RECHARGE YOUR SUPER POWERS!!
Embracing a philosophy of Wellness is the prescription for staying strong for a lifetime. Teaching, guiding, and modeling the concept of wellness provides students, teachers, parents, and communities with tools for happier, healthier, more productive lives. The award winning movie *Inside Out* reminds us of the importance of our emotions and provides an opportunity for teachers and parents to help themselves and their children to navigate through the world of feelings. Join Joy, Anger, Sadness, Fear, and Disgust as we go *Inside Out*.

Molly Behannon, M.Ed., has been a mental health professional for over 30 years, empowering and inspiring others to personally evolve and create balance in their lives. Within her practice she uses a combination of holistic approaches which are significantly personalized to help the individual or team overcome obstacles which have hindered them in the past. Molly is uniquely talented and gifted in bringing together a transformative experience through nature, learning, connecting with others, play, laughter, relaxation, and reflection. She embraces a whole person approach and encourages clients to balance their lives through realization and appreciation for everything they feel, do, think and believe. Molly knows that one’s health and wellbeing are achieved only through the balanced integration of the emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual aspects of ourselves.
Stacy Benge

Presenting... “Phonological Awareness: The Cornerstone of Language and Literacy”

Before children can decode words and read, their brains must learn to break words down into syllables and recognize simple units of sound, otherwise known as phonological awareness. Learn all about the components of this skill and why it is the cornerstone of reading. Explore also practical teaching strategies to implement throughout the day to enhance phonological awareness.

Stacy Benge is a child development and early learning specialist who approaches early childhood education in a practical way to create strong foundations. In addition to holding a Master of Science degree in Human/ Child Development and Family Studies, she has spent 10 years in the early childhood classroom teaching children ages birth to five. Stacy also has almost 20 years’ experience of sharing her passion for child and human development with fellow early learning professionals by designing and presenting continuing education courses.
Quality and effective early care and education must consider Developmentally Appropriate Practice when planning curriculum. This session will focus on theories of child development, developmental stages, individualizing and supporting social and cultural context of the children they serve. Teachers and Directors will have an opportunity to identify and discover how to use these considerations when responding to children using the environment, daily routine, interactions, and activities and partnering with parents.

Steve Erwin has spent 36 years working in a variety of capacities to promote, educate and advocate for young children and their families. His work experience has included the many service delivery and funding systems that provide care and education to children and their families. He has worked throughout the United States including Hawaii and America Samoa. He believes working with young children and their families is important because we have the opportunity to make a difference in their lives at this crucial time of development.
Transitions are all those “in between” times when things tend to get out of control. This workshop will present positive ways to focus children’s attention with songs, finger plays, props, and games. Ideas for circle time, clean up, focusing children’s attention, and releasing wiggles will be addressed.

Highlights will include:
- circle time songs and learning activities
- chants and tunes for guiding children
- hocus pocus focus
- rhymes and finger plays to develop phonemic awareness
- recall activities to end your day

Dr. Jean Feldman’s noteworthy educational career has spanned more than 45 years. She has served as a classroom teacher, instructor of adults, author, and consultant. She is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the International Reading Association. Dr. Feldman’s list of degrees include a B.A. from the University of Georgia, a D.A.S.T. from Emory University, and both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Georgia State University. Dr. Feldman inspires teachers across the country with her engaging songs and creative activities that help make teaching and learning FUN!
The workshop will focus on the thinking processes that children use during appropriate art activities. Emphasis is placed on the process the children are experiencing rather than a ‘cutesy’ final product. This workshop will also give the attendees an opportunity to participate in and create a number of projects to develop first-hand experience in what thinking skills are involved in appropriate art activities. This is a make and take session where the participants will take their completed projects home as examples of activities appropriate for their early childhood classroom.

John Funk has worked in the field of early childhood since 1979. He taught preschool, first and second grades, and kindergarten. While teaching kindergarten, John was chosen as the Utah Teacher of the Year and met with the President of the United States. He worked as an Early Childhood Specialist for a large school district, managed Early Childhood Services for Salt Lake CAP Head Start, and served as the president of the Utah AEYC. For the last two decades, as an early childhood reading and literacy consultant, John has written on early childhood subjects and collaborated on products for McGraw Hill, Leap Frog and Discount School Supply. He served on the editorial panel for Young Children magazine published by NAEYC. John currently serves as the Manager of Educational Programs for the Excelligence Learning Corporation. He also supervises student teachers and interns for the University of Utah in addition to teaching courses in early childhood development, children’s literature, classroom management and reading methods. He is currently serving on the Utah AEYC board for the third time.
Animals in nature learn how to move in their environment either individually or in groups to help them survive. In this session, you will become an animal and learn how to use your indoor/outdoor space to engage your students in science.
Brian Mowry

Brian has served as a K-5th grade mathematics support specialist in AISD, writing curriculum and providing teacher in-service training. He currently works as an AISD district level early childhood specialist. He is currently a doctoral candidate in curriculum and instruction (with an emphasis on early childhood education) at the University of Texas at Austin. He has also authored a national textbook curriculum in mathematics and has presented at several national and state conferences, including National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). Brian Mowry is the author of the Frog Street Pre-K Math Program.
Layne Pethick

Presenting... "The Brain and Behavior: Neurological Factors that Affect Behavior and Learning"

Participants in this session will gain information on neurological factors that affect the behavior and learning of children and will include such topics as stress and the brain, biological factors of the brain, behavior and learning. Behavior analysis, interventions and de-escalation strategies will also be discussed. This presentation will be an open forum style with several engaging activities and the opportunity for inquiry and discussion by participants.

Layne Pethick is an Autism Spectrum Disorders and Behavior Consultant for the state of Texas. He is currently PhD (All But Dissertation-ABD) and has a Master’s degree in Special Education with concentration in ASD and E/BD, along with degrees in Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, and Reading.

Layne has experience as a general and special education teacher, school administrator, district trainer, program director, and in higher education as a professor of special education, assessment, early childhood and teacher education. He has several articles published and has presented at local, state, national, and international conferences.
Kenneth Sherman

Presenting...“Supporting Children’s Play or Scaffolding Children’s Learning. Can I Do Both?”

This session will help participants come away with a deeper understanding of the value of supporting children’s play. Ideas will be presented on how to scaffold, by supporting a child’s current developmental level, and then offering gentle extensions, all within the context of the child’s self-initiated play. Participants will gain a greater understanding of how to honor children's ideas, intentions and play, and yet still meet program and state content standards. In addition, short video clips, scenarios, and small-group discussions will provide a stimulating and supportive environment for the participants to generate their own ideas and strategies for incorporating scaffolding into the learning in their classrooms and settings.

Kenneth Sherman is a Training Specialist and former demonstration preschool teacher at the HighScope Educational Research Foundation. He has a Bachelor’s of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of Texas at Tyler an Associates of Arts degree in Child Development from Trinity Valley community college. Kenneth has been a certified HighScope Teacher since 2004, and has been a HighScope certified trainer since 2011. In addition he has over 24 years of teaching young children in a preschool setting, has been a center director, mentor teacher, coach, and trainer. Kenneth has presented at numerous state and local conferences, as well as customizing trainings for UT Dallas Callier Preschool and child development center in Dallas Texas. Kenneth has been facilitating online classes in, Small Group time for Active learners, Numbers Plus Mathematics, Large group time, and Conflict Resolution. He also is an independent consultant and has provided training for various agencies in the Texas area.
Gilberto Soto

Presenting "The Use of Music, Movement and Songs in the Bilingual Early Childhood Classroom Curriculum"

This is a 100 percent hands on presentation in which early childhood educators, parents and/or administrators will experience the use of music, movement and songs in order to enhance the iconic and aesthetic aspects when preparing a bilingual lesson plan. Music and/or materials used are author arranged and samples will be provided.

Gilberto D. Soto, Ph.D. is currently Professor of Music Education/Guitar at Texas A&M International University where he teaches early childhood, elementary and secondary bilingual music education courses. He also supervises the guitar and bass studios and directs the "TAMIU Guitar Ensemble". In addition, Dr. Soto is the owner/director of "Soto Academy of Music", a music studio for children ages 2-18 years old and in which his university students are trained and use as a teaching lab in preparation for their education careers. Dr. Soto is the author of the bilingual books "Fiesta de Canciones" (Primary and Intermediate Levels), co-author of "Multilevel Strategies for English Language Learners", co-author of the national music series "Spotlight on Music", co-author of the national reading series "Treasures/Tesoros" and "Wonders/Maravillas", and song arranger for the National Mathematics Series and the DLM Early Childhood Express, all published by McGraw-Hill Education. Dr. Soto is also the author of "Music of our World: Mexico", published by Hal Leonard Music Corporation, and has written several articles to "Music Express", reviewed elementary music education textbooks, and received many awards for his contributions to bilingual music education, especially in under priviledged school communities as well as many awards as a higher educator instructor and guitar performer. He holds a BA degree in Education from Universidad Autonoma del Noreste, a BA in Music from Abilene Christian University, plus a M.M. and Ph.D. in Music Education from the University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Soto travels extensively offering hands on clinics and lectures in bilingual music education, plus flamenco and classical guitar concerts throughout the United States, Central and South America, plus recently in Spain (Madrid) and in the Middle East (Dubai and Qatar).
There are two types of “writing” in the classroom for young children. This session will define the two types of writing appropriate for young children and outline activities that will enhance both types. Participants will have opportunities to experience ways to promote writing and “fine motor development” for young children. A brief review of the stages of writing for children will be addressed during this session. Resources and materials will be shared in developmentally appropriate ways to address the various developmental levels of children in an educational setting.

Al taught kindergarten for nine years and served as a Head Start Lead Teacher for six summers, both in the Bryan Independent School District, Bryan, Texas. In 1980, Al became the Early Childhood Specialist for Region 6 Education Service Center in Huntsville, Texas. After nine years, he became the Early Childhood Specialist for the Division of Special Education at the Texas Education Agency. He then became a preschool consultant for Region 10 Education Service Center in Richardson, Texas. During the spring semesters from 1996 through 2000, Al taught a graduate course on early childhood development at the University of Texas at Dallas. After 34 years in the public school arena, Al retired to become an early childhood consultant. He worked for Booz Allen Hamilton as the Early Learning and Literacy Content Specialist for the Region 6 Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Network for 5 years. Al has conducted training sessions for High Scope Educational Research Foundation (Four years as a field consultant working with teachers in kindergarten through sixth grade), Choosy Kids, Frog Street Press, and has conducted training sessions for Staff Development for Educators (SDE). Currently he is the sole proprietor of A. Stewart Consulting out of Plano, Texas. This is Al’s 45th year as an early childhood professional.
“Language Play for Infants and Young Toddlers”

The session covers activities such as songs, body movement, and books appropriate for very young children. Participants learn ways of introducing concepts; developing self-esteem; applying book selection criteria; how to use rhythm, movement, and songs in everyday events; and how to encourage exercise and signing activities. Those attending will take home a CD of actual programs, the words and recording to all songs. Please bring a stuffed animal or teddy bear. Be sure to dress comfortably.

“Making Circle Times Memorable for 2s, 3s, and 4s”

Participants learn techniques to identify the six early reading skills, how they relate to brain development, and basic ways to include them into daily activities. Also covered: how to identify books appropriate for each age; how to present books in memorable ways; and how to use songs and signing to extend circle times. Participants receive a CD of actual programs, the words and recording to all songs. Be sure to dress comfortably.