# April 2024 Texas Rising Star Early Educator Live Stream Sessions

| **Track, Date, Time** | **Session Title** | **Presented By** | **Session Description** |
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| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 25th Session 1 9:45 - 11:00 AM | Beating Burnout/ Stress Management | Laura Clary | Everyone is constantly dealing with change and challenges and in this busy, chaotic time it can easily feel like you have no time for yourself. Operating at a high level of unmitigated stress will, over time, lead to burnout. During this session, we will explore the importance of self-care and provide practical approaches for both work and personal life. We will delve into implementing these strategies across different scenarios, discovering what resonates with you. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 25th Session 1 9:45 - 11:00 AM | Broken Crayons Still Color | JuNene K. | Health is not just the absence of disease; it is the presence of wellness and actively making choices to be well. The environment plays a huge role in your behavior, which includes who and what you allow in your space. However, it is the conditioning (what you do with what you’re given) that is the defining factor. You may feel broken, cut down, and drained, but understand that broken crayons still color. At this session, you will find out how to thrive where you are. |
| Administrator TrackApril 25th Session 1 9:45 - 11:00 AM | The Little Things: Supporting Staff's Mental Well-Being | Kristin Miller | Are you tired? Is your staff burnt out? This session is just for you! We will look at our challenges, our strengths, and self-reflect on our own mental well-being to help identify areas of personal and professional growth. This session will help educators who work in child care become familiar with core components of mental health and well-being, learn how to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in themselves, make connections with their peers and staff members, and receive helpful tips and tools to prepare goals for continued professional growth. Get inspired and develop a plan to prevent burnout as participants focus on five little things that are big goals, they want to accomplish during the school year. Participants will choose and adopt a school-year motto and growth mindset quote to implement within their programs for encouragement. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 25thSession 2 12:15-1:30 PM | Developmental Cascades  | Texas A&M University - Commerce | The developmental cascades framework is a useful perspective in early childhood education that brings together different domains, interactions, and experiences on child development. When using the developmental cascades framework, educators of infants and toddlers can understand development as a complex system that cannot operate alone. This framework can bring a new set of ideas to promote positive outcomes that cascade into the teaching and learning process. Given the diverse cultural background and languages present in Texas early childhood classrooms, teachers can derive valuable insights from the developmental cascades’ framework. This framework enables them to not only recognize the impact of traditions and the child’s environment but also understand how these factors shape development. The developmental cascades theory is vital for understanding the multifaceted nature of all children in Texas. When educators are well prepared in how to face cultural, identity, and language barriers, then they can set positive outcomes for child well-being across the state and beyond. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 25thSession 2 12:15-1:30 PM | Managing Difficult Behavior in Children | Albert Wright | Every educator encounters children who have difficult behaviors to manage, such as biting. These situations can be difficult to deal with and have you questioning your ability. It is hard to remain calm in these situations. There is absolutely a difference between difficult behaviors and age-appropriate behaviors, and understanding the difference is imperative. This session provides practical ways to diffuse these behaviors and prevent them from happening in the future. Positive reinforcement is a must, as a happy and successful child makes for a happy and successful classroom. |
| Administrator TrackApril 25thSession 2 12:15-1:30 PM | Showing Up for Each Other: Building Community Among Early Childhood Educators | Wendy Helker | The education and care of young children is a rewarding but demanding job—far more complicated than most casual observers realize (NAEYC, 2022). As an administrator of an early childhood campus, you know firsthand the joys and difficulties early childhood educators experience. You also know a key component of high-quality early childhood education is positive interactions between colleagues. Building these collaborative relationships requires intentional planning and attention by leadership. In this workshop, we will discuss strategies for facilitating and maintaining professional, supportive relationships among staff members to ensure your campus is a positive community for all. |
| Administrator TrackApril 25th Session 3 2:00 - 3:15 PM | How to Get it All Done by Creating Systems That Work | Sheika Petteway | Are you a leader, business owner, or staff member that is ready for extreme productivity? Join this session if you are prepared to maximize your profits and achieve optimal results. Whether you are aiming to secure potential customers, enhance your follow-up techniques, or establish efficient systems that drive growth for your organization, company, or project, this session is tailored to empower you. Participants leaving this session will be able to identify areas within their organization that will profit from creating automation and system; take a more proactive approach to their monthly, weekly, and daily schedule; and create new strategies that will help maintain profits and estimate losses. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 25th Session 3 2:00 - 3:15 PM | Preventing Tantrums and Meltdowns: Building Children’s Capacity for Self-Regulation | Diane Goyette | Tantrums and meltdowns are stressful events for teachers and for children. These challenging behaviors often occur when children do not have the skills to handle the situation appropriately. Enhance the likelihood of preventing these occurrences by implementing supportive strategies that foster children’s self-regulation skills. When children develop these skills, they are better able to cope with expectations and situations they find challenging. In this session, you will be encouraged to view challenging behaviors as opportunities to teach and to guide children toward more acceptable behaviors gently and compassionately. You will learn eight guidance and interaction strategies that support self-regulation. After practicing several of these strategies, you will leave ready to build children’s capacity for self-regulation. You will also be prepared to prevent future tantrums and meltdowns, build children’s resilience, and make your classroom a calmer place for your children and for yourself. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 25th Session 3 2:00 - 3:15 PM | Storytime Puppets and Plays for Preschoolers | DD Hutson and Cody Patterson | Join us for some storytelling techniques, including puppets, props, books, music, teachers, children, and more. We will have fun while learning to work on student engagement that promotes FUN! |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 25thSession 4 3:45 - 5:00 PM | Building Brains, One Peek A Boo at a Time | Laura Minnigerode and Kristen Nottleson | In this session, we will discuss how games and interactions with babies build important parts of the baby’s brain. Babies are born ready to hear, see, and connect with others, and the way we interact with them influences their development for the first years after their birth and beyond. Science tells us that conversational turns, and the peekaboo games we play with babies, build pathways in their brains that support their future language ability and sensory motor integration. Infants that engage in a lot of early speech will start producing vocalizations earlier on that resembles words. We will play some baby games and offer strategies for creating language-rich classrooms and learn how to add more conversational turns into your day, drawing from infant mental health and early communication frameworks as well as traditional wisdom. |
| Administrator TrackApril 25thSession 4 3:45 - 5:00 PM | How to Improve Staffing and Retention in Early Childcare Education | Keith Scott | Staffing and retention have proven to be a challenge in child care. A high-quality child care center’s staff—satisfied, motivated, and engaged workers—is one of its most essential indications. Participants will acquire best practices for finding and employing qualified candidates as well as learn how to nurture and keep qualified personnel through change, crisis, and beyond in this session. |
| Early Childhood Education Track April 25thSession 4 3:45 - 5:00 PM | Purposeful Play: Helping to Heal the Hurt | Dr. Melissa Williamson | As early educators, we know that children learn through play. But what about those children who exhibit “challenging behaviors?” Are they still learning in your environment? Of course! What is often misunderstood is that children’s behaviors reveal the stress in their lives. Unfortunately, that stress can be difficult for teachers. Understanding how to use play to address the hurt is often overlooked. Join this interactive session to discover the benefits of using specific playful learning experiences and help to bring joy back to the lives of children with behavioral challenges. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 26thSession 5 8:30 - 9:45 AM | Look Again! Redefining Early Learning Environments | DJ Alexander, Ed.D. | How do you feel about your current classroom environment? Is your current classroom inclusive for all children to learn successfully? This session will define an inclusive classroom, share a variety of inclusive learning environment designs and materials, and present an instructional approach that supports inclusivity. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 26thSession 5 8:30 - 9:45 AM | Sensory Processing Needs In The Classroom | Natasha Harris | Sensory Activities are a vital part of the early childhood classroom. Educators that have an awareness of the sensory needs and stimulation children need will allow them to be successful in the classroom. In this session, we will discuss sensory processing, identify signs and symptoms, and learn how to create activities in a sensory stimulating environment for our students. |
| Administrator TrackApril 26thSession 5 8:30 - 9:45 AM | Shrinking Your To-Do List | Kathryn Woodward Young and Carrie Casey | If your to-do list is approximately the length of a football field, you need to come to this session. A child care program has a multitude of things to accomplish every day, such as conducting safety checks, planning who will be in charge of each classroom, and meeting with licensing officials. Creating systems to get items off your to-do list is key to a well-running program. In this session, you will take the first steps to create those systems. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 26thSession 6 10:15 - 11:30 AM | Building Relationships with Parents | Albert Wright | Teachers who partner with parents and families help tremendously during the child’s developmental years. Parents and families need to feel that they are not alone in raising their children; therefore, having a customer service–oriented attitude is key. It is our job to create a positive co-parenting environment. Having a relationship with the parents and families of the students in your class is the only way for educators to have a successful dialogue and resolution when observing delays or encountering challenging situations with the students in our class. This session will look at the various ways to communicate with parents and families as well as ways to get them involved. Communication is vital for the child, the teacher, and the parents and families. |
| Early Childhood Education TrackApril 26thSession 6 10:15 - 11:30 AM | From Chaos Coordinator to Skill Giver | Rachael Ennis and Meredith Pruitt | This session will give educators a new outlook on social-emotional development. As we discuss brain development, changing our focus to behavior as communication, and teaching kids how to self-regulate, participants will find ways to teach children skills that will help them for life instead of just managing chaos. Participants will discuss activities, rituals, and routines, as well as collaborate with other educators to brainstorm new ways to teach social-emotional skills. |
| Administrator TrackApril 26thSession 6 10:15 - 11:30 AM | What You Say vs. What They Hear | Traci Mackintosh | In child care, providing excellent customer service is crucial, and the foundation of it is fundamental professional communication. To reduce misunderstandings, participants will have the ability to anticipate how the recipient may interpret the information. Gaining communication skills with parents and other adults in our schools and centers will support the teamwork required to provide the best care possible for the children served. |