

2024



MNAFEE Family & Early Childhood Education Conference

APRIL 10-12

St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center



Register Now!
bit.ly/MNAFEE2024

This conference is designed for: administrators, coordinators, teachers, students, legislators, researchers, and all others who care about and are concerned for the welfare of children.



Letter from Board Chair Michelle Berscheid

Welcome!

Welcome to the **2024 Minnesota Association for Family and Early Education (MNAFEE) Conference!** We have so much to look forward to this year as we come together as a dedicated group of educators. Embrace learning, discovering, sharing new ideas, and celebrating the many accomplishments of one another.

One of **MNAFEE's guiding principles is to provide ongoing training and professional development.** Our Conference Committee considers the needs of staff and families when selecting each year's speakers and presenters.

This is an exciting year as **Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) celebrates its 50th anniversary!** The ECFE 50th Anniversary committee has worked hard to provide opportunities for us to celebrate this great statewide achievement. Enjoy sharing and learning about history, memories, and plans as we move forward to many more years.

MNAFEE is a great way to stay connected, participate, and bring unique and inspiring skills to the efforts of supporting families in Minnesota. Committee members do outstanding work and are incredible to work with. Consider connecting with committee members to get updated with the new work happening through MNAFEE. The Welcome Table can share information and answer questions about membership and committees.

Thank you for joining us at the 2024 MNAFEE Family & Early Childhood Education Conference. Enjoy the connections you make with others and bring the information you learn back to share with others. We can learn and accomplish so much together! **Thank YOU for your knowledge, experience, and passion.**

With appreciation,

Michelle Berscheid

ECFE 50th Anniversary

In 2024, we're gearing up to celebrate the 50th anniversary of ECFE in Minnesota, and what better way to kick off the festivities than at the MNAFEE Conference!

Throughout its journey, ECFE has expanded through various programs, partnerships, and initiatives, always with the mission of strengthening families and supporting healthy growth and development for children.

As we mark this milestone, MNAFEE, with the assistance of the 50th Anniversary Committee, will reflect on the past five decades of progress and perseverance. We're excited to continue leading the charge in providing services, resources, and advocacy to support all families across the State of Minnesota.

On Thursday, April 11, Governor Tim Walz will officially declare it Minnesota ECFE Day, recognizing the incredible accomplishments and contributions made over the past 50 years. Join us during lunch as we celebrate this proclamation, accompanied by a state-wide sing-along of the new ECFE 50th Anniversary Song, performed by the Teddy Bear Band.

Stay in the loop with all the exciting 50th Anniversary celebrations by following us on Facebook (facebook.com/MNAFEEMinnesota) or visiting our website at www.mnafee.org/ecfe50thanniversary.html.



**EARLY CHILDHOOD
FAMILY EDUCATION**

50th Anniversary Song!

The Teddy Bear Band has created the official MN ECFE 50th Anniversary Song. Through the years the Teddy Bear Band has supported ECFE programs with concerts and benefits.

Now, they're offering 2, 3, or more musicians for an ECFE 50th Anniversary Celebration Tour. Explore funding and sponsorship opportunities. Learn more and hear the song on the MNAFEE webpage for the ECFE 50th Anniversary.

Conference Overview



Wednesday, April 10 Kelly Inn Ballroom

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1-4 pm | Afternoon Pre-Conference Keynote* |
| 5:30-6:30 pm | Light Dinner for Evening Pre-Conference Keynote |
| 6:30-8 pm | Evening Pre-Conference Keynote* |

* Must register for each Pre-Conference presentation separately; not part of the total conference registration.

Thursday, April 11 River's Edge Conference Center

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 7:30-8:15 am | Continental Breakfast & Conference Registration |
| 8:20-8:30 am | Conference Welcome & Announcements |
| 8:30-9:45 am | Keynote Speaker |
| 9:45-10 am | Break & Exhibits |
| 10-11:30 am | Workshop Session A |
| 11:45 am-1:15 pm | Lunch |
| 1:30-3 pm | Workshop Session B |
| 3-3:15 pm | Break & Exhibits |
| 3:15-4:45 pm | Workshop Session C |
| 5-6 pm | Teaching Strategies BINGO Reception |

*No Eat, Ponder & Learn due to 50th Anniversary schedule changes

Friday, April 12 River's Edge Conference Center

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 7:15-8:20 am | Exhibits Open |
| 7:30-8:15 am | Continental Breakfast and Conference Registration |
| 8:20-8:30 am | Conference Welcome & Announcements |
| 8:30-9:45 am | Keynote Speaker |
| 9:45-10 am | Break and Exhibits |
| 10-11:30 am | Workshop Session D |
| 11:15-11:30 am | Break & Exhibits |
| 11:30-12:45 pm | Workshop Session D |
| 12:45-2 pm | Lunch & Adjourn |



Register Now!
bit.ly/MNAFEE2024

Pre-Conference Keynote

1-4 pm

Kelly Inn Ballroom

movemindfully for Early Educators: Mind-Body Strategies for Co-Regulation

Chrissy Mignogna

Explore the power of integrated mind-body strategies to address the impact of burnout while supporting adult stress-management and self-care. Your ability to co-regulate with children using simple, trauma-responsive mind-body strategies creates a safe learning environment where everyone can thrive. Discover simple practices to manage energy levels and decrease stress/anxiety using the 5 Ss for self-care.



Pre-Conference Keynote

6:30-8 pm

Kelly Inn Ballroom

The Safari Way to Happiness

Steve Fredlund

Is it possible to be successful and still be happy? Or do you have to choose? Through his career experience and research, Steve “The Safari Dude” Fredlund has uncovered the “Big 5” drivers of success and happiness – and they are the same factors that make an African safari incredible. Join us on this epic adventure to approach life, work and leadership The Safari Way.



Thursday Keynote

8:30-9:45 am

River's Edge Conference Center

Is There An App For That?

Erin Walsh

The youngest among us are no strangers to digital technology. Yet families and educators are inundated with conflicting advice about screen time. Erin will cut through conflicting information and translate the latest research into easy-to-understand language. Explore practical strategies for helping young children thrive in a world dominated by screens. You will leave understanding the key ingredients for digital wellbeing as well as practical tools and strategies to reduce risks and nurture digital strengths during this screen-intensive time.

Erin is a parent, speaker, educator, and writer. She has worked with communities across the country who want to better understand child and adolescent development and cut through conflicting information about kids and technology. She is committed to bringing an equity lens and asset-based approach to our understanding of, and response to, youth and media. Her signature down-to-earth approach and sense of humor helps families and educators engage in complicated topics and leave feeling capable and motivated.

Erin has enjoyed bringing science and strategies to families and educators alongside her father Dr. David Walsh for nearly 20 years. They started together at the National Institute on Media and the Family before creating Spark & Stitch Institute in 2019. In addition to writing articles for several other organizations including Bolster Collaborative and Psychology Today, she co-authored the 10th Anniversary Edition of the national bestseller *Why Do They Act That Way? A Survival Guide to the Adolescent Brain for You and Your Teen*.



Workshop Session A

River's Edge Conference Center

**Thursday,
April 11**
10-11:30 am

A-1 Three Common Beliefs About Child Behavior That Can Escalate Conflict (And What To Do Instead)

Erin Walsh

Working with young children is not always easy. The strain of responding to challenging behaviors makes it easy to fall into cognitive traps that skew our vision and limit our ability to stay connected. Drawing on brain science, Erin Walsh will explain three common traps that get in the way of our capacity to show up for children (and ourselves) and three strategies to help get back on track.

A-2 Exploring the Needs of Parent Educators: A Focus Group Debrief

Janette Driscoll, M.S.

Shannon Rader, Ph.D.

Eamon Whiteaker-Smith

Maggie Beaupre DeYoung, M.A

In spring 2023, we conducted focus groups and hosted a roundtable discussion at MNAFEE to discuss needs and supports for parent educators. Join us today to discuss the results, next steps, and sharing these insights with stakeholders.

A-3 Working with Bereaved Parents (Repeated B-3)

Kelly Pulford, CCLS. Family Support Coordinator, Star Legacy Foundation

Knowing what to say or do when working with a grieving parent who has lost an infant does not come naturally. It can feel uncomfortable or awkward.

Understanding the common trajectory of the grieving parent and learning how to sit with them in their grief is possible. We will discuss what affects a grieving parent, differences in the grieving process, and things you can say and do that will make a difference. We will also discuss how you can connect families with resources that will help.

A-4 Parent Group Facilitation: Supporting All Parenting Personalities Through Reflective Questioning

Jennifer Sadlovsky, M.A. Parent Educator, Connecting to Learn LLC

Beka Swisher, M.S. Parent Educator, Connecting to Learn LLC

Crafting questions that engage and inspire parents is an art and a science! Open-ended questioning is essential for facilitating engaging parent ed discussions. Join Beka and Jen to learn techniques, strategies, and patterns for creating questions that support parents in increasing their ability to be reflective of their parenting.

**Thursday,
April 11**
10-11:30 am

Workshop Session A

River's Edge Conference Center

A-5 Tiny Techies: Teaching Computational Literacies to our Youngest Learners

(repeat D-5)

Samantha Dahlby, Director of K-12 Education, The New Bohemian Innovation Collaborative (NewBoCo)

Lori Randall, 2nd Grade Teacher, Osage Community School District

Alison Mohr, Assistant Director of K-12 Education, The New Bohemian Innovation Collaborative (NewBoCo)

Since 2015, we have been developing content and working with preschool-2nd grade students and educators to teach computational literacies using hands-on, developmentally appropriate methods. Join us to learn what this looks like and what we have learned over the years! We'll also share how educators we have worked with are incorporating computational literacies into their existing curriculum, how educators' self-efficacy has improved through various activities, and analysis of initial results from participant feedback and case study responses. With Minnesota currently ranked 50/50 for computer science education per the 2023 State of CS Report, and computer science skills becoming more relevant in every aspect of our lives and every career field, let's talk about how we start to incorporate these important concepts into our work with our youngest learners in an appropriate way, and without screens!

A-6 Equity in Leadership

Melissa Donovan, M.Ed.

Designed for those in leadership and aspiring leaders, this course delves into the principles, practices, and strategies necessary to promote equity in leadership for those in early education. Gain valuable insights, and resources to enhance your leadership skills and foster inclusive environments where all children, families, and staff can thrive.

A-7 Better Boundaries: Let's Get Real

(repeat B-7)

Susan K Walker, PhD, Associate Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota

We can talk about the value of setting boundaries in our practice and our lives, but it's hard. This workshop is a follow up to the Fall Training keynote and will allow us - together - to find ways to exercise boundaries in ways that protect our values AND continue to show the world that we are kind and caring. Bring your trouble spots and let's find joy together.

Workshop Session A

River's Edge Conference Center

10-11:30 am

A-8 **Collective Bargaining and Early Childhood Educators: Expanded rights for the early education workforce**
(repeat C-8)

Andrea Cecconi, Negotiations Specialist, Education MN
Adam Janiak, Negotiations Specialist, Education MN
Meg Luger-Nikolai, Attorney, Education MN
Aaron VanMoorelehem, Field Staff, Education MN

During Minnesota's 2023 legislative session, changes that can improve the economic and professional outlook for early childhood educators through their unions became state law. This panel will focus on legislative changes and contractual rights that affect school district employees in early childhood.

A-9 **B.Y.O.B. (Bring your own Baby!)**
(repeat B-9)

Shelley Peterka-Kohlweiss, M.A. Parent Educator, Inver Grove Heights ISD 199
Julia Rohda, M.A. Early Childhood Teacher, Inver Grove Heights ISD 199

Babies class is fun and sometimes can feel overwhelming. Come and hear how our team has created a framework for Babies class for infants 0-12 months of age. Leave with ideas of songs, song sheet handouts, ideas for creating toys from household items that parents can replicate at home as well as conversation starters for parents. This will be an interactive session set up like our baby class!

A-10 **Application of Multicultural Literature in the Early Childhood Classroom**

Dr. Deborah Wheeler, St. Cloud State University, Department of Child & Family Studies

Dr. Jenny Hill, St. Cloud State University, Department of Teacher Development

Culture equates to identity; therefore, the implementation of multicultural literature in the early childhood curriculum is an essential method for securing children's concept of self and cultural identity. This session will include a review of our research findings, followed by research informed best practices for early educators and recommended multicultural book titles.

A-11 **Centering Children in State Government - The Department of Children, Youth and Families**

Elizabeth Ebot, Assistant Transition Director, Engagement and Equity in the DCYF Implementation Office

Join us for an insightful presentation led by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Implementation Office staff. Discover the journey of creating this pivotal agency, explore the timeline for its launch, and learn how you can actively participate in shaping its future. Your engagement will play a crucial role in informing the transition process for the new agency, which will serve as a beacon for children's issues in state government. Don't miss this opportunity to stay connected and contribute to this important endeavor.

**Thursday,
April 11**
10-11:30 am

Workshop Session A

River's Edge Conference Center

A-12 Attachment in the family system: Grow through what you go through!

Jennifer George, PhD, Teaching Assistant Professor, University of Minnesota

Explore the basics of family systems and the impact these systems have on individuals and relationships. We will examine attachment styles, the role attachment plays in shaping relationships within families, how these attachment styles set a blueprint for future relationships, and how culture may influence our understanding of attachment. Additionally, the concept of fixed versus growth mindset will be explored along with its significance in shaping views about families and parent/caregiver-child relationships. The presentation will show how these concepts are interconnected and offer insights for consideration within the parent/caregiver-child relationship along with practical ideas and considerations for practitioners.

6 Benefits of Attending the MNAFEE Conference

1. Networking with peers and professionals.
2. Sharing innovative ideas.
3. Expanding your knowledge and skills.
4. Staying updated on the latest trends.
5. Exposing yourself to fresh perspectives.
6. Enjoying a fun and engaging experience.



Workshop Session B

River's Edge Conference Center

**Thursday,
April 11**
1:30-3 pm

B-1 Navigating Supports Available for the Early Childhood Workforce

Kelly Kazeck MDE, Early Childhood Workforce Collaboration Specialist
Michael Brown, Ed.D. Early Learning Services

Together we will navigate all the new information and resources available for supporting the early childhood workforce including grants, new legislation, the Early Childhood Workforce study, Star Reporting, and more.

B-2 ECFE Home Visiting: A Panel Presentation (Part 1)

Jenny Luing, M.Ed. Lead Home Visitor, Anoka-Hennepin Schools
Nicki Murphy, M.Ed. Parent and Family Educator and Home Visitor, Robbinsdale Area Schools
Hilary Novacek Bundt, M.Ed. Parent and Family Educator and Home Visitor, Hopkins Schools District
Kari Sawyer, MA - Early Childhood and Family Education Coordinator, Osseo Area Schools
Rebecca Wong, M.Ed. Early Childhood and Family Educator, Home Visitor, Osseo Area Schools
Mi Yang, MA - District Program Facilitator (DPF), Minneapolis Public School

The panel will include home visitors from multiple districts. Join us as we share their similarities and differences in our home visiting programs and practices. Panelists will talk about referrals, intake, tracking, resources, partnerships, safety, planning, content and more.

B-3 Working with Bereaved Parents

(repeat A-3)

Kelly Pulford, CCLS. Family Support Coordinator, Star Legacy Foundation

Knowing what to say or do when working with a grieving parent who has lost an infant does not come naturally. It can feel uncomfortable or awkward. Understanding the common trajectory of the grieving parent and learning how to sit with them in their grief is possible. We will discuss what affects a grieving parent, differences in the grieving process, and things you can say and do that will make a difference. We will also discuss how you can connect families with resources that will help.

**Thursday,
April 11**
1:30-3 pm

Workshop Session B

River's Edge Conference Center

B-4 What's Next? Exploring Opportunities for Professional Development and Leadership in the ECFE Field

Dr. Shannon Rader, Ph.D. Program Director and License Program Lead, Parent and Family Education Program, U of MN

Dr. Jennifer George, Ph.D. Assistant Teaching Professor, Parent and Family Education Program, U of MN

Maggie Beaupre DeYoung, M.A. Senior Academic Adviser, Parent and Family Education Program, U of MN

Have you been working in an ECFE program and now want to further your skills in mentorship, coaching, advocacy and /or leadership? This session is for you!

Join us for an informative conversation that will help you make decisions about how you can elevate your academic and professional skills. Session highlights include exploring advanced certifications and programs, participating in professional organizations, ECFE advocacy, and building mentorship and coaching skills.

B-5 Parent Education Book Clubs

Jennifer Sadlovsky, M.A. Parent Educator, Connecting to Learn LLC

Beka Swisher, M.S. Parent Educator, Connecting to Learn LLC

Join us for a discussion on how to run a successful book club in-person or virtually. Bring your ideas and strategies to share! Beka & Jen will share several of their favorite book titles as well as tried and true ways to host these offerings.

B-6 Embedding Technology in Early Childhood

Melissa Donovan, M.Ed.

This course aims to equip educators and caregivers with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively integrate technology into early childhood.

Participants will explore the benefits and challenges of using technology, discover age-appropriate tools and resources, and learn best practices for promoting healthy screen time habits for young children.

Workshop Session B

Rivers Edge Conference Center

1:30-3 pm

B-7 Better Boundaries: Let's get real
(repeat A-7)

Susan K Walker, PhD, Associate Professor Emeritus,
University of Minnesota

We can talk about the value of setting boundaries in our practice and our lives, but it's hard. This workshop is a follow up to the Fall Training keynote and will allow us - together - to find ways to exercise boundaries in ways that protect our values AND continue to show the world that we are kind and caring. Bring your trouble spots and let's find joy together.

B-8 The 2024 Parent Education Core Curriculum Framework is Here! Ways to Use! What's Next?

Betty Cooke, MNAFEE Board Member, Retired University of MN Family Education Faculty & Former MN Department of Education ECFE Specialist

Melissa Denning, Parent Educator, St. Francis Area Schools

Shannon Rader, PhD, University of MN Parent and Family Education Director and parent educator

Nancy Wallace, MNAFEE Board Member, retired St. Francis Area Schools Family Services Supervisor

Parent Educators have been using the PECCF for more than a decade. Work is completed on the revision of the Indicators and simplified Procedures. In addition to revisions of Indicators reflecting recent research, an indepth review and alignment with the new 2024 edition of the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs) was done. In this workshop you will learn about the rationale for the revisions, develop an understanding of how the Early Childhood Development domain of PECCF is aligned with the ECIPs, discover ways to enhance integrated planning between the parent educator and early childhood educator, and explore innovative ways to use the PECCF for planning for your parent education settings.

B-9 B.Y.O.B. (Bring your own Baby!)
(repeat A-9)

Shelley Peterka-Kohlweiss, M.A. Parent Educator, Inver Grove Heights ISD 199

Julia Rohda, M.A. Early Childhood Teacher, Inver Grove Heights ISD 199

Babies class is fun and sometimes can feel overwhelming. Come and hear how our team has created a framework for Babies class for infants 0-12 months of age. Leave with ideas of songs, song sheet handouts, ideas for creating toys from household items that parents can replicate at home as well as conversation starters for parents. This will be an interactive session set up like our baby class!

B-10 From Emergent to Fluent: Early Learning Program and Literacy Development
(repeat C-10)

Lucy Arias, Early Language and Literacy Specialist, MDE

Please join us for a READ Act update and viewing of The Reading Brain documentary. Participants will then discuss the READ Act and the documentary to reflect and plan how they can contribute to students' literacy growth in their programs.

**Thursday,
April 11**
1:30-3 pm

Workshop Session B

River's Edge Conference Center

B-11 Cooking Connection: Engaging Parents and Children in Nutrition

Mary Schroeder, MPH, RDN, Extension Educator, University of Minnesota Extension

Poukhan Anthony, MA, Educational Resource Development, University of Minnesota Extension

Kelly Kunkel Extension Educator, MS, MCHES, University of Minnesota Extension

Educators will gain insight on how to connect parents and children in cooking activities to encourage healthy eating. By demonstrating cooking activities and discussions on nutrition, educators will leave with actionable strategies to implement parent-child cooking sessions at home or in classrooms, fostering positive relationships between children and food.

50th Anniversary ECFE Tumblers

Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of ECFE with commemorative tumblers! Available for sale near the registration check-in area. Look for signs indicating the times when they will be available for purchase.



Workshop Session C

River's Edge Conference Center

**Thursday,
April 11**
3:15-4:45 pm

C-1 Minnesota's Early Childhood Educators: Insights from the 2023 Early Care and Education Workforce Study

Angela Butel, Child Development Services Data and Policy Analyst, Minnesota Department of Human Services

Kelly Kazeck, PDG Early Childhood Workforce Collaboration Specialist, Minnesota Department of Education

Emma Kurth, ECE Business Supports Specialist, Minnesota Children's Cabinet

Marah Weidensee, Early Learning Analyst, Minnesota Department of Education

This session will focus on the recently-published 2023 Early Care and Education Workforce Study. Through a survey and focus groups, the study gathered information about early childhood educators' demographics, education and experience, financial wellbeing, and professional development interests. The session will share key findings and include time for discussion.

C-2 ECFE Home Visiting: A Panel Presentation (Part 2)

Jenny Luing, M.Ed. Lead Home Visitor, Anoka-Hennepin Schools

Nicki Murphy, M.Ed. Parent and Family Educator and Home Visitor, Robbinsdale Area Schools

Hilary Novacek Bundt, M.Ed. Parent and Family Educator and Home Visitor, Hopkins Schools District

Kari Sawyer, MA - Early Childhood and Family Education Coordinator, Osseo Area Schools

Rebecca Wong, M.Ed. Early Childhood and Family Educator, Home Visitor, Osseo Area Schools

Mi Yang, MA - District Program Facilitator (DPF), Minneapolis Public School

The panel will include home visitors from multiple districts. Join us as we share their similarities and differences in our home visiting programs and practices. Panelists will talk about referrals, intake, tracking, resources, partnerships, safety, planning, content and more.

C-3 Are you Ready for a Parent and Family Education License?

Maggie Beaupre DeYoung, M.A. Parent Education, University of Minnesota Parent and Family Education program

Learn more about the process for obtaining a license in Parent and Family Education. Go over program options, cost and new funding opportunities! Whether you already hold a MN teaching license or are looking to obtain a Parent Education license as your first teaching license, get your questions answered here!

**Thursday,
April 11**
3:15-4:45 pm

Workshop Session C

River's Edge Conference Center

C-4 How Can We Help? Using a Trauma Informed Approach in the Early Childhood Setting

Beka Swisher, M.S. Marriage & Family Therapy, Parent Educator

Dr. Ross Greene shares, "Kids do well when they can." Join Beka Swisher, MS Marriage & Family Therapy and long time Parent Educator & Early Childhood Director, in learning about how trauma affects the nervous system of young learners and how to best support their needs in the classroom setting. This training will cover a brief overview of potential causes of trauma, what factors contribute to resilience and practical tips and tricks on how to support children, families, and staff (each other) as you work with these needs.

C-5 Having Fun Yet? Yes! With Music Activities for Infants to 5: How to Prepare Young Brains for Reading

Richard Erickson, Teddy Bear Band

Ron Gustafson, ECFE early childhood teacher (ret), Teddy Bear Band

Ann C. Kay, Education Coordinator, Rock 'n' Read Project

Did you know that young children who sing and practice basic music skills become better readers? Fun songs and activities to use with babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and parents! Research about how sound processing, memory, phonological awareness, and beat synchronization enable brains for reading. New: Ages & Stages Music Activities Guide.

Attending the MNAFEE Family & Early Childhood Education Conference is an investment in your future and the families you support. You'll have opportunities for professional growth and access to the latest developments in early childhood education



Workshop Session C

River's Edge Convention Center

3:15-4:45 pm

C-6 **Becoming a Develop-Approved Trainer**

Melissa Donovan, M.Ed.

Have you ever thought about becoming a Develop-approved trainer? This presentation will delve into the critical role of early childhood trainers in shaping the education and development of young minds and provide valuable insights into the process of becoming a successful early childhood trainer. We will explore the qualifications, responsibilities, and essential skills needed to excel as an early childhood trainer.

C-7 **ECFE and Great River Children's Museum: Leading for Families, Play and DEI**

Linda McNelly, M.S., Parent Educator, ECFE District 742 & Great River Children's Museum

Tomoko Rebeck, M.S., Early Childhood Educator, ECFE District 742, St. Cloud State University, Great River Children's Museum

Research shows that access to playful learning environments which intentionally support diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) enhances children's, families', and communities' well-being. This session will provide updates into the planning and building of a children's museum - and delve into shared philosophy and practices fostering collaboration between GRCM and ECFE.

C-8 **Collective Bargaining and Early Childhood Educators: Expanded rights for the early education workforce** (repeat A-8)

Andrea Cecconi, Negotiations Specialist, Education MN

Adam Janiak, Negotiations Specialist, Education MN

Meg Luger-Nikolai, Attorney, Education MN

Aaron VanMoorelehem, Field Staff, Education MN

During Minnesota's 2023 legislative session, changes that can improve the economic and professional outlook for early childhood educators through their unions became state law. This panel will focus on legislative changes and contractual rights that affect school district employees in early childhood.

C-9 **Strategies to Engage Diverse Parent Education Groups**

Bonnie Buckley, MDiv, MEd, Parent Educator

Learn strategies that promote discussion, broaden parenting options, and raise awareness during parent education groups. Information and resources will be shared based on my years of experience providing parent education with diverse parent participants.

C-10 **From Emergent to Fluent: Early Learning Program and Literacy Development** (repeat B-10)

Lucy Arias, Early Language and Literacy Specialist, MDE

Please join us for a READ Act update and viewing of The Reading Brain documentary. Participants will then discuss the READ Act and the documentary to reflect and plan how they can contribute to students' literacy growth in their programs.



Teaching Strategies BINGO Reception

5-6 pm

Glenn Carlson Room
River's Edge Convention Center

FREE!

Join us for the Teaching Strategies BINGO reception that promises to be an evening of lighthearted fun, delicious food, and refreshing drinks!

Whether you're a seasoned bingo enthusiast or just looking for a good time, this event is perfect for everyone.

Picture yourself surrounded by friends and colleagues laughing and cheering as the bingo balls roll and the numbers are called. With a variety of prizes up for grabs and entertaining bingo calls that will keep you on your toes, this reception guarantees an unforgettable experience.

Plus, indulge in a delectable spread of appetizers, finger foods, and a selection of beverages to keep you fueled throughout the evening.



Friday Keynote

8:30-9:45 am

River's Edge Conference Center

I Am Not Getting Them Ready for Kindergarten...

Kristen RB Peterson

Because I am getting them ready for kindergarten by letting them have a 3, 4, and 5-year-old experiences. Let's challenge society's favorite phrase, "ready for kindergarten". Children deserve childhood and when we rush from one stage to the next, we miss the stage the children are currently in. Learn to embrace childhood in the age the child is in NOW. Kristen will share stories and research to inspire the audience to slow down and trust play.

Kristen RB Peterson is the retired founder of a magical place called Butterfly Hill Nature Preschool. In her quest to create a place full of play, learning, nature, emotions, and yes moments, Kristen discovered that play based learning is a MUST for all early childhood environments and is an advocate for play in early childhood.

She is not just a teacher and life long learner... She has four children, loves donuts, reading everything and traveling to new places.

Now a podcaster, keynote speaker, and online entrepreneur, Kristen uses her experience and B.A. in Education with an emphasis in ECE to help early childhood educators find play, settle in, and enjoy the journey through training and digital courses.



**Friday,
April 12**

10-11:15 am

Workshop Session D

River's Edge Conference Center

D-1 **The Great Break-Up**

Kristin RB Peterson

There are many things that happen in early childhood environments that are not developmentally appropriate for young children. Learn why breaking up with calendar time (along with weathertime, criss cross applesauce, letter of the week and more!) will lead to a happier, calmer, and more enriching environment for you and the children in your care.

D-2 **Nature-based Learning in Early Childhood Programs**

Anna Dutke, Early Childhood Educator, ISD 196

Minnesota is one of the leading states in nature-based early childhood programs, an approach that is growing in popularity with the support of research. This session will walk participants through using a FREE resource to set goals and identify action steps for increasing how nature is incorporated in your program's philosophy & policies, community engagement opportunities, and your indoor and outdoor instructional practices. The Nature-based Early Childhood Program Assessment and Guidebook resource is applicable to any type of program (public or private preschool or childcare center, ECFE class, home-based programs).

D-3 **Parent Aware Requirements for Public Programs**

(repeat E-3)

Krista Seiboldt, Early Learning Specialist, Minnesota Department of Education

This session will provide an overview of Parent Aware Rating requirements, processes, and training options for school districts and charter schools to receive and maintain a Rating.

D-4 **Legislative Changes 2023-2024**

Kate Lynne Snyder, Lobbyist, Education MN

Sara Ford, Ed Issues Specialist, Education MN

This presentation will cover an overview of legislative changes passed the prior year, and any under discussion in 2024, that will affect your work. This includes licensure changes, funding changes, collective bargaining protections, Earned Sick and Safe Time and Paid Family Leave.

Workshop Session D

River's Edge Convention Center

10-11:15 am

D-5 **Tiny Techies - Teaching Computational Literacies to Our Youngest Learners**

(repeat A-5)

Since 2015, we have been developing content and working with preschool–2nd grade students and educators to teach computational literacies using hands-on, developmentally appropriate methods. Join us to learn what this looks like and what we have learned over the years! We'll also share how educators we have worked with are incorporating computational literacies into their existing curriculum, how educators' self-efficacy has improved through various activities, and analysis of initial results from participant feedback and case study responses. With Minnesota currently ranked 50/50 for computer science education per the 2023 State of CS Report, and computer science skills becoming more relevant in every aspect of our lives and every career field, let's talk about how we start to incorporate these important concepts into our work with our youngest learners in an appropriate way, and without screens!

D-6 **Weaving Kindness Into Daily Life**

MiaLisa Millares, Executive Director of Doing Good Together™

Discuss the benefits of family volunteering, provide free resources for Parenting with Purpose, and practical ideas for weaving kindness into daily life.

D-7 **Striving to Increase BIPOC Family Participation in Early Childhood Family Education.**

Ayuko Boomer, EdD, Early Childhood Specialist, Parent Educator, University of Minnesota Child Development Laboratory School

Examine Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) in Minnesota, emphasizing its availability for all families but noting a lack of awareness among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. The study aims to assess current outreach methods, collaboration with other programs, and efforts to increase BIPOC participation in traditional ECFE parent education group classes. It also explores the support needed by ECFE educators to engage BIPOC communities, detailing the history and purpose of parent education. The presentation will be in lecture style, emphasizing the result of the study.

Attending the MNAFEE Annual Conference is a great opportunity. You'll learn the latest information about Early Childhood Education, improve your skills, and meet other professionals. It's a chance to grow and make a difference in your work.



**Friday,
April 12**

10-11:15 am

Workshop Session D

River's Edge Conference Center

D-8 **Developing Mind Body Fitness- Chakra Jump Game**
(repeat E-8)

Beverly Sharp, Elementary Education, Rochester School District

Michelle Sharp, Mind Body Fitness Educator, Yoga Therapist, AZ State MT Board

Come explore Mind Body Fitness and learn how to use The Chakra Jump to bring the benefits to your classroom, students, and their families. This simple game develops mind/body awareness, improves coordination, boosts confidence, enhances positive communication, and so much more.

D-9 **Journaling with Parents & Caregivers**

Sarah Hansen, St Louis County ISD 2142 and Ely ISD 696

Becca Koering, North St Paul/ Maplewood /Oakdale ISD 622

Journaling can be a valuable reflective tool in your work with parents and caregivers. In this workshop we will discuss how to start and how to keep it going. We will also engage in some journaling practices as a group. Join us as we explore ideas for journaling and creative practice with parents and caregivers together. If you have ever wondered how fun it might be to have a journal of your time ECFE then this workshop is for you.

Networking while at the Conference

While developing skills and knowledge is important, the real power lies in connecting with others and collaborating. Engaging with diverse perspectives expands horizons and offers new insights. By working together, attendees can leverage collective expertise to address challenges more effectively, leading to greater success in making a positive impact in our communities.



Workshop Session E

River's Edge Conference Center

Friday,
April 12

11:30 am-
12:45 pm

E-1 **Healthy Kids Minnesota: Early Childhood Screening-MDH Partnerships to Improve Children's Environmental Health**

Jessica Nelson, PhD, MPH, Program Director and Environmental Epidemiologist, Minnesota Department of Health

Joye Baumgartner, Early Childhood Screening Lead, Bloomington Public Schools

Fathi Ahmed, Program Manager, Minnesota Department of Health

Sarah Moline, Early Learning and Youth & Family Services Director, Bloomington Public Schools

Healthy Kids Minnesota is assessing exposures to harmful environmental chemicals in children across the state. Through partnerships with Early Childhood Screening Programs, families are offered the chance to participate. We will share information on the program, Bloomington Public Schools' partnership experience, and children's environmental exposures and ways to reduce them.

E-2 **Risky Play in the Outdoors**

Anna Dutke, Early Childhood Educator, ISD 196

Learn WHAT is Risky Play, WHY you should provide opportunities for it, and HOW you can do it through creating intentional systems and structures for supporting children and teachers, in the process. This session will also include structures and resources for facilitating discussions with caregivers.

E-3 **Parent Aware Requirements for Public Programs** (repeat D-3)

Krista Seiboldt, Early Learning Specialist, Minnesota Department of Education

This session will provide an overview of Parent Aware Rating requirements, processes, and training options for school districts and charter schools to receive and maintain a Rating.

E-4 **How to Talk to Porcupines: Crossing the Communication Divide**

Allegra Birdseye-Hannula, MS Teaching, How to Talk to Porcupines

Learning how to break down communication barriers will help you better engage with the young people you serve. This training will give you a clear understanding of porcupines. You'll explore principles of effective communication strategies, including active listening, questioning, body language, and non-verbal skills to positively engage with porcupines.

Workshop Session E

River's Edge Conference Center

11:30 am-12:45 pm

E-6 Coaching to Promote Social Emotional Development for All

Priscilla Weigel, Executive Director, Center for Inclusive Child Care

This session will highlight the services provided by the Center for Inclusive Child Care (CICC), a nonprofit funded by the Minnesota Department of Human Services to provide free inclusion coaching support to licensed child care settings. Learn how CICC coaches build quality care for all through their trauma informed, healing centered coaching approach that supports healthy social emotional development. This information is an important resource for families.

E-7 MN Rally to Read: mobilizing Minnesota's social capital so every child is wired to read proficiently

Tim Reardon, Che' + Assisi Consulting / Rally to Read Facilitator

Tim Munkeby, Author and retired public school teacher

The MN Rally to Read is a Community Innovation Initiative with a BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) of making MN the state with the highest reading proficiency with the fewest racial inequities than any other state and accomplishing it in record breaking time. The benchmarks of success are: every child is wired to read by age 3 and reads proficiently at each grade level. How? By launching community based coalitions to mobilize support and establish grass roots strategies that are effective, efficient and evidence based to achieve the goal. Community Innovation showcases best practices and the local expertise of educators, early childhood development specialists, brain development researchers, pediatric medical professionals and literacy experts. MN Rally to Read is launching prototypes in several communities throughout MN. If you want to accelerate the pace of reaching the goal of all children reading proficiently in your community, this is the session for you!

E-8 Developing Mind Body Fitness- Chakra Jump Game

(repeat D-8)

Beverly Sharp, Elementary Education, Rochester School District

Michelle Sharp, Mind Body Fitness Educator, Yoga Therapist, AZ State MT Board

Come explore Mind Body Fitness and learn how to use The Chakra Jump to bring the benefits to your classroom, students, and their families. This simple game develops mind/body awareness, improves coordination, boosts confidence, enhances positive communication, and so much more.



ECFE 50th Anniversary Merchandise

Get ready to show off your ECFE pride with our brand new merchandise!

From t-shirts to hoodies, we've got something for everyone. Our fun designs feature the 50th Anniversary logo. Choose from a variety of options including t-shirts, hoodies, zip-ups, and totes. Check out our selection today!

Online ordering opens in early March. Watch for updates on the [MNAFEE 50th Anniversary webpage](#).

mnafee.org/ecfe50thanniversary.html



Conference Logistics



Conference Location

The conference is located at the St. Cloud River's Edge Convention Center 10 Fourth Ave. S. in St. Cloud, MN

Accommodations

Enjoy discounted rates for overnight accommodations during the conference at the following hotels conveniently located near the Convention Center.

A room block is reserved under the name: Minnesota Association for Family and Early Education. Be sure to mention that you are attending the MNAFEE Family & Early Childhood Education Conference to take advantage of the reduced room rate.

Best Western Plus Kelly Inn

100 4th Ave. | 320-253-0606
\$119 king, \$119 double queen

Courtyard Marriott Hotel

404 West St. Germain St. | 320-654-1661
\$144 king, \$164 double queen

Clock Hours - CEU Credit

Following the conference, Certificates of Attendance will be accessible through an online evaluation process. Participants will receive an email containing a link to complete the evaluation and download their certificates.

Attendees are reminded that it is their responsibility to submit these certificates to their respective governing boards to obtain Clock Hours or CEU Credit.

Pre-Conference Keynote Presentations

Wednesday, April 10, from 1–4 p.m. and 5:30–8 p.m. Register for pre-conference presentations separately; not part of the total conference registration. Heavy appetizers included with evening presentation. The registration deadline is Wednesday, April 3 at noon.

Exhibitors

Don't miss out on the opportunity to explore our exhibitors showcasing educational materials and books! Swing by their booths on Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Friday from 7:15 a.m. to noon to discover valuable resources and insights to enhance your learning experience.



Register Now!
bit.ly/MNAFEE2024

Conference Registration

Conference Registration

The full conference registration fee covers access to speakers, workshops, materials, continental breakfast, and lunch for both Thursday and Friday.

To register, visit our website at mnafee.org. The registration deadline is noon on Wednesday, April 3rd. Don't miss out on this opportunity to join us!

Registration Fees

Afternoon Pre-Conference Keynote	\$ 50
Evening Pre-Conference Keynote includes heavy appetizers	\$ 50
Thursday-Friday (MNAFEE Member Rate)	\$210
Thursday-Friday (Non-Member Rate)	\$250
Thursday-Friday (Retiree/Student Rate)	\$110
Thursday Only (MNAFEE Member Rate)	\$140
Thursday Only (Non-Member Rate)	\$170
Friday Only (MNAFEE Member Rate)	\$100
Friday Only (Non-Member Rate)	\$120
Approved Speaker Credit	\$ 25



Register Now!
bit.ly/MNAFEE2024



Mark your calendars! The 2025 MNAFEE Family & Early Childhood Education Conference is happening from April 9 to 11 at the St. Cloud Rivers Edge Convention Center.