



Tuesday, October 28, 2025

AGENDA

Hillsdale Conference Center | 550 Hillsdale Drive | Charlottesville, VA 22911

8:15 - 8:45 am **Registration Open** (no registration the night before)

Note: Breakfast is on your own, feel free to bring it with you, coffee will be provided.
Visit Exhibitors, door prize drawings Wednesday at 4:00 pm. Must be present to win!

8:45 – 9:45 am

Carry the Tray: Raising Resilient Kids in Today's Wild World	Presenters
Prepare to be captivated as Mister Stu, armed with over 13 years of professional mental health expertise, unveils practical strategies and profound insights into nurturing resilient and confident children. Gain invaluable tips on fostering self-respect, respect for others, and integrity in young minds. Mister Stu delves into essential topics, exploring the pivotal role of positive reinforcement in cultivating self-esteem, the significance of resilience in today's challenging world, and how to instill a growth mindset in your children.	Stuart Perry, Child Therapist, LCSW, ASDCS

10:00-11:30 am

Beyond Battles: How to Transform Disruptions into Growth Opportunities	Presenters
Discover practical strategies for fostering a harmonious and productive learning environment through empathetic communication, conflict resolution, and proactive approaches. Gain invaluable tools to effectively de-escalate tantrums, elopement, physical aggression, and other escalated behaviors. Elevate your experience, forge meaningful connections with children, and create an atmosphere where every child feels truly understood and cherished.	Stuart Perry, Child Therapist, LCSW, ASDCS

11:30 am – 1:00 pm **Lunch on your own, there are several restaurants nearby**

1:00 – 1:30 pm

Seeds to Stems: Foundational Literacy	Presenters
Oral language is the seed for all children for foundational literacy skills. Key Foundations by Hatch starts with oral language and listening skills, the two literacy skills of every child even before they come to school. Oral language skills are critical for communication, social and emotional development, and academic success. Learn how	Kathy Scott, HATCH Early Learning

10-minute daily lessons, strengthening the five pillars of the Science of Reading will enhance your core curriculum for student success!	
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1:30 - 3:00 pm

The Power of Music in Early Childhood: Developing Literacy and Self-Regulation Skills	Presenters
In this session, we will take a deep dive into understanding why using high-quality music learning experiences are such a powerful tool to support children's learning development, both with early literacy and social-emotional skills. Learn simple and playful ways to integrate music into the daily classroom routine that will support language acquisition and development, reading readiness, fluency and phonemic awareness, aural memory, along with self-regulation and communication skills. Leave with a toolbox full of songs, finger plays, and movement activities to share with teachers to help children feel grounded and ready to learn.	Mary Anderson, My Music Starts Here Founder

3:15 - 4:30 pm

When That Cat Named Pat Sat by a Big Black Bat: Embracing the Science of Reading in Early Childhood Classrooms	Presenters
Policymakers, parents, and program leaders agree: Elementary-through-high school test scores that indicate persistent declines in literacy rates are a concern for us all. Often, this data serves only to add fuel to the fire of the long-standing debate over how best to teach reading. The body of research known as the science of reading, which explains the neuroscience-based findings of how humans learn to read, is reshaping reading instruction in elementary schools and placing a renewed emphasis on phonics instruction. But what does this K-12 research have to say about supporting the language development and literacy learning that occurs in the critical years from birth through age five? In this interactive session, discover how the science of reading can best shape practices and policies in your early childhood programs, so that children are primed for success in elementary school. The good news is that many early childhood programs are already laying much of the essential groundwork whose importance is verified by the science of reading. It's a complex equation that phonics alone cannot solve—but that early childhood educators implementing a comprehensive curriculum can. 1. Identify the essential components of effective literacy instruction, as defined by the body of research known as the science of reading 2. Describe implications of the science of reading on early childhood policies and programs 3. Identify essential aspects of the high-quality learning experiences and environments substantiated by the science of reading that are parts of your current birth to five policies and practices as well as components you may want to alter or add.	Laura Bilbrey, Senior Director of Learning and Implementation, Teaching Strategies

**Be sure to visit Exhibitors throughout the conference.
Door prize drawings at the conclusion on Wed. Oct 29.**



Wednesday, October 29, 2025

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8:30 – 10:15 am

Serenity Within: A Self-Love & Caring Wellness Program for Educators	Presenter
This program is designed to empower educators in embracing their well-being amidst the challenges of modern education. Throughout this program, we acknowledge the profound influence that emotional, social, spiritual, and physical wellness exert on educators' efficacy and satisfaction in their roles. As providers of early childhood education, we often invest ourselves fully in the success and growth of our students, sometimes at the expense of our own wellness. However, we recognize that by nurturing our own well-being, we enhance our capacity to support our students and cultivate nurturing learning environments. This dynamic program guides you on a journey of self-discovery and holistic well-being, perfect for personal growth and for enhancing your coaching skills. Explore the importance of self-love, understand its true meaning, and uncover hidden beliefs and emotions through guided exercises. Adopt holistic practices to nurture your mind, body, and soul while gaining practical strategies for cultivating self-compassion, building confidence, embracing imperfection, and creating a positive self-image. Learn to practice gratitude, heal your inner child, and celebrate your journey. This training offers invaluable insights and best practices for fostering self-love and overall happiness, as we remind ourselves that as educators, that we cannot pour from an empty cup.	Lillian Hubler Tobin, Time to Sign & EC Learn

10:30 – 11:30 pm

Thrive & Grow: Practical Activities to Promote Wellness of Young Children, Part 1	Presenter
Teaching wellness to young children is essential for their overall development. The "Thrive & Grow: Wellness for Young Children" program helps build healthy habits, emotional resilience, and a strong sense of self. Through a teacher's guidance with this program, children learn positive social interactions, emotional management, inner peace, and healthy lifestyles.	Lillian Hubler Tobin, Time to Sign & EC Learn

11:30-1:00 pm

Lunch on your own, there are several restaurants nearby

1:00 – 2:15

Thrive & Grow: Practical Activities to Promote Wellness of Young Children, Part 2	Presenter
Finish Part 2 of this workshop from the morning. You will also receive: • A DropBox link with 3 additional hours of online learning: videos, wellness tips, and resources • A Journal titled: Thrive Together, a Practical Guide to Promoting Wellness • Wellness Handouts and eBooks to use with teachers as a Train the Trainer Model	Lillian Hubler Tobin, Time to Sign & EC Learn

2:30 - 4:00 pm

Child-centered Artificial Intelligence: Empowering Educators & Enhancing Classrooms	Presenter
This highly interactive and hands-on workshop uses real-world scenarios to provide hands-on practice with readily available generative AI tools. Educators will work collaboratively to develop personalized learning ideas, draft play-based activity plans, and streamline administrative tasks like documentation and family communication. The session includes small group exercises and culminates in an open discussion on ethical best practices. Participants will practice creating content, critically evaluating AI outputs, and ensuring developmentally appropriate use. By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Apply AI tools to personalize activities and support for diverse learners, including children with special needs, multilingual learners, and neurodiverse children. • Leverage generative AI to inspire creative, play-based learning that supports, rather than detracts from, educator-guided interaction. • Utilize AI for administrative efficiency, including generating observation logs, drafting lesson plans, aligning activities with early learning standards, and streamlining communication with families. • Identify and navigate the critical ethical considerations of using AI with young children, such as data privacy, consent, algorithmic bias, and screen time.	Dr. Chelsey M. Bahlmann Bollinger Dr. Smita Mathur James Madison University Professors, College of Education, Department of Early, Elementary, and Reading

4:00 Door Prize Drawings – Dawn Ault