

BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE

CELEBRATING

FOCUS

on Children 2024

40

BTC Child & Family Studies: 360.752.8353 | www.btc.edu

AGENDA

We are looking forward to learning with our local early childhood educators at the 40th Annual Focus on Children Conference!

Saturday, February 3, 2024

8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Four Points by Sheraton, Bellingham

Registration NOW OPEN

Register on or before January 16 for discounted early bird pricing!

Early Bird:
Register on or before
January 16 to save!

Limited scholarships available

- **Reflect** on your practices
- **Gain** new resources & strategies
- **Connect** & share information
- **Contemplate** culture, diversity & & early childhood education issues
- **Earn** 6 STARS hours or 6 Clock Hours

Breakfast & lunch
provided!

Special Thanks to Our Sponsors:



The Bainum Family Foundation works alongside communities experiencing racial and economic disparities to create lasting systems change for the well-being of children and families.



The Imagine Institute's mission is to create community relationships and innovative early learning programs that empower people, caring every day for every generation.



The Opportunity Council is a private, non-profit human service organization that acts as a catalyst for positive change, both in the community and in the lives of the people it serves.



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The Whatcom Early Learning Alliance (WELA) is all about making excellence in early learning achievable and sustainable for EVERY child in Whatcom County. WELA works to build a system of support for young children and their families, prenatally through age eight.



Pacific Northwest Chapter of WAEYC acts on behalf of the needs and rights of all young children and their families and provides opportunities to improve professional practice in early childhood education.



Bellingham Technical College provides student-centered, high-quality professional technical education for today's needs and tomorrow's opportunities.

Questions: 360.752.8478

Registration: registration@btc.edu

Details: www.btc.edu/focus

Making the Ideal Real:

Get Ready for the Future of Early Childhood Education

The “child care” crisis is receiving significant media and political attention. Experts across multiple fields are weighing in and presenting their solutions to address this crisis. But what is the ideal system and who defines this ideal? This futuristic session will identify components of the ideal early childhood education system, discuss the mindset shifts needed to transform “child care,” and identify ways to make the ideal more real. Join us to get ready for the future of early childhood education.



Marica Cox Mitchell

Marica Cox Mitchell is Vice President, Early Childhood for the Bainum Family Foundation. She leads the foundation’s efforts to support the healthy growth and development of young children and the well-being of their families through work in two primary areas: practice/direct service and policy/advocacy. The foundation’s work prioritizes five aspects of Early Childhood: early learning, mental health and well-being, health (including prenatal and perinatal), family economic security and housing stability.

Before joining the foundation in 2019, Cox Mitchell worked for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), where she most recently served as Deputy Executive Director, Early Learning Systems. In this role, she led a portfolio encompassing public policy and advocacy, accreditations of early learning programs, higher education accreditation and the Power to the Profession initiative. Previously, she was Senior Director, NAEYC Accreditation for Higher Education Programs. She also worked for the District’s Office of the State Superintendent of Education from 2009 to 2012 — serving as Director, School Preparedness Division and Supervisor, Professional Development Unit. She began her career as an early childhood educator — working in various early learning settings as well as with young children birth through age 8.



Elisa Huss-Hage

Elisa Huss-Hage is the Director of Early Childhood for HOPE Toledo, a non-profit in Toledo, Ohio working to support and ensure high-quality education, from preschool to postsecondary, for every young person in the city of Toledo. In her role, she leads and guides the early childhood initiative, which includes supporting HOPE Toledo’s 20 comprehensive, community-based partner providers as they strive to provide the highest quality education to the young children and families they serve.

Huss-Hage joined HOPE Toledo after 25 years at Owens Community College as a faculty member in the Department of Teacher Education and Human Services. During these years, she dedicated significant time to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and their higher education work to establish and maintain teacher preparation standards for the field of early childhood education. She is currently serving on NAEYC’s Higher Education Commission. Huss-Hage also served on the NAEYC Governing Board (2016-2020), serving as Chair of their Early Learning Systems Committee, which was responsible for the development of the Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education position statement.

Elisa and her husband, Chuck, as “Just Kiddin’ Around...” have performed interactive musical concerts for young children and families for 30+ years, including local, state, and national events and conferences.

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SCHEDULE

TIME	ACTIVITY/WORKSHOP	PRESENTER(S)
8–8:30 a.m.	Check-In	
8:30–8:40 a.m.	Welcome	
8:40–9:40 a.m.	Keynote  Making the Ideal Real: Get Ready for the Future of Early Childhood Education	Marica Cox Mitchell & Elisa Huss-Hage
9:40–10 a.m.	Break	
10 a.m.–12 p.m.	Morning Workshops	
	Defining the Early Childhood Education System We Want: The ECE Futurism Session	Marica Cox Mitchell & Elisa Huss-Hage
	Reflecting on Anti-Bias Education in Action: The Early Years	Patricia Coss-Maxwell & Paulina Valerio-Guerrero
	The Adult That Plays	Michael Haycock
	Building on Wonder: Creating Individual Curriculum for Young Children	Kim Bogren Owen
	 Neurociencia, Bienestar y Justicia Social, Explorando Nuestros Recursos Internos Para Cultivar Resiliencia Colectiva	Paulina Cuevas Vega
12–1 p.m.	Lunch	
	<i>Acknowledgement of Retired Early Learning Champions</i>	
1–2 p.m.	Imagine Institute Workshop	
	Prepare for Care – Module 1: The Healing Relationship	Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen
	 Prepárese para la Atención – Módulo 1: La Relación Sanadora	Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen
2:15–4:15 p.m.	Afternoon Workshops	
	Prepare for Care – Module 2: Trauma & Vicarious Trauma	Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen
	 Prepárese para la Atención - Módulo 2: Trauma en el Entorno	Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen
	Concepts to Support Children with Emerging Behavioral Health Concerns	Dr. Sara White
	Caring for Infants and Toddlers in Groups	Wendy Jans
	Exploring Early Achievers Quality Recognition: Implementation of a Provider-Driven System	Jacque Rafferty
	 Explorar el Proceso de Reconocimiento de Calidad con Early Achievers	Elsie De La Rosa
4:15–4:30	Sign-out	



Traducción Española



Taller en Español

Focus on Children 2024 Workshop Sessions

Morning Workshops: 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Defining the Early Childhood Education System We Want: The ECE Futurism Session

Marica Cox Mitchell & Elisa Huss-Hage

Early childhood education is gaining local and national attention. Increased funding for early childhood education will likely require increased standards and expectations. Rather than state what we don't want, let's be clear about what we do want. This session will examine and reimagine quality rating systems, credentialing, compensation, licensing, subsidy, and more. What do we want these systems to look like? What policies do we want in place?

Core Competencies: Professional Development Leadership

Reflecting On Anti-Bias Education in Action: The Early Years

Patricia Coss-Maxwell & Paulina Valerio-Guerrero

Participants will have the opportunity to watch and reflect on the documentary "Reflecting on Anti-Bias Education in Action: The Early Years." Debbie Lee Keenan and John Nimmo produced the film, which features anti-bias strategies in early childhood classrooms interspersed with teachers reflecting on their practice. The film shifts the focus away from the talking heads of experts and onto the daily voices of teachers committed to equity. By taking us into diverse early childhood classrooms, participants will understand the importance of identity, context, and practice in anti-bias education and gain a much-needed resource for their professional development. The training is for early childhood professionals; no previous experience is required.

Core Competencies: Curriculum & Learning Environment, Professional Development Leadership

The Adult That Plays

Michael Haycock

This is an interactive workshop where we will learn applied improvisation techniques developed by Viola Spolin. Participants will learn and play games in a no-pressure environment as they re-discover the power of being playful, build self-confidence in their ability to play, and connect with fellow peers in the workshop.

Core Competencies: Curriculum & Learning Environment, Interactions

Building on Wonder: Creating Individual Curriculum for Young Children

Kim Bogren Owen

In this hands-on workshop, participants will explore why it's important to individualize the curriculum and how to create individual curriculum. Attendees will leave with materials they created to use in their classroom to support individual children's development and interests. Come with 2 to 3 children in mind and bring pictures of items that the children are interested in or that represent their culture, to use in the materials you create.

Core Competencies: Curriculum & Learning Environment, Program Planning & Development



Neurociencia, Bienestar y Justicia Social,

Explorando Nuestros Recursos Internos Para Cultivar Resiliencia Colectiva

Paulina Cuevas Vega

Esta experiencia de aprendizaje está diseñada para mirar la información que tenemos desde la neurociencia sobre nuestro sistema nervioso, a través de los lentes de la justicia social, que considera el bienestar, no como una meta individual, sino que como una necesidad colectiva para que toda y cada persona pueda florecer. Comprender la propia posición social dentro de los sistemas de opresión, tales como la opresión racial, es fundamental para entender la conexión entre el bienestar y la justicia social, así como también nuestra responsabilidad y poder en el bienestar colectivo. A través de actividades vivenciales, reflexión individual, proceso en grupo pequeño y en grupo grande, este taller invita a los participantes a explorar y entender en sus cuerpos, la conexión directa entre bienestar y justicia social, basado en los conocimientos que nos ofrece la neurociencia y la teoría polivagal, acerca de la inmensa sabiduría del sistema nervioso. Nuestras reflexiones se enmarcarán en nuestras propias experiencias de posición social en relación al poder, y en las experiencias que resultan de las intersecciones de nuestras identidades. Con el objetivo de apoyar nuestro proceso de aprendizaje, integraremos prácticas somáticas que nos permitan in-corporar (traer al cuerpo) los conceptos aprendidos. *Core Competencies: Professional Development Leadership*

Afternoon Session with Imagine Institute: 1–2 p.m.

PREPARE for Care – Module 1: The Healing Relationship

Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen

Relationships are the center of all children's early learning and development, especially for children who have experienced trauma. Supporting healthy relationships with children and their families is childcare providers' most important role. Childcare providers can develop their ability to build not only healthy relationships, but truly healing relationships. In this module, participants will explore essential foundations in relationship-building and practice three relationship-building tools that can help. Following the module, participants will be able to explain and apply these tools and discuss how they are important in their work. *Core Competencies: Child Growth & Development, Interactions*



Prepárese para la Atención - Módulo 1: La Relación Sanadora

Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen

Las relaciones son el núcleo del aprendizaje y del desarrollo temprano de los niños, especialmente para aquellos que han sufrido traumas. Fomentar relaciones sanas con los niños y sus familias es la tarea más importante de un proveedor de cuidado infantil. Los proveedores de cuidado infantil pueden desarrollar sus habilidades para construir, no solo relaciones sanas, sino también relaciones sanadoras. En este módulo, los participantes analizarán las bases esenciales de la construcción de relaciones y pondrán en práctica tres herramientas para la construcción de relaciones que pueden serles de utilidad. Al finalizar el módulo, los participantes serán capaces de explicar y aplicar estas herramientas, y discutir la importancia que estas tienen en su trabajo.

Core Competencies: Child Growth & Development, Interactions

Afternoon Workshops: 2:15–4:15 p.m.

PREPARE for Care – Module 2: Trauma and Vicarious Trauma

Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen

After understanding the importance of healthy developmental relationships in Module 1, providers will begin to understand the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) on developing children and how to recognize and identify the impacts of childhood trauma. The term ACES is used to describe all types of abuse; however, ACES have the most significant impact during childhood development. While the prevalence of ACES does not always determine a child's outcome, it is important to determine protective factors to support children and their families, which include: parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional wellness.

Providers working with traumatized children may also suffer from the impact of vicarious trauma. An examination of the causes and indicators of vicarious trauma will be reviewed using the guide "When Compassion Hurts." Providers then will determine what self-care practices work best for them and plan for additional self-care practice to promote general health and well-being. *Core Competencies: Child Growth & Development, Interactions*



Prepárese para la Atención - Módulo 2: Trauma en el Entorno

Aida Rodriguez & Pauli Owen

Luego de entender la importancia de las relaciones de desarrollo sanas en el Módulo 1, los proveedores comienzan a comprender el impacto que tienen el estrés y el trauma en niños en desarrollo y a cómo reconocer e identificar los impactos de los traumas en la niñez. El término ACE (Experiencias Adversas en la Niñez) se utiliza para describir cualquier tipo de abuso; sin embargo, las ACE tienen un mayor impacto durante el desarrollo infantil. Mientras que la prevalencia de las ACE no siempre determina el futuro de un niño, es importante determinar factores protectores para apoyar a los niños y a sus familias, como: resiliencia de los padres, nexos sociales, apoyo concreto en tiempos de necesidad, brindar conocimiento sobre la paternidad y el desarrollo infantil, y bienestar social y emocional.

Los proveedores que trabajen con niños traumatizados pueden llegar a sufrir trauma secundario. Los proveedores pueden mejorar su bienestar mental y fortalecer su resiliencia al emplear prácticas de autoayuda y de ayuda comunitaria. *Core Competencies: Child Growth & Development, Interactions*

Afternoon Workshops: 2:15–4:15 p.m.

Concepts to Support Children with Emerging Behavioral Health Concerns

Dr. Sara White

This presentation will explore some basic principles to consider when working with children with emerging behavioral health concerns. Principles to be discussed will include: increasing communication, creating connection, empathetic listening and more. How these principles can be implemented with children of different ages, language abilities and cognitive levels will also be discussed. Finally, warning signs to look for and where and when to refer children for further assessment or treatment will be covered. *Core Competencies: Child Growth & Development*

Caring for Infants and Toddlers in Groups

Wendy Jans

This interactive, hands-on session explores the research on attachment and makes connections between theory and caregiving with infants and toddlers. In addition, the topics of early language development and temperament will be explored through video and small group conversation. Participants will have multiple opportunities to engage in reflection on their practice caring for young children with their colleagues.

Core Competencies: Child Growth & Development, Interactions

Exploring Early Achievers Quality Recognition: Implementation of a Provider-Driven System

Jacque Rafferty

In this workshop we will explore the Early Achievers Quality Recognition process. We will begin with an overview of the Quality Recognition Cycle and examine the value of a provider-driven Quality Recognition and Improvement System. We will then dive deeper into the components of Quality Recognition (Program Profile, Video Highlights, and Records Review). We will examine how each component supports equity and quality improvement practices and review resources that are available for each component. We will also explore the Coach and Educator Community Interface (CECI) website that is used for Quality Recognition.

Core Competencies: Program Planning & Development, Professional Leadership



Explorar el proceso de Reconocimiento de Calidad con Early Achievers

Elsie De La Rosa

In this workshop we will explore the Early Achievers Quality Recognition process in SPANISH. We will begin with an overview of the Quality Recognition Cycle and examine the value of a provider-driven Quality Recognition and Improvement System. We will then dive deeper into the components of Quality Recognition (Program Profile, Video Highlights, and Records Review). We will examine how each component supports equity and quality improvement practices and review resources that are available for each component. We will also explore the Coach and Educator Community Interface (CECI) website that is used for Quality Recognition. This will be in Spanish similar to the English session that was presented by Jacque Rafferty.

Core Competencies: Program Planning & Development, Professional Leadership

FOCUS 2024 Presenter Bios

Kim Bogren Owen

holds a BA in Cultural Anthropology and an MA in Early Childhood Education. She believes supporting individual children is the best way to help them develop and learn. She brings her knowledge and experience to the training she offers. In her spare time, she enjoys beachcombing, hiking, and spending time with her family.

Patricia Coss-Maxwell

has a Master of Education in Early Childhood Education and a Certificate in Adult Education College Instruction from Eastern Washington University in Cheney, WA. She also holds a BAS in Early Childhood Education from North Seattle College in Seattle, WA. Patricia is a recipient of the Noris E. Daniel Fellowship from North Seattle College, The Early Education Investment Collaborative, Eastern Washington University, and Child Care Aware of Washington. She currently serves as the Program Manager of Professional Development at Child Care Aware of Washington and is an instructor at North Seattle College and Green River College.

Paulina Cuevas Vega

es Chilena. Ella recibió su master en Psicología Educacional y su licencia como Consejera Escolar (K-12) en la Universidad de Minnesota. Es entrenadora líder certificada de Disciplina Positiva y facilitadora de Yoga, Mindfulness, y Desarrollo Socio Emocional (500 RYT). Por más de 20 años, ella ha apoyado a familias, estudiantes, y educadores, en escuelas públicas e internacionales en Chile, China, y Estados Unidos, a cultivar y defender las condiciones para un mundo donde todas las personas tengan un sentido de pertenencia. A ella le apasiona diseñar e implementar experiencias de aprendizaje para adultos, desde una mirada de justicia social. Ha certificado en Disciplina Positiva a más de 1000 educadores alrededor del mundo. Durante los últimos 10 años ella también ha facilitado experiencias de aprendizaje para adultos en diversos países del mundo, abordando temas relacionados con: Crianza y educación basada en la Neurociencia, informada de trauma y orientada a la justicia social.

Elsie De La Rosa:

Yo soy enlace comunitario con Early Achievers y he trabajado por mas de un ano con coaches para apoyar las proveedoras en este nuevo proceso de Reconocimiento de Calidad. Yo doy apoyo con la tecnología y dando clarificaciones de los requeridos de este proceso.

I am the Community Liaison with Early Achievers that has worked with coaches in partnership to support providers who are working through this process for over 1 year now. I provide tech support and clarifications on the requirements for providers.

Michael Haycock

is the Artistic Director of the Upfront Theater in Bellingham, WA. He has a Master's in Special Education. Michael has been performing improv comedy and working in early childhood education for over 10 years. Michael is fascinated by the concept of play and loves to discover new ways to play in his personal and professional life.

Wendy Jans

is a coach consultant, trainer, and instructor at Cultivate Learning in the College of Education at the University of Washington. She is committed to providing support and professional development for early learning coaches. Having been a coach herself, Wendy knows how challenging the work can be. Wendy has worked in a variety of early learning settings, primarily Early Head Start and Head Start, as a supervisor, trainer, and consultant. Her work with Early Head Start and Head Start includes coaching and consultation for home visitors, teachers, and supervisors.

Jacque Rafferty

began working in the field of Early Childhood Education in 2016. She has worked with a variety of ages from infants to school-age children and in a variety of different settings. She has a BA in Elementary Education and received her M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education in 2022. Serving as a Community Liaison for Early Achievers for almost 10 years has allowed her to build relationships with numerous members of our ECE community. She has been a foster parent and currently has three children at home that keep her very busy!

Aida Rodriguez

is a former Whatcom County family home child care provider who became a state approved trainer in 2019, and holds a BA in Early Childhood Education. She is currently the Shared Services Program Manager at the Imagine Institute, working statewide to ensure child care providers have access to needed business supports and training. She is also an advocate serving on multiple committees and boards working to grow the field of early learning. She has been delivering PREPARE since 2021 and is passionate about building professional relationships that promote the knowledge of personal experience and working together in order to gain skills, self-confidence, and independence while working in ECE. She recognizes the importance of a positive self-image for ECE professionals, and the role it plays in fostering independence and pride in oneself, taking into special consideration that each person is an individual with a diverse background.

Paulina Valerio-Guerrero,

a Garifuna descendent from Honduras, holds a Master of Arts in Education from Goddard College in Plainfield, VT. She operates a trilingual family home child care and serves as an instructor at North Seattle College in Seattle, WA. Paulina also earned a BA in Early Childhood Education from Goddard College.

Dr. Sara White

is currently the Clinical Director and Director of Operations of Sendan Center in Bellingham, WA. She completed her Master's degree in Applied Behavior Analysis at the University of the Pacific (2000) and Doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology at Binghamton University (2005). She currently works with clients in British Columbia, Washington, and Alaska providing home and school consultation to children with developmental disabilities and disruptive behavior disorders, as well as office and home-based cognitive behavior therapy for children and adolescents with anxiety, depression and other behavioral health issues. She has presented the results of her research and clinical work at professional conferences such as the Association for Behavior Analysis and the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy, on topics ranging from interventions to improve employee motivation to techniques to improve acquisition rates in children with autism. She has also presented several workshops to parents, school personnel, and health care professionals.

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