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# 2024 EARLY INTERVENTION AND PRESCHOOL CONFERENCE

RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL – MOBILE, ALABAMA

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***Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>***

9:00-10:30 WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND KEYNOTE

**Check Your Rear View Mirror Before Moving Forward!**

Betsy Prince

It's important to check your "rear view" mirror to the past before pulling out into the fast-moving traffic of the future! This presentation will focus on the importance of looking back at the basic principles and core values that laid the foundation of Early Intervention. The presenter will share her own personal stories and professional experience on this journey!

10:30-11:00 BREAK AND EXHIBITS OPEN

11:00-12:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**Autism 101: Characteristics in Toddlers, Tools and Resources, and Tips for Talking to Caregivers**

Abby Hicks, M.A. & Glinda Mauldin ClinScD, CCC-SLP

*Audience: Early Intervention, Home Visitation, Preschool/Classroom, SLPs*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

This session will provide an overview of what characteristics of Autism look like in toddlers. There will be a discussion of where tools and resources can be found for families and how to navigate relevant internet sites. Tips for talking with caregivers when Autism is first suspected using the PREP model developed by Part C Early Intervention will also be provided.

**Engineering Preschool Environments-Management of Best Practices, Behaviors, and Staff**

Deborah Owens & Joylee Cain

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

Engineering Preschool Environments refers to formatting activities, schedules, relationships, and positive behavior strategies to promote, encourage, and maintain positive interactions for students. This session looks at engineering the environment through designing schedules, responsibilities, and behavioral outcomes to foster positive relationships during transitions, activities, and student involvement for teachers and paraprofessionals. This session will examine resources to establish and maintain positive outcomes for preschoolers in inclusive settings.

## **Impacts of Early Nutrition on Young Children’s Brains & Cognitive Development**

Kristi Guest, PhD & Aida Miles, EdD, MMSc, RDN, LD, CSP, FAN

*Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate-Advanced*

This session will provide an overview of the first 1,000 days and the importance of early nutrition. We will discuss influences on early growth and development and early brain development. Most of the time will be spent discussing implications of poor maternal nutrition and implications on brain and cognitive development of young children at the macronutrient and micronutrient levels. We will end with discussions on the importance of breastfeeding and advocacy programs.

## **We Are Better Together: Cultural Sensitivity in Home Visiting**

Shanté Hamm, LMSW

*Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

This session will allow participants an opportunity to discuss and learn ways to improve cultural sensitivity while serving families in their home. There will be a small group activity with discussion afterwards regarding differences. We will also discuss biases and cultural humility.

## **Clinical vs. School-Based Practice for Speech-Language Pathologists**

Stephanie Bear, Ed.S., CCC-SLP

*Audience: Speech-Language Pathologists*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

There are a number of differences in policies, procedures, and best practice for speech-language pathologists (SLPs) working in a private or clinical setting versus working in a public school setting. This session will address the major differences, with focus on SLPs transitioning to or new to the public schools, including their base in the laws that govern public schools and provision of services to students with disabilities.

## **Controversies in Pediatric Rehabilitation**

Mark Gormley, Jr., M.D.

*Audience: PTs/OTs*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate-Advanced*

Patients with developmental problems are often treated with a multitude of modalities, including medications, various direct therapies, medical interventions, bracing, equipment, and other interventions. Because of the heterogeneity of the various diagnoses and their presentations it can be difficult to gather evidence-based information to justify the use of these treatment modalities. This talk will explore the various treatments considered standard of care and non-standard of care and the evidence available to support these treatments.

## **Early Childhood Education and Dyslexia: What Is Our Role?**

Theresa H. Rodgers, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL, L-SLP, EdS (LD)

*Audience: SLPs*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

We know that early screening and intervention in early elementary grades are crucial for at-risk children. What then are the considerations for the early intervention and early childhood provider? These will be discussed including factors identified in children with speech sound disorders.

## **Building a Strong Foundation: Pre-Braille and Orientation & Mobility (O & M) Skills for the Early Years**

Susie Thomas, Ed.D., CTVI, COMS, NBCT

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

By building a strong foundation, children can begin a lifelong journey of learning. For children who will be braille learners, pre-braille and pre-O&M skills are essential. This presentation will give participants ideas on how they can begin strengthening these skills in young children. These will not only help professionals but also involve all of the child's support system in building that strong foundation.

**12:00-1:30 LUNCH BREAK (ON YOUR OWN)**

**1:30-3:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

### **Transitioning from Part C (Early Intervention) to Part B (Preschool)**

Tabitha Perry; Kathy Wilkins, M.Ed.; Beth Herndon, MCD, CCC-SLP; and Stephanie Bear, Ed. S., CCC-SLP

*Audience: Early Intervention, Preschool*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

This session will provide strategies to make transitioning from Early Intervention to Preschool as seamless as possible. The session will highlight transition meetings, forms, and other means of communication. The Alabama Early Intervention System and the Alabama State Department of Education are working together to ensure team members understand transition and what is required according to IDEA and how to work together to facilitate and positive and successful transition experiences for children and families.

### **All Together Now: Building a Sensory Inclusive Early Childhood Education Program**

Marisa Estrada

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Sensory play is more than spending time at the sand table or bringing out the playdough. Our brains are taking in sensory input every second of the day, and to build a sensory inclusive early childhood education program requires someone to understand the how and why of sensory processing. From indoor to outdoor play, the type of play happening in classrooms, and what is available via curriculum and centers are all influenced by sensory input and processing. This session offers the background needed to support a sensory inclusive early childhood education program as well as a large variety of strategies you can use today to be successful. *This is a make and take session; therefore, participation will be limited to 100 attendees.*

### **2 for 1 Group Meeting Ideas: "Born to Do Math" and "Little Hands Working Through Play"**

Barbara Thompson & Debra Pierce

*Audience: Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Through daily interactions, children develop math skills and concepts early in life. Simple games, activities and "math talk" will be the focus of this session. Additionally, we will share activities and games to explore the development of fine motor skills. This session will provide strategies that parents can use to support their children with their fine motor and mathematical development. Ideas for two inexpensive group meetings for parents and children to enjoy together will be provided.

## **Who Needs Toys? Creating Opportunities for Therapy Within the Home Environment**

Andi Gillen, Cynthia Sampson, Baylor Harris, and Ashlyn West

*Audience: Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

We all have seen or done it as early intervention providers or preschool teachers....we bring a bag of toys and tricks to target therapy goals or we make suggestions to families of what to do at home based on supplies we have in our classroom. This session will challenge participants to create opportunities for therapy targeting all areas of development with items commonly found in every home. No more bringing a bag of toys and tricks. Let's spend some time thinking about ways to creatively target therapy goals!

## **Early Childhood Behavior: Strategies that Support Social Emotional Learning**

Cheryl Scales

*Audience: Early Intervention, Home Visitation, Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

The first step to provide nurturing and responsive interactions is to observe. The next step is to think about or analyze the actions, words, sounds, and cues you observed. In this session participants will learn responsive strategies that meet the child's expectations and are developmentally appropriate.

## **Listening and Spoken Language & Early Intervention: Working Together to Benefit All**

Heather Griffin, MS, CCC-SLP, LSL, Cert. AVT & Sharion Gordon, M.Ed.

*Audience: Early Intervention, Home Visitation, Speech-Language Pathologists*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

Discover how the philosophy of Listening and Spoken Language/Auditory Verbal Therapy overlaps with the Vital Message of the Alabama Early Intervention System. Then discuss how many strategies used in AVT can be used to promote speech and language development in all children. Come away with new ways to engage and coach caregivers to use these communication building strategies in early intervention sessions.

## **Nerve Ninja: Mastering The Body's Control Center**

Jessica Strickland, BSE, LMSW

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

Ever had an experience that just made you feel out of control? Or been in an educational scenario where you felt you couldn't learn what was being taught due to your mind and body being dysregulated? What about working with others (client, child, parent, teacher, participant, etc.) who seemed out of control, distracted, and unable to regulate their minds, bodies and emotions, much less learn from what you were trying to share? Has saying "calm down" ever been an effective tool for you or your clients in calming down? In this session, you will learn how to master control of your body and mind so you can regulate your own emotions and be a more effective provider. You will also learn how to help others do the same, creating a sense of felt-safety, thus making your sessions more effective and "homework" completion/follow through more likely.

## **Controversies in Pediatric Rehabilitation**

Mark Gormley, Jr., M.D.

*Audience: PTs/OTs*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate-Advanced*

Patients with developmental problems are often treated with a multitude of modalities, including medications, various direct therapies, medical interventions, bracing, equipment, and other interventions. Because of the heterogeneity of the various diagnoses and their presentations it can be difficult to gather evidence-based information to justify the use of these treatment modalities. This talk will explore the various treatments considered standard of care and non-standard of care and the evidence available to support these treatments.

## 3:00-3:15 BREAK AND EXHIBITS OPEN

## 3:15-4:45 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### **Congenital Heart Disease and Developmental Delay: What the Research Shows and What We Can Do**

Anna Ruth McCalley, MS, OTR/L, NTMTC

*Audience: Early Intervention, Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

As medical advances continue, the population of children, and now adults, with complex congenital heart disease (CHD) is growing. With this has come evidence of developmental delays that have an impact across the lifespan. Research over the last 10-15 years has shown the importance of referring infants and young toddlers with congenital heart disease for Early Intervention (EI) services. We will explore why these delays occur, why early referral is beneficial, and how families are impacted by CHD and associated delays.

### **An Effective Therapy for Managing Disruptive Behaviors in Young Children: Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)**

Sarah Olivas, PsyD and Brandi Ellis, PhD

*Audience: Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is an evidence-based parent training program for young children with emotional and behavioral disorders that emphasizes the quality of the parent-child relationship. In this session, we will cover the theory and development of PCIT and the important therapeutic components of the intervention. Appropriate treatment uses and populations will be identified, as well as existing adaptations of the protocol to be used with specific populations (e.g., toddlers, autism, anxiety, classroom behaviors). The steps to become certified in PCIT through PCIT International will be discussed.

### **Maternal Mental Health and Its Effects on Early Development**

Jamie Hill, NCC, LPC, ECMH-E

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

There has been a new focus on mental health and mental wellbeing over the last several years and it's a good thing! But how does maternal mental health or lack of mental health affect the infant and young child's development?

### **Emotional Superheroes: Building Resilience in Pre-K**

Johnece Smith, MS, Eds, LPC, NCC, IMH-E®

*Audience: Early Intervention, Home Visitation, Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Emotional Superheroes: Building Resilience in Pre-K is an engaging workshop designed to empower educators with the tools and strategies necessary to cultivate resilience in young children. This session delves into the critical role of emotional intelligence and resilience in early childhood development, emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive environment where children feel safe to explore, learn, and grow. Participants will discover practical techniques for fostering resilience, such as promoting positive relationships, teaching coping skills, and encouraging problem-solving abilities. Through interactive discussions and hands-on activities, attendees will gain valuable insights into nurturing emotional well-being and empowering children to overcome challenges with resilience and confidence.

## **Considering Mobility Equipment as it Relates to Development**

Jessica Presperin Pedersen OTD, BSOT, MBA, ATP/SMS, FAOTA & Erica Walling MSPT, ATP, SMS

*Audience: PTs/OTs*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

What mobility base is appropriate for a specific child related to gross and fine motor development and cognitive and functional status? As part of this course, we will discuss the application of mobility equipment to support the development of self-initiated movement for function and participation. Additionally, the course will review specific challenges related to children with disabilities or delays, current evidence, and the assessment and prescription of products pertaining to on-time mobility or function desired.

## **Let's Talk About It: Resource Panel Discussion for Statewide Community Resources**

Melissa Anderson, Tracy Cieniewicz, Michala Steele, Michelle Raybon, Dawn Owens, & Kaelyn Christian

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

Panelists from Childcare Enhancement with A Purpose, Alabama Lifespan Respite, Alabama Partnership for Children, Voices for Alabama's Children, and Dolly Parton Imagination Library will share the details of their services, and how their resources are beneficial to Early Interventionists, home visitors, childcare providers, and parents. At the end of the panel discussion, participants will be able to ask questions during the Q & A portion. First 100 participants will leave with a detailed resource binder to use at their disposal.

## **A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Teaching with Wordless Picture Books in the Preschool Classroom**

Sonia Free & Stacy Gaither

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Wordless picture books are told entirely through their illustrations--they are books without words, or sometimes just a few words. Sharing wordless books with a child provides an opportunity for literacy-rich conversations and to develop important emergent literacy skills. A good wordless picture book is worth a thousand words. When used with thoughtfulness and intention, wordless picture books are powerful tools and children love them! Join us in this training for great information and ideas on incorporating wordless picture books into the preschool classroom.

## **Ethical Decision-Making in 2024: What We Need to Know**

Theresa H. Rodgers, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL, L-SLP, EdS (LD)

*Audience: SLPs & OTs*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

The topic of ethics is a pervasive and sometimes challenging one, applicable to all professionals, practice settings, and types of clients. A decision-making model will be delineated and scenarios depicting potential ethical dilemmas will be analyzed by participants.

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# Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>

## 8:30-10:00 ANNOUNCEMENTS AND KEYNOTE

### Our Shared Identities as Early Interventionists and Early Childhood Professionals: Who We Are and Why We're Amazing

Dana Childress, PhD

We love the work we do, even on the hard days and always on the days we can't wait to tell others about. On either day, this work comes with unique challenges too - think pink eye and "behavior" or pets on home visits and travel time. Balancing the joys and challenges of work in early intervention and early childhood is not always easy, so let's take some time to consider what evidence suggests we have in common, what we need as professionals, and how our shared identity guides us. This session will give us space to smile about our success stories, embrace our challenges, sprinkle in a little humor, and perhaps remind ourselves of just how amazing we really are (yes, I mean YOU)!

## 8:30-10:00 CONCURRENT MOTOR THERAPISTS (PT & OTs) BREAKOUT SESSION

### Implications of Mechanical Ventilation and Oxygen Use on Development

Ashley Parish, PT, DPT, PhD, CRT, CCS

*Audience: PTs/OTs*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate-Advanced*

Use of supplemental oxygen and mechanical ventilation is common among hospitalized infants, especially those born prematurely. Unfortunately, use of these interventions can profoundly affect subsequent lung function into adolescence and be a source for developmental delay. This session will discuss reasoning behind impaired pulmonary function and development in this population, as well as ways to address deficits post hospital discharge.

## 10:00-10:30 BREAK AND EXHIBITS OPEN

## 10:30-12:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### Flip the Script: Inviting Kids to Become Active Participants in the Inclusive Classroom

Michala Steele, MS

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

The fourth wall refers to the invisible boundary between actors on the stage and the audience. Quite often teachers find themselves being the performers in the classroom while their students are the audience. In this engaging training, participants will explore how to flip-the-script while engaging in activities that make the students the stars of the show. Say goodbye to the battle-of-wills, and hello to reciprocity, collaboration, and imagination! *This session is a make and take, therefore participation will be limited to 100 attendees.*

## **Making a Difference for Your Dual Language Learners**

Kathy McDonald, MA

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom, Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Young Dual Language Learners (DLLs) benefit greatly from a variety of supports and practices teachers can put in place to maximize their learning. DLLs' first language is a valuable asset that plays an important role in their learning and must be woven into the classroom experience. Join this engaging session to see how development in more than one language unfolds and learn best practices to support this development.

## **For Safety's Sake**

Angie Gullede, Michael Kelley, and Travis Parden

*Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

This session will be delivered by two local responders (a police sergeant, and a paramedic) with over 40 years combined experience serving the community and moderated by a veteran Service Coordinator. The presentation will include basic personal home safety tips and information for home visitors travelling to client locations in rural and urban areas.

## **Nurturing Earliest Relationships and Healthy Social-Emotional Development in Young Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children**

Amanda G. Somdal, LCSW, LICSW-S & Lacey K. H. Wood, MA

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

Early childhood researchers and educators have long known that children's earliest relationships and experiences set the stage for lifelong well-being. When a baby is born with a hearing difference, every area of development for both child and family is impacted. Families of young deaf/hard of hearing (DHH) children need highly-specialized information, resources, and support as they nurture their whole DHH child from life's first moments onward.

## **Positioning for Participation and Function: 24-Hour Postural Support**

Jessica Presperin Pedersen OTD, BSOT, MBA, ATP/SMS, FAOTA & Erica Walling MSPT, ATP, SMS

*Audience: PTs/OTs*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

A child participates in many activities throughout a 24-hour period. The wheelchair or a mobility system is often addressed providing optimal transportation, opportunity for self-initiated movement, and positioning. Evidence has demonstrated the benefits of providing positioning intervention when a child is not in the wheelchair. Positions focusing on lying, sitting, and standing will be addressed. A 24-hour postural care program addresses all activities the child might be involved in. This session addresses options for alternative positioning, toileting, bathing, and sleeping. Physiological and anatomical theoretical principles will be addressed incorporating how equipment can address an individual's postural needs while promoting function and participation throughout a full 24-hour day.

## **I Don't Think I Can; I Don't Think I Can: What to Do When Your Child's Behavior Goes off the Rails**

Stephanie Collum MS, CCC-SLP; Danielle Waldrep Rich PhD CCC-SLP; and Shauna Ashley PhD CCC-SLP

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

This is an intermediate course for parents, caregivers, and families, as well as professionals, on how to manage behavior. This presentation will provide a variety of techniques (e.g., hands-on, research-based, functional techniques) that the participants can implement when they do not have the experience or have no idea on what to do to help manage behaviors such as temper tantrums, meltdowns, and other behaviors that impede the development and learning of the child.



## **Navigating Change in the EI Workplace**

Susan Sellers, JD & Jessica Letson

*Audience: Program Directors, Managers, Supervisors, Team Leads*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Change in the workplace is expected, and early intervention is no exception. This session is designed for program directors and managers, team leads, CEOs and Executive Directors, or any others serving in a supervisory capacity. Topics to be discussed include: proactivity vs. reactivity, collaborating, creating, and presenting a plan when changes do occur, building trust through effective communication, supporting employees through workplace change, and addressing resistance by defining a clear mission.

## **Making the Most of the Routines-Based Interview**

Julie Carden, MS

*Audience: Early Intervention Service Coordinators*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Whether you are preparing for your first RBI live-scoring or you have been conducting RBIs for several years, this session will help you dig deep to elicit the most information for a rich RBI and avoid common mistakes and pitfalls. Using real-world practical examples, participants will practice in small groups key skills needed for a successful RBI. Essential skills such as developing an Ecomap, following the RBI checklist, asking questions related to EISR, and time management will be discussed.

**12:00-1:30 LUNCH BREAK (ON YOUR OWN)**

**1:30-3:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

## **Coaching during EI Service Coordination: 9 Practices for Collaborating with Families**

Dana Childress, PhD

*Audience: Early Intervention Service Coordinators*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Join this session to reflect on how coaching “shows up” in service coordination. We will discuss nine coaching practices service coordinators can use when helping families participate in the early intervention process, share information, access resources, and solve problems. We will also use a Coaching Families during Service Coordination fidelity tool to observe coaching practices while watching videos of service coordinators collaborating with families.

## **Let's Tinker! Inspiring Children to Create, Invent, and Innovate**

Sonia Free & Stacy Gaither

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

What can you add to your early childhood classroom that will immerse children in rich learning, reduce challenging behaviors, and develop confidence as well as critical thinking and problem-solving skills? A makerspace! Join us as we learn how to create a makerspace in your early childhood classroom.

## **Developmentally Appropriate Practices: How Do We Teach the Whole Child?**

Hannah Kennedy, PhD & Kate Scarborough, PhD

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

In this session, the presenters will share instructional activities and strategies that incorporate developmentally appropriate practices that target all developmental domains. The presenters will share research that supports meeting the needs of the whole child through inclusive classroom practices and differentiation. This session will also include tangible resources, strategies, and activities that creatively target all developmental domains while balancing the unique needs of the diverse learners in the class.

### **Discipline-specific Issues Working with Children Exhibiting Characteristics of Autism**

Autumn Bobo, OTR/L; Blaklie Blevins, MS CCC-SLP; and Angie Gullledge

*Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention, SLPs*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

This session will provide an overview to describe how "Discipline-Specific Intervention Strategies" can work with the Part C Autism Initiative's Five Strategies of Intervention to provide appropriate ASD interventions for young children exhibiting characteristics of Autism.

### **Reflux Keeps Coming Up-What it is, and How to Manage, From a Therapist and Evidence-Based Perspective**

Margie Gutrich Mizera, PT, DPT, PCS

*Audience: PTs/OTs, Speech-Language Pathologists, Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

It seems we are seeing so much more reflux than ever before. This presentation will help us identify and quantify what we are seeing from a medical and clinical perspective. It will address what we, as therapists, educators, and parents can incorporate into our daily practice to help find relief for our infants, young children, and their parents.

### **Don't Get Your Panties in a Bunch: Inclusive Potty Training Strategies**

Marisa Estrada

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Potty training doesn't need to feel impossible anymore. This interactive session covers a variety of tips, tricks, and strategies to support caregivers, teachers, early interventionists, and therapists to support potty training children of all abilities. Learning inclusive potty training strategies helps take the stress away from this huge milestone and helps us focus on supporting the child and celebrating the victories along the way.

### **Part C to Part B: Successful Transition for Children with a Hearing Difference Using the Listening and Spoken-Language Communication Model**

Denise Wilkes; Monya Peppers, MS, CCC-SLP; and Helen Lee Miles, AuD, CCC-A

*Audience: Early Intervention, Preschool/Classroom, Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

Due to the low incidence of children with a hearing difference, this population has traditionally been transitioned from Part C to Part B in a similar manner as children with a developmental or speech delay. Research shows that these children require specialized assessments that address their unique needs related to their hearing difference. This presentation will address the 3-prong evaluation process, appropriate assessments to reflect the whole child, transition team members, and examples of a complete transition report.

### **Grief and the Special Needs Mom**

Rene Sprague RN, MSN, FNP-C

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

When you enter the world of special needs parenting, nobody prepares you for the grief that meets you there. While you are learning a new language, navigating appointments and diagnoses, and rearranging your life to support your child, you are grieving the life you planned and were forced to leave behind. Being a special parent and working with a special needs parent requires insight that is not always familiar. This talk will be a discussion on do's and don'ts associated with parenting and working with a parent of a special needs child.

## 3:00-3:15 BREAK AND EXHIBITS OPEN

## 3:15-4:45 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### **Contextually Relevant Practices to Foster Early Literacy and Authentic Learning**

Jennifer Kilgo, PhD

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

This session will highlight the importance of authentic, contextually relevant instruction and how early literacy can be enhanced. Included will be rationale for revamping learning rituals, routines, and activities (e.g., circle time/morning meeting, letter of the week, calendar) to create more relevant learning opportunities. Illustrations of authentic instruction embedded throughout the day for diverse populations will be used to show direct applications of these recommended practices.

### **Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Preschool Updates**

Stephanie Bear, Ed. S., CCC-SLP & Kathy Wilkins, M. Ed

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom, SLPs*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

Get the most current information from the State and Federal level that will affect your procedures and practices as a provider for preschool-age students with disabilities, including some tips for producing compliant paperwork. Any updated information that pertains to preschool students with disabilities will be included.

### **The Other Sisters: Considering Siblings in Early Intervention**

Kameron C. Carden, PhD, CCC/SLP, LSL Cert. AVEEd. & Mary Coston Bell, MAE, ECSE

*Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

As outcomes have improved for children with developmental delays due to early intervention, we must also consider how a routines-based early intervention model can be leveraged to prioritize the experiences of their siblings (McWilliam, 2010; Tudor & Lerner, 2015). We will briefly share our lived experiences as siblings of individuals with disabilities as well as risk and protective factors for siblings. Then, we will identify perceived barriers to including siblings in early intervention sessions and ways to effectively include them as an integral part of a routines-based model.

### **Amid Your Trauma and Pain...A Hero Lies Within YOU!**

Sabrina Robinson, MA

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Understanding trauma is not just about acquiring knowledge. It's about changing the way you view the world and yourself. It's about changing the helping paradigm from "What is wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" Amid your trauma and pain, there exists a hero within you, waiting to emerge.

## **Strategies to Promote Infant Regulation Through Massage, Positioning, and Modifying the Sensory Environment**

MaryBeth Moses, PT, MS, PCS, NTMTC & Holley Steele, PT, MS, NTMTC

*Audience: PTs/OTs*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Young infants who have experienced a NICU stay or who have a neurological diagnosis often present difficulties with sensory regulation. This session is designed to help providers guide families in promoting infant regulation and understanding their baby's non-verbal cues. Participants will practice hands on strategies to teach families to promote calming and infant regulation through positive touch, massage, positioning, and carrying.

## **Modeling Magic**

Pamela Ramsey, MCD, CCC-SLP; Mallory Manning, MS, CCC-SLP; & Shelby H. Hall, MS, CCC-SLP

*Audience: Speech-Language Pathologists*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

This session will guide participants through specific ways to model for desirable communication outcomes, giving concrete steps for scaffolding modeling through using Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions. The presentation will discuss modeling through different phases of linguistic development and various communication modalities. Professionals will learn tips and tricks for fostering modeling magic through the Early Intervention Parent Coaching framework.

## **From Pixels to Playgrounds: How to Balance Technology and Play for Brain Development**

Joy Winchester

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Play is how the brain develops - the brain learns through movement and navigating challenging environments. But technology is a part of our world and a part of our children's world at very young ages. How do we balance play and tech use? How do we set children up to have healthy boundaries for technology, so as they grow they are not addicted to tech but instead use it as a tool for success not diversion.

## **Just Chill: Identifying and Utilizing Strategies in Your Work to Promote Productivity and Relieve Stress**

Dr. Chelsea T. Taylor, LPC, NCC

*Audience: Early Intervention, Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

This session focuses on identifying and mitigating stress/stressors that arise when working with young children and their families. It will provide strategies that can be used to reduce provider stress, improve quality of life when working with families, and improve overall work ethic. We will also look at how to address conflicts with parents/caregivers that appear to be "difficult".

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# Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>

## 8:30-9:30 BREAKOUT SESSIONS

### **Hispanic Resources for Families**

Isabella Cimins, Veronica Valero, and Karla Greene

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Living in a community where resources are limited can isolate a family. Let's have a discussion on how we can help our Hispanic families be more included in the community, identify what your families need, and help reduce the barriers that limit progress overall.

### **Using Function-based Thinking to Manage the Behavior of Young Children**

Mandy S. Hilsmier, PhD

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

This presentation will provide an overview of Functional Based Assessment practices for preschool teachers. Teachers will be then provided with an overview of the concept of function-based thinking and how to implement such practices when dealing with individual behavioral concerns in the preschool classroom. Finally, case studies will be provided for teachers to practice implementation of such practices.

### **Conscious Discipline for You and Me**

Amy Brakenhoff

*Audience: Home Visitation, Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

As you prepare to interact with those around you, would it be helpful to understand what's going on in the heads of the children, co-workers, and even yourself? When we understand the brain, we better understand behavior. When we understand the why behind behavior, we are better equipped to move brains forward into problem solving mode. Join us to learn about Conscious Discipline, understand the brain, and practice strategies to support us along the way.

### **Looking at Parenting Through a Neuroscience Lens**

Joy Winchester

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

Does parenting style impact brain development? New research in neuroscience shows that different parenting styles have different impacts on brain development and therefore different behavioral outcomes as well.

## **ADAPT & PLAY: How to Access Assistive Technology for Children in Early Intervention**

Lynn Roebuck, MS, CCC-SLP & Ashley McLeroy, MSME

*Audience: General, SLPs*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

ADAPT & PLAY provides access to assistive technology in the form of switch adapted toys and simple voice output devices to caregivers of young children through a lending library system. Learn more about ADAPT & PLAY, assistive technology for young children, how to access the APT AT lending library, and resources for acquiring assistive technology in Alabama.

## **Developmental Consequences of Fetal Substance Exposures**

Rian Anglin, MD FAAP

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

Maternal substance use in pregnancy can have significant impacts on developmental and behavioral outcomes in children. In this lecture, we will discuss the impact various substances have on the developing child and the importance of early surveillance and intervention to improve outcomes.

## **Exploring the World of Adaptive Equipment Justification and Billing**

Billy Ronilo, PT

*Audience: PTs/OTs*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

Have you ever wondered why some pieces of adaptive equipment are covered by insurance and others are denied? Come join us for a discussion on the process of submitting custom adaptive equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, gait trainers, standers, etc. to insurance for their approval. We will discuss key justification terminology, coverage limits, and typical turnaround times from evaluation to delivery.

## **9:30-9:45 BREAK AND HOTEL CHECKOUT**

## **9:45-10:45 BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

### **Service Coordination Roundtable**

Debra Florea & Misty Champion

*Audience: Early Intervention Service Coordinators*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

The Early Intervention Service Coordination Roundtable is a collaborative forum designed to facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration among service coordinators involved in early intervention services.

### **Focusing on Teacher and Child Wellness When Behavior is "Challenging"**

Courtney O'Grady, PhD & Ragan McLeod, PhD

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom*

*Instructional Level: Introductory*

When teachers feel overwhelmed and unsupported, they may resort to exclusionary discipline practices such as suspension and expulsion. We know that to end these practices, both teachers AND children need to be supported. In this session, we will share resources and strategies to protect the well-being of both children and teachers while promoting social-emotional competence.

## **Build My Brain: Set a Foundation for Language and Literacy**

Gay Finn & Kendall Hampton

*Audience: Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

Interactions during the first 3 years of life greatly impact brain architecture. These early experiences affect lifelong learning and health. Discover what types of interactions infants and toddlers need to build a strong foundation for language and literacy. Empower caregivers to provide the language nutrition their babies need to grow healthy brains. Let's intervene early and put an end to Alabama's reading crisis. Includes a take-home activity.

## **When to Refer: Implications for Feeding and Swallowing Management in Infants and Toddlers**

Summer Ensor, MS, CCC-SLP

*Audience: Speech-Language Pathologists*

*Instructional Level: Intermediate*

This session will provide an overall crash course into feeding and swallowing in infants and toddlers. Throughout this session, the speaker will review overall infant/toddler head and neck anatomy/physiology, major differences from adult anatomy/physiology, and the problems that can occur related to swallowing. Based upon these problems, as well as feeding "red flags", the speaker will provide examples of reasons to refer out for additional evaluations for feeding and swallowing, as well as how to educate caregivers about the additional referral. This presentation will also touch on picky eaters/eating, the differences between picky eating and problem feeding, and the overall need for additional referrals.

## **Get a Grip on Motor Development**

Desira Bolden-Keith, M.Ed.

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

In this comprehensive class, participants will delve into the realm of motor skill delays in young children. Through a combination of case studies, research insights, and hands-on exercises, attendees will gain the knowledge of what is needed to identify subtle signs of motor skill delays early on. By analyzing real-life scenarios and exploring current research findings, participants will enhance their ability to pinpoint developmental concerns accurately. Moreover, through practical exercises, they will acquire essential skills to implement evidence-based interventions tailored to support and enhance motor development effectively. Whether you're an educator, caregiver, or healthcare professional, this class equips you with practical tools to make a meaningful impact on children's motor skill development.

## **Finding Purpose Against All Odds**

Sylvia Bowen, JD

*Audience: General*

*Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate*

There is no doubt that a neatly wrapped package is better received than one that is not. It is in our nature to equate value with that which appears well packaged and ignore or discard that which may not be aesthetically pleasing. Unfortunately, the same standards, albeit not openly, are applied to children with Trisomy 18 as they are repeatedly labeled as incompatible with life, which could not be further from the truth as my family learned.

## **Let's SEL-ebrate: Breaking Down the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Framework and Why It's Important for Child Development**

Savannah Loudin

*Audience: Preschool/Classroom, Home Visitation*

*Instructional Level: All levels*

The "Let's SEL-ebrate" training focuses on fostering Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in children at child development centers, home learning environments, and in community settings. It emphasizes the development of key competencies such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Through interactive activities, discussions, and practical examples, the training aims to equip educators and parents with the tools and understanding needed to support children's emotional and social growth, ultimately creating a more empathetic, inclusive, and supportive learning environment.

**10:45-11:00      BREAK**

**11:00-12:15      CLOSING SESSION**

### **No Bad Days (Seize Your Opportunity):**

Karockas "Doc Rock" Watkins, PhD

This presentation addresses the stresses of everyday life in a dynamic and engaging manner. It focuses on seven key characteristics that lay the foundation for daily personal and professional triumph: VISION, ATTITUDE, BELIEF, POTENTIAL, CONFIDENCE, ENTHUSIASM/DRIVE, & PURPOSE. We help you develop a champion mindset and teach you how to maximize your day. Presentation is based on Doc Rock's published book, *No Bad Days*.