Friday, October 4th Breakout Sessions:

**Keynote Address, Holly Elissa Bruno**

**Hats Off to You: Everyday Miracle Workers in Children’s Lives**

Do you give yourself credit for the difference you are making? Or, do you keep up the hard work without taking a quiet moment to appreciate the good that you do? We educators are so expert at putting everyone else's needs first that we rarely have time left over for ourselves. Let's instead step back to acknowledge our contributions, take better care of ourselves, and reclaim the joy that is rightfully ours. After all, each time you change the life of a child, you are changing the world.

**Hearing Parents in Every Language: Partnering with Families Unlike Your Own, Holly Elissa Bruno**

Children bring a colorful kaleidoscope of cultures into early childhood programs each day. Their families may have child raising traditions, religious beliefs, and lifestyle choices that differ from our own. By using the “Ask & Listen” process, we can partner with every family by hearing their dreams and learning what’s at the heart of their values.

**Joy of the Unexpected: Expression through Materials, Lee Lingelbach & Robin Holman**

When you explore, experiment, and create with art materials and “loose parts” ideas unfold. A Reggio inspired workshop studio will provide mediums and materials for painting, drawing, sculpting and designing. This hands on interactive session is designed to inspire creative opportunities for undirected expression. When you experience various mediums unexpected questions, answers, ideas, chances and problems arise. This session is targeted for learners of all ages-expression is all inclusive. Come enjoy the experience of the unexpected.

**Learning through Exploration & Play + Technology, Bonnie Blagojevic & Loyann Worster**

In this session, presenters will share stories from early learning programs in Maine that have included the use of technology to enhance learning through exploration and play, positively impact social and emotional development and partner with families. There will be hands-on activities so that participants can try some of the learning experiences described. Resources will be shared, as we consider ways to “take control of technology” and help children learn how to use it in beneficial ways.

**Beyond Pinterest: Embracing the Process in Art Experiences, Elizabeth Richards**

This session is an interactive look at the difference between product art and process art, and the benefits that come from adopting a process approach. The skills that young children develop when given the freedom to explore art materials freely include problem solving and language skills, creativity and so
much more. This session will introduce participants to these benefits, allow time for discussion and questions, and include time to participate in hands-on projects that illustrate the differences.

We will discuss challenges and barriers to setting up process art experiences in the classroom, explore why many classrooms still frequently offer product art experiences, and why a shift towards process art is important.

The Art of the Picture Book, Jan Coates
Picture books and children are a winning combination for inspiring learning and fun! What better way to engage children, ages three to five, in careful observation, listening, and curious and creative thinking than through sharing a picture book.

Using the Whole Book Approach, developed by Megan Lambert at the Eric Carle Museum for Picture Book Art, participants will learn and experience how pictures, book design and words come together to tell a story and rouse a sense of curiosity and wonder in children.

The Whole Book Approach is child-centered and focuses on how to deepen the reading experience by viewing the picture book as an art form and using Visual Thinking Strategies to develop children's observation, imagination and vocabulary skills. Time will be spent learning about the anatomy of a book and its modality for engaging children in dialogue around the various elements in a picture book, and discovering their clues and connection to the story inside. Books, books and more books will provide hands-on examples of each element in the Whole Book Approach. This is a highly interactive session.

The Project Approach: Putting Young Children in the Driver's Seat! Debby Adkins
“Project work calls upon the teacher’s ability to build on children’s natural inclination to enjoy becoming absorbed in their work.” Sylvia Chard

What is the Project Approach? Will it coordinate with the Maine Early Learning Development Standards? Does the Project Approach align with Reggio Emilia philosophy? How is a project different than a theme? How do I begin? What are the phases of a project? How long does an investigation last? Can you do projects with infants and toddlers? Project work and STEM?

This session is designed for those who are new to the approach and for those who are already dabbling into it and would like more information and guidance. Participants will get an overview of the Project Approach via a PowerPoint presentation and will then be given a topic, and break into groups to: create a KWL web, plan for materials/activities, consider documentation, and think about the culmination of a project.

Children’s Awareness & Experience with Death & Grief, Jeanine Deas
Young children are not able to think abstractly and therefore cannot clearly conceptualize death. What the young child does understand is absence. Children learn that significant persons in their world may leave for a time, but they always come back. They learn to tolerate, and eventually accept, these periods of separation.

However, prolonged absence of a significant person will cause stress and sadness for a child. If the absence is permanent, as with death, the accumulative effect of the beloved person’s absence will cause the child to experience grief.

Children are unique individuals, with their own temperament and personality, each growing within their own time frame, following a predictable pattern, one stage of development after another. When children experience the death of a loved one, their grief will be as unique as the individual experiencing it. Each child will have their own time frame, process, feelings, and understanding of death. This understanding will be impacted by the child’s age, past experiences with death, or of not having prior knowledge, or of having limited awareness about death.

In this session, we will explore the child’s perspective of death, grief, and loss by age groups. We will look at the tasks required of a child when someone they know dies. We will discuss developmentally appropriate ways to explore death with children and to support a child who is grieving and other children’s affected by another’s grief.

Understanding Selective Mutism in the Educational Setting, Annie DiVello
This interactive course is intended to help a variety of professionals in educational settings to better understand and support children with selective mutism. Attendees will gain a greater understanding of the
clinical features of SM, the Dos and Don’ts for relating to a child who has SM, and grow in their awareness of the basic steps for intervention. Ways to foster inclusivity and participation in the school setting will be reviewed. Safety plans will also be discussed.

Understanding the Basics of Opioid & Substance Use Disorders: Creating a Path Forward, Patty Tripp & Nena Cunningham

Are your early childhood programs asking for help in understanding the opioid crisis and dealing with substance misuse disorder? Participants in this foundational training will explore basis terminology, implications for children and families, strategies to support staff and families and resources to recommend. This workshop will share information from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness (NCECHW) and provide materials for you to bring back to your programs to share with colleagues and families.

Exploring Your Teaching Self, Michael Sandberg

Despite the myth, teachers, especially good teachers, are human beings too. Our caring and the associated vulnerability are what make our relationships with children and parents work. At the same time, they can also distort our ability to separate what is going on for a child and/or family from our own material. Our values, attitudes, and emotional worlds impact directly on our classroom selves. Why, for example, do we really like one child, while we find another’s behavior particularly difficult to take? Why do we find ourselves warming to some parents and judgmental of others. In this workshop, we will use written tools and discussion, to explore our attitudes and biases. Awareness can help us separate and clarify our own needs, so we can be more objective about the needs of others and our ability to meet them. As a great educational philosopher once said, the process of becoming a better teacher is getting to know yourself better!

Technical Assistance, Linda Labas, Jill Downs, Jami Pollis & Tammie Davis

Given the importance of technical assistance for improving the quality of early care and education, it is imperative that the technical assistance approaches and roles are clearly defined and measured. Maine responded by developing a set of competencies to ensure that all Technical Assistance (TA) professionals have a common core of knowledge and skills as they support TA partners’ progress to higher levels of quality.

Taking a systems approach to building an integrated, cross-sector response to technical assistance, Maine stakeholders adopted the 2011 NAEYC / NACCRA TA definitions to create Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine’s Early Childhood Workforce. These competencies are being used to inform the development of a Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

This round table session will provide an overview of the Technical Assistance Competencies and the development of a Maine Technical Assistance Credential. Lead partners from Kennebec Valley Community Action Program, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network and the Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies will:

- Share the competencies and examples of how they are used in coaching and the MRTQ PDN TA system.
- Gather feedback from participants to assist in furthering the development of the credential.

Developing Reflective Practitioners Through the Use of Peer & Video Observation, Sarah Jewell & Beth Gachowski

Teachers at the Child Study and Development Center at the University of New Hampshire have in engaged in several methods of peer observation as a tool for our own reflection but also to enhance the reflective practice of our UNH preservice teachers. In this workshop we will share two approaches to enhancing teachers’ ability to observe their own and others’ teaching practices. Embedded in these observation techniques are prompts for reflection which research has shown leads to shifts in teaching practice. We will explain why this approach is effective and how to implement a Video Mentoring program. Additionally, we will share our experiences using Peer Observation Protocols. Participants will be excited to try this low risk, low cost form of professional development and novice teacher training approach.
Positive School Experiences for All Students through the PBIS Framework, Karen Robbie

Grounded in over 25 years of research, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a prevention-oriented multi-tiered framework currently implemented in over 26,000 schools throughout the United States. PBIS’ all-encompassing design engages all staff and all students in a shift from punitive disciplinary practices to instructional practices within a school-wide multi-tiered system of behavioral support. Research indicates that implementing schools demonstrate improved academic achievement scores, increased academic instructional time for students, staff, and administrators, improved school climate, reductions in office discipline referrals and suspensions, decreases in special education referral and placements, and improved teacher job satisfaction. The Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) Regional Professional Development Cohort (RPDC), funded through a 2017 FEDES grant and a partnership with RSU 3, provides opportunities for schools to establish a network of support, learning, and implementation across the boundaries of districts and school units. Through exemplars of Maine schools currently engaged in this transformational process and seeing positive results, you can learn how your community’s school can create an environment of success for all students!

Educators are Leaders & Advocates! Tara Williams & April Humphrey

As an educator, do you consider yourself a leader? Do you consider yourself an advocate? From Higher Ed to Family Child Care, from infant and toddler teachers to 3rd grade teachers, we all have an opportunity to raise our voices. Participants will explore the concept of advocacy and learn how all educators can be leaders in the profession and advocate for the things they believe in. MaineAEYC and FCCAM board members and ECE Reps from the 2019 Policy Leadership Program will share the opportunity and challenges they have found in being leaders for change.

Telling Your Story to Inspire Change, Tara Williams, Joni Sprague, Karen Bruder & Abigail Carter

Why is telling your story so important? When have you talked about your experience as an ECE Professional? From Higher Ed, to Family Child Care, from infant and toddler teachers to 3rd grade teachers, we all have an opportunity to inspire change with our stories. Participants will learn how to share their experience with community leaders, parents, elected officials, and more! Join MaineAEYC and Educare with Parent Ambassadors and ECE Reps from the 2019 Policy Leadership Program as we share our stories and help you share yours.

Early Childhood Public Policy in Maine, Office of Child & Family Services

The Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services will share high-level updates on their strategic direction. This will include information on their new internal structure and office priorities related to the Maine Quality Rating and Improvement System, Child Care Subsidy Program, Child Care Licensing, Professional Development Network and Background Checks.

Saturday, October 5th Breakout Sessions:

Keynote Address, Ross Greene

Why are Challenging Kids Challenging?

Why are challenging kids challenging? When are challenging kids challenging? Dr. Greene will explore the premise that challenging behavior occurs when the demands and expectations being placed on a child exceed the child’s capacity to respond adaptively…and that some children are lacking the skills to handle certain demands and expectations. And he will explore the roll of an early childhood professional in supporting young children and families.

From Challenging Behaviors to Meeting Expectations, Ross Greene

Join Dr. Ross Greene to learn more about supporting young children with the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) model. The emphasis of the model isn’t on kids' challenging behavior. Rather the model focuses on identifying the skills a kid is lacking and the expectations they’re having difficulty meeting (in the CPS model, those unmet expectations are referred to as unsolved problems). Then the goal is to help them solve those problems, rather than trying to modify their behavior through application of rewards and punishments.
Working with Mixed Ages? There are Many Right Ways! Chrissie Davis, Bridget Barden & Deb Arcaro

Working in a multi-age setting, are you at times challenged by providing equal support to the children in your program based on the spread of their developmental abilities? How do you scaffold an activity across multiple ages, adapt routines and environments, document needs at different developmental stages, all while creating a sense of community within your diverse group? For many family child care providers, this is what they do every day. In this session a team of family child care providers will share their experiences working with mixed ages in their diverse programs. While the session will be presented by family child care providers the information shared is beneficial to all early childhood professionals. We all know there are many rights ways to provide quality care! Through sharing examples from diverse programs our goal is to strengthen and inspire your practices.

Applying Attachment Principles to Relationships with Infants & Toddlers, Laina Clugston & Heather Stephenson

The focus of this session is on building strong, intentional and authentic relationships with infants, young toddlers and their families in a group care setting. Caring for infants and toddlers is a unique dance which includes non-verbal communication, intense caregiving moments, exhaustive emotional work and close partnerships with parents. This can be difficult to navigate at times, particularly when working with multiple infants.

We will explore how to build attachment with infants pulling from the work of Gordon Neufeld, PhD and Dr. Emmi Pikler. The focus will be on the distinctives of these approaches in order to offer participants concrete strategies for building secure relationships with the infants and toddlers in their care.

To deepen the work of applying theory to practice, we will include time for journal reflections, small group work, and sharing. (two-part session)

Talk to Me: Strategies for Developing Language in Children Birth-3, Laurie Mack

We have all met them—the toddler who is very communicative but is not yet talking, the mom who wants to help her baby learn to talk but isn’t quite sure how, the children who need a boost in language but may not qualify or cannot access services, the new employee who needs to brush up on how to interact and talk with infants and toddlers.

This workshop will begin with an overview and practice with specific strategies to facilitate language skills for children age birth-3. We will follow up with a method for sharing these strategies with parents in the community using the Talking Is Teaching public awareness and action campaign recently implemented in Southern Maine.

Talking to Parents about Developmental Concerns, Kellie Irving

This break-out session focuses on supporting early childhood educators in tackling difficult conversations with parents regarding their child’s development. The presentation begins by identifying and acknowledging possible barriers to doing this work, as well as strategies to overcome these barriers and have successful conversations with parents. Different styles of documentation and authentic assessment techniques are discussed as resources for educators to implement as they prepare for conversations and meetings with parents and caregivers. The presentation includes discussion of strategies for effective conversations that encourage parent engagement and trust. Closing out with conversation on the importance of determining next steps, making a plan, and setting a time to meet and follow up on the discussion with the family moving forward.

Development Screening Community Initiative: Building a Coordinated Early Childhood System of Care in Cumberland County, Gita Rao, Kayla Cole, & Cheryl Hillicoss

The Developmental Screening Community Initiative of Cumberland County (DSCI) is a collaborative cross-sector community workgroup focused on increasing developmental screening rates and developing a coordinated communication and referral system between primary care practices, community organizations and early educators. In May of 2016, DSCI launched an intervention to increase developmental screening rates and information exchange between primary care practices and Child Development Services (CDS) to ensure shared patients received optimal services in a timely fashion. Practices and CDS discussed referral and follow-up workflows, identified barriers, and conducted small
tests of change, including adapting workflows, so information about enrollment, service plans, and progress reporting could be shared back and forth. Data was collected for six months on developmental screening rates, referral patterns, communication between organizations and whether qualified children were expediently connected to services; there was noticeable improvement in different measures per practice, suggesting this approach can be successfully applied to others. CDS and the practices reported stronger relationships and communication and that more comprehensive and actionable information was shared, allowing them both to support shared patients with appropriate services and ensure they were ready to enter educational environments. This project model is being replicated with Portland’s Public Health nurses, and additional improvement projects are planned.

Making Healthy Changes Using Go NAPSACC, Meredith Backus & Dawn Littlefield-Gordon
Are you interested in learning how to improve children’s health but not sure where to start? Look no further than Go NAPSACC! Go NAPSACC is an online tool for early care and education providers that gives you tools to help improve children’s health. The flexible program allows providers to focus on any seven topic areas around healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and oral health. The 5 steps of Go NAPSACC help early care and education providers prioritize, plan, and take action to make healthy changes.

Come watch a live demonstration of Go NAPSACC and learn how easy it is to use. You can sign up for Go NAPSACC during the session, learn about technical assistance providers in your area, and leave excited to begin making healthy changes in your program.

Going Natural: One School’s Story about Change, Kristen Tarr
At Educare Central Maine, early childhood school, we’ve experienced the change in our students’ play as they transition from a traditional playground to a natural playscape. A few years ago, the phrase “I’m bored” use to be echoed throughout the day but not anymore. Our playground now offers open-ended materials that stimulate our students’ imaginations to explore and be creative and become flexible thinkers (Curtis & Carter, 2003). During the presentation, we will share stories/observations that directly relate to the benefits on nature play. We will discuss ways your program can better connect children to nature. We will provide ideas for books, activities and other resources that can enhance children’s nature connection. We will also do a hands on activity that focuses on loose parts.

Music in Early Childhood: Strategies for Development & Regulation, Carla Tanguay
Active involvement in music has beneficial effects on many areas of early child development. Join board-certified music therapist Carla Tanguay for an interactive exploration of how music can help young children build upon their strengths, meet developmental goals, and reach their potential. Special focus will be placed on music therapy research related to social and emotional development and on meeting the needs of children with a wide range of abilities.

Supporting Healthy Sexual Development, Jamie Spencer & Jennifer Wiessner
In this 3 hour session we hope to help you raise your comfort level around talking with children about their amazing bodies and developing sexuality. We’ll discuss developmental stages birth-8 years, strategies, and how to handle the tough stuff, with time for Q&A after. You’ll bring home printed resources and all you need to get yourself and the children you serve comfortable with their sexual selves. (Two part session)

Systems for Sustainable Coaching in Early Education, Erica Palmer
At Educare Central Maine/Kennebec Valley Community Action Program (KVCAP), ongoing professional development is an individualized expectation and is supported for each education staff member to promote growth and effective teaching behaviors. Head Start Performance Standards recognize the growing body of research literature that describes the effectiveness of coaching to improve practice, and requires programs to implement research-based coaching strategies. Coaching promotes continuous self-assessment through a cycle of planning, observing, taking action, and reflecting. Coaching is a partnership, and it requires a foundation of trust and respect. We recognize that there will be trial and error as staff are implementing new strategies, knowing that professional development, learning, and growth is a lifelong process.
In order to develop confident and competent staff and healthy coaching relationships, Educare Central Maine and KVCAP have developed an informed, comprehensive coaching framework to assure sustainability and consistency throughout their agency. The framework provides an overview and background on what coaching is and why it is crucial, a defined process for identifying who receives coaching, a coach/coachee partnership agreement, specific age-appropriate teaching practices on which teaching staff are coached on and accompanying coaching forms.

This framework assures consistency in implementation and support throughout KVCAP’s entire Child and Family services program, which includes: center based childcare, public preschool collaborations, community childcare settings, and private in-home childcare centers. Coaches are supported via the use of identified “Coach Leads” who facilitate monthly Communities of Practice for coaches in both infant/toddler and preschool age groups. These Communities of Practice guide coaches through their work in implementing all components of the Coaching Framework and the coaching cycle.

Changes in ECE...What Do You Want to Make Happen? Tara Williams & Heather Marden

Changes in policy can support families with young children and ECE professionals from infant and toddler teachers to 3rd grade teachers, from Family Child Care to Higher Ed. What changes do you hope to see? Help shape the policy platform in early childhood education for the coming years. We can work together to create a difference in the lives of Mainers. Participants will share their perspectives and learn about recent policy work and upcoming opportunities. Join MaineAEYC with ECE Reps from the 2019 Policy Leadership Program as we work together for meaningful change.

Educators are Leaders & Advocates! Tara Williams & April Humphrey

As an educator, do you consider yourself a leader? Do you consider yourself an advocate? From Higher Ed to Family Child Care, from infant and toddler teachers to 3rd grade teachers, we all have an opportunity to raise our voices. Participants will explore the concept of advocacy and learn how all educators can be leaders in the profession and advocate for the things they believe in. MaineAEYC and FCCAM board members and ECE Reps from the 2019 Policy Leadership Program will share the opportunity and challenges they have found in being leaders for change.

Beyond Mandated Reporting: Critical Thinking & Learning to Support Families on the Edge, Sarah Dore

Early Care Educators wear multiple hats and are often responsible to many. Of utmost importance is ensuring that the children you care for are safe in- and outside of your program. Evaluating and supporting safety for children and families on the edge can be scary and overwhelming and requires that you have a knowledge of child welfare (including the law and your role) and strong critical thinking skills. Join this break-out session to learn more about how you- as an ECE- can develop and enhance your skills to better serve and support the children and families you work with.
**Presenter Biographies:**

**Debby Adkins**
Debby Adkins began her adventure into the world of early childhood education as a family childcare provider in 1985, teaching toddlers and preschoolers in her home through 1996. During the next twenty years, she taught preschool 4’s and kindergarten in early childhood programs in Connecticut and Maine. Over the past twelve years, Debby has used the Project Approach directly with her students, and coached teachers as they implemented it in their classrooms. Debby is currently the Program Coordinator at The Children’s Center in Portland and is an advocate for accessible, affordable, high quality early childhood education.

**Deb Arcaro**
Deborah Arcaro, Country Fun Child Care (1988), Gorham, BS in Elementary Education, M.Ed., Step 3 with Quality for ME and certified teacher. I have taught 6th grade mathematics, 2nd grade, 3rd grade and been a K-3 Resource Room teacher. Besides mixed ages, I have offered full-day developmental preschool, and before and after school care only. I have always operated my business as a single provider. I am currently licensed for 8 children, providing care for infants up.

**Meredith Backus**
Meredith Backus is the state coordinator for Go NAPSACC and project coordinator for the Healthy Kids Healthy Future project, which has the primary goal of giving early care and education providers the tools and resources to help Maine children get a healthy start.

**Bridget Barden**
Bridget Barden, Shunk Child Care (2011), Portland, Associate’s in Early Childhood Education, Inclusion Credential, National Association of Family Child Care Accredited Provider, and an Accreditation Observer. Shunk Child Care is an Outdoor Classroom certified by Nature Explore. Bridget started working in center-based care before joining Shunk Child Care which is licensed for 12 children, providing care for infants up.

**Bonnie Blagojevic**
Bonnie Blagojevic is an education consultant and Apple Distinguished Educator. She is a consulting editor for NAEYC, has co-authored articles for NAEYC publications, and has been involved with the NAEYC Technology & Young Children Interest Forum for many years. Bonnie has more than 30 years experience as an early education professional working in a variety of settings, including a high school lab preschool, a university preschool program, a family child care home, and nonprofit center. As a consultant, she collaborates with program partners to explore ways technology can increase access to early learning. She shares “lessons learned” through workshops and publications.

**Holly Elissa Bruno**
Holly Elissa Bruno, MA, JD, is an award winning best-selling author on emotional intelligence and managing legal risks in early childhood education. Before joining our field, she served as Assistant Attorney General in Maine, Dean of Faculty, Associate Professor and was selected Outstanding Professor at the University of Maine-Augusta. Holly Elissa specializes in Emotional Intelligence and Managing Legal Risks in Early Childhood Education. In 2019, Exchange named Holly Elissa as an early childhood doyenne (respected leader).

**Laina Clugston**
Laina Clugston, M.A., is on the faculty of the Neufeld Institute. She works at Bowdoin College Children’s Center where she is a lead teacher in the Infant and Toddler Programs. Laina is active in the Center’s staff development where she provides support, mentoring and training. She is formerly from the Washington D.C. area, where she served on the faculty of Acorn Hill Waldorf Nursery and Kindergarten as a Parent Child/Infant and Toddler teacher. Laina has worked for over thirty years with parents and young children. She has Waldorf and Pikler training and teaches attachment-based, developmental theory.
for home and classroom practices. Laina studied group facilitation with Parker Palmer, author of *Courage to Teach*.

**Jan Coates**

Jan Coates is founding Executive Director of Island Readers & Writers and former owner of Port In A Storm Bookstore in Somesville, Maine. Prior to returning to her home state, she served as a senior administrator/Dean at Albion College in Michigan and Hamilton College in New York. She holds a Ph.D. from Michigan State University, MS from Indiana University and a BS from the University of Maine. One of her favorite children’s book is “Harold and the Purple Crayon” by Crockett Johnson.

**Kayla Cole**

Kayla is an experienced project manager, having developed and managed quality improvement initiatives in child health, SUD/OUD, and information technology. Her experience includes working for the Maine Women Infants and Children Nutrition Program (WIC) serving as the Vendor and Data Services Manager for the State of Maine where she also worked to identify future technology needs of the program. In 2013, she transitioned into the field of Information Technology and served as a Certified Scrum Master on agile software development teams that worked to develop licensing systems for Departments within the State of Maine. After several years of leading Agile teams, Kayla achieved her Scrum Professional Certification from the Scrum Alliance. Kayla began working for Quality Counts, a Qualidigm Company in January of 2017 and serves as Lead Project Manager overseeing several opioid, ECHO and child health focused programs. Over the past two years Kayla has led several large-scale child health quality improvement projects with medical practices and is experienced in facilitating trainings to clinicians and professional groups.

**Nena Cunningham**

Nena Cunningham Ed.D. has worked in Head Start and Early Head Start programming for the last 18 years. She is the Head Start State Collaboration Director at the Department of Education. Nena is a graduate from UMF’s Early Childhood Education Master’s program and UNE’s Educational Leadership Doctoral Program. She also teaches courses for Maine Roads to Quality and for UMF and KVCC as an adjunct faculty member for a variety of courses.

**Chrissie Davis**

Chrissie Davis, Bouncing Bubbles (2001), Skowhegan, Associate’s in Early Childhood Education, CDA, Maine Youth Development Credential, National Association of Family Child Care Accredited Provider, Step 4 with Quality for ME, Home Start provider and holds Gold status with 5210 Let’s Go! Currently licensed for 12 children, providing care for infants up. My program involves the children in the daily activities required on my small hobby farm that includes goats, chickens and ducks, as well as, gardens with vegetables and fruit.

**Tammie Davis**

Tammie Davis, B.S. in ECE is a Master Teacher and education coach at Educare Central Maine. She has over 24 years of professional experience in the field of early childhood education. Tammie provided direct care and education to preschool age children (3-5) for 20 years; working in a variety of full-day and part-day program options. Her passion for supporting teachers in their work with children and families led her to her current role. During the past 4 years, she has moved into a dual supervisor/coach role. This combined role requires her to build transparent, reciprocal, and trusting relationships with the teachers she partners with. Modeling reflective practice and continual learning are critical to her success. Tammie was one of the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine’s Early Childhood Workforce field test participants.

**Jeanine Deas**

Jeanine Deas lives in central Maine. She is an Early Childhood Educator and Licensed Social Worker, with a BA in Mental Health and Human Services. She has dedicated her career to advocating, supporting, and improving the quality of life for children and families. Jeanine is the author of a recently published children’s picture book, Anna’s Little Buddy. It is a story of friendship between a young child and
his neighbor. It is also a story about grief and loss – when having the say goodbye to a beloved friend. Jeanine is currently working on a second children’s book.

Annie DiVello
Annie is a licensed and ASHA certified Speech-Language Pathologist. She has worked with children across the country including New England, West Virginia, Georgia, and South Central Los Angeles. Her particular area of clinical interest is selective mutism. Annie follows a “whole child” philosophy. She enjoys working closely with family members, school teams, and other service providers to create a collaborative model of support for the children and families she serves. Annie is the Selective Mutism Association State Coordinator for Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Annie is passionate about her field and about helping individuals to find their voices. She feels that the ability to communicate is a beautiful gift.

Sarah Dore
Sarah Dore is the Learning & Development Director for the iLookOut for Child Abuse Learning Program with Penn State University. Prior to joining this exciting, cutting-edge project, Sarah worked for the Maine Office of Child and Family Services for 9 years and previously, with the Kids Free to Grow (York County’s Child Abuse Prevention Council) and Caring Unlimited, (York County’s Domestic Violence Program). Sarah brings nearly 20 years of experience as a social worker and educator working directly with families and training community members and providers on issues of violence and abuse identification and prevention.

Jill Downs
Jill Downs M.Ed. is the Manager of the Technical Assistance System at Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network, University of Southern Maine, at the Muskie School of Public Service. She has over 40 years of experience in the field of Early Care and Education and Early Intervention. During that time she has held numerous positions including teacher, child care food program director, director of an early intervention program, administrator of an inclusive child care program, Child Care Plus ME project, Head Start Collaboration Office and Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network (MRTQ PDN). She is currently working at MRTQ PDN as the Technical Assistance Manager and oversees the ongoing development of the Technical Assistance system to include protocols, procedures, and systems for oversight including Technical Assistance consultants and Communities of Practice facilitators; consultant training, and the Accreditation and Credential Cohorts. Jill is one of the authors of the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine’s Early Childhood Workforce.

Beth Gachowski
Beth Gachowski, M.Ed has been working with young children and their families for over 27 years. She is currently the Director of The Village Center in Kennebunk, ME. Prior to this Ms. Gachowski worked at The University of New Hampshire’s Child Study and Development Center for eleven years. In her role at C.S.D.C Beth worked with preservice teachers with a focus on helping them develop skills of observation and reflection. She served as The Executive Director at The Children’s Center in Portland for seven years. Beth has taught at community colleges and presented on a wide variety of early childhood topics. Most recently, she has performed teacher research focused on improving mentoring strategies in which she implemented a Video Mentoring program with UNH interns.

Ross Greene
Ross Greene, PhD, is founding Director of the Maine-based non-profit Lives in the Balance and originator of the Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) model. The mission of Lives in the Balance is to provide vital, accessible resources and programs to caregivers of behaviorally challenging kids; to bring the plight of these kids into the public consciousness; to address the systemic issues that cause many of these kids to slip through the cracks; and to promote parenting and disciplinary practices that foster the better side of human nature in all children. Dr. Greene is also author of the books The Explosive Child, Lost at School, Raising Human Beings, and Lost & Found. He served on the faculty at Harvard Medical School for over 20 years, and is now adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech and adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Science at the University of Technology Sydney in Australia.
Cheryl Hillicoss
Cheryl Hillicoss, M.Ed. Cheryl is currently an Early Intervention Program Manager for Child Development Services. Cheryl has enjoyed working in Early Intervention since 1986. She holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Special Education, Learning Disabilities and Severe, Profound & Sensory Disabilities. She has additional interest, education and training in feeding issues, sleeping behaviors, autism, Picture Exchange Communication System, Applied Behavior Analysis and Routines-Based Early Intervention. Cheryl has been in a leadership position with CDS since 2005 and conducts local and statewide trainings in evidence based early intervention practices and participates in community partnerships to enhance supports for parents of children B-3 with developmental delays and disabilities.

Robin Holman
Robin Holman is a District Early Childhood and Youth Coordinator for Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network. She is a veteran early childhood educator with over 25 years experience working with young children and their families. She has a doctorate in early childhood education and a master’s degree in elementary education. She is dedicated to building environments that support the highest and best experiences for staff and children. She enjoys nature, yoga, and reading children’s books. In fact, one of her favorite activities is to read to young children. Robin hopes to inspire and support those who work with children through consultation, peer to peer networking, teaching or online training.

Kellie Irving
Kellie J. Irving is an adjunct faculty member in special education, part of the School of Learning and Teaching at the University of Maine College of Education and Human Development. She has a wealth of knowledge and experience working in the field of early childhood education. She has worked as a preschool teacher, an itinerant special education teacher, a registered Maine Roads to Quality trainer, and as an early intervention home visitor. Kellie has worked for Child Development Services since 2008, currently working as an Early Intervention Program Manager at both the CDS REACH and York sites. She holds state of Maine certifications as an Early Childhood Teacher, a Teacher of Children with Disabilities ages 0-5, and as a Special Education Consultant. Kellie’s academic accomplishments include a master’s degree in early childhood education from the University of New Hampshire, an infant specialist certificate from the Erikson Institute in Chicago, a certificate of advanced study in early intervention and educational leadership and a graduate certificate in autism spectrum disorders from the University of Maine.

Linda Labas
Linda Labas, M.Ed. is the Early Childhood Coordinator at the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. She has over 40 years of professional experience from direct service work in a variety of early care and education and early intervention settings to research, development, technical assistance and training. Her technical assistance experience includes: directing a statewide inclusion and early childhood mental health consultation project; providing coaching support in several grants and agencies. As a collaborative partner with MRTQ PDN, she developed and taught the Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance Training series. Linda is one of the authors of the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine’s Early Childhood Workforce.

Sarah Jewell Leonard
Sarah Jewell Leonard, M.Ed has been teaching young children at the Child Study and Development Center at UNH since 2000. In addition to her role as an Early Childhood Teacher, Mrs. Leonard has served as a cooperating teacher for more than 30 undergraduates in the Family Studies Department. She has taught in the Continuing Education Department and presented within the Family Studies Department. She graduated from UNH with a B.S in Family Studies with a Young Child concentration and certification to teach Nursery School and Kindergarten. Mrs.Leonard graduated from Plymouth State University with an M.Ed in Educational Leadership and a focus on Teacher Leadership. Her capstone for this degree was the implementation of Peer Observation Protocols as a tool for reflection and building trust. She holds credentials as a NH Master Teacher and Master Professional with endorsements for Workshop Trainer and Individual Mentor.
Lee Lingelbach

Lee Lingelbach is an Early Care and Youth District Coordinator for Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network. She’s been in the early care and education field for over thirty years in roles ranging from classroom teacher, program director, trainer, mentor, curricula writer, and quality improvement facilitator. Many of those years were at Peopleplace Cooperative Preschool, a Reggio inspired program. She has a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from the University of Vermont and a masters in Early Childhood Leadership from Wheelock College. Beyond her work life Lee is grounded by her family, pets, and being outdoors.

Dawn Littlefield-Gordon

Dawn Littlefield-Gordon is the lead for the Maine CDC’s obesity efforts within the ECE setting. She has worked on improving health outcomes in this setting for over a decade and focuses on providing resources and enhancing policies that work to support ECE providers and Maine children to eat healthy and be active!

Laurie Mack

Laurie L. Mack, MA, CCC-SLP is a Speech-Language Pathologist and the Executive Director of Northeast Hearing and Speech. She is a Hanen Certified Trainer for Early Childhood Educators and a faculty member of the UNE LEND program. Her trainings focus on strategies that can be implemented immediately. Laurie is an active member of Portland Connect Ed Starting Strong and the Westbrook Children’s Project, community initiatives to improve kindergarten readiness and 3rd grade reading levels. Her work in the community has focused on the evaluation and treatment of young children with speech-language delays as well as supporting parents, students, early childhood educators, specialists, and teachers in the facilitation of language and literacy with children age birth-age 5.

Erica Palmer

Erica Palmer is the Education Supervisor and one of three “Coach Leads” at Educare Central Maine, overseeing a large center-based childcare facility serving over 200 children and their families age’s birth through five. Erica provides direct supervision of Master Teachers and Educational Coaches who provide mentoring and coaching for 14 classrooms. Erica has been involved in a nation-wide acceleration grant for the past four years which has led to the development of a sustainable coaching model and framework for Educare Central Maine and KVCAP’s Child and Family Services program. This framework supports center-based childcare classrooms.

Jami Pollis

Jami Pollis, MA is an early childhood education coach for KVCAP in Waterville, ME. She has over 20 years of experience in the field of early care and education including direct service with children ages 0-5, family service work, and administration. Jami has worked in a variety of program options for children and families. The past several years of her career has been specifically focused on working with infants and toddlers and their caregivers. Jami was one of the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine’s Early Childhood Workforce field test participants.

Gita Rao

Dr. Gita Rao is currently a Pediatrician and the Clinical Director of School Based Health Centers for Greater Portland Health. From 2016-2019, she has served as a consultant to Quality Counts, a Qualidigm Company, on the Developmental Systems Integration (DSI) Project, focused on bridging communication between medical homes and early childhood community services in Cumberland County. Dr. Rao earned a joint MD/MPH degree from Boston University Schools of Medicine & Public Health. After completing her internship at Boston Children’s Hospital, Dr. Rao served at the Boston Public Health Commission as the Director of Quality Improvement for two SAMSHA funded grants on early childhood mental health. Dr. Rao then completed her pediatric clinical training at Massachusetts General Hospital for Children in 2015.
**Elizabeth Richards**  
Elizabeth has an MS in Care and Education in Early Childhood Settings from Wheelock College. Elizabeth has worked in classrooms with children ranging from infants to school age. Most recently, Elizabeth was a preschool teacher/director at a cooperative nursery school in Portland. She has been designing and presenting workshops for early childhood professionals for more than ten years, and has recently had an article on this topic published in Exchange magazine.

**Karen Robie**  
As a classroom teacher of 23 years, Karen Robbie has extensive practical knowledge about student behavior, classroom management, and school systems. She completed her certificate of graduate studies in Response to Intervention for Behavior in July 2017. Karen is now a graduate assistant and doctoral student in the Prevention and Intervention program at the University of Maine. Additionally, Karen is an endorsed trainer through the Northeast PBIS network and the University of Connecticut. Karen is also a SWIS (School-wide Information System) Facilitator and the program manager of the PBIS Regional Professional Development Cohort.

**Michael Sandberg**  
Michael Sandberg has worked with children and families for more than forty years. He has been a classroom teacher, a teacher educator, an educational and mental health consultant, a parent educator, and a child and family therapist. Michael has a master’s degree in Early Childhood Education and three years of training in family systems therapy. He is a registered counselor. He has also been an active member of the Maine Association for Infant Mental Health’s Board of Directors. Currently, he teaches as an adjunct at the University of Maine at Augusta and consults statewide with early education programs.

**Jamie Spencer**  
Jamie Spencer holds a B.A. in Psychology and Community Studies and an M.S.Ed. in Early Childhood Education. She lives in Ellsworth, Maine and works as a District Early Childhood and Youth Coordinator for Maine Roads to Quality PDN serving Hancock, Penobscot, and Piscataquis Counties. Jamie has conducted research, specific to Maine, to assess adult perceptions of sexualized behavior in the early childhood setting.

**Heather Stephenson**  
Heather Stephenson has been a Lead Educator at the Bowdoin College Children’s Center for over 20 years. She has worked in the Preschool and Older Toddler programs, then two years ago delved into the Continuity of Care model, beginning with an Infant group, currently Younger Toddlers, continuing to follow them through their Older Toddler year. Heather has studied the Neufeld paradigm and is actively applying this attachment based theory to her work.

**Carla Tanguay**  
Carla Tanguay, MA, MT-BC, is a board-certified music therapist with over 17 years of experience in clinical practice and healthcare management. The owner of Modulations Therapies, Carla provides group and individual music therapy services to children, adults, and organizations throughout Hancock and Penobscot Counties. Carla holds a Bachelor’s of Music Education in Music Therapy from the College of Wooster and a Master of Arts in Music Therapy from St. Mary of the Woods College. She has been a featured speaker at national conferences, medical schools, and healthcare organizations. Carla has published research articles in peer reviewed journals, and was recognized with a professional practice award from the American Music Therapy Association.

**Kristen Tarr**  
Kristen works for KVCAP at Educare Central Maine. She is an infant and toddler teacher and serves as the lead nature educator. She is an alumni of the University of Maine at Farmington. Kristen has been sharing her research and ideas at conferences across the United States.
**Patty Tripp**

Patty Tripp has worked with Head Start and Early Head Start programs for over 25 years. She is a trainer for early care and education professionals and she is currently working for the UMASS Donahue Institute in the Region 1 Head Start T&TA Network as an Early Childhood Specialist. Patty received her BS in Early Childhood Special Education, is a graduate of the Head Start-Johnson & Johnson Management Fellows Program, Anderson School of Management at UCLA, and holds a Masters in Child Development and Early Childhood Education with a concentration in Leadership from Wheelock College.

**Jennifer Wiessner**

Jennifer Wiessner is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and certified Sex Therapist. Her Cumberland, Maine-based private practice focuses on achieving healthy sexuality for her individual and couple clients. Jennifer also created and facilitates the Raising Sexually Healthy Children workshops series as well as specialty workshops for medical providers, dentists, therapists and learning opportunities for communities and organizations.

**Tara Williams**

Tara Williams is the Executive Director of the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children. She coordinates the new ECE Policy Leadership Program, co-leads the Right from the Start Coalition, and is a MRTQ PDN Trainer. Tara has taught in public school and private programs with children from birth to third grade. Tara was a research analyst at the National Council on Teacher Quality, has mentored teachers, and has presented workshops at regional and national conferences. She received her bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education from Boston University and her master’s in Early Childhood Leadership and Administration from Bank Street College.

**Loyann Worster**

Loyann Worster is currently a Pre-K teacher at Veazie Community School in Veazie Maine. She holds a B.S. in Early Childhood Education, with a Masters in Early intervention from the University of Maine. She is in her fourth year of teaching; and is passionate about providing a rich and engaging early education program designed to include all children and their families. Using a Reggio inspired teaching model Loyann incorporates hands-on exploratory learning for all areas of development in order to foster early inquiry.