses
- Listeners will gain more information about how trauma can impact on young children's social, emotional, and cognitive development
- Participants will understand more about strategies that can be implemented to support resilience in young children and families

## THE ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: IMPROVING COURT PRACTICE IN CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASES

### Judge Douglas Johnson

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Improving Systems to Support Young Children | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Lawyers and non-lawyers who work in Child Welfare need to know the importance of the reasonable efforts laws, how they are applied and how they impact the children and parents we serve.

**Intended audience:** All legal and non-legal persons who work in child welfare cases and are curious about how quality hearings improve the lives of the children and parents we serve.

## Learning objectives

- Know the reasonable efforts laws
- Understand why the reasonable efforts laws are important
- Understand how the reasonable efforts laws are applied
- Understand how these laws impact the children and parents we serve

## THE IMPACT OF COVID ON YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND WAYS TO SUPPORT RESILIENCE

### Dr. Joy Osofsky

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Advanced

The over one million deaths in the United States from COVID-19 have impacted on young children who have lost parents and caregivers. The loss of a parent can be devastating for development and for very young children can lead to emotional and behavioral dysregulation for the short-term and overall well-being over time. These losses can be devastating for the development and long-term well-being of all children, including very young children, leading to emotional and behavioral dysregulation, regressions in sleeping, eating, toileting, difficulties with attachment, problems in day care or preschool, and mental health issues that are likely to increase over time without supportive interventions. It has been estimated that in the United States, over 200,000 children lost a parent or caregiver to COVID-19 through December 2021, many of whom may have been their only within household caregiver. Racial and ethnic disparities in caregiver loss exceed disparities in COVID-19 deaths. Disparities are even higher in children losing their only caregiver, which creates even more acute mental health, educational, and community concerns requiring attention. With the COVID-19 pandemic, the losses without needed supports are much greater than those following natural disasters. Caregiver deaths due to COVID-19 are a significant threat to the functioning of children and families, compounding additional challenges to physical and mental health already impacted by economic and other stresses in families. Early childhood and community settings can play a key role in providing a caring environment to support resilience for young children through listening, being emotionally available and present for them.

**Intended audience:** Early childhood community professionals

## Learning objectives

- Participants will recognize the impact of trauma and the COVID-19 pandemic losses on young children and families, including the inequities in losses
- Listeners will gain more information about how these losses can impact on young children's social, emotional, and cognitive development
- Participants will be able to acknowledge what is most important to support recovery and resilience in young children impacted by trauma and losses

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### THERAPEUTIC TIME-OUTS FOR BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN

**Dr. Corey Lieneman**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Advanced

Time-out is a highly effective technique for child behavior management if conducted properly. However, many popular time-out strategies used by well intentioned parents, caregivers, and educators have drifted from the original therapeutic methods. As such, the average time-out is often less effective and results in greater stress on the caregiver-child relationship as compared with therapeutic time-outs. These challenges are exacerbated for children with special behavioral and emotional needs, such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), anxiety, and developmental differences (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, language delays). This presentation will introduce the basic parameters of an effective, evidence based, and trauma-informed therapeutic time-out protocol. The techniques highlighted will draw heavily on Parent-Child Interaction Therapy research. Tips for tailoring time-out to meet the unique developmental and cultural needs of families will also be reviewed. A summary of the comprehensive research base on time-out will be provided, including a description of its behavioral theoretical background. Controversial legal and ethical issues related to time-out will be discussed.

**Intended audience:** Geared toward a wide audience, especially:

- EDN providers
- Head Start personnel
- School representatives
- Early childhood educators
- Home visitors
- Medical/health and mental health professionals
- Service providers
- Family members

#### **Learning objectives**

- Participants will be familiar with the evidence supporting the use of time-out for behavior management in young children
- Audience members will identify clinical strategies for appropriately tailoring time-out components to families' unique cultural and developmental needs
- Attendees will better understand controversial legal and ethical issues related to time-out

### THERE'S GRIEF THERE: THE IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNIZING AND TREATING UNRESOLVED GRIEF IN OUR CLINICAL WORK OF NON-DEATH RELATED SYMPTOMS

**Tiffany Eisenbraun**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Provider Well-Being | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Grief is often merely considered in clients who present with symptoms of bereavement following a death. This training will explore the purpose and circumstances of acknowledging grief responses in treatment of all mental health symptoms. We will explore various grief models, identify observable biopsychosocial factors that are disrupted by grief, and discuss how unresolved grief can influence trauma reactions, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, etc. You will be provided with a therapeutic framework to implement skills for treating grief symptoms and helping clients overcome schemas that are influenced by their unresolved grief.

**Intended audience:** Mental Health Professionals, Other professionals that have influence and meet needs related to mental health

#### **Learning objectives**

- Provide a clear definition of grief and discover the benefits of applying a grief lens in clinical treatment
- Gain a fundamental understanding of the primary theories and models of grief
- Identify biopsychosocial factors influenced by grief and discuss the impacts of unhealed grief
- Develop framework for implementing skills into practical treatment strategies

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### TIPS FOR GUARDIANS AD LITEM AND CASA VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

**Tana Fye**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Advocating for Young Children | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Attorneys serving as Guardians ad Litem and CASA Volunteers receive general training before serving in these roles, but often don't receive any specific guidance about working with young children. In this session, GALs and CASA volunteers will receive additional information and tips to help them better work with their youngest clients.

**Intended audience:** Attorneys, CASA volunteers. It would also be beneficial for caseworkers

**Learning objectives**

- Upon completion of attendance at this session, GALs and CASA volunteers will have a better understanding of how to work better with their very youngest clients

### TRAFFIC STOP: HUMAN DIVISION

**Stacey Cahill, Lisa Pereyra-Molina**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT & Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT

**Track:** Advocating for Young Children | **Audience level:** Foundational

Human Trafficking is an issue in Nebraska, especially for our young children and vulnerable youth. Awareness and prevention are key since only 1% of trafficked individuals get out of the bondage. Even though this topic is overwhelming, the public and our children are better served by banding together and doing what we can to prevent human trafficking or provide support for survivors.

**Intended audience:** Educators, medical professionals, attorneys, CASA, mental health professionals

**Learning objectives**

- Know the prevalence of human trafficking in Nebraska and why prevention is key
- Be able to identify signs that trafficking may be occurring
- Resiliency in Children and Trauma informed interactions with vulnerable persons
- Identifying options to prevent trafficking
- Resources for identified survivors and families

### TRANSITIONS MATTER!

**Barbara Jessing, Melanie Anderson**

Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 9:00 - 10:10am CDT

**Track:** Early Childhood Services | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Early attachment between young children and their caregivers is the absolute foundation of healthy development. But children at risk of maltreatment who enter the child welfare system may experience a range of disruptions in caregiver which can threaten healthy attachment. These may include removal from their parents, changes in foster placements, entering and leaving visitation sessions, and/or return to home. Each transition has the potential to either strengthen/protect attachment or repeat a traumatic disruption. In this session we will present ideas for how we can use the tools of Early Childhood Mental Health to support healthy attachment and facilitate the best possible transitions.

**Intended audience:** Early Childhood Mental Health, Case Managers, Guardians Ad Litem, Judges

**Learning objectives**

- Identify the impact of transitions of caregivers of children from birth to five, on the child's experience of attachment
- Explore the concepts of rupture and repair in regard to child-caregiver attachment
- Implement strategies for fostering a cooperative perspective between parents, foster parents, or kinship caregivers
- Outline a supportive process for transitioning young children during placement/caregiver change

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## Session descriptions

### TREATMENT AND INCARCERATION ISSUES FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

**Tana Fye**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Advocating for Young Children | **Audience level:** Advanced

When parents are incarcerated, facing potential incarceration, or have substance abuse issues requiring treatment, arranging services can be difficult. When young children are involved, the potential for problems becomes more complicated. In this session, we will look at the services available, identify how provision of services is more difficult when young children are involved, and attempt to identify solutions to the problems and complications.

**Intended audience:** Attorneys, caseworkers, family support workers, foster care support workers.

#### Learning objectives

We will examine the following specific topics, as well as identifying issues, services available, and possible solutions:

- Types of Treatment Programs
- Nebraska Treatment Programs
- Maintaining Contact
- Visitation with Parent
- Visitation/Placement with Extended Family
- Presence/Participation at Hearings
- Presence/Participation at Team Meetings
- Relinquishment of Parental Rights
- Termination of Parental Rights
- Ethics

### UNDERSTANDING PRESCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS TO PROMOTE INCLUSION IN NEBRASKA

**Amy Bunnell, Dr. Vera Stroup-Rentier**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT

**Track:** Early Education | **Audience level:** Advanced

Preschool educational environments data can help program leaders and policymakers make sound decisions. Nebraska will share its experiences in rolling out guidance documents and materials to help with shaping local school districts better understand how to accurately report what is happening in preschool programs.

**Intended audience:** State and local leaders, teachers, and service providers

#### Learning objectives

- To share the process for better equipping local school districts to better understand their preschool inclusion practices and educational environments
- To share with participants how the Nebraska Department Education (NDE) are promoting more inclusive educational environments and practices for preschoolers with disabilities, specifically for children transitioning from Part C to Part B special education services

### UNDERSTANDING THE BASIC CONCEPTS OF ATTACHMENT AND THE APPLICATION OF THE ATTACHMENT LENS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

**Dr. Mark Hald**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 2:20 - 3:30pm CDT & Wed, Jun 26, 2024 | 10:30 - 11:40am CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Attachment theory is a psychological theory that describes the emotional bond between infants and their caregivers. The quality of attachment relationships in early childhood has a significant impact on children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. Early childhood intervention programs can help to promote secure attachment relationships and to improve the outcomes for children who have experienced insecure attachment. Presentation Outline: Introduction to

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## Session descriptions

attachment theory The four attachment styles The importance of attachment for child development How attachment is formed How attachment can be disrupted The role of early childhood intervention in promoting secure attachment The role of the child welfare system in promoting secure attachment Conclusion: Attachment theory is a valuable framework for understanding the emotional development of children. Early childhood intervention programs can help to promote secure attachment relationships and to improve the outcomes for children who have experienced insecure attachment

**Intended audience:** All

### Learning objectives

- Participants will be able to define attachment theory and the four attachment styles
- Participants will be able to discuss the importance of attachment for child development
- Participants will be able to identify the role of early childhood intervention and the child welfare system in promoting secure attachment
- Participants will be able to discuss the challenges of working with children who have experienced insecure attachment

## WHAT CHILDREN DO REMEMBER: DISRUPTIONS IN ATTACHMENT AND WHY ADOPTION AND KINSHIP IS NOT THE FINAL ANSWER

**Stacy Varouh**

Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 10:40 - 11:50am CDT & Tue, Jun 25, 2024 | 3:50 - 5:00pm CDT

**Track:** Trauma and Resiliency of the Developing Child | **Audience level:** Intermediary

Adoptive families are 2 to 5 times more likely to utilize outpatient mental health services than their non-adopted peers and 4 to 7 times more likely to place their children in residential treatment centers. While 10% of U.S. children over age 5 in the general population receive mental health services, 33% to 55% of children in private domestic and international adoptions and 46% of children in foster care adoptions receive such services yet mental health providers and professionals receive little to no training on the unique issues that exist for adoptive, foster, birth and kinship families. Often, the presenting behaviors do not appear to be adoption related and thus the underlying issues are then left unrecognized and untreated. In this session, we will explore the impact of disruptions on attachment and how, even at a young age, children do remember more than most adults give them credit for. Establishing permanency, though important, is not the sole solution to the trauma children (and families!) have endured and supporting them as they heal is integral to helping them thrive.

### Learning objectives

- Identify the impact of trauma and disruptions in attachment on early childhood development. Learn about the unique emotions and tasks inherent in all adoptions
- Explore strategies that help mitigate the core issues in adoption and support families as they begin to heal from their trauma, together

# Presenter biographies

## **JACKIE ANDERSON, ED. S**

Dundy County Stratton | Superintendent

Jackie Anderson is the current superintendent of Dundy County Stratton School. Her background includes training and practice as a School Psychologist and Special Education Director. Early childhood education and supports have been passionate interests throughout her educational career.

## **MELANIE ANDERSON, LCSW**

Heartland Family Service | Child and Family Therapist

Melanie has extensive experience as a child welfare case manager, MDT team leader, and Child and Family Therapist. She was one of the initial coordinators hired to staff the "Impact from Infancy" Team in Douglas County, which reviews cases of children age birth to five in the juvenile court system, offering developmentally appropriate and trauma informed resources in these cases. At Family Works, a residential program for mothers in substance abuse/mental health/trauma recovery, in which they reside with their children. Melanie provides Child Parent Psychotherapy to mothers and young children with the goal of developing, preserving and repairing early attachment.

## **JESSICA ANTHONY**

DHHS | EDN Program Coordinator

Jessica Anthony is an employee of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care. Jessica began her role as the IDEA Part C (Early Intervention) Co-Coordinator in March of 2021. In this role, Jessica manages 22 Early Development Network Services Coordination contracts, provides regulatory and procedural technical assistance to EDN Services Coordination agencies, and works with colleagues at the Nebraska Department of Education to oversee the implementation of Early Intervention services in Nebraska. Jessica also has over four years of experience as an Early Development Network Services Coordinator, working directly with children and families and over five years of experience as a Child and Family Services Specialist investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect. Jessica holds a Bachelor's Degree in Child Development/Early Childhood Education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is the older sister of two siblings living with disabilities.

## **JENNIFER AUMAN**

NE DHHS | Program Manager, Nebraska-Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

Jennifer Auman has a Bachelors in Education and over 20 years professional experience in Early Childhood. She has spent the last ten years as the Nebraska State Lead in evidence-based home visiting. She is a professional, an advocate for children and families, an adult educator, a coach and most importantly a mom. She is passionate about what she does and believes strongly in the mission of NDHHS: "Helping People Live Better Lives." She has conducted national-level presentations for Healthy Families America and the American Academy of Pediatrics, many state and local-level presentations, and serve actively as a member of several national and state level boards advocating for the prevention of child maltreatment. The greatest accomplishment in her life is that her two children have become thoughtful, compassionate, and kind adults! Her family lives in Panama, just south of Lincoln, Nebraska.

## **JAMIE BAHM**

Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children, UNL-CCFL  
| Assistant Project Director

Jamie Bahm is an Assistant Project Director with the Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children at the University of Nebraska's Center on Children, Families, and the Law. Prior to her current position, she worked as Technical Expert Lead for JBS International, as Reflective Practice and Court Infusion Project Manager for NRPVYC, as the Lancaster County Family Treatment Drug Court Supervisor for the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, and she has specialized in casework with adjudicated youth with high behavioral health needs. Jamie earned her Master of Science and Bachelor of Science degrees, both in criminology and criminal justice from the University of Nebraska.

# Presenter biographies

## **SUE BAINTE, MA**

### NDE | Educational Consultant

Sue Bainter is an Early Intervention trainer and coach with the Getting Ready project for both EDN and UNL. In this role she trains and coaches Early Intervention professionals in the Getting Ready approach to build strong partnerships with the parents and families they serve, to promote positive child and family outcomes.

## **SUSAN BORCHER**

### Routines Based Early Intervention Technical Assistance Provider

Susan has served as a pediatric physical therapist for many years. She is passionate about building the capacity of families and other care givers to meet the needs of young children with special needs. Sue's special interests include adult learning principals, coaching, and professional development. She currently serves a Routines Based Early Intervention Technical Assistance provider for several Planning Regions across the state.

## **KIM BOWEN**

### Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership | Assistive Technology Specialist – Education

Kim Bowen has over 25 years' experience working with children and families including childcare management services, case supervision to children involved in the Juvenile Justice System, and family support and IFSP management as an EDN Services Coordinator for children birth to 3. Her educational background includes a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work. In Kim's current role, she works to help educators build capacity for delivering quality AT services within Nebraska.

## **SAMANTHA BRADLEY, LIMHP, IMH-E**

### Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | Associate Vice President of Early Childhood Mental Health

Sami Bradley, LIMHP is with the Rooted in Relationships Initiative where she works with state and community partners to develop systems of care that support the social and emotional well-being of children birth through age 8. She received her Masters in Community Counseling from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. She is trained in Circle of Security, Child Parent Psychotherapy, Play Therapy, and Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN). Prior to her work at Nebraska Children she worked in Private Practice at an office in Holdrege, NE. She also has experience with Part C- Early Intervention. Sami has a special interest in supporting She currently co-leads the Nebraska Association for Infant Mental Health and has her Infant Mental Health Endorsement as Infant Mental Health Mentor-Policy. She leads the Nebraska Circle of Security State Leadership Team and supports facilitators across Nebraska.

## **LELYNDA BRIGGS-LINSTADT, MSC, NCC**

### Child Saving Institute | Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant

Lelynda Briggs-Linstadt currently provides early childhood behavioral and mental health services on a referral basis for ages birth to five. She conducts observations and consultations on a weekly basis and conducts assessments to maintain documentation from intake to discharge. Services rendered at Educare Early Head Start & Head Start programs, schools, and childcare facilities. Lelynda is also currently the Co-Chair of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee at Child Saving Institute.

## **JESSICA BRODERICK, MAED, MSED, CCC-SLP/L, ATP**

### Educational Service Unit 13 | Director of Special Education

Jessica Broderick is the Director of Special Education at Educational Service Unit 13 in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. Jessica graduated from the University of Nebraska Kearney in 2011 with her BSEd in Communication Disorders, in 2013 with her MEd in Speech-Language Pathology, and in 2020 with her MAEd in Special Education Administration. She has completed a specialist certification in Assistive Technology and is dually-licensed as a speech-language pathologist and assistive technology professional. Jessica has worked as a speech-language pathologist serving students birth-21 through traditional speech therapy and



# Presenter

## biographies

augmentative alternative communication (AAC) consultation and collaboration. She has also served as ESU 13's secondary transition specialist and special education program coordinator. Jessica lives in Scottsbluff with her husband, Matt, and daughter, Linden.

### **BETH BUHR, MA**

#### NE DHHS Division of Children Family Services | CFS Administrator I

Beth has been with the Department of Health and Human Services since 2012 beginning her career there supervising 7 southeastern rural counties in the division of Children Family Services. She transitioned into her role as a CFS Administrator serving Lancaster County in 2017. In this role she created the first Southeast Service Area domestic violence specialized team. Beth started her work in Child Welfare in 2009 during privatization as a service coordinator, she then became a trainer until her she transitioned to HHS. Beth has her Bachelor's Degree in Human Relations and a Master's of Arts with in Emphasis in Management, both achieved from Doane University. Beth is trained in the Safe & Together Model CORE program.

### **AMY BUNNELL**

#### Nebraska Department of Education, Early Development Network | Director of Early Childhood Special Education

Amy Bunnell is currently employed by the Nebraska Department of Education as the Early Childhood Special Education Director. In this role she also serves as the IDEA Part C (Early Intervention) Coordinator and has been the State Part C Co-Coordinator since 2007. She is responsible for administering grants to agencies in support of improving outcomes for infants/toddlers/preschoolers with disabilities and their families. Additionally, Amy provides consultation, training and technical assistance to B-5 early intervention/special education providers/services coordinators, Administrators, public/private agencies, and family members regarding early intervention and special education regulations, policies and procedures. Amy is involved with and co-chairs many state/national projects, committees, and task forces in a variety of areas that promote children's development, healthy families, community involvement and positive outcomes for infants/toddlers with disabilities. She has 4 years' experience as a Corrections Case Manager in both Kansas and Nebraska and has worked for over 11 years in Nebraska Child Protective Services, 5 of those years as a supervisor. She earned her degree from the University of Nebraska and resides in Lincoln, NE.

### **SAMANTHA BYRNS, LIMHP, LPC, NCC, IMH-E®**

#### Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children, UNL-CCFL | Assistant Project Director

Samantha Byrns, LIMHP, LPC, NCC, IMH-E® is an Assistant Project Director at the Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children. She is a board certified, licensed independent mental health practitioner with specialized training in trauma-focused interventions and infant and early childhood mental health. Samantha is a State Trainer in Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) and Integration of Working Models of Attachment into Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (IOWA-PCIT). She is also a Reflective Practice Trainer in the Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN) model and provides reflective practice and consultation for therapists and other multidisciplinary professionals, including RS/C for endorsement as she is an Endorsed Infant Mental Health Clinical Mentor. Samantha enjoys facilitating Circle of Security-Parenting and Circle of Security-Parenting Classroom groups and is a member of the Nebraska Counseling Association (NCA), American Counseling Association (ACA) and Nebraska Association for Infant Mental Health (NAIMH).

### **STACEY CAHILL, LIMHP, LMFT, LMT**

#### Synergy Balance | Mental Health Practitioner, Massage Therapist, Author

Stacey has been in private practice since 2005 specializing in trauma. She graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2001 with a Master's in Family and Consumer Sciences, Marriage and Family Therapy. She co-authored a journal article in 2004 on Husband's Perspective of Wife's Childhood Sexual Abuse. She has written a novel depicting intergenerational trauma and human trafficking entitled Traffic Stop: Human Division to be published fall 2023. Stacey is a trained EMDR therapist and is working towards certification in IFS. She utilizes a variety of massage therapy techniques in special cases to establish safe touch, address stuck energy, and chronic body tension/trauma.

## Presenter biographies

### **JENNIFER CALAHAN**

#### East Central District Health Department | Services Coordination Supervisor

Jennifer Calahan is the Services Coordination Supervisor for the Early Development Network office serving the Columbus and surrounding areas. Jen also carries a caseload as a Services Coordinator. She is a nationally certified trainer for the Routines Based interview. Jen graduated from University of Nebraska at Kearney with a social work degree. She has work experience with the nursing home and hospice.

### **APRIL CHRISTENSEN**

#### DHHS | Children and Family Services Supervisor

April Christensen has been employed with the State of Nebraska since 2005. In 2007 she joined the Department of Health and Human Services as an Initial Assessment working in the North Platte, Nebraska office. In 2013 she was promoted to Children and Family Services Supervisor and has been supervising Initial Assessment and Alternative Response Intakes since then. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and two minors in Psychology and Sociology from the University of Nebraska Omaha.

### **AMY COLWELL WILLIAMS, M.ED**

#### ESU 6 | Early Childhood NeMTSS Implementation

In her more than 27 years as a Nebraska educator, Amy Colwell Williams has had the privilege to serve students, teachers, families and stakeholders in several districts and a variety of PK-9 settings. She began her career as a middle level English Language Arts teacher. After completing her Master of Curriculum and Instruction degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Amy earned a Master of Educational Leadership degree from Doane University. As an elementary assistant principal, she discovered a passion for early childhood education.

Amy followed that passion to the Buffett Early Childhood Institute before serving Region 1 as the Early Childhood NeMTSS Implementation Facilitator by supporting teams in creating sustainable, effective, multi-tiered systems of supports.

### **JUDGE DOUGLAS JOHNSON, JD**

#### Retired Judge

Judge Johnson served 26 years on the Separate Juvenile Court of Douglas County, NE. He taught Juvenile Law at Creighton University School of Law for 25 years. He is a Past President of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and has been a member of its faculty since 1998. He has served on numerous local, state and national committees and received numerous awards for public service and judicial leadership.

### **BECKY DUNLAP-MORTON, MS**

#### ESU #3 | Early Childhood Coach Consultant

Becky D. Morton is an early childhood educator and has worked with infants and toddlers, preschool children, and school-age children. She has also facilitated parenting classes, child care training, CDA coursework, and college-level classes in a variety of settings for over 25 years. Becky has been an Early Childhood Coach for over 10 years and feels honored to have the opportunity to serve children, educators, and families. Becky currently works as the Early Learning Connection Coach Consultant for the Educational Service Unit #3 in LaVista, NE and supports coaches in various Nebraska Early Childhood Coaching Initiatives. She is dedicated to developing and cultivating growth in coaches who work with early childhood educators and families to improve access to quality care and education for each child. One of her professional goals is to work collaboratively with early childhood coaches to increase access to equitable and culturally responsive learning spaces for all children, families, and educators. Becky received her Master's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

### **JENNIFER DURAND, MS, MSW**

#### Visiting Nurse Association | MSW Coordinator – Healthy Families America

# Presenter biographies

Jennifer Durand, MS, MSW, supervises the Healthy Families America program at the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) in Omaha, Nebraska. She began her career as a special education teacher with Chicago Public Schools, where she witnessed the impact of students' unmet social and emotional needs on academic achievement. Through a dual degree program with the Erikson Institute and Loyola University Chicago, Jennifer earned a Master of Science Degree in Child Development in 2013 and Master of Social Work Degree in 2014. Prior to moving to Omaha in early 2020, she was an Intake Coordinator and Case Manager Supervisor for a specialized foster care agency. Jennifer is passionate about providing preventative public health services to underserved communities, and she enjoys supporting staff through reflective supervision. In her free time, Jennifer spends time with her family, including her two young daughters.

## **SUNNY EDWARDS, MA**

### Morrill Public Schools | Early Childhood Principal/Director

Sunny Edwards has been in the field of Early Childhood Education for 18+ years. She started her journey as a private Preschool owner and teacher and then moved into a Preschool classroom. She has been a coach for the Nebraska Department of Education with their Pyramid and PBIS initiatives. She is currently the Early Childhood Principal for Morrill Public Schools, just finishing her fifth year in Morrill. She has a master's degree in Pk-8 Administration and my Applied Educational Neuroscience Certificate from Butler University. She has a passion for teaching early childhood social and emotional skills, with a trauma lens.

## **TIFFANY EISENBRAUN, LIMHP**

### Affinity Community Counseling/Community Supports Network | Director of Behavioral Health Services

Tiffany Eisenbraun is currently the Director of Behavioral Health Services with Affinity Community Counseling and The Community Supports Network, INC in Lincoln, Nebraska. She graduated from South Dakota State University in 2015 with her Master's of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. She currently holds her Licensed Independent Mental Health Practitioner License in Nebraska and her Licensed Professional Counselor License in Missouri. Grief therapy is what led her to the field of counseling, but she has since expanded her expertise to include work with clients who are struggling with eating disorders, mood disorders, infertility and assisting clients to address a variety of other mental health issues. Tiffany has experience working in diverse clinical settings such as Intensive Outpatient Programs for Eating Disorders and Substance Abuse, leading grief support groups, and running a private practice. She enjoys creating and implementing educational tools for clients and has a passion for providing knowledge to assist others in the field. She enjoys working with a variety of adult clients and takes a strengths based, person-centered, approach that incorporates self-compassion and curiosity in her clinical care.

## **JUDGE ELISE M. W. WHITE, JD**

### Lancaster County Juvenile Court | Juvenile Court Judge

Hon. Elise M. W. White has served as Judge of the Separate Juvenile Court of Lancaster County, Nebraska since April of 2020. Prior to her judicial appointment, Judge White ran a small firm for 14 years, specializing in family, juvenile and elder law as well as mediation services; serving as parents attorney and Guardian ad Litem in a variety of juvenile and domestic relations cases. She is currently the lead judge for the Lancaster County Safe and Healthy Families Problem Solving Court, the child welfare lead judge for the Lancaster County Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative and serves on a wide variety of Nebraska Supreme Court committees and commissions. She is a 2006 graduate of the Nebraska College of Law.

## **NANCY ENGEN-WEDIN, MA**

### Indigenous Roots Teacher Education Program and Education; Lied Center for Performing Arts | Director, Program Manager

Nancy Engen-Wedin has served as project director of the Indigenous Roots Teacher Education and School Leader Program (ROOTS) in the Department of Teaching and Learning at UNL for over 23 years. Since 2000, the program has awarded over 57 bachelor's and master's degrees to American Indian students living and working in communities across Nebraska, including indigenous communities such as Macy, Winnebago, Walthill, Niobrara and Santee. She has overseen ROOTS professional development efforts to integrate cultural sensitivity and culturally relevant teaching into UNL coursework and supervises practicum and student teachers. Engen-Wedin's efforts led to a successful program transition from in-person to virtual learning using satellite and web-based learning

# Presenter biographies

formats, thus enhancing accessibility for participants across Nebraska. She is a K-12 certified teacher and licensed school administrator and has administered statewide professional development programs, including for the Minnesota Center for Arts Education. Engen-Wedin currently serves on New America Program's national Grow-Your-Own network, and recently received a Spencer grant to work to Elevate Indigenous Knowledge at UNL and statewide. She has been successful in receiving federal support for the program since 1999 (Grants awarded through the U.S. Department of Education). In her role as ROOTS director, Engen-Wedin is responsible for oversight, recruitment, program and course development, advising, grant writing/reporting, project mentors, contracts, budget adherence, and ensuring student success.

## **KELLY ERIKSON, CIMI**

### Public Health Solutions–Healthy Families America Affiliate | Supervisor

Kelly has explored various fields but was drawn to helping people so she began working at Public Health Solutions in March of 2017 as a Family Support Specialist for Healthy Families America where she worked with families and their young children in their home helping to grow the parent child bond. She is currently Supervisor of the Healthy Families America program serving Gage, Jefferson, Saline, Thayer and Fillmore where she supervises Family Supports Specialists and helps support them in this field.

## **TANA FYE, JD, MPA**

### Fye Law Office | Attorney

Tana M. Fye is the principal attorney at Fye Law Office, in Holdrege, Nebraska. She practices predominantly in the areas of juvenile law, criminal defense, and public health law. She attended The University of South Dakota where she obtained Juris Doctor, Master of Public Administration and Bachelor of Arts degrees. Tana serves as Co-Chair of the Rural Practice Section, and is active on the Legal Services Committee and the Juvenile Law Sections of the Nebraska State Bar Association. She is also a member of the Commission on Children and the Courts, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court.

## **RANDY GEIER, ED. S**

### Wauneta–Palisade Public School | Superintendent

Randy Geier has over 41 years in education, 23 as a teacher and 6 as a principal. He began his career as a superintendent at Wauneta-Palisade in 2012.

## **KAY GLIDDEN, MS**

### Compassion Resiliency | Trainer

Kay Glidden, MS in Higher Education from Indiana University, is a compassion fatigue specialist, trauma informed care trainer and mindfulness educator. Her experience stems from over 30+ years as a mental health professional and work in a public behavioral health system.

## **DAYNA GOFF, JD, MSW**

### Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children, UNL–CCFL | Outreach & Training Specialist

Dayna L. Goff is the Outreach and Training Specialist with the Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children at UNL's Center for Children, Family and the Law. Dayna earned her Bachelor's and Master's in Social Work from the University of Kansas and her Juris Doctorate from University of Nebraska College of Law. She previously worked as a therapeutic case manager at a child welfare agency, as the associate director of a visitation agency and as an attorney practicing in estate planning, family and juvenile law. She continues to practice juvenile law in Lancaster County.

## **TANA GOOSIC, IMH-E**

### Nebraska Association for Infant Mental Health | Endorsement Coordinator

Tana Goosic, IMH-E is currently the Nebraska Association for Infant Mental Health's Endorsement Coordinator. She has her Associates degree in Early Childhood

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## Presenter biographies

Education and Inclusion. She worked as a lead teacher at a center for 7 years, before staying at home with her two children. She has a special interest in the social emotional development of young children.

### **TRACY GORDON, MA**

#### Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children | Executive Director

Tracy Gordon serves as the Executive Director of the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children (Nebraska AEYC) and the Director of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA and Child Care WAGES® NEBRASKA programs. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and a Master of Arts degree in Management and Leadership from Doane University in Lincoln. Tracy has many years of experience in early childhood education and has held numerous positions including a toddler teacher, a preschool teacher, an assistant director & director of a childcare center, a Program Coordinator, and a Co-Executive Director. Tracy has served on numerous committees and is currently serving as a partner on the Lincoln Early Childhood Network Leadership Team, as the Co-Chair of the Nebraska Coach Development Network, and sits on the statewide Circle of Security-Parenting (COS-P) Leadership Team.

### **MACHAELA HACKENDAHL, MS, LIMHP**

#### Project Harmony | Director of Multidisciplinary Teams

Machaela Hackendahl is a Licensed Independent Mental Health Practitioner in Omaha, NE as well as the Director of the Multi-Disciplinary Team's at Project Harmony. Machaela received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Sociology from Hastings College and her Masters of Science in Human Services from Bellevue University. She has been practicing for over 10 years and specializes in treating children with trauma and/or attachment issues. Machaela is trained in several evidence-based practices such as TF-CBT, Circle of Security, Child Parent Psychotherapy, EMDR, PCIT, Play Therapy and many more. Machaela uses all of these treatment modalities to ensure the little's that she works with are receiving the best care. While at Project Harmony Machaela has used her therapeutic knowledge to educate the community on the importance of infant mental health. This is done through the various MDT's as well as the Impact from Infancy Program. When not working, Machaela spends time with her husband and three kids. This often includes cheer competitions, show choir competitions and football games.

### **DR. MARK HALD, PHD**

#### Options In Psychology, LLC | Licensed Psychologist

Mark Hald, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist. He provides trauma-informed, neurodevelopmentally appropriate, and community-based interventions for infants, children, adolescents, and their families who are experiencing behavioral, psychological, or neuropsychological challenges. He is a partner at Options in Psychology, LLC, in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, and serves clients from all over the region. Dr. Hald has over 30 years of experience working with young people and their families in a broad variety of settings, including schools, residential treatment centers and psychiatric hospitals. He has an extensive background in both mental-behavioral health and school psychology, and worked in various educational, programmatic and therapeutic roles in schools, hospitals and universities before entering private practice as a psychologist. He has taught at the college and university level since 1986. In addition to his clinical work, Dr. Hald currently provides psychological consultation to local schools, the Educational Service Unit #13 Head Start programs, the CAPStone Child Advocacy Center, the Nebraska Circle of Security Programs, and several community agencies. He is also past-president of the Nebraska Association of Infant Mental Health. He is a registered Circle of Security (R) Parenting Facilitator and a Certified Circle of Security Fidelity Coach for Circle of Security International. He speaks and presents on topics related to attachment, trauma, and other behavioral and mental health topics, and has led numerous workshops and presentations regionally, nationally and internationally. Dr. Hald can trace his interest in mental health service to his time volunteering at a state hospital and residential treatment home for adolescent boys in college. Since then, he has been driven to ensure that infants, children and families receive the compassionate, community-driven and evidence-based support, services and care they need in order to thrive.

### **DR. PAIGE HARDY, DNP, APPN, NNP-BC**

#### University of Nebraska Medical Center | Assistant Professor

Paige is a Neonatal Nurse Practitioner in Omaha, Nebraska. She graduated with her Master's of Science in Nursing from University of Nebraska Medical Center

## Presenter biographies

in 2008 and her Doctor of Nursing Practice from Creighton University in 2018. Paige has worked in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit at Nebraska Medicine and Children's Hospital and Medical Center. She currently co-directs the Developmental TIPS program and provides services in TIPS clinics as an advanced practice provider. Her experience as a clinician was impacted through her son's extreme premature birth in 2004 and the early arrival of 32 week twin's in 2010. She credits her personal journey as strengthening her desire to promote the well being of medically fragile infant's once they are discharged from the NICU.

### **DR. HOLLY HATTON, PHD**

University of Nebraska–Lincoln | Associate Professor and Early Childhood Extension Specialist

Holly Hatton received her doctorate from the University of California, Davis in human development with a focus on early childhood development and early mental health. She completed the University of Massachusetts/Napa Infant-Parent Mental Health Post-Graduate Certificate Program in 2007. She has been a CASA worker, family support worker for families with children 0-5 years with involvement in child welfare services, a child care provider of infants and toddlers in a perinatal day treatment program, and an evaluation consultant for programs aimed at enhancing and improving caregiving for low-income families. For four years she served as a senior academic researcher at the University of California, Davis Extension, examining programs and services serving vulnerable children and families and using research-based education to enhance the lives of professionals, families, and communities. Hatton is an assistant professor in child, youth, and family studies and an early childhood extension specialist at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Hatton's primary areas of interest and scholarly activity include creating and implementing programs designed to enhance the quality of early childhood development and early care and education and to use strategies that cultivate resilience, compassion, and kindness among caregivers and families. Her work focuses on contemplative practices, such as reflection and mindfulness to promote child, teacher, and family well-being. Specifically, these practices are examined for how they improve parent and teacher capacity for sensitive and responsive caregiving; particularly in the context of stress, and with vulnerable populations of children. As an Extension Early Childhood Specialist, she is active in translating and disseminating current research findings in the areas of caregiving and health in early childhood using an interdisciplinary approach.

### **KELLI HAUPTMAN, JD**

Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children, UNL-CCFL | Project Director

Kelli Hauptman is the Project Director of the Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children at the UNL Center on Children, Families and the Law. She was Staff Attorney of the Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative with the Nebraska Court Improvement Project for 10 years and has clerked for a district court judge in Minnesota. She is a member of the Nebraska Bar and is a guardian ad litem in Douglas County.

### **STACEY HAUSER**

Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership | Assistive Technology Specialist – Education

Stacey Hauser has over 15 year's experience in the disability field working across the lifespan currently as an Assistive Technology Specialist. She has also served families and children as an Early Intervention Services Coordinator, and high school students and adults as a VR Counselor & Placement Specialist. Her educational background includes Master's Degree's in both Early Childhood Special Education and in Counseling. In Stacey's current role, she works to help educators build capacity for delivering quality AT services within Nebraska.

### **DR. TAMARA HECHTNER–GALVIN, PHD**

Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools / UNL | Getting Ready Project Coordinator

Tamara Hechtner-Galvin is the Project Coordinator for Getting Ready, which is a collaborative approach that supports children's learning and development by strengthening relationships among children, parents and educators. Getting Ready is housed within the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

# Presenter

## biographies

### **JUDGE ROGER HEIDEMAN, JD**

#### Lancaster County Juvenile Court | Juvenile Court Judge

Honorable Judge Roger J. Heideman has been in his judgeship since 2006 in the Separate Juvenile Court of Lancaster County. He serves as the Lancaster County Family Treatment Drug Court presiding judge and serves on Nebraska Supreme Court committees such as Commission on Children in Court, co-chair, Through the Eyes of a Child Initiative, co-chair, Committee on Problem Solving Courts, Judicial Branch Education Advisory Committee amongst others. He has received honors, awards, and presented on topics specific to children, families, and family drug courts.

### **DR. SOO-YOUNG HONG, PHD**

#### University of Nebraska-Lincoln | Associate Professor

Soo-Young Hong is an associate professor in the Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Soo-Young's research focuses on enhancing early childhood professionals' capacity to teach young children science concepts and practices and work with young children with varying levels of abilities. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses related to early care and education, human development, developmental and family theories, and college teaching seminar and practicum and advises post-bac students seeking Nebraska's early childhood supplemental endorsement.

### **HAYLEY JACKSON, MS**

#### University of Nebraska Extension | Early Childhood Extension Educator

Hayley is an Early Childhood Extension Educator serving Lancaster, Cass, & Otoe counties. She is passionate about coaching relationships in early childhood settings, the social and emotional development of young children, and supporting educators in working with children who exhibit challenging behaviors. Hayley has a bachelors degree in Human Development & Family Studies from Arizona State University and a masters degree in Human Development & Family Studies with an emphasis in Early Childhood Education from Colorado State University. Hayley has over 15 years of experience teaching, coaching, and directing early childhood programs.

### **BARBARA JESSING, MS, LIMHP, LMFT**

#### Fontenelle House | Consultant

Barbara Jessing is a retired mental health practitioner and family therapist with more than 40 years of experience with community mental health and child welfare services; with a specialization in the treatment of early childhood trauma. She has provided clinical leadership in the development of innovative treatment programs for child and family healing and recovery. She is an endorsed trainer in Child Parent Psychotherapy in Nebraska. At Fontenelle House, she offers clinical consultation and training. She has worked with schools, community mental health, and child welfare organizations. She serves on the Impact from Infancy Multi-disciplinary Team in Douglas County, and is the president of the Board of Directors of the Center for Holistic Development. She has a master's degree in Counseling from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and a certificate in Marriage and Family Therapy from the Karl Menninger School of Psychiatry in Topeka, Kansas.

### **ANGELA JOHNSON**

#### Healthy Families America | Project Manager

Angela began working at Public Health Solutions in February of 2022. She currently serves as the Program Manager for Healthy Families America. She oversees Healthy Families America in Saline, Gage, Fillmore, Thayer, and Jefferson county. Angela's career has taken a winding road from receiving her Bachelor's degree in Social Work from Nebraska Wesleyan University to working with grieving families, individuals experiencing homelessness, men and women battling addiction, and children affected by trauma. Her goals are to connect families in rural communities with resources and to help build their support system in their own communities.



# Presenter biographies

## **JERI JOHNSON**

### ATP Education – ESU 10 | Assistive Technology Specialist

Jeri Johnson has over 15 years of experience in the Early Childhood Special Education field. Most recently, she served as the ATP Education Statewide Loan Pool Coordinator for 6 years before recently starting her new role as an Assistive Technology Specialist. Her educational background includes a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education and Family Advocacy.

## **DR. VICTORIA JOHNSON, PHD**

### University of Nebraska – Lincoln | Research specialist for the RESPECT Across Nebraska

Victoria serves as a research specialist for the Responsive Equitable System for Preparing Early Childhood Teachers (RESPECT) across Nebraska project—coordinating research, evaluation and implementation. Victoria earned an M.Ed. from Weber State University in 2010, with a research focus on teacher preparation and child development. In 2016–2018 she completed Montessori training for PreK–6th grade from the Mid-America Montessori Teacher Training Institute (now part of University of Nebraska–Kearney). She earned her Ph.D. in Global Family Health and Wellbeing from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 2022 with a research focus on global education and socioemotional development. Her research in community-based and culturally-relevant education around the world has focused on creative solutions for education that address holistic developmental growth among underserved populations.

## **DR. PAMELA JORDAN, PHD**

### Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children, UNL–CCFL | Research Assistant Professor

Dr. Pamela Jordan, a program evaluator with the University of Nebraska's Center on Children, Families, & the Law, oversees evaluation of several projects including Lancaster County's Safe & Healthy Families Court and Family Treatment Drug Court. Pam holds a Ph.D. in Community Psychology and has worked in the domestic violence field for more than 20 years, helping programs measure the difference they make in survivors' lives.

## **ERIN KAMPBELL, MS**

### University of Nebraska–Lincoln | Early Childhood Extension Educator

Erin is an Early Childhood Extension Educator serving Madison, Stanton, Platte, and Colfax counties. Erin teaches and supports those who interact with children birth to age eight. Previously, Erin was a Nutrition Education Program Assistant in Scotts Bluff County and brings a dedication to cultivating healthy habits to her current work, including coaching early childhood professionals and families. Her focus is early childhood health and wellness and caregiver/educator health and well-being. Erin earned a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in child, youth, and family studies with a specialization in international family studies from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

## **SIMIN KAZEMI, MSC**

### University of Nebraska Lincoln | PhD Student, Graduate Research Assistant

Simin is a PhD student at the University of Nebraska Lincoln. She is studying Child Development/Early Childhood Education in the Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies, and her research interest is to understand better the different aspects of the interaction between children and nature and the ways in which experiences in nature can promote children's overall wellbeing and their learning outcomes. She also serves as a project assistant for the RESPECT across Nebraska project.

## **CHRISTINA KILGORE, BSOT**

### NDE | ECSE Coordinator, OT

Tina Kilgore has been an Occupational Therapist for 24 years, specializing in school-based services since 2000. More recently Tina has narrowed her specialization to working with children ages birth–5. Tina has served on the ESU 7 Autism team for the past 6 years, specializing in Sensory Integration. Tina has

# Presenter biographies

presented multiple times throughout the State of Nebraska focused on Routines Based Early Intervention. Tina is a state RBI, GRHV, and CEI coach. She is now in her second year of ECSE Coordinator for Columbus Public Schools.

## **TRACEY KOCK, MSW**

Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children, UNL-CCFL | Outreach and Training Specialist

Tracey Kock is an Outreach and Training Specialist with the Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children at the University of Nebraska's Center on Children, Families, and the Law. Prior to her current position, Tracey worked as a Permanency Director in child welfare in Nebraska's Eastern Service Area. Tracey earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Child Welfare and a Criminal Justice Certificate from the University of Wisconsin Madison and a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

## **JAMIE KRAMER, MSW**

DHHS Division of Children and Family Services/DHHS Division of Public Health | DHHS Administrator

Jamie is currently an Administrator with the DHHS. She has worked at DHHS within the realm of child welfare for the past 14 years.

## **AMY KROLL, M.S. ED**

Weeping Water Public Schools | Director of Continuous Improvement and Student Services

Amy is the Director of Continuous Improvement and Student Services at Weeping Water Public Schools. She supervises student programs Birth-21. She is currently supervisor of a center-based Sixpence, Rule 11, and DHHS licensed childcare center located on the campus of Weeping Water Public Schools. Amy has served on a variety of state committees and is an Advisor for the NAESE PreK Leadership Academy. She is President-Elect for the Nebraska Association of Special Education Supervisors (NASES).

## **JANICE LEE, MA ECSE**

Nebraska Early Development Network | Routines Based Early Intervention Coordinator

Janice is a former early childhood special educator who has a passion for working with, and supporting families and early childhood professionals. She has served as a preschool teacher, Part C Early Intervention provider, and coach. Janice currently serves as an early childhood coach and is one of two coordinators for Routines Based Early Intervention with the Nebraska Early Development Network.

## **DR. COREY LIENEMAN, PHD, LP**

University of Nebraska Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry | Assistant Professor, Clinical Child Psychologist

Dr. Lieneman is an assistant professor and licensed clinical child and adolescent psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). She specializes in research, diagnosis, and treatment of disruptive behavior in children ages 12 and younger with particular focus on children with autism, ADHD, anxiety, trauma, and caregiver-child attachment. Dr. Lieneman also has expertise in behavioral sleep medicine. She is the author of Time-Out in Child Behavior Management and is certified as a therapist and within-agency trainer through Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) International, Inc. Dr. Lieneman received her PhD in Clinical Child Psychology at West Virginia University under the mentorship of Dr. Cheryl McNeil. She completed her internship and post-doctoral fellowship at the Munroe-Meyer Institute at UNMC under the mentorship of Drs. Keith Allen and Brett Kuhn.

# Presenter biographies

## **CHERISH LIENEMANN**

### Early Development Network | Services Coordinator

Cherish Lienemann has worked in Early Childhood Education for close to 20 years. She started out as a nanny, has worked in childcare centers, has taught private preschool for 11 years, and has been in her current role as an EDN Service Coordinator for 5 years. She is currently the lead service coordinator for PRT 27 servicing North Platte Public School District. She has been a PRT 27 Co-Lead for the last 4 years and will continue for the 23/24 and 24/25 school years. She graduated from Mid Plains Community College with an Associates of Applied Science degree in Business Administration. Some of her favorite things are advocating for families, ensuring great services and resources are provided to the families that she works with, and collaborating with community partners.

## **INGRID LINDAL, MS**

### University of Nebraska-Lincoln | Early Childhood Extension Educator

Ingrid Lindal has a master's degree in Human Services and Family Studies with an emphasis on Early Childhood Education from Kansas State University. She has been an early childhood teacher in various preschools in Costa Rica and the United States. She has more than 8 years of experience working with children from birth to 5 years old. Currently, she works in the Extension Department at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, in the early childhood program area. The focus of her work is socio-emotional development in children birth to 5 years old and the emotional well-being of teachers and their students. In her role as an extension educator, she develops and implements professional trainings for teachers such as "Learning through Block Play", "STEM", "Strategies for classroom management", "Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the classroom", among others.

## **KALA LOCOCO**

### Assistive Technology | Education Program Statewide Loan Pool Coordinator

Kala Lococo has over 6 years' experience in the Special Education field. In her current role, she serves as the Education Program Statewide Loan Pool Coordinator where she assists school districts in trialing assistive technology devices to ensure an appropriate fit prior to purchase, serves as the shipping manager for equipment, and coordinates all aspects of the Statewide Loan Pool. Prior to joining Assistive Technology Partnership, Kala worked as a special education para-educator where she was UEB certified.

## **EMILY MANNING, MS**

### University of Nebraska-Lincoln | Early Childhood Extension Educator

Emily Manning is an Early Childhood Extension Educator serving six counties: Butler, Hamilton, Merrick, Polk, Seward, and York. Emily received a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Family Consumer Science Education, and a Master's Degree from the University of Missouri in Human Development and Family Studies. She provides resources and trainings to early care and education providers and families in Nebraska to support young children's growth and learning. Emily is also the host of The Good Life in Early Life podcast which is a production of the Nebraska Extension Early Childhood team.

## **JESSE MEINTS-HARMS**

### ESU 5 | Services Coordinator

Jesse began working at ESU 5 as a Services Coordinator in 2020. Prior to that, Jesse was a resource para for the Beatrice School District. While Jesse was in college, she worked as a substitute teacher and para. Jesse earned her Associates in Early Childhood and then her Bachelor's in General Studies with minors in Psychology and Special Education. While in College Jesse had her first experience with Early Intervention and the benefits of home visitors, which is when she knew that was exactly her goal to obtain. Jesse has always had a passion for helping children and families reach their full potential. Jesse helps families in rural areas connect with resources to help build their support system in which best fits their needs.

# Presenter biographies

## **DR. KERRY MILLER, PHD**

UNMC Munroe Meyer Institute | Associate Director of Department of Education and Child Development and Assistant Professor

Kerry Miller, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Education and Child Development at the Munroe Meyer Institute on the University of Nebraska Medical Center campus. She obtained degrees in communication disorders and special education, with an emphasis in early childhood, from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Dr. Miller is the co-director of Nebraska's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) follow up program (Developmental TIPS) and a principal investigator for several statewide home visitation and early childhood programs. Her primary interests include developmental and family outcomes for NICU graduates and their parents, early childhood executive function skill development, quality home visitation practices, and outcomes for children and families receiving Part C early intervention services. Dr. Miller has extensive experience in working with infants and toddlers who are medically fragile, family-centered practices, typical/atypical child development, quality home visit practices, and early childhood development assessment practices. She is the current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Act Early Ambassador to Nebraska. In this role, her work involves expanding the reach of the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." program and supporting work toward improving the early identification of developmental delays and disabilities.

## **CHRISTEN MILLION, MS**

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | Assistant Vice President of Early Childhood Mental Health

Christen Million has been with Nebraska Children and Families Foundation-Rooted in Relationships since 2019. Before joining NC, she previously worked as an Early Childhood and Family Specialist, where she provided Pyramid Model training, coaching, and support for Early Childhood staff. In addition, Christen has also worked for Head Start as a Family Advocate and a Mental Health/Disabilities Specialist. Christen currently serves as a co-lead for the Nebraska Pyramid State Leadership Team, supports the Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI) statewide infrastructure, and helps to support Nebraska's Early Childhood Coaching and Pyramid systems. Christen provides expertise specifically around Pyramid Model Training and Implementation, Early Childhood Coaching, and Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI). She received her Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Sciences with a concentration in Child Development from the University of Arkansas, and a Master of Science in Developmental Therapy from Henderson State University. Christen also holds a Developmental Therapy certification through the state of Arkansas.

## **JESSICA MITCHELL-MCCOLLOUGH**

Nebraska Public Media | Director of Education

Jessica Mitchell-McCollough is the Director of Education at Nebraska Public Media. She is a University of Nebraska-Lincoln Ph.D. candidate in Educational Studies. Mitchell-McCollough is an experienced bilingual educator who has worked in preK-12 education, higher ed, and public media. Her specialization includes partnering with families and caregivers to support the home to school connection and helping pre- and in-service teachers support multilingual children and families. She speaks Spanish as her second language.

## **DR. DAWN MOLLENKOPF, PHD**

University of Nebraska at Kearney | Professor

Dr. Dawn Mollenkopf is a Professor in Teacher Education at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and directs the Early Childhood Inclusive Endorsement program. Her research is primarily in professional development models for early childhood teachers to address and improve: (1) curriculum, delivery, and learning outcomes, and (2) access and persistence for degree completion, particularly through technological applications and digital learning systems.

## **KRISTINA NORWOOD, M.ED**

ESU 3 | Early Childhood NeMTSS Implementation Facilitator

Kristina Norwood is in her 22nd year in education. She taught preschool, first and second grades over 8 years, was a program evaluator at the University of

## Presenter biographies

Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-Meyer Institute, an administrator and coach for a preschool program, and taught early childhood college courses for six years before joining ESU 3 in 2022. Kristina earned a bachelor's degree in education from Florida State University and a master's of education in early childhood leadership from Concordia University. Kristina's professional interests include behavioral support, equity, early childhood language development and teacher leadership.

### **LINDSEY ONDRAK, MA, LIMHP, LPC, IMH-E®**

#### Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children, UNL-CCFL | Outreach & Training Specialist

Lindsey Ondrak, MA, LIMHP, LPC, IMH-E® is the Outreach and Training Specialist at the Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children at the University of Nebraska's Center on Children, Families, and the Law. She has been serving children and families since 2007 and provides outpatient treatment for children and their families with specialized training in trauma and attachment. Lindsey is trained in Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), Integration of Working Models of Attachment into Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (IoWA-PCIT), Trauma Focused Attachment Therapy/Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP), Theraplay, Brainspotting, Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR), the FAN model of Reflective Practice (Trainer), Circle of Security Parenting (Facilitator), and she is an Endorsed Infant Mental Health Clinical Mentor.

### **MICHELLE PAXTON, JD**

#### University of Nebraska | Director

Michelle Paxton, J.D., created and directs the Children's Justice Attorney Education Fellowship Program and the Children's Justice Clinic at the University of Nebraska College of Law and the Center on Children, Families and the Law. Michelle believes that effective advocacy in juvenile court requires both an understanding of the law and appreciation for the complex dynamics of children, families and stakeholders comprising the child welfare and juvenile system. Michelle received her J.D. from the University of Nebraska College of Law in 2002. She has served as a Deputy County Attorney in Douglas and Lancaster Counties, specializing in juvenile law, domestic violence and general criminal prosecution. She also served as the Director of Legal Training at the University of Nebraska's Center on Children, Families and the Law, developing curriculum and training child welfare workers, probation officers and mental health professionals on all aspects of juvenile court process and procedure in Nebraska.

### **LISA PEREYRA-MOLINA**

#### Educator & Case Manager

Lisa has dedicated her life to children. She has supported and advocated for children and adults with severe and persistent mental illness since 2006. She has helped edit and promote Traffic Stop: Human Division, providing marketing and education.

### **CHRISTY PRANG, MBA**

#### BraveBe Child Advocacy Center | Director of Training & Community Engagement

Christy Prang is the Director of Training & Prevention at BraveBe Child Advocacy Center where she educates and empowers adults to protect and stand up for kids. Since 2015, Christy helps educate Multidisciplinary Team members across 17 counties in Southeast Nebraska. Christy partners with local schools to provide education opportunities to youth on topics ranging from Digital Citizenship to Body Safety and establishing safe boundaries. Prior to working at the Child Advocacy Center, Christy developed a passion for working for children and families at CEDARS Youth Services. Christy spent 10 years working with the foster care program, both as a Family Partner and later as a trainer. Christy has been blessed to provide presentations at an International/National Level, with Conferences including; Dallas Crimes Against Children, The International Symposium on Child Maltreatment, NCA Engage Leadership & The Children's Justice Conference. Christy holds a Master's in Business Administration with an emphasis in Non-Profit Management from Doane University Christy's received her undergraduate in Criminal Justice from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Christy loves spending time with her family, reading and running!

# Presenter biographies

## **MARIELLA RESENDIZ ALVARADO**

### Nebraska Department of Education | Director School Mental Health

Mariella Resendiz Alvarado currently serves as the Nebraska Department of Education Director of Education Partnerships, as well as the Director of School Mental Health. In these roles, she fosters strategic partnerships with federal and state agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools, and communities to improve and support a comprehensive continuum of school-based and community-based services for Nebraska students to learn, earn, and live.

## **BETH REYNOLDS LEWIS**

### Compassion Resiliency | Trainer

Beth Reynolds Lewis, BS in Education, is a compassion fatigue specialist, trauma informed care trainer, and Registered Yoga Teacher. Her experience includes 30+ years as a Child Welfare case manager, a forensic interviewer, and work in a public behavioral health system.

## **LORI RODRIQUEZ-FLETCHER, MSW, LICSW, IMH-E®**

### Options in Psychology LLC | Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker

Lori Rodriguez-Fletcher, MSW, LICSW, IMH-E® is a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker and an Independent Contract Therapist with Options in Psychology LLC. She is endorsed as an Infant Mental Health Mentor-Clinical. She provides individual and family therapy and is also a Child-Parent Psychotherapist in Alliance, Scottsbluff, and Sidney. Lori has over ten years of clinical experience and has special training in Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP), Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Play Therapy, and Adoption Competency (TAC). She is also a CPP Trainer through the Nebraska Resource Project for Vulnerable Young Children. In addition, she provides case consultation and reflective supervision to interns and other clinicians. Lori's special interests include working with children and families involved in the child welfare system due to abuse and neglect, adoption, infant and early childhood mental health, sex trafficking, military PTSD, secondary traumatic stress, and other traumas. Lori has a Bachelor of Arts with a Comprehensive Major in Social Work and a Minor in Psychology from Chadron State College and a Masters in Clinical Social Work from Florida State University. In addition to providing therapy services, Lori is an Adjunct Social Work Instructor at Chadron State College, contracts with the Chadron Community Hospital to provide Social Work consultation to Hospice and the Dialysis Unit, and is a part of several different advisory boards.

## **SARAH ROESLER, MS, CCC-SLP**

### Educational Service Unit 5 | Early Childhood Coordinator

Sarah Roesler is the Early Childhood Coordinator at ESU 5 in Beatrice, NE. She has a Masters of Science in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Nebraska-Kearney and a Masters of Education in Educational Leadership from Doane College. She has worked as a Speech-Language Pathologist serving children and families in early intervention through age 21, an elementary principal, and now as an Early Childhood Coordinator. She is the co-chair of PRT-5, supervises and provides technical support to districts in the implementation of EDN services, co-facilitates the ESU 5 area MTSS team, and assists districts with implementing the Pyramid Model and PBIS. Sarah loves to help children, families and educators develop to their fullest potential.

## **NIKKI ROSEBERRY, MA**

### Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | Associate Vice President of Early Childhood Mental Health

Nikki Roseberry (She/Her) has been with Nebraska Children and Families Foundation-Rooted in Relationships since 2018. In addition to Rooted work, Nikki is the product owner of the Child Care Referral Network. She developed the system from the ground up and continues to lead the development and implementation of the site. Nikki provides expertise around Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI), data management, and evaluation including observational tools used for Pyramid. Before working for Nebraska Children, Nikki worked for the State of Nebraska - Division of Behavioral Health administering funds for and coordinating work on substance use and suicide prevention as well as mental health promotion. Nikki has spoken at several state and national conferences on topics such as Parents Interacting with Infants, Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS), and building state prevention systems. In 2017,

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Nikki was the recipient of the State of Nebraska's Excellence in Leadership Award. Nikki holds two bachelor of arts degrees in Psychology and English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Master of Arts in Counseling from Doane University.

## **MARIANA SCHELL, MA**

### Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | AVP Cultural and Linguistic Response

Mariana Muñoz de Schell joined Nebraska Children in April 2021. She has spent over 10 years in the nonprofit environment. She has been focused on helping communities and enjoys creating processes to become more efficient to ultimately help others effectively and compassionately. Mariana has a Business Administration degree from the Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey and has a Master of Arts in Management from Doane College. She is originally from Mexico City and her passions are her family, friends, Mexico, traveling, photography and trying new foods. She is married and has two daughters.

## **DEANNA SCHLAUTMAN, BSN, RN**

### Healthy Families America | Clinical Manager of Parenting Support/Program Manager

Deanna Schlautman, BSN, RN serves as Clinical Manager of Parenting Support programs and Program Manager of Healthy Families America at Visiting Nurse Association in Omaha, Nebraska. Deanna has over twenty years of nursing experience working in the areas of maternal-child health, family-centered care, and public health. She specializes in providing quality home visitation services and educational opportunities to support parents and help their young children flourish. She truly believes in the Prevent Child Abuse America motto Prevention Through Partnership. Deanna uses a strength-based approach to lead a team of nurses and social workers to provide health promotion and prevention-focused services to families via free, voluntary home visitation programs. In her free time, Deanna can be found soaking up the sunshine, snuggling her three grandbabies, and spending time with family and friends!

## **DR. RACHEL SCHUMACHER, PHD, LP**

### Munroe-Meyer Institute | Assistant Professor, Child Psychologist

Rachel Schumacher, PhD is a licensed psychologist and an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at the Munroe-Meyer Institute for Genetics and Rehabilitation. Rachel received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and completed her internship and post-doctoral training at the Munroe-Meyer Institute. She has completed specialized training in screening, diagnosing, and treating autism spectrum disorders in early childhood and is certified in Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT). Her clinical and research interests include early identification and intervention, including behavioral parent training, for common childhood problems. She values working within a collaborative, systems approach to facilitate clients' most optimal development by strengthening supports across all familial, educational, medical, and community contexts. Rachel is also passionate about translating research to practice and policy and disseminating effective psychological services and tools to practitioners and families.

## **CONNIE SHOCKLEY**

### PTI Nebraska | Parent Support Coordinator

Connie provides training, information and support to:

- Families who have babies and young children that qualifies for services through Nebraska's Early Development Network and those moving into a pre-school setting
- Family members on the Early Childhood Inter Agency Coordinating Council and family members of local Planning Region Teams
- Parents starting or sustaining a family support organization in their community
- Parents who provide peer support to other parents
- Connie and her husband have three children, two of them have Autism. She came to PTI Nebraska in 2007



# Presenter biographies

## **RACHEL SISSEL, MS ED**

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | Associate Vice President Early Childhood Programs

Rachel Sissel, currently serves as an Associate Vice President for Early Childhood at Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. Rachel works with communities all across the state through the Communities For Kids initiative, which is focused on building the capacity and enhancing the quality of early care and education in Nebraska. She was previously based in Garden County and loved life in the panhandle but has recently returned to her hometown of Fremont, NE with her two very active, hilarious, and loving sons!

## **MARK SMITH, MS**

University of Nebraska Medical Center | Training Director

Mark Smith, MS, an Omaha native, joined the Munroe-Meyer Institute (MMI) in January, 2003 as its Consumer/Family Coordinator. He was promoted to MMI faculty in 2015. His educational experience includes earning Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Psychology from the University of Nebraska. He is the parent of and sibling to family members with disabilities. Mark has done extensive work in individual and family advocacy, personnel preparation, clinical services, and public policy regarding disabilities across the age span at the local, state, and national levels. Mark supervises the University Center on Excellence in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities grant training program, and supervises a Developmental Disabilities Council grant on individual and family leadership and advocacy training. He also works within the MMI Interdisciplinary Training Program, including serving as a Family Faculty to MMI's Leadership Enhancement in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program. One of the many programs Mark helps direct is Project DOCC (Delivery of Chronic Care), a UNMC training program where families of children with special healthcare needs serve as trainers for Pediatric and Family Practice Medical Residents along with MMI Interdisciplinary trainees on family-centered and chronic care concerns. Mark has also conducted grant-funded training and other trainings and presentations to a variety of audiences on disability leadership, self-advocacy, Special Education and inclusion, parenting children with disabilities, addressing behavior problems, and law enforcement and developmental disabilities. To this end, Mark has presented to disability organizations, at conferences, and guest taught university students on these topics at the University of Nebraska-Omaha and Lincoln and as well as at UNMC. Mark also is involved in disability-related systems change activities in Nebraska and nationally as the Institute representative and advisor to numerous organizations and efforts, including the Executive Board of the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children; the Executive Board of the Association of University Centers; on federal task forces and standing committees; as a board President of the Nebraska Parent Training and Information Center; as a technical advisor on Early Intervention policy and family-centered practices to the Nebraska Department of Education; as Institute representative to the Nebraska Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities; and serves on the UNMC Vice-Chancellor's Legislative Advisory.

## **ELIZABETH STRAHAM, MA, MPHIL**

Project Harmony | MDT Coordinator

Elizabeth Straham is an MDT Coordinator at Project Harmony and is one of the coordinators for the Impact from Infancy program. She transitioned into the child welfare field after serving in the United States Air Force as a Communications Sergeant. She received her Master's degree from Liberty University in Human Service Counseling and Family Advocacy and a Master's degree from Walden University in Public Policy and Administration. She is also trained in the Safe and Together Model which is a domestic violence informed intervention model.

## **DR. VERA STROUP-RENTIER, PHD**

Westat | Project Director

Vera Stroup-Rentier serves as a technical assistance provider and project director for the Nebraska Technical Assistance Project and works at Westat. Vera has worked in the field of Special Education for almost 30 years. She has a PhD in Special Education from the University of Kansas. Her past work has included teacher, service coordinator, technical assistance coordinator and SEA assistant director. She has published several papers from her work at University of Kansas on the project entitled Foundations for Self-Determination in Early Childhood: An Inclusive Model for Children with Disabilities. Vera is passionate about the inclusion of each and every child in the places they live, learn and play.

# Presenter biographies

## **MORIAH TAYLOR**

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges/The National Center for Juvenile Justice | Research Associate

Moriah joined the NCJFCJ/NCJJ in 2017 and has held various roles within the organization. Starting as a research assistant with NCJJ, Moriah became a site manager with the NCJFCJ's Child Welfare and Juvenile Law Department in 2020 and re-joined the NCJJ team as a Research Associate in 2023. Before joining the NCJFCJ/NCJJ, her work focused on community-based research of policy and practice to promote the inclusion of community perspectives in local and institutional decision-making. She has been able to continue that work with the council by providing training and technical assistance to courts to inform practice change. Her work has focused on providing technical assistance in data collection and analysis of local, state, and national data across several projects, assisting with the development of fundamental measures for the juvenile justice system, helping process data for the National Juvenile Court Data Archive (NJCDA), helping courts implement the Enhanced Resource Guidelines (ERGs) to improve practice in child abuse and neglect cases, and updating the Desktop Guide to Good Juvenile Probation Practice.

## **DR. JULIA TORQUATI, PHD**

Department of Child, Youth and Family Studies, University of Nebraska–Lincoln | Professor, Buffett Community Chair in Infant Mental Health

Julia has supported the development of early care and education professionals through education and research for almost 30 years. Her research focuses on young children's social-emotional development, in particular the role of caregiving relationships and natural environments (i.e., nature) on self-regulation and executive functions. She currently teaches courses on infant mental health, and methods for working with infants, toddlers, and their families.

## **LINDSEY TURNER, MA, LMPH**

Voices of Hope | Program Services Director

Lindsey Turner is the Associate Executive Director at Voices of Hope, a crisis center for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking and other forms of abuse in Lincoln, NE. Lindsey has been with Voices of Hope for over 6 years, previously serving at the Children's Services Coordinator in which she supported survivors who were also involved in the child welfare system. Lindsey was an active member of the Through the Eyes of the Child Domestic Violence Subcommittee and assisted in developing the Safe and Healthy Families Initiative (SAHFI) which supported the Safe and Healthy Families Court (SAHFC).

Lindsey supervises three advocates who work directly with survivors and participate in SAHFC team meetings and case mappings. Lindsey also serves on the SAHFI Management Team. Lindsey is a Licensed Mental Health Practitioner and has experience working with youth experiencing mental and behavioral health challenges as well as the child welfare field. Lindsey received her MA in Counseling Psychology through the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

## **STACY VAROUH, MSW**

Lutheran Family Services | Children's Clinical Education and Training Coordinator

Stacy is the Children's Clinical Education and Training Coordinator for Lutheran Family Services. She specializes in adoption, kinship, and foster care related issues and concerns, helping caregivers and professionals expand their capabilities to help society's most vulnerable children and families. She is a trainer for the nationally accredited Training for Adoption Competency (TAC) program, Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) practitioner, and Circle of Security Parenting Facilitator. Stacy received her master's in social work from the University of Denver and holds a certificate in Animal-Assisted Social Work. After moving back to her home state, she started working in post adoption and has since continued working within the entire adoption kinship network! Stacy's unique tie to adoption and foster care have provided her with the experience and compassion needed to support Nebraska's adoptive and foster families and her education and training enables her to provide professionals with the knowledge and skills to better support vulnerable families and be proactive in their care. When not spending time with her family Stacy can be found playing with her retired therapy dog, Bosley, "training" her rabbit, Lucy, or chancing her parakeets, Boomer and Myrtle, around the house!

## Presenter biographies

### **DR. SARA WESTERLIN, ED.D**

#### Peru State College | Assistant Professor

Sara Westerlin is an Assistant Professor of Education at Peru State College. She has previous experience teaching kindergarten, first, and second grades in Omaha, NE. In addition, for the past 10 years, she has served as an adjunct faculty member in Early Childhood Education at Metropolitan Community College. Dr. Westerlin also has prior experience owning and operating a childcare center, as well as working at childcare centers in the Omaha metro area. She received her BA in Elementary Education and Art from Dana College, and a MS in Elementary Education with an Early Childhood Concentration from UNO. Dr. Westerlin graduated from Northcentral University with her Ed.D in Educational Leadership in 2020. Her certifications include an Elementary K-6 Standard Teaching Certificate, Early Childhood Certificate as well as Early Learning Guidelines, Safe with You, Safe Sleep for Infants, Never Shake a Baby, and Power to Protect Trainer and Instructor Certification.

### **MIKAYLA WICKS**

#### Nebraska Children and Families Foundation | Assistant Vice President of Medical Pathways

Mikayla Wicks is the current Assistant Vice President of Medical Pathways at Nebraska Children and Families Foundation. Through this role, she is continuing her work on Prenatal Plans of Safe Care and a Medical Pathway to ensure medical professionals have the tools to refer families to community resources and supports instead of the child welfare system when appropriate. Before joining NCF in June 2023, Mikayla spent 10 years at DHHS CFS. Four years were spent as an Initial Assessment Case Worker and the last 7 were at Central Office as a Program Specialist. Mikayla led the way for statewide implementation of Alternative Response and ensuring it became a permanent program through legislative updates in 2020. Mikayla took on the work of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act in 2016 to develop Plans of Safe Care and continues the work at NCF with the implementation of Prenatal Plans of Safe Care. Mikayla's passion for working in child welfare started while attending Midland University, studying Business and Human Services. Through personal experiences, the work has taken Mikayla to also focus on maternal, prenatal, and post-partum health care for all families in Nebraska.

### **BRIAN WOJCIK**

#### Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership | ATP Education Program Supervisor/Assistive Technology Specialist

Brian Wojcik currently works as the Education Program Supervisor for the Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership within the Nebraska Department of Education. He has worked previously as Special Education Faculty at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and as the Coordinator of the Special Education Assistive Technology (SEAT) Center at Illinois State University. As an educator, Brian has been integrating technology to meet the needs of students with diverse learning needs for well over three decades. In his current position, Brian works to help educators build capacity for delivering quality AT services within Nebraska.

### **BECKYJO WYLIE, MA**

#### Morrill Public Schools | Birth-5 & Early Childhood Special Education

Becky has been in the field of Early Childhood Education for 20+ years in the state of Colorado and in Nebraska. She has operated a private child care facility and worked in the public school system. She is passionate about Early Childhood education and serving children and families starting at the birth. Currently, She is the Early Childhood Special Education and Early Development Service Provider for Morrill Public Schools. She focuses on trauma and curriculum support, as she has a master's in this area as well as her Applied Educational Neuroscience Certificate from Butler University.

### **DR. ALEXA YUNES-KOCH, PHD, MED**

#### Nebraska Department of Education. | RESPECT Grant Specialist

Dr. Alexa Yunes-Koch is the RESPECT Grant Specialist for the Nebraska Department of Education. She is a learning and behavior consultant specializing in the practical application of neuroscience to improve teacher and student well-being. As a Mexican immigrant, Alexa is devoted to achieving equity in public education.

## Presenter biographies

### **KATIE ZABEL**

Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools / UNL | Early Childhood Coach

Katie Zabel is an Early Childhood Coach for Getting Ready, which is a collaborative approach that supports children's learning and development by strengthening relationships among children, parents and educators. Getting Ready is housed within the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.



# SAVE THE DATE

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