



Nebraska Association for the
Education of Young Children

**Celebrating Young Children
Early Childhood Education Conference
UNO Milo Bail Student Center
February 24, 2018**

MORNING

8:00-8:30 Registration/ Check-in
Community Resource Gallery
Coffee provided by PlayTime Schooltime
(2nd Floor Ballroom/Nebraska Room)

8:30-9:00 Welcome (2nd Floor Ballroom)

9:00-9:50 Keynote (2nd Floor Ballroom)

“Joy, Risk, Love, and Justice: Making Visible Stories of Play in ECE”

Dr. Julie Nicholson, Deputy Program Director with WestEd's Center for Child & Family Studies (CCFS) and Associate Professor of Practice in the School of Education at Mills College

10:00- 10:50 Break-out Sessions:

Steps to BUILD STEM Thinking
Kelley Buchheister, UNL- Child, Youth, and Family Studies (Dodge Rooms #302 and 302A)

This workshop is a hands-on, evidence-based discussion describing 5 strategies teachers and caregivers should consider as they interact with children during constructive play. Participants will learn how to apply the 5 strategies when designing developmentally appropriate environments and provocations that promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) thinking as children engage with various building materials.

Special Sponsorship by:





Let's Play! Active Play Ideas for Infants, Toddlers, and Pre-School Aged Children
Danae Dinkel, PhD and Kailey Snyder, MS, UNO Health and Kinesiology
Department (Chancellor's Room #228)

This session will briefly discuss the benefits of active play for young children. Then we will provide ideas that help to improve multiple aspects of development for infants, toddlers, and pre-school aged children including activity ideas for all seasons.

“Joy, Love, Risk, and Justice” Continued (Council Room #306)
Dr. Julie Nicholson, WestED and Mills College

This session will provide a follow-up to the opening keynote presentation. For those who have questions for the speaker, or would like to explore the topic through conversation with others.

Teacher Play Centers*(First Floor Atrium)

Play and playful experiences are a vital part of many early childhood classrooms in the Omaha area. This session is an interactive opportunity for participants to engage in playful learning experiences led by local educators.

11:00- 11:50 Break-out Sessions

Teaching Pretend
Mikaela Wolf, Carol Burk, and Jessica Hald, Spring Lake Elementary Omaha
Public Schools (Council Room #306)

Our goal is to share our journey investigating imagination alongside our preschool students. With our student's we began researching the basic question “what is imagination?” to discovering how imagination is used to power play. We ask our students to pretend in every study, for today's child what does that mean and how can we teach it?

Special Sponsorship by:





Let's Play to Learn

Ann Dirks, Western Hills Elementary Omaha Public Schools (Chancellor's Room #228)

Start putting fun back into the early elementary classroom and learn how to teach without worksheets. To engage kids to keep them learning, over 30 hands-on learning activities will be shared-- guaranteed to help teachers and students have fun "doing" math and reading. The ideas are organic, not store bought. Most can be easily created and leveled to fit any learner. Create a learning community by teaching kids to teach each other, while building essential social skills. Let's play to learn!

Learning Social, Emotional, and Academic Skills With Picture Books

Darcy Heath and Amy Schmidtke, Buffett Early Childhood Institute (Dodge Rooms #302 & 302A)

Picture books are a staple in early childhood classrooms but are we using them to their full potential? Join us as we delve into the many social, emotional, and academic skills that can be modeled and discussed through the use of high quality, diverse children's literature. Time will be spent sharing and browsing a wide variety of books.

Play Teacher Centers (First Floor Atrium)

11:50- 12:45

LUNCH BREAK (2nd floor Food Court Seating)

Special Sponsorship by:





AFTERNOON

12:45 – 1:30 **Break-out Sessions**

Building Positive Family-Centered Relationships: Principles and Practices
Dr. Kerry-Ann Escayg and Danita Webb, UNO Teacher Education Department
(Council Room #306)

This presentation will provide a review of principles related to strong family-centered partnerships. Participants will be invited to make connections to teaching and professional practice in their own settings.

Come Play like a Preschooler
Stephanie Anderson, Nils Haaland and Carolyn Anderson, WhyArts (Dodge
Rooms #302 and #302A)

Participants will be invited to engage in a variety of creative play exercises from a WhyArts project called “Exploring Color through Creative Play”. Participants will take a journey with two WhyArts teaching artists and engage in the colors red, yellow and blue through their senses and playful theatre games and movements. Come prepared to play!

Promoting Educator Well-being with Mindfulness: Be Well to Teach Well
Dr. Holly Hatten-Bowers, UNL
(Chancellor’s Room #228)

Caregivers’ abilities to attend, reflect and connect has important impacts for children’s wellbeing. This session provides mindfulness strategies and tools to promote caregiver self-regulation, compassion, kindness, and managing stress. When caregivers are more mindful, they can better guide what to teach young children and promote security, enhanced learning, and social-emotional health

1:40- 2:00 **Closing Conference Sharing and Raffle**
(Ballroom)

Gift Books provided by Early Learning Connection Omaha Region
Raffle gifts provided by Play+Rooms, PlayTime SchoolTime, and
Lakeshore

Special Sponsorship by:





***Teacher Play Center Presenters and Topics**

Codipillars

Ruth Vonderohe, UNL Extension

Mini Atelier – Engaging young children in art experiences

Paige Wernick, UNL Extension

Outdoor Provocations

Melany Spiehs and Ashley Petersen Spring Lake Elementary, OPS

STEM and Literacy

Brian Priesman and Michelle Rono, Henry Doorly Zoo

How Does That Work? Tinkering and Creating with Electronics

Theresa Hill, Mike and Jean Stiehl, Iowa Western Community College

Music for the Young

Peggy Pawloski, Play+Rooms

Magnificent Messy Mud: A Little Dirt Never Hurt

Laura Clarke, Brandi Gales, Barb Ruigh, Liz Fajman, and Sarah Ravenberg, Creighton University Child Care Center

Block Play

Tasha Wulf

Nebraska Extension Educator in Red Willow County

Photography for the Young

Chantelle Ridgley

Educare at Kellom

Sensory Play for Infants

Christina Sigbornson

Hamilton Heights Child Development Center

Process art

Michelle Rasmussen

Lighthouse Learning Family Childcare

Special Sponsorship by:

