Early childhood education programs have been shown to provide children with the cognitive, academic, social and emotional skills needed to succeed in school. However, recent research demonstrates that providing early childhood education is only part of the equation for success. Many of these children live in high risk environments and exhibit challenging behaviors that interfere with learning and increased rates of discipline problems, even expulsions. Recent social-emotional trauma research clearly demonstrates that such experiences can alter the normal developmental trajectory of the child’s brain development. Improving the ability of schools, teachers, administrators and counselors to understand, manage and intervene in biologically informed and in developmentally sensitive ways can dramatically improve their academic and social success.
Fun with Literacy  
*Ana Contreras, Milexis Rodriguez, Gloria Walker*  
Participants will have an opportunity to learn successful strategies for Pre K and Kinder bilingual classrooms. Favorite themes taught each school year will be used to demonstrate teaching practices that enhance development and learning in a fun and engaging way for children. Participants will be able to create a community of learners through hands-on activities, promotion of collaboration between children and beneficial teaching strategies. Throughout the session, there will be opportunities for participants to make and take activities related to school year classroom themes.

PreK with a Bang: Establishing Parental Connections and Functional Classrooms  
*Shanaya Harris, Maite Sapp*  
At the beginning of the school year, as teachers, we all know how stressful things can be. This session will help teachers with building relationships with guardians as well as with designing a classroom that is well organized, functional and welcoming. In our past experiences, we have found that these two pieces are essential to having a successful year. Participants in this session will leave with a new outlook on classroom design and relationship building that will last Now4Forever!

Awareness! Access! Action!  
*Dr. Helena Mosley*  
This highly engaging triple A (Awareness, Access, and Action) session will provide participants examples of how one medium-sized (majority minority; high low-socioeconomic) district has leveraged its resources to remove barriers for engagement and access for both parents and community. Learn about our telehealth devices that allow real time communication between school nurses and pediatricians. Discover how we launched parental engagement sessions and implemented Early Childhood registration systems designed to increase enrollment. Participants will walk away with concrete suggestions for implementing a half-day PK3 program, possible funding sources for a full-day PK4 program, as well as assessments used to monitor instruction.

HOP on Board with the Fight Against Childhood Obesity – Physical Education in an Early Childhood Setting  
*Marie Rogers*  
Getting students active and excited about moving at an Early Childhood level is very important. Physical Education is not only an outlet for students to get their wiggles out but it is also a place for them to improve their motor and cognitive development. Join me and learn how to bring physical education activities into your classroom!
| Tips and Tricks to Help Support Exceptional Learners in Today’s Classroom  
Myranda Cope, Kelley Dively |
---|---|
This session will provide information regarding how to implement differentiated instruction in general education and in special education classroom settings. These strategies and techniques will be helpful in increasing student knowledge and in reducing behavior interruptions. All children learn differently and teachers need to have strategies in their “tool kit” to teach different types of learners.

| Communication 4 Forever: Strategies for Preschool Teachers to Increase Communication Skills with Students in Their Classrooms and Collaborate with Speech-Language Pathologists  
Leslie Rainy |
---|---|
8-12% of the preschool population across the United States will cope with a communication struggle at any given time! This means that every preschool classroom across the United States has children who can’t speak so that others can understand them. Every preschool classroom across the United States has children who are not able to clearly communicate their wants, needs and ideas. Every preschool classroom across the United States has children whose language skills are negatively impacting their ability to learn to read and write. This means that preschool teachers are the frontline of defense for identifying and helping to improve communication disorders! This poses a serious and important problem for preschool teachers to address. The specific question that this session will address is, “How can preschool teachers improve the communication skills of their students?”

| Positive Preschools: Classroom Environment and Positive Interactions  
Stacie Robbins |
---|---|
The classroom environment sets the tone for your class. A positive environment will lead to happier teachers and students and even more learning. Learn how to have responsive interactions with your students and maintain a positive climate in even the most challenging classes.
Making an IMPACT

Susie Towber

The staff at Lawson Early Childhood School understands the importance of early childhood education. This year, they have studied brain research, ways to engage students and high yield strategies. With this knowledge in mind, the Lawson teachers create engaging lessons so that students can achieve academically, socially, emotionally and physically. All staff understand that everyone has learning differences and strive to meet the needs of all children so they each have the foundation needed for future success in all areas. On a daily basis, our students are exposed to stories, poems, numbers, letters, science/social studies concepts, technology and songs. Science and social studies are integrated to ensure students are using academic vocabulary in reading, writing and play. Learning how to share, encourage others and how to give and receive praise are embedded into high interest learning. Lawson teachers collaborate with each other, with families and with district leaders. This session will explore the innovative ways that staff is making a difference with our young population. Administration will share strategies for engaging students, staff, families and the community to prepare our students for their future in education. Our goal is to ensure that our students are ready for their academic careers! Expectations are high and you can hear us chant... “Everything is Lawsome!”
Effective Strategies for Bilingual and English Language Learners
Dr. Rossanna Boyd
During this workshop, the participants will become familiar with the process of first and second language acquisition, with linguistic and cultural consideration when educating bilingual and English language learners to age five and with effective strategies for developing language and content. The participants will have an opportunity to interact with one another by practicing some of the strategies.

Improving the Quality of Public Pre-K – Dallas ISD’s theory of change
Dr. Alan Cohen
Participants will experience a view of quality early childhood programming through the lens of Dallas ISD. Hurdles to quality PK will be discussed. Strategies for providing professional development that meets the specific needs of early childhood educators will also be addressed.

How Trauma Sensitive Schools Help Children Learn to Self-Regulate
Dr. Rick Gaskill
Historically, behavior management systems have been based on a unilateral contingency management of the desired or undesired behavior with little attention given to mediating the brain regions involved. This typically resulted in mixed results as all problems were treated with the same methods. Research now informs us that effective trauma sensitive strategies rely on the creation of new, healthy learning. Such learning occurs in a warm, caring, safe, relational atmosphere with a sense of positive reward. It is through this attuned relationship that effective change strategies have been found to have their greatest impact. Such strategies must activate the specific brain regions mediating the problem behaviors and do so in repeated, repetitive patterns of sufficient duration in order to create new, more functional behavior.
**Sensory Integration: Practical Tips for Meeting the Sensory Needs of Young Children**

*Dr. Christy Isbell*

Learn about the brain process, sensory integration, and their relationship to young children’s development. Red flags for the identification of young children (toddler to K) who have sensory processing problems and are “sensory seekers” or are “sensory avoiders” will be revealed. Sensory integration techniques for managing challenging behaviors, including over-activity, inattentiveness and physical aggression, will be presented. Gather developmentally appropriate sensory integration ideas that will improve the learning environment for all young children!

**Addressing the Invisible So That They May Become Invincible: Physical and Mental Health and How They Impact Early Childhood Learning**

*Dr. Peggy Linquist*

What causes the discrepancies that we all see in our early childhood students and their learning? What makes one child “ready to learn” in the classroom while others start out behind? What might have happened in the early years, or even before birth, that could have influenced an ability to absorb and process information? What could families and teachers be doing right now to enhance learning and development? In this session, we will discuss physical and mental health in the early childhood years and their impact on learning. We will look at the latest medical and behavioral health research to identify areas of opportunity to engage families and ourselves in supporting the brain development and in the learning of our early childhood students.

**Engaging Young Children in Mathematical Inquiry Through Play**

*Brian Mowry*

Play provides a natural and engaging context for children to accomplish important cognitive and linguistic milestones at their developmental pace. As children play, they are meeting academic standards related to vocabulary, print recognition and counting and numerical fluency through 21st century desired skills, such as problem solving, communication, collaboration, imagination and creativity. This workshop reviews empirical research and theory about how children learn through play. Participants will make practical connections to theory by learning ways to scaffold and guide children in productive, self-selected, exploratory and pretend play scenarios through the lens of mathematics.
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It’s All About Behavior...Everyone’s Behavior

*Layne Pethick*

Parents, educators, medical professionals and the public are being inundated with information about Autism Spectrum Disorder. This wave of information has caused a flood of reactions that has been both beneficial and detrimental to the understanding of ASD. This session will look at what ASD is, how to analyze behaviors that may occur and how to intervene appropriately.

Building Solid Foundations

*Angelia Turquette*

In this session, participants will learn how to design a prekindergarten classroom. They will discover the importance of transitions and schedules. Participants will also have an opportunity to acquire strategies for infusing the Texas PK Guidelines into daily instruction.