

Wednesday, April 22, 2020

AM PreCon: Life Is Good Playmakers	8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.	Through an outpouring of love, optimism, experience, and expertise, Chief Playmaker, Steve Gross, MSW, and a trusted team of researchers and colleagues spent 30+ years developing the Life is Good Playmaker program. Designed so childcare professionals can harness the power of optimism to help kids heal, the program provides transformative trainings, signature tools, and ongoing coaching, so that they can build life-changing relationships. Cost: \$99 Member \$139 Non-Member
Tour: Explore Local Child Care Centers	8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Check in at 7:00 a.m.	This popular pre-conference event takes you on a tour of local child care centers noted for excellence and innovation in early care and education. Cost: \$60 Member \$85 Non-Member
PM PreCon: Playmakers (REPEAT)	1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.	Through an outpouring of love, optimism, experience, and expertise, Chief Playmaker, Steve Gross, MSW, and a trusted team of researchers and colleagues spent 30+ years developing the Life is Good Playmaker program. Designed so childcare professionals can harness the power of optimism to help kids heal, the program provides transformative trainings, signature tools, and ongoing coaching, so that they can build life-changing relationships. Cost: \$99 Member \$139 Non-Member
Welcome Happy Hour with Exhibitors	4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	Ready? Set? GO! It's time to get this incredible event started and we need YOU there! Get checked in, reconnect with friends, make new friends, and get ready to make memories and fill your buckets at the 36th Annual National Conference, How Successful Directors Lead!
Leader's Night Out: Statue of Liberty Harbor Dinner Cruise	6:30 p.m.-11:30 p.m.	You won't want to miss this incredible tour of the New York City Harbor! Your evening will include breathtaking views of the Manhattan skyline, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, and all of the iconic bridges that lead into the city. Your fee will include a seated dinner, dessert, and open wine and beer bar. Cost: \$159 per person (This event is NOT included in the conference registration price)

Thursday, April 23, 2020

Keynote: Steve Gross, MSW	8:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m.	In this interactive keynote, Steve Gross, Chief Playmaker with the Life is Good Playmakers, will share how the Life is Good Superpowers of Love, Compassion, Fun and Humor can transform our work in building life-changing relationships that help insulate kids from the impacts of toxic stress. Using research, humor and personal stories from Steve's 30+ years of work with kids and their caregivers, participants will walk away with a deeper understanding of how fostering "The "Fantastic Four" can bring out the best in everyone - especially children - and help them heal, learn and thrive.
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BREAKOUT SESSION ONE | 10:45 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.

101	The Five Essential Elements of Financial Health in Your Early Education Business KATHY LIGON	There are five things that childcare business owners need to pay strong attention to in order to be financially strong. Not 99 things. Five. Do you know what they are? Join Kathy Ligon as she discusses the top actions owners can take today to start moving the needle towards profitability and what financial areas childcare business owners should focus on now in order to reach true financial health.
102	The Art of Delegation JENNIFER ROMANOFF	Delegation is a beautiful thing! It creates opportunity for you to pursue your goals and dreams. It creates opportunities for your team members to stretch and grow into more effective and productive employees. It reveals team members who possess leadership potential just waiting to be realized! So why is it so very hard for us to do?! Join Jennifer as she unpacks the challenges, the opportunities, and the strategies that will make "delegation" your new best friend!
103	Improving K-Readiness by Using Classroom Management Techniques SUSAN TESTAGUZZA	According to the "Connections" theory introduced by author and researcher Dr. Brene Brown, we are all "wired for connections." Applying that to early childhood, this session introduces classroom management techniques designed to improve kindergarten-readiness pursuant to the research on the relationship between emotional health and academic success. Attendees of this workshop will learn procedures and practices designed to help teachers and students have stronger connections that will help students have higher self-esteem and stronger emotional readiness to learn.
104	How to Create A Culture of Innovation and Risk-Taking CHANIE WILSCHANSKI	The school culture is an effect of the leader's skills. We want innovative, accountable and mindful teachers. Building this culture is a product of focusing on the right thing, right time and right order.
105	Art on Saturdays: Inclusive Communities for Children with ASD CAMILLE BRANDT	Research in Autism is yielding promising information for parents, caregivers, and educational practitioners regarding alternative and creative educational approaches. This engaging presentation will highlight some of the most recent discoveries in the field of ASD, centering on an inclusive community project designed to meet social, emotional, behavioral, sensory, and communication needs for young children and their families impacted by autism.

106	Conversations that Matter: Strengths-Based Communication Skills SUSAN MACDONALD	<p>Supporting the continuous professional growth of educators requires leaders to be skilled communicators. When leaders can inspire, motivate and engage educators through impactful dialogues they will be able to facilitate sustainable improvements in overall program quality. This workshop will guide leaders in developing the skills they need to have effective dialogues that are fully aligned with individual and program goals, lead to action, and offer constructive feedback. We will explore: Appreciative Inquiry (A1) as a collaborative model for leveraging strengths, reflective practices that add depth to professional conversations, observation protocols, adult development theory as it relates to providing constructive feedback, powerful questions as the foundation for meaningful dialogues from the hiring process through the exit interview. The fundamental goal for this session is to support leaders in gaining a new perspective on their communication and leadership practices, so they can leave refreshed and recharged with a clear vision for facilitating positive changes in their daily work and learning communities.</p>
107	How to Digitally Transform Your Childcare Business for the Millennial Workforce MATT BUSBRIDGE	<p>Today, 94% of childcare providers spend up to 10 hours a week making shopping trips to multiple retailers and shopping off print catalogs. The hours spent gathering requests from teachers, then driving, loading shopping carts, managing receipts, and transporting supplies back to schools result in less time focused on students and longer work hours. But the workforce is rapidly changing and by 2020, 50% will be digital native millennials who expect streamlined processes using technology. Learn how to build a new work experience by digitally transforming your childcare business: automate repetitive purchasing needs, set up spend management tools, and uncover insights from scheduled data reports.</p>
108	The Who, What, When, & Where of Accreditation with the National Accreditation Commission ERIN SCHMIDT	<p>This informative session will provide an overview of the National Accreditation Commission, and how it can serve your program and families in meaningful ways. It is designed to ensure that all participants establish a core understanding of both process, and procedure. A brief history of the system, an overview of the accreditation process, a review of the self-study steps, and tips for using the Accreditation Manual for program improvement will be the basis for this workshop.</p>

BREAKOUT SESSION TWO | 2:00 P.M. - 3:45 P.M.

201	The Four Forces of Director Support CHANIE WILSCHANSKI	Leading a team of directors and a growing business requires specific skills. Keen observation of directors' performance, metrics for accountability and supporting their growth in ways that align with the school vision and mission.
202	You Win in the Locker Room First MARY HORNBECK	Based on the book by the same name, this session will unpack the seven C's to build a winning team in business and in life. Join Mary for this interactive and informative session that will set the stage for increased productivity and improved morale!
203	Effects of Marijuana Legalization on the Workplace DAWN MARTINI	This session will examine the interaction between the state and federal laws, your license, your general liability insurance and worker's compensation insurance policies. We will analyze the complexities of an employee's medicinal use of marijuana to treat a condition which qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act as a protected disability and your employment policy. We will work to create a comprehensive employment policy that protects the business, the license and administration and explore ways to further the conversation with state licensing agencies to provide clear direction for your programs. Finally, we will discuss the interplay between Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect and parent's use of marijuana to apply the regulations and laws to individual situations that may occur with parents in your center.
204	Overcoming Obstacles to Enrollment, Recruitment, and On-Boarding CAROLINE JENS	Learn innovative solutions to solve common struggles all early education leaders experience in the areas of enrollment, recruitment, and on-boarding. It's so easy to get bogged down with the daily fires, constant interruptions, and the never ending revolving door. The effect of this equates too many missed opportunities and lost revenue especially when we are mishandling enrollment leads, potential new employees, and even those employees that have just been hired. There is a solution, so you don't have to feel overwhelmed by these common early childhood struggles.
205	Conscious Leadership: 8 Essential Skills Every Director Must Have TYM SMITH	Being a leader of an early education program takes a lot of practice. Leaders must recognize the skills they have in their portfolio so that they can lend these skills to teachers. However, you can't lend what you don't have. Come to this exciting and motivating session to learn the 8 essential skills needed to be an effective leader.
206	Team and Program Building: Fostering Collaboration Among Staff NANCY TOSO	Working together as a team is essential to providing quality early education and care. We will explore how to foster collaboration and teamwork among staff to generate shared engagement and investment in our program. You will discover how to create a positive, strengths-based environment that supports individual passions and talents, as well as how to facilitate effective communication among staff. We will also examine the many roles of early childhood educators and how these contribute to quality programs for children and families.

207	How to Talk to Parents About Development Delays BOYD MARK	For most parents, friends, child care provider and physicians, sharing concerns about a child's development can be a challenging and daunting task. However, it's important to talk about any developmental delays or concerns. With caring support and open communication, parents can begin to take action. If a parent is encouraged to see a pediatrician or health care provider with developmental concerns about their child, there will be one of two outcomes, but each will have its positive results. If concerns are ruled out, parents can rest easy. If there are indeed confirmed issues, seeking help through evaluation and referral will eventually get the family back on a healthy developmental path.
208	Child Care Risk Management Tips That Will Make Your Insurance Company Happy! MICHAEL SWAIN	Having good risk management practices can help reduce the likelihood of you needing to file a claim with your insurance carrier and help provide a positive client experience. What better way to learn what insurance carriers might expect from your risk management program than listening to an experienced insurance loss control specialist. For early education providers, risk management practices need to support business continuity and safety. This can include having strategies in place designed to protect your property, enhance your transportation practices, and provide a safe environment for your clientele. This workshop will provide an insurance professional's overview of what some of these risk management strategies should be to help maintain a well-rounded risk management program at your center.
EIS Owners-Executive Leaders Happy Hour	5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	If you are a program Owner or Senior Executive, join us for the Executive Invitational Series Happy Hour! This is a great opportunity to find out more about the outstanding training and networking opportunities available and to connect with leaders from around the country who walk where you walk and talk what you talk! Cash bar available.
Get Connected! First Time Attendee Meet & Greet	5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.	If this is your first time to attend an AELL National Conference OR you are traveling alone, join the AELL Ambassadors and get connected! Bring your business cards and build your network of cheerleaders, experts, phone a friends, support systems, etc.!
Jersey Shore Dance & Karaoke Party!	8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.	This annual party is a celebration of all that we do to make a forever difference in the lives of young children! We are bringing the Jersey Shore to YOU with food carts, games, music, dancing, and karaoke! Bring your big hair, muscles, and dress up in your best Jersey Shore outfits for more fun than you will be able to handle! Cash bar available.

Friday, April 24, 2020

Keynote: Dr. Peter Gray	9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.	You won't want to miss this special conversation with celebrated author and professor, Dr. Peter Gray! His career has been dedicated to understanding and promoting play in the classroom and in life. This engaging keynote will give you information and tools to elevate the level of productive, meaningful play in your programs and in your world.
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BREAKOUT SESSION THREE | 11:00 A.M. - 12:45 P.M.

301	Strategies for Transition and Succession DIANE NICOLET	
302	The Power of Perception CHRIS EBERHARDT	Have you ever wondered why two people from the same community think act differently? Understanding perceptions is more important than ever society is being exposed to increasingly more intentional messaging designed to shape our beliefs, biases, attitudes and feelings. Without an awareness of how this messaging programs our brains to influence our actions and behaviors, we become mere cogs in a materialistic and divisive culture. Recognizing the sources that shape our personal beliefs and garter behaviors is the first step to building a real community. Once we understand our views and beliefs, we become more understanding, empathetic and effective and building relationships with others as we work to solve pressing problems together. This presentation is designed to bring awareness to how perceptions developed over time and influence everyday actions and attitudes.
303	The Thing About Gossip... LORI BUXTON	Gossip is a destructive weed in our garden, maybe the most destructive, and it grows best when we can't or won't deal with it. In this very transparent session, we will discuss what gossip is, how it spreads, and how we can get rid of it so our team and program is healthy, happy, and productive.
304	Reputation an EVERYDAY Thing! TONY D'AGOSTINO	In this session leaders will come away with usable knowledge on how to develop ones reputation and the value of starting early through engagement with staff, families and the community, understand how to promote your reputation to all three groups above in a way that aligns to their values and yours, how to work with your teammates and staff to manage the daily challenges that can effect your reputation from a disgruntled staff member, parent or even a internet troll, and what to do to protect your reputation if something goes wrong and how to do your very best not to lose your staff, parents or center!
305	Financial Perspectives on Child Care Leasing BRANDON HOWARD	This informative session will focus on the following business areas: 1. Four Critical Perspectives on Child Care Center Leasing 2. Building Your Commercial Real Estate Leasing Team 3. Selecting Your Commercial Real Estate Agent 4. The Many Faces of Commercial Real Estate 5. Various Types of Landlords 6. Understanding Your Value as a Tenant 7. Secrets Used by National Providers to Find Excellent Space 8. Examples of Your Commercial Real Estate Leasing Team at Work
306	What Does It Take to Become A Conference Presenter DANIELLE WAITE & GABRIEL SMITH	This workshop is to go over the details on how to become a presenter at a local, regional, or national conference – like the AELL conference. From topics to activities, from handouts to technology, from adult learning outcomes to engaging participants, from research to writing a proposal - we will give tools and strategies to help you feel confident enough to submit a proposal and present.

307	Promoting Autonomy in Young Children SUZETTE HECHT	The purpose of this session is to discover what autonomy is as it relates to ECE and techniques to employ to promote autonomy in the classroom. This focuses on ways offering choices affects pre-school children's decisions, and attitudes as well as interventions that encourage children to have control over their decisions.
308	Unpacking the New Standards! ERIN SCHMIDT	Join Erin Schmidt, Director of Accreditation, for this interactive session that will answer questions about the newly released National Accreditation Commission standards. This session is designed for programs in self-study or currently accredited by the National Accreditation Commission.
BREAKOUT SESSION FOUR 2:15 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.		
401	Owner's Only: Effective Strategic Planning RON MCGUCKIN, MARY HORNBECK, ALIX HALL	Join Ron McGuckin, Alix Hall, and Mary Hornbeck for this informative session that equips owners to build practical strategic growth plans and establish meaningful, attainable goals for their business and staff.
402	Mindfulness to Manage Stress & Burnout LOU REDMOND	This training focuses on empowering educators to use mindfulness techniques to manage the work overwhelm their job can come with. The goal is to create a top down approach to help both teachers and students improve their overall as well to create a positive environment for learning to thrive. Through an engaging presentation that includes mindfulness exercises and insightful conversation, educators will learn techniques they can take with them to improve their lives in and out of the school.
403	Creating a Culture of Impact Through Influence RACHEL SUPALLA	What does it take to be a positive leader that inspires impact through influence and do you have the cards and grit to be ALL IN? This workshop will inspire how to spark the fire of passion in the lives of Early Childhood Directors and Owners. Using the model of Know, Be, Do we will create a visual action plan to cultivate your organizational culture by creating impact through influence. We will discuss the power of positive leadership and how to be an inspirational director that will successfully be able to motivate and manage. Which will inspire everyone on your team will be ALL IN!
404	Help Me Motivate-Energize-Inspire My Staff! DONNA THORNTON-ROBERTS	Are you challenged by staff members' low energy? Frustrated with personalities that lack inspiration and zeal? Do you want to create greater synergy to get things accomplished? If the answer is YES, this session is for you! Leaders, you will gain new appreciation and understanding in advanced communication methods which will motivate each unique personality on your team. In this session, you will learn the secrets to motivation and the keys to effective listening and communication.
405	Developing a Strategic Plan for Professional Success ROBIN STEPHENSON	If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Our team depends on us to be at the top of our game! In this session, participants will develop a strategic plan for their growth and development that identifies strengths to accomplish current responsibilities, areas in need of improvement to accomplish career advancement, and future goals leading to greater career satisfaction.

406	Ready or Not? Preparing for Critical Incidents and Violence JASON RUSSELL	Course will discuss the three main components of a comprehensive approach to preparation. This includes facility assessments, emergency planning, and critical incident training. The presentation will cover practical approaches to prepare for a variety of emergencies and critical incidents including active violence situations, all with application to childcare.
407	The Importance of Creative and Critical Thinking in a Rapidly Evolving World JAMAICA STEVENS	More and more research shows that automation and artificial intelligence will be shifting the landscape of the world we know today. Creative and critical thinking will become increasingly more important as it informs job skills and life skills. In addition, ADHD, dyslexia and autism are all becoming more identified. As the world is changing, we as leaders have to ask ourselves if we are providing our teachers with the tools that they need to successfully teach our students. In this workshop we will talk about how to create an environment and curriculum that foster creative and critical thinking. We'll focus on how to train your teachers to become creative thinkers themselves so that they are able to lead by example and positively impact all children in their classroom helping them thrive in this ever changing world.
408	What High Performing Teams Do Differently SHANNON HENDRICKS	Why is it that some professional sports teams manage to perform at championship-winning levels year after year while most others do not? When Microsoft asked this question, that set off a six-year study to try and decipher the code. After more than 100 interviews with the people behind the most consistently successful teams and organizations in the United States, it was shown the key is to maintain a culture of greatness. Specifically, maintaining that culture comes down to four essential pillars which set a great team apart. In this session based on the book Great Teams by bestselling author Don Yaeger, participants will unpack those pillars and create practical strategies for elevating their team performance.
TRADITIONAL PORTUGUESE DINNER WITH THE AMBASSADORS	7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Come dine with the ambassadors as we visit Valença's Restaurant – a local “must visit” fine dining experience that has been serving the local community for over 20 years. Established by owners Martinho and Teresa Pereira in 1989, Valença Restaurant is the result of their vision of bringing traditional Portuguese delicacies and trademark hospitality to Elizabeth, NJ. Valença's traditional restaurant offers such menu items as shrimp in garlic sauce, empanadas, grilled rib eye steak, seafood paella and more! Homemade sangria and a Venetian table of desserts are included and will enhance this night out. https://www.valencarestaurantnj.com/ Cost: \$50 per person Appetizers, dinner, dessert, beverages and transportation are included

Saturday, April 25, 2020

BREAKOUT SESSION FIVE | 9:00 A.M. - 10:45 A.M.

501	Director's Round Table Discussion LYNNETTE MCCARTY	Join Lynnette McCarty for this interactive discussion of the latest trends, challenges, and strategies for Program Directors.
502	How to Balance the Many Hats You Wear Without Becoming the Mad Hatter! HEATHER TORRES	Managing a child care center is a delicate balancing act. Different challenges require different strategies, perspectives, and actions. In this interactive session, participants will explore the many "hats" hanging on the coat rack of our leadership and which hat goes with which situation.
503	ADA: Accommodating Employees with Disabilities DAWN MARTINI	This session will provide a comprehensive review of Title 1: Employment of the Americans with Disabilities Act. ADA contains many qualifying terms which have been shaped through more than 25 years of legal challenges to the administrative rules either through the courts or the EEOC. We will discuss the most recent caselaw and judicial interpretations of Title 1 and apply the information to the unique employment environment that is early care and education. Discussion will include the process to provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities once hired, the need for personnel policies and job descriptions that reflect the requirements of ADA. Participants will be lead through the appropriate accommodation request documentation and getting certification from the employee's treating physician. Specific attention will be focused on mental health related diagnoses, medication and employee threats to harm themselves or others.
504	The Power of Positive Leadership TYM SMITH	Being a leader requires many skills and talents. A manager must maintain a positive image of the school, their staff and their parents at all times. This is easier said than done. This session will motivate and inspire leaders to use their "super powers" to be positively contagious even during the most challenging moments in their school.
505	The Curriculum Conundrum JENNECE BLACK & GERALDINE PERRY-WYNN	Curriculum Conundrum is aimed toward providing leaders with the tools and insight on how to select, implement, evaluate and supplement curriculum. Curriculum is a crucial component to student success and without a thoughtful methodology towards curriculum selection and implementation, critical learning outcomes could be missed. This training will identify the challenges of curriculum implementation and prepare leaders to choose what is suitable and achievable for their learning population.
506	HALT: Pause Before Making a Big Decision DONNA THORNTON-ROBERTS	Research says that we make about 35,000 decisions a day! In this session, Leaders will examine the decision making process and discover HALT – a management tool that aids in the process of making good decisions. Stop or pausing to process can be a powerful step especially if you are feeling rushed, exhausted, or furious! This session is packed with insightful information in how to make decisions without losing your wits!

507	OOPS! I Did it Again!: Preventing Common Mistakes Leaders Make LYNETTE GALANTE	An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure! This session will take an honest look at the common mistakes leaders make that can add to our stress and diminish our quality of leadership and life. This is a must-attend session for new or emerging leaders!
508	Leading Your Team Through Accreditation ERIN SCHMIDT	Put Me in Coach! So you are ready to begin the Accreditation process! How do you lead your team through the process in your already busy schedule? How do you gain buy-in from your teaching staff? Planning for success and being aware of potential hurdles will help you stay on your path. We will use the National Accreditation Commission Self-Study Timetable to develop a strategy for success. We can help you get your team fired up, engaged, and committed to this important journey! Let us show you how to replace intimidated with INSPIRED!
Closing Keynote: Jeanette Betancourt - Sesame Workshop	11:15 A.M.-1:00 P.M.	You won't want to miss this exciting and informative keynote to close out our annual conference. Dr. Betancourt will share her story and the story of Sesame Workshop. She will also share some of the outstanding resources available to early learning programs for use in elevating the learning experiences for young children.
POST CONFERENCE EXCURSION: Frozen On Broadway	5:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Extend your stay in the New York City Area to take in the sights and sounds of Broadway! A limited number of tickets (30) are available for Frozen, "the hottest show on Broadway". Your ticket includes transportation to and from the Theater District, dropping off at approximately 6:00 p.m. to grab dinner before the show begins at 8:00 p.m. We will provide you with a quick guide to great restaurants in the area. (Dinner is not included in ticket price.) Cost: \$125 per person
POST CONFERENCE EXCURSION: Little Italy/Chinatown Drop-Off	5:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.	Extend your stay in the New York City Area to take in the sights, sounds, and flavors of world-famous Little Italy and Chinatown. A limited number of tickets (25) are available that will provide transportation to and from this historic tourist destination. We will provide you with a quick guide to the best restaurants in the area, leaving you plenty of time to shop and play! Cost: \$30 per person

