
2024 EARLY INTERVENTION AND PRESCHOOL CONFERENCE

RENAISSANCE MOBILE RIVERVIEW PLAZA HOTEL – MOBILE, ALABAMA

Monday, October 28th

9:00-9:30 WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

10:30-11:30 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION (60 MINUTES)

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 (EI). The presenter will share her own personal stories and professional experience on this journey!

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List basic principles that laid the foundation for Early Intervention.
2. Describe core values of Early Intervention and how to put them into practice.
3. Describe challenges parents face balancing EI services with other aspects of raising a child with developmental concerns.

10:30-11:00 BREAK AND EXHIBITS OPEN

11:00-12:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (60 MINUTES)

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

Abby Hicks, MA & 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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify characteristics of Autism in toddlers.
2. Identify and explain tools and resources for families.
3. Demonstrate ways to communicate characteristics of Autism with families.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify various strategies of best practices in preschool environments to foster maximum student and staff engagement to establish positive outcomes during class time activities.
2. Describe implementation of favorable strategies to introduce and encourage positive transitions, relationships, behavior management, and outcomes for students within the preschool environment.
3. List a variety of activities, formats and educational resources to establish and maintain positive staff involvement.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the first 1,000 days and the importance of early nutrition.
2. Identify implications of poor maternal nutrition at the micronutrient level on brain and cognitive development of young children.
3. Identify implications of poor maternal nutrition at the macronutrient level on brain and cognitive development of young children.

We Are Better Together: Cultural Sensitivity in Home Visiting

Shanté Hamm, LMSW

*Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention, SLPs**

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the difference between cultural sensitivity and cultural competence.
2. Describe biases and ways to understand and resolve them.
3. Explain how cultural humility helps form partnerships with families.

**Supports ASHA DEI Certification Maintenance Standards*

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

Stephanie Bear, EdS, 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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the major State and Federal laws that govern the practice of school-based SLPs.
2. Describe considerations for eligibility that are unique to school-based practice for SLPs.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of best practices in service provision for preschool students with disabilities.

Controversies in Pediatric Rehabilitation

Mark Gormley, Jr., MD

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List some of the various controversies in treating children with disabilities.
2. Describe the evidence for some common standard and non-standard treatments for children with disabilities.
3. Explain when "alternative" treatments may or may not be appropriate.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the five pillars of early literacy.
2. Analyze contributing factors to children not being taught to read.
3. Examine critical facts about dyslexia.
4. Describe the relationship of communication impairments in young children to elevated risk of developing reading problems.

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

Susie Thomas, Ed.D., CTVI, COMS, NBCT and Jennifer Fuller

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain why pre-braille and pre-O&M skills are essential for young braille learners.
2. Explain how to incorporate activities in daily routines to strengthen braille and O&M skills.
3. Explain how to create activities to increase Braille and O&M skills.
4. Describe early Braille learning devices.

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

1:30-3:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (90 MINUTES)

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

Tabitha Perry, MEd; Kathy Wilkins, MEd; Beth Herndon, MCD, CCC-SLP; and Stephanie Bear, EdS, 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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Participants will learn how to prepare the parent(s) for the Transition.
2. Summarize the importance of relationships and communication with the LEA.
3. Explain the service coordinator's role at the 33rd-month meeting.
4. Explain how to use the Transition Planning Form.

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.*

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the different sensory systems and how the brain processes sensory input.

2. Explain strategies to support sensory integration in all areas of their early childhood education program.
3. Describe how to engineer sensory activities to engage the children they serve in a way that is appropriate for their age and ability.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe how they can lay a foundation for early math skills through simple games and connections.
2. Explain how they can support math learning through language, games and everyday play with toddlers and preschoolers.
3. List simple activities to share with parents that promote the development of fine motor.

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

Andi Gillen, Cynthia Sampson, Baylor Harris, and Ashlyn West, MS, CCC-SLP

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!

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify ways to utilize common household objects to target therapy goals in all areas of development.
2. Identify the challenges families experience if early intervention therapy providers and preschool teachers bring in toys or suggest toys that families do not have access to.
3. Explain the importance of embedding therapy goals in family routines.
4. List 25 common objects and pick five to incorporate with families in the next three months.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe a high-quality learning environment.
2. Explain what responsive interactions look like.
3. Summarize typical social-emotional milestones in preschool-age children.
4. Analyze how adults can support the social-emotional skills of preschool-age children.
5. Discuss what to do if you are concerned about the social-emotional development of a preschooler in your classroom.

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

Heather Griffin, MS, CCC-SLP, LSLs, Cert. AVT & Sharion Gordon, MEd

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

Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate

Discover how the philosophy of Listening and Spoken Language/Auditory Verbal Therapy (LSL/AVT) overlaps with the Vital Message of the Alabama Early Intervention System (AEIS). 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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain how the philosophies of LSL/AVT and of AEIS overlap and complement each other.
2. Identify LSL/AVT strategies that can be shared with caregivers they serve.
3. Describe how these strategies could be used in specific routines encountered in home sessions.

Nerve Ninja: Mastering The Body's Control Center

Jessica Strickland, BSE, LMSW and Jennifer Street, LCSW-S

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify and describe three primary nervous system states.
2. Compare and contrast unhealthy and healthy nervous systems and three primary causes for nervous system dysfunction.
3. Compare and contrast ineffective and effective tools for nervous system regulation and the creation of felt-safety.

Pediatric Hypertonia

Mark Gormley, Jr., M.D.

Audience: PTs/OTs

Instructional Level: Intermediate-Advanced

Hypertonia is very common in patients with cerebral palsy and other developmental problems. Hypertonia has various etiologies and severities thus various different treatments. This talk will review the most common forms of hypertonia seen in the pediatric population, their etiologies, and various treatments.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List the different types of pediatric hypertonia.
2. Describe the etiologies of pediatric hypertonia.
3. List the possible treatments for pediatric hypertonia

3:00-3:15 BREAK AND EXHIBITS OPEN

3:15-4:45 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (90 MINUTES)

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify some of the more common types of CHD.
2. Explain why CHD causes developmental delays.
3. Explain what types of delays and challenges are seen in this population.
4. Explain why EI services can be beneficial for CHD families even if delays are not showing at the moment.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the therapeutic components of PCIT.
2. Identify the appropriate populations with which to implement PCIT.
3. Identify the existing adaptations available for PCIT when working with specific populations.
4. Identify the steps needed to achieve PCIT certification through PCIT International.

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?

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify symptoms and concerns related to maternal mental health.
2. Describe how maternal mental health affects the development of very young children.
3. Explain how to address maternal mental health concerns in the families they serve.

Emotional Superheroes: Building Resilience in Pre-K

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

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

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List the components of Resilience and Emotional Intelligence.
2. Examine strategies to foster Resilience.
3. Explain how to promote positive coping skills and problem-solving abilities.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List two benefits of on-time mobility intervention.
2. Compare and contrast reasons to utilize a dependent versus an independent wheelchair base.
3. Identify two interventions for power driver training.

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

Melissa Anderson; Tracy Cieniewicz; Michala Steele, MS; Michelle Raybon, MEd & Kaelyn Christian

Audience: General

Instructional Level: All levels

Panelists from Childcare Enhancement with A Purpose, Alabama Lifespan Respite, Alabama Partnership for 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. The first 100 participants will leave with a detailed resource binder to use at their disposal.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify beneficial statewide programs and resources.
2. Formulate a list of services and contact information to share with families and providers.
3. Explain how to use the resource binder in order to make appropriate referrals.

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

Sonia Free & Stacy Gaither, MS

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify what wordless picture books are and how they are significant in developing oral language skills and vocabulary.
2. Identify different examples of preschool wordless picture books.
3. Demonstrate wordless picture book activities that can be incorporated 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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Analyze a model for ethical decision-making.
2. Summarize ethical issues associated with utilization of artificial intelligence as well as social media.
3. Apply ethical principles through analysis of dilemmas encountered in the practice of occupational therapy and speech-language pathology.

**Supports ASHA Ethics Certification Maintenance Standards*

Tuesday, October 29th

8:30-9:00 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

9:00-10:00 **KEYNOTE PRESENTATION (60 MINUTES)**

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)!

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the shared experiences and practices of early interventionists and early childhood professionals.
2. Predict how professional identity develops and guides our practice.
3. Define the shared components of our identities, including strengths, needs and challenges faced by early interventionists and early childhood professionals.
4. Connect professional identities with the impact that both roles play with children, families and in communities.

8:30-10:00 **CONCURRENT PT & OT BREAKOUT SESSION (90 MINUTES)**

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe typical lung function and development.
2. Describe how supplemental oxygen use and mechanical ventilation can impair development.
3. Identify appropriate interventions to address deficits in pulmonary function.

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

10:30-12:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (90 MINUTES)

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.***

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain the child's role in decision making and its connection to cultivating students who are emotionally intelligent and engaged in classroom activities.
2. Describe self-active play and explain the importance of constructing knowledge from experience.
3. Explain fundamental movement skills and the neurobiological impact on early childhood development and classroom engagement.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain the “why” and “how” to support DLLs in their classrooms.
2. Identify the stages of language acquisition for DLLs.
3. Connect practices and tools discussed to support DLLs in their care.

For Safety's Sake

Angie Gullledge, 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. Participants will also hear 3 Pro Tips for Home Visitors.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Lists ways home visitors can be prepared to face unexpected safety issues that may arise during travelling to or during a home visit.
2. Describe practical information on suggested essential daily tasks.
3. Describe basic first aid and universal precautions.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the definition, importance of, and foundational practices in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health.
2. Describe barriers young DHH children face in achieving healthy earliest relationships with families, caregivers, and peers.
3. Describe the lifelong impacts of language deprivation and compromised earliest relationships on this population.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify three activities that may require support to enhance participation.
2. List two benefits for equipment intervention throughout the day.
3. Identify two activities that can accompany the equipment intervention.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe techniques to manage a child's behavior.
2. Evaluate when certain behavior modification is not working and describe ways how to manage the child's behaviors.
3. Formulate techniques for the individual child they provide services to or for the parents to implement at home to help manage a child's behavior.

Navigating Change in the Early Intervention Workplace

Susan Sellers, JD; Jessica Letson; Stephanie Holderby; and Christine Smith

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List ways to be proactive versus reactive.
2. Describe how to collaborate, create, and present a plan.
3. Describe ways to build trust through effective communication.
4. Explain how to support employees through workplace change.

Routines-Based Interview: Practical Application

Julie Carden, MS; Debra Florea; and Brandi Brown, MS

Audience: Early Intervention Service Coordinators

Instructional Level: Intermediate

Whether you are preparing for your first Routines-Based Interview (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 Engagement, Independence, and Social Relationships (EISR), and time management will be discussed. By integrating evidence-based practices, collaborative approaches, and family-centered perspectives, attendees will also gain insights into effective strategies for developing, implementing, and evaluating functional outcomes.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain key skills needed for a meaningful RBI.
2. Demonstrate use of the RBI checklist for conducting an RBI, serving as a notetaker, and giving feedback.
3. Demonstrate ways of asking questions to dig deep to elicit rich interviews.
4. Identify common obstacles in outcome development.
5. Describe practical solutions and best practices in outcome development.

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

1:30-3:00 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (90 MINUTES)

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify nine practices for coaching families during service coordination.
2. Discuss how these practices help families participate in the EI process, share information, access resources, and solve problems.
3. Integrate observation of coaching practices using video examples and the Coaching during Service Coordination Fidelity Checklist.
4. Decide how to use coaching practices in your work with families.

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

Sonia Free & Stacy Gaither, MS

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify what a makerspace is.
2. Identify the importance of makerspaces in the early childhood classroom.
3. Demonstrate opportunities for children to build, create, and engineer.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the characteristics of developmentally appropriate practices in the preschool classroom.
2. Analyze collaboration successes and challenges to meet the needs of the whole child in inclusive classroom settings.
3. Generalize new ways to implement creative and intentional practices that target all five developmental domains.

Discipline-specific Issues Working with Children Exhibiting Characteristics of Autism

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

Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention

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 interventions for young children exhibiting characteristics of Autism.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain 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.
2. Explain how Part C Autism Initiative Strategies can be used by all disciplines effectively.
3. Explain how different disciplines can work with young children exhibiting characteristics of Autism using the Part C ASD Five Strategies on interventions.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the anatomy/physiology of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and the medical causes and consequences of reflux.
2. Identify the clinical symptoms of reflux in our patients, from infancy to early childhood.
3. Describe the secondary complications /consequences of GERD.
4. Identify evidence-based clinical interventions to minimize the adverse effects of reflux in our children.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain what inclusion is through the lens of potty-training children of all ages.
2. Formulate a potty-training plan for the children they care for that is inclusive, age appropriate and developmentally appropriate.
3. Describe how to collaborate with their fellow participants through a variety of activities to support learning inclusive potty-training strategies.

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, SLPs

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List necessary members of the transition team for a child with a hearing difference.
2. Identify assessments appropriate to evaluate a child with a hearing difference during Part B evaluation process.
3. List all necessary components of a complete transition report for a child with a hearing difference.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Analyze grief and long-term effects on parents/families.
2. List words and phrases that trigger special needs parents.
3. Identify community resources that support mental health and special needs parents.
4. Explain anticipatory grief and ways to help parents navigate this topic.

3:00-3:15 BREAK AND EXHIBITS OPEN

3:15-4:45 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (90 MINUTES)

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the importance of authentic, contextually relevant instruction to foster literacy.
2. Explain how to redesign routines, rituals, and activities (such as circle time/morning meeting) to create authentic learning experiences.
3. Describe information on how to create authentic learning opportunities and instructional strategies embedded throughout the daily routine.

Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) Preschool Updates

Stephanie Bear, EdS, CCC-SLP & Kathy Wilkins, MEd

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe updates in forms, processes, and/or procedures used in the special education process in the public schools.
2. Explain updates and changes to procedures and practices for preschool-aged students with disabilities.
3. List best practices in compliant special education processes.

The Other Sisters: Considering Siblings in Early Intervention

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

Audience: Home Visitation, Early Intervention, SLPs

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the lived experiences of two individuals growing up with siblings with disabilities.
2. Identify perceived barriers to including siblings in early intervention sessions.
3. List strategies for overcoming perceived barriers to including siblings in early intervention sessions.
4. Explain how to plan a routines-based early intervention session to include siblings.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss how trauma is a part of their story, but it doesn't define them.
2. Describe strategies to cultivate resilience and adaptability as they navigate the twists and turns of life.
3. Demonstrate ways to move forward as they offer hope and empathy to others.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Demonstrate strategies including: "just be/listening touch" massage; leg massage; arm massage; and I love you abdominal massage strokes on dolls to promote calming states.
2. Assess the environment for ways to decrease overly stimulating environments and coach families on ways to modify the environment to promote infant regulation.
3. Identify infant stress signals and infant regulation cues to coach families on reading their infant's cues and identify regulating strategies for their baby.
4. Demonstrate how to coach families in problem solving strategies to promote infant regulation during daily routines.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe different styles of modeling.
2. Explain the different stages of modeling.
3. Demonstrate how to implement successful modeling through challenging cases.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the importance of play in brain development and its role in future learning and cognitive development.
2. Explain the role of parents in creating boundaries for technology in children.
3. Identify strategies to support children's use of technology and how to mitigate the harmful effects of overuse.

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

Chelsea T. Taylor, PhD, 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".

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify elements of self-care.
2. Describe the impact of the parallel process in relationship-based work.
3. List numerous self-care strategies and the tools to apply these strategies for self and the families they serve.
4. Identify ways of working with difficult parents/caregivers.

Wednesday, October 30th

8:30-9:30 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (60 MINUTES)

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify gaps in resources for Hispanic families.
2. Explain what is available for families.
3. Identify the resources that are easily accessible.
4. Identify services for families in schools.
5. Explain medical services that are available.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify two purposes of Functional Based Assessment.
2. Identify three functions of behavior that can reinforce individual behavior in the preschool classroom.
3. Demonstrate how to develop an intervention plan based on the function of behavior.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List the three basic brain states and be able to identify each state in action.
2. Compare perspectives and see behavior from a new lens.
3. Explain the language of safety, connection, and problem solving, and choose a strategy to practice in one of those brain states.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify the three types of parenting styles have different impact on brain development in young children.
2. Explain the behavioral outcomes of each parenting style
3. Identify strategies to support healthy parenting styles.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify examples of assistive technology that benefit young children in various environments.
2. Explain how to access the ADAPT&PLAY kits available through the lending library at APT AT.
3. Describe what services are available through APT AT 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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the prevalence of maternal substance abuse during pregnancy.
2. Explain the impact of various substances on a developing fetus.
3. Identify the neurocognitive consequences of substance exposure in utero.
4. Describe the importance of developmental surveillance and intervention in the early life of substance-exposed children.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe and list commonly used adaptive equipment for Early Intervention.
2. Identify commonly used justifications for medically necessary adaptive equipment.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the various funding limitations regarding adaptive equipment.
4. List additional funding sources for adaptive equipment not covered by insurance in the state of Alabama.

9:30-9:45 BREAK AND HOTEL CHECKOUT

9:45-10:45 BREAKOUT SESSIONS (60 MINUTES)

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Participants will identify common challenges and issues related to service coordination.
2. Participants will apply brainstorming techniques to generate innovative solutions to service coordination problems.
3. Participants will be able identify solutions to common GIFTS problems.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain how teacher well-being impacts perceptions of and responses to children's behavior.
2. Describe strategies and resources to center well-being while promoting social-emotional competencies.
3. Demonstrate how to create an action plan to apply session content.

Build My Brain: Set a Foundation for Language and Literacy

Gay Finn, MA & Kendall Hampton

Audience: Home Visitation, SLPs

Instructional Level: Introductory-Intermediate

Interactions during the first three 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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the science behind the developing brain and early language development.
2. Explain the impact of early interactions on literacy and lifelong learning and health.
3. Demonstrate what comprises good language nutrition.

4. Describe how to empower caregivers to help their babies develop a strong foundation for language and learning.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify differences in infant/toddler swallowing anatomy versus adult anatomy and its implications for swallowing/concerns for swallowing.
2. Describe red flags for swallowing/feeding in infants to warrant additional referral for feeding therapy.
3. Explain reasons for referral for additional feeding therapy to caregivers, as well as tips to give caregivers.
4. Identify the differences between picky eaters and problem feeders in toddlers.

Get a Grip on Motor Development

Desira Bolden-Keith, MEd

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Identify developmental delays in motor skills, particularly focusing on identification, assessment, and intervention strategies.
2. Identify and discuss appropriate motor development techniques that effectively support proficient writing performance in young children, empowering them to develop essential motor skills crucial for handwriting fluency and precision.
3. List appropriate fine motor development techniques that effectively support proficient writing performance in young children, empowering them to develop essential motor skills crucial for handwriting fluency and precision.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the invaluable gift and experience a mother of a child with Trisomy 18 received and how the experience is being used to encourage families with children that have complex medical needs.
2. Explain the surpassing joy and beauty obtained from loving and being loved by a child with special health care needs as well as the challenges faced when advocating for medical care.
3. Describe the role faith played in overcoming medical perceptions and opinions in order to attain lasting purpose and continue in a place of gratitude.

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.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. List ways to help children identify and express their emotions.
2. Explain how to foster positive interactions and relationships among peers.
3. List strategies children can use to manage their emotions and behaviors.
4. Explain how to encourage understanding and sharing the feelings of others.
5. Analyze how to equip children with tools to resolve conflicts and challenges.

10:45-11:00 BREAK

11:00-11:15 CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

11:15-12:15 CLOSING KEYNOTE PRESENTATION (60 MINUTES)

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*.

OBJECTIVES – Participants will be able to:

1. Explain and apply the Seven Key Characteristics (Vision, Attitude, Belief, Potential, Confidence, Enthusiasm/Drive, and Purpose) and demonstrate how to integrate them into daily routines for personal and professional success.
2. Describe strategies to cultivate a positive and resilient mindset that empowers you to overcome challenges and seize opportunities every day.
3. Describe practical techniques to enhance daily productivity and efficiency by leveraging the power of a positive mindset and clear vision.
4. List ways to strengthen self-confidence and belief in your abilities, enabling you to take bold actions and make impactful decisions.
5. List ways to cultivate and maintain high levels of enthusiasm and drive, fueling continuous growth and achievement in both personal and professional arenas.