

# 2019 Champions

for Young Children Symposium



Meaningful Family  
Engagement Using  
the Protective  
Factors Framework



August 2, 2019  
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Welcome to the 2019 Champions for Young Children Symposium!

For those of you who have attended Champions in the past and for those who are here for the first time, I hope that you will find this professional development experience both worthwhile and enriching. We could not offer this event without the consistent commitment of time and resources from multiple agencies and organizations.

This year marks the 5th Annual Champions for Young Children Symposium. Starting with the first event in 2015, the planning committee has aimed to provide a rich professional development experience around a specific theme for participants and to provide an opportunity for networking across early childhood sectors.

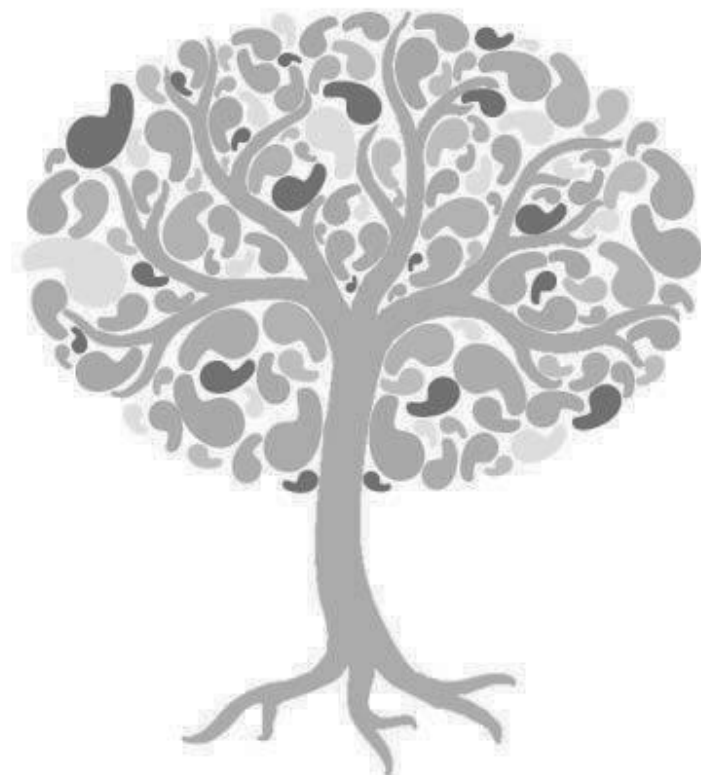
The theme for this year's Champions for Young Children Symposium is Meaningful Family Engagement Using the Protective Factors Framework. We built the program with the following goals in mind:

- To inspire and empower participants to understand their role related to meaningful family engagement using the protective factors framework.
- To provide symposium participants with evidence-based family engagement strategies to promote the protective factors.
- To provide a platform for practitioners from multiple early childhood sectors to network.

You will be given the opportunity to provide feedback about your experience at today's symposium. I hope you will use that opportunity to share your ideas with us.

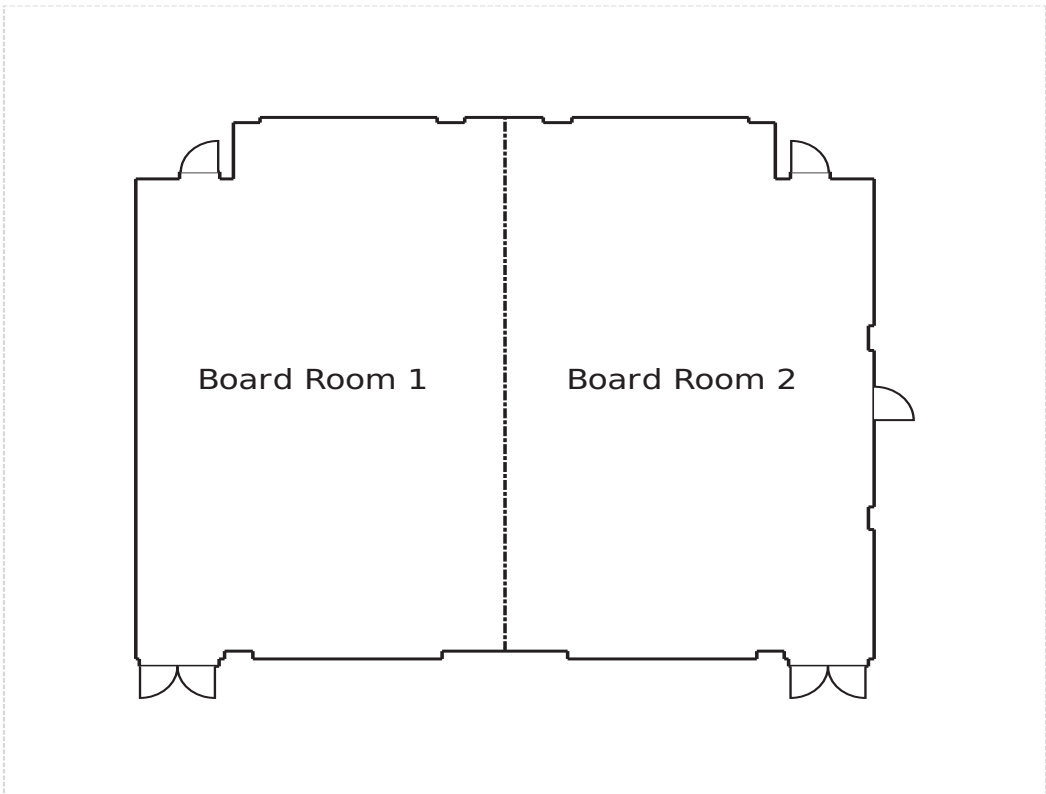
Enjoy your day!

Heather S. Googe, PhD  
2019 Champions for Young Children planning committee chair  
Research Assistant Professor, USC Yvonne and Schuyler Moore Child Development  
Research Center  
South Carolina Child Care Inclusion Collaborative, PI and Program Director  
South Carolina Partnerships for Inclusion, PI

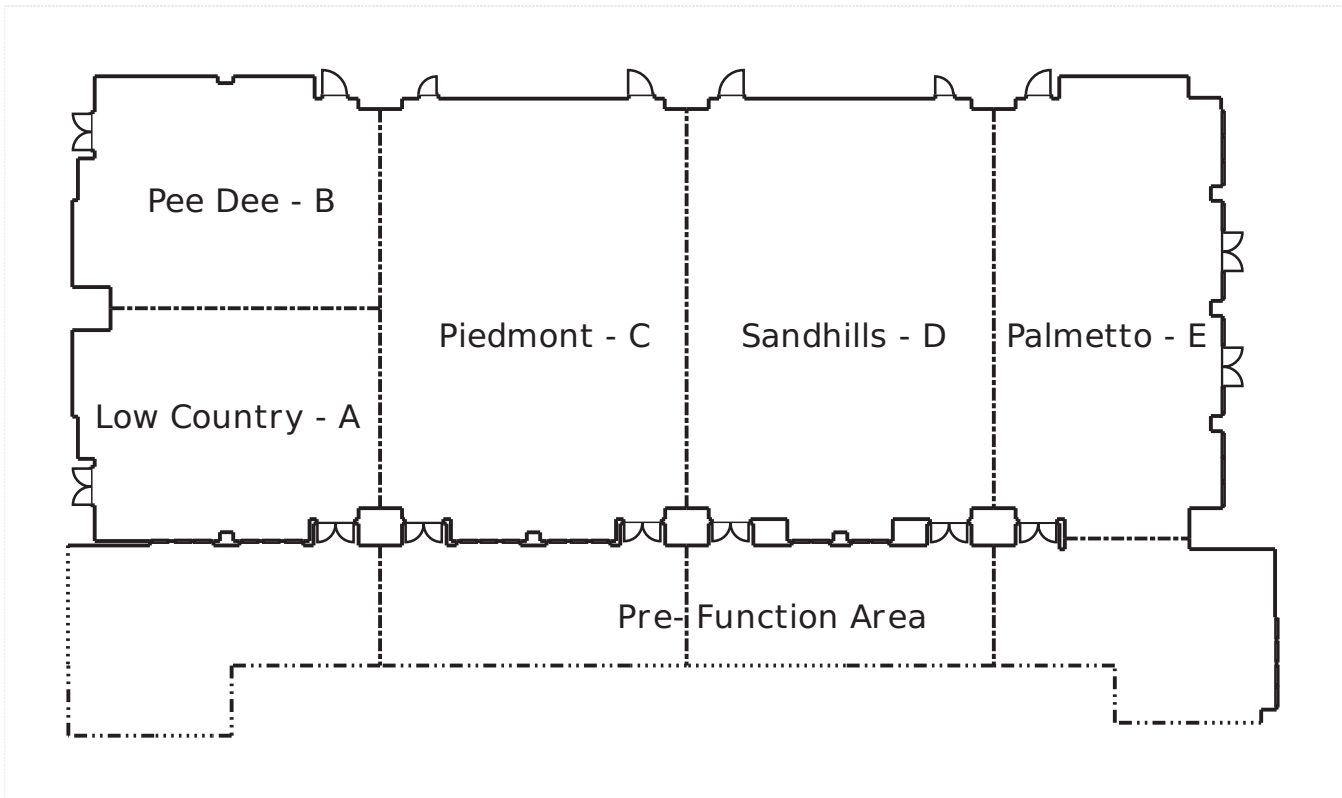


# Symposium Floor Plan

## First Floor



## Second Floor



## Wi-Fi

Good News! You will be able to stay connected while at the 2019 Champions for Your Children Symposium. Free wi-fi is available for participants by selecting the open, unsecured network: **rsd2 guest**.

## Training Credit

- **CEUs:** Participants can earn .5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for participation in featured speaker sessions and breakout sessions. One CEU is awarded for every 10 hours of training. Symposium participants have the opportunity to participate in 5 hours of training. There is no additional fee for CEUs. Participants interested in receiving CEUs should request a form to document your participation in Symposium sessions at the registration desk. Participants must attend both featured speaker sessions and both breakout sessions to receive credit. Forms should be returned to the registration desk at the end of the event.
- **Child Care:** This event is a certified conference through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development. Participants interested in receiving child care training credit can pick up a sticker sheet at the registration desk on the day of the event. Completed sheets should be returned to the registration desk at the end of the event.
- **Early Intervention:** The Team for Early Childhood Solutions has approved this training for SC Early Intervention Credential renewal.
- **Early Intervention:** The Team for Early Childhood Solutions has approved this training for SC Early Intervention Credential renewal.
- **Head Start/Early Head Start:** The Symposium is approved as a Head Start pre-service event.
- There is a strict **No Smoking** policy at R2i2. There is no smoking allowed on the R2i2 campus. Please ask someone at the registration desk to direct you to an area that is available for smoking.

## Symposium At-A-Glance

	Piedmont C/Sandhills D	Pee Dee B	Low Country A	Palmetto E	Board Room 1	Board Room 2
8:00-8:45	<b>Registration and Continental Breakfast- Pre-function Area</b>					
8:45-9:00	<b>Opening Remarks</b>					
9:00-10:00	<b>Morning Keynote</b> <i>Engaging the 'Grab-n-Go,' 'On the Move' Parents</i> <b>Pearlie Harris, RN, M.ED (PD 1.0)</b>					
10:00-10:15	<b>Break</b>					
10:15-11:45	Social Emotional Toolkit for Families <b>C. Trivedi &amp; K. Kannengieser (PD 1.5)</b>	Becoming Trauma Informed <b>J. Szalwinski (PD 1.5)</b>	Keys to Communicating with Parents <b>B. Peebles (PD 1.5)</b>	Opioids: Increasing Family Capacity through the Protective Factors, Part 1 <b>M. Grego Cunningham &amp; L. Cragan-Sullivan (PD 1.5)</b>	More vulnerable, less acknowledged: The Prevalence of ACEs and Tools for Tailoring Protective Factors for children with developmental disabilities <b>A. Moseley &amp; K. Chappell (SN 1.5)</b>	Connecting with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families <b>L. Carnesale (PD 1.5)</b>
12:00-1:15	<b>Lunch-Pre-function Area</b>					
1:15-2:45	Building Positive Relationships and Creative Supportive Environments with Children and Families <b>A. Compton &amp; L. Kuykendall (PD 1.5)</b>	Using the Protective Factors Framework to Strengthen Families Impacted by the Foster Care System <b>K. Perry (PD 1.5)</b>	Implementing Circles in Your Community to Lift Children and Parents out of Poverty <b>S. Hill-McBee (PD 1.5)</b>	Opioids: Increasing Family Capacity through the Protective Factors, Part 2 <b>(PD 1.5)</b>	The Meta-Play Method & Dynamic Behavior Theory of Autism (DBTA) <b>E. Tyler (SN 1.5)</b>	3 Ways to Foster Meaningful Connection <b>A. Reaves (PD 1.5)</b>
2:45-3:00	<b>Break</b>					
3:00-4:00	<b>Afternoon Keynote</b> <i>Relating at the Speed of Trust: Becoming Authentically Present with Families</i> <b>Dr. Gerard Costa (PD 1.0)</b>					

PD –Professional Development

SN –Special Needs



## Morning Featured Speaker

### **Pearlie Harris, RN, M.ED and Royal Castle Early Learning Institute Owner/Director**

Pearlie Harris, owner and director of Royal Castle Early Learning Institute, strives to enhance and provide educational growth and development for young children. Harris has a devotional commitment to creating an environment that stimulates a holistic child. Pearlie Harris's extensive educational background has allowed her to manage an established incorporation. As a Registered Nurse with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, a Master of Education with a concentration in Curriculum and Instruction in Early Childhood from the University of New Orleans, a licensed Child Care Health Consultant, and a certified CLASS Observer, Harris incorporates all educational sectors into the operation of her childcare centers.



As a Child Care Health Consultant for the State of Louisiana, Harris facilitates trainings regarding health and safety, medication administration, as well as any trainings that require the blue certificate. Moreover, Harris advises childcare center start-ups that are in different stages of the business cycle. The areas she helps include but are not limited to building their enrollment, resolving staff conflict(s), enhancing family engagement and parent workshops.

Harris sees Royal Castle Early Learning Institute as a great opportunity to advance the lives of our future generations because ages 0-5 is the time when a child's brain develops the most. Harris presents a strong work ethic as she hires and trains staff, establishes sturdy relationships with programs local and far, and ensures the growth of the children at her childcare centers.

Harris reminisces on the honor of being a stopping point by Former First Lady Michelle Obama during her Let's Move Campaign in 2011. Former First Lady exalted her appreciation and encouragement of healthy, active children to the parents and children of Royal Castle. Harris has been able to continuously grow and enhance her business in New Orleans, and she plans to do so for many years to come.

#### ***Title: Engaging the 'Grab-n-Go,' 'On the Move' Parents***

The morning keynote shares that research shows family engagement plays a vital part in early childhood while exposing the fact that many administrators, directors, and childhood educators have a difficult time getting parents to participate in their child's school. Come hear a Director, who operates two centers, provide practical tips on how to get the "Grab-n-Dash" parents, the "I Wish I Could" parents, and the "Hide-n-Seek" parents involved in their child's school. Valuable tips and laughs will be shared!

## Afternoon Featured Speaker

### **Dr. Gerard Costa, Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health Founder & Director**

Gerard Costa is the founding director of the Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health at Montclair State University (NJ). He is a Professor in the Department of Early Childhood, Elementary and Literacy Education (ECELE) in the College of Education and Human Services and is a member of the faculty of the Infant and Early Childhood Development (IECD) Ph.D. program at Fielding University (formerly the ICDL Graduate School). He serves as a trustee and President of the Interdisciplinary Council on Development and Learning, founded by Drs. Stanley Greenspan and Serena Wieder, and served as a consultant to ZERO TO THREE for the past 20 years. He is one of the first 16 “Expert Faculty” selected by ZERO TO THREE in the new DC: 0-5 (2016) Classification system.



Dr. Costa sits on several state and non-profit boards and was appointed by two New Jersey Governors to serve on the New Jersey Council for Young Children, where he headed the Infancy and Early Childhood Mental Health committee. He received his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Temple University. He was one of the first 16 recipients of the DIR certificate by Dr. Stanley Greenspan and Dr. Serena Wieder, and is a trained faculty member in the Brazelton Touchpoints Model. He holds an endorsement as an Infant Mental Health Clinical Mentor, through the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health and Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health.

Dr. Costa led a 4-year Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health systems development project in partnership with Child Development Services of Wyoming and the Wyoming Developmental Disabilities Division and is the principal author of a 15 module Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health training curriculum. He led a two year-long training and consultation project with 25 Infant Mental Health mentors with South Dakota Voices for Children, and he is currently leading a strategic planning initiative with the Missouri Association for Infant Mental Health-Early Childhood. He has presented keynotes, workshops and trainings at hundreds of events and programs.

Dr. Costa has been honored with numerous awards including the Christian Kjeldsen Champion for Children Award by the NJ Child Care Advisory Council, the Lucille Weistuch Early Childhood Special Education Award, by the New Jersey Division for Early Childhood (NJDEC), and the Golden Bell Leadership Award, by the New Jersey Mental Health Association. He is a New Jersey licensed psychologist, has a consulting and training practice, and is the author of numerous articles and book chapters on autism and infant mental health. Dr. Costa has presented throughout the United States and the world.

#### ***Title: Relating at the Speed of Trust: Becoming Authentically Present with Families***

What families need most from us is to feel safe and listened to! This presentation will describe a way of thinking about our “professional FORMATION” -the idea that we who work with infants, children and families must pay attention to our own personal growth and inner lives. In our relationships with families we must become aware of our tendency to “have an agenda” and instead learn to follow the lead of the families with whom we work. Ways of “knowing”, “doing” and “being” will be described, and the critical importance of not only what we say and do, but “how we are” with families will be examined. Becoming “present” helps us be open to ourselves and our families as we support them in their journey as parents and caregivers.

# Workshop Session Information

**10:45 AM- 12:15 AM**

## **Social Emotional Toolkit for Families Piedmont C/Sandhills D**

**Presenter:** Carrie Trivedi and Kerri Kannengieser

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Family-to-Family Support, Home Visiting Programs

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Social Connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Social and emotional competence of children

**Workshop Description:** This session will use multiple modes of instruction to help participants learn about strategies and resources available to assist families in promoting social emotional development and positive child outcomes. Through Powerpoint, small/large group discussion and hands on activities, participants will come away with an understanding of how to set families of young children up for success.

### **About the Presenters:**

Carrie Trivedi is the Program Coordinator for the South Carolina Child Care Inclusion Collaborative. She holds a Bachelors in Experimental Psychology and a Masters of Arts in Teaching in Early Childhood Education from the University of South Carolina. She has worked in the field for over 15 years. During her years in the classroom, she taught Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten in Title I schools in the Columbia area.

Kerri Kannengieser is the Program Coordinator for South Carolina Partnerships for Inclusion. She holds an M.Ed. in Special Education and has 15 years of experience in the field. For 10 of these years, she worked directly with children as a special education teacher in New York.

## **Becoming Trauma Informed Pee Dee B**

**Presenter:** Jennifer Szalwinski

**Settings:** Early Care and Education

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Parental resilience, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete supports in times of need

### **Workshop Description:**

We have a responsibility to educate every single child who enters our classroom and every classroom should be a safe place to live, learn, develop and meet high academic standards. Having an understanding of students and their families is essential in building the classroom culture and meaningful relationships needed to maintain that responsibility. Trauma is prevalent and Adverse Childhood Experiences effect how students and families engage in the classroom and with schools. This session will provide the fundamental building blocks to a trauma-informed classroom and school.

### **About the Presenter:**

Jenny Szalwinski is the Assistant Director of the Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty. She is a life-long learner with over 10 years of experience. She is a member of the first cohort who completed the four graduate courses that lead to South Carolina's Add-On Certification for Teachers of Children of Poverty. As Assistant Director, Szalwinski's goals are to build strong relationships with educators around the state and to use the Center's resources to provide long-term support for them. She also will strive to instill a sense of urgency in leaders around the state for this important work.

## **Keys to Communicating with Parents Low Country A**

**Presenter:** Bonnye Peebles

**Settings:** Early Care and Education

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Parental resilience, Social connections, Social and emotional competence of children

### **Workshop Description:**

Communication is a vital part of ensuring that the care and education of young children is being met. The goal is to communicate with families in an open and responsive manner as a partner. A true partnership combines the strengths of both parents and caregivers to create something that neither could do alone. Caring for young children is not always easy, but the rewards can be as great as the challenges. Building partnerships with families is also a challenge, but children come to your program as part of a family. To be effective with children caregivers must recognize the importance of being connected with their families. In this session we will explore strategies to build solid communication pathways with families and methods that caregivers can implement to build this communication.

### **About the Presenter:**

Bonnye Peebles has been in Early Childhood Education for 33 years working in various childcare areas including classroom teacher of all ages, assistant director and curriculum coordinator. She attended the University of South Carolina for her BA degree in Social Studies and Master's degree in Early Childhood Education and South Carolina State University for her teaching certification. She lives with her husband in Chapin and is a mother of two daughters and has two grandchildren. Currently she is a Quality Coach for South Carolina Child Care Resource and Referral.

## **Opioids: Increasing Family Capacity through the Protective Factors, Part One Palmetto E**

**Presenters:** Michelle Grego Cunningham and Lorraine Cragan-Sullivan

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Family-to-Family Support, Home Visiting Programs

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete supports in times of need

### **Workshop Description:**

Using the Protective Factors Framework, this two-part session will identify opportunities to mitigate the impact of opioid exposure on children and enhance the capacity of professionals to assist caregivers. Four of the five protective factors; parental resilience, knowledge of parenting and child development, social connections, and concrete supports in times of need, will be highlighted and explored through a lens of adversity and resiliency. Throughout the session, learners will be provided opportunities to develop protective factor implementation plans in their work.

### **Part One: Parental Resilience and Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**

#### **About the Presenter:**

Michelle Greco Cunningham received a BA in Sociology from the University of Connecticut, a BSN from the University of North Carolina Charlotte and a post-baccalaureate certificate in Child Advocacy Studies from USC Upstate. She is certified in Maternal Newborn Nursing, Child Birth Education and is a Certified Trainer for the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children and ACE Master Trainer. She is employed by Prisma Health-Upstate in the Bradshaw Institute for Community Child Health & Advocacy and serves as the Program Manager for Managing Abstinence in Newborns (MAiN) and Manager of Child Abuse Prevention.

Lorraine Cragan-Sullivan has over 20 years of experience working with children and families in diverse settings. She received her Bachelor and Master degrees in psychology from Marist College and Master of Social Work degree from the University at Albany. Lorraine is employed by Prisma Health-Upstate in the Bradshaw Institute for Community Child Health & Advocacy and serves as Program Coordinator-Upstate Outreach for Help Me Grow South Carolina. She is a certified trainer in the Strengthening Families Protective Factor Framework and the CDC's Act Early Ambassador to South Carolina.



## **More Vulnerable, Less Acknowledged: The Prevalence of ACEs and Tools for Tailoring Protective Factors for Children with Developmental Disabilities**

### **Board Room 1**

**Presenters:** Amy Moseley and Kate Chappell

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Family-to-Family Support, Family Engagement

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Social connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete supports in times of need

#### **Workshop Description:**

This session for early childhood educators examines statistical findings on the risk and predictive factors of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) for families of children with developmental disabilities and identifies evidence-based strategies for maltreatment response and prevention strategies that strengthen families by tailoring the approach to building protective factors. Participants will receive tools and tactics to apply these strategies in the classroom and in family engagement.

#### **About the Presenters:**

Amy Moseley coordinates the activities of the South Carolina Child Well-Being Coalition and manages the community coalition and parent advisory work for Children's Trust of South Carolina. She has a BA in counseling and Bible from Southern Methodist College and a MA in counseling from Trevecca Nazarene University. Amy has served children and families in South Carolina, Pennsylvania and Tennessee through direct service and program management in the fields of foster care, sexual assault, disability and maternal-infant health. Amy is a certified trainer in protective factors through the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds, and an ACE Interface master trainer.

Kate Chappell is a Clinical Associate Professor with The University of South Carolina College of Nursing. She earned her BS and MS degrees in Nursing from The University of South Carolina. She has been a forensic medical provider in the SC Children's Advocacy Medical Response System network since 2011. She is a Fellow in the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners. A Ph.D. candidate in Nursing, her research is focused on prevention of child maltreatment with a particular interest in caregiver vigilance for child sexual abuse.

## **Connecting with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families**

### **Board Room 2**

**Presenter:** Lydia Carnesale

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Home Visiting Program

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Parental resilience, Social connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete supports in times of need, Social and emotional competence of children

#### **Workshop Description:**

Participants will be able to identify and understand their role when working with culturally and linguistically diverse families. Information on how to connect and support familial connections will be shared. This workshop will foster understanding of the importance of maintaining a home language for healthy growth and development of children and families. Participants will be given resources to use with families.

#### **About the Presenter:**

Lydia Carnesale is a mother of three, a Doctoral Student and Holmes Scholar with USC and the Educational Coordinator for Richland County First Steps. Her research focuses on students and families who are culturally and linguistically diverse within South Carolina. She is interested in understanding how professionals are being prepared to respond to these young learners and their families. A second interest is exploring how families engage the educational world that their children are navigating. As a Holmes Scholar, Lydia primarily supports activities related to the Parent Advocacy Group. At RCFS she supports both Family Services Advocates and Classroom Caregivers.

**1:15 PM- 2:45 PM**

**Building Positive Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments with Children and Families  
Piedmont C/Sandhills D**

**Presenter:** Angela Compton and Lynn Kuykendall

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Home Visiting Programs

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Social connections, Social and emotional competence of children

**Workshop Description:**

This interactive session will address the impact and importance of building positive relationships with every child and family. Participants will learn about the relationship between environmental variables, children's challenging behaviors, and social emotional development. Strategies to build relationships with children and families, design and create supporting environments, and ways to acknowledge and encourage positive social behaviors will be identified. Throughout the session, the focus will be on prevention and teaching appropriate skills as participants reflect on their work with children and families and generate strategies for promoting social development for every child in their care.

**About the Presenter:**

Angela Compton is an education associate with the South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Early Learning and Literacy. Angela is a life-long educator and learner who collaborates with CERDEP districts, schools and teachers, inspiring and empowering educators through supportive coaching, training, and feedback in the implementation of best practices. Before joining the Office of Early Learning and Literacy, Angela served as an instructional coach with Laurens District 55 and a facilitator for the Read to Succeed courses through the University of South Carolina. These roles allowed her the opportunity to collaborate, support and coach administrators and teachers (Pre-K-Secondary) in the understanding and implementation of best practices as well as in the use of data to inform instruction; allowing her to contribute to improving teacher practice and fostering student growth. She is passionate about igniting a spark and instilling a love of learning in every child! In her spare time, she enjoys running, attending Clemson football games, working on the farm, and writing. In the future, she aspires to write a children's book and compete in a half-marathon. Angela's educational background includes a master's degree in Language and Literacy from the University of South Carolina and a bachelor of science in Elementary Education from Winthrop University.

Lynn Kuykendall is an education associate with the South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Early Learning and Literacy. In this role, she supports CERDEP districts, schools and teachers as they implement best practices in early childhood classrooms and provides coaching, training, and feedback as needed. Prior to joining the Office of Early Learning and Literacy, Lynn served as a regional master teacher with the South Carolina Department of Education. In that role, she was responsible for supporting schools and districts in the implementation of school improvement models, collaborating with and coaching district and school-level leadership regarding all aspects of implementation and evaluation of professional growth for teachers and assisting school leadership teams in designing comprehensive human capital management systems. Lynn earned her bachelor of science in Early Childhood Education from Lander University and a master's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of South Carolina. In addition, she earned National Board Certification as an Early Childhood Generalist.

**Using the Protective Factors Framework to Strengthen Families Impacted by the Foster Care System  
Pee Dee B**

**Presenters:** Kim Perry

**Settings:** All Service Providers working with Families

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Parental resilience, Social connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete supports in times of need, Social and emotional competence of children

**Workshop Description:** This information session will highlight the Assessment Center's (AC) approach to promoting protective factors with families experiencing the crisis of foster care entry. The AC brings together key partners to provide trauma-informed needs assessments for families that emphasize the protective factors. Children receive initial medical, mental health, and developmental assessments while their families are invited to participate in comprehensive assessments that are designed to elicit strengths and barriers specific to the protective factors.

**About the Presenter:**

Kim Perry is director of the Assessment Center (AC) at Pendleton Place. She is a licensed clinical social worker and provides leadership, coordination, on-going implementation, and oversight for the AC program. The AC program seeks to improve continuity of care, maintenance of family connections, and the utilization of comprehensive evaluations to improve child and family well-being. The AC offers comprehensive services for families impacted by entry into foster care. She is proud to be a part of an innovative approach to working with families that is grounded in strengths-based and trauma-informed practices that promote the protective factors.

**Implementing Circles in Your Community to Lift Children and Parents out of Poverty  
Low Country A**

**Presenters:** Stella Hill-McBee

**Settings:** Family-to-Family Support

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Parental resilience, Social connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete supports in times of need, Social and emotional competence of children

**Workshop Description:**

The Circles model is a two-generation approach to ending poverty for the family. It incorporates the Protective Factors Framework. This is a community-initiative that involves volunteers and service partners. Circles' secret is matching two community volunteers with each family while they make an 18 to 24 months-long commitment to help the parents and children reach their goals to exit poverty.

**About the Presenter:**

"Where there's a wall, build stairs." That is the message Stella (Cook) Hill-McBee shares, and the message she lives. Her professional background is in engineering but her heart is in people. She followed her passion for helping people and it guided her to college and an AA in Human Services and certificates in Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Gerontology. Realizing the power in attaining an education; she continued and received her BA in Human Services with a concentration in Behavioral Science. Mother of five and 'Glam-ma' of eight are at the top of the many other hats she wears. Stella is currently a Life Coach/Case Manager for SHARE/Circles Greenville County. With Circles, individuals receive supportive training to become Circle Leaders and take increasingly more active roles in giving back to the community. A circle is a unit made up of a Circle Leader and two to three volunteers from the community called Circle Allies. Circle Allies build intentional, reciprocal relationships to help Circle Leaders achieve their goals. Circle Allies and other circle volunteers join Circle Leaders in advocating for removal of community barriers as people move out of poverty. The Circles Mission is to inspire and equip families and communities to resolve poverty and thrive. Stella feels the sky is not the limit, "We create our own limits; in reality there are no limits in life if we don't allow them." Stella's mission is to free the hearts and minds of others to find their passion and pursue their destiny.

**Opioids: Increasing Family Capacity through the Protective Factors, Part Two  
Palmetto E**

**Presenters:** Michelle Grego Cunningham and Lorraine Cragan-Sullivan

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Family-to-Family Support, Home Visiting Programs

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete supports in times of need

Part Two: Social Connection and Concrete Support in Times of Need

## **The Meta-Play Method & Dynamic Behavior Theory of Autism (DBTA)**

### **Board Room 1**

**Presenter:** Erin Tyler

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Home Visiting Programs

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Social connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Social and emotional competence of children

#### **Workshop Description:**

The Meta-Play Method offers a systematic approach to fostering the development of imagination and play skills in young children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), intellectual disabilities, developmental delays, and social and emotional disabilities. By creating meaningful and purposeful play for young learners with disabilities, the Meta-Play Method provides educators, practitioners, and families with a comprehensive play-based curriculum that systematically fosters the development of imaginative thinking, pretend play, and age-appropriate social skills. Individuals diagnosed with autism or who display characteristics of autism might experience meta-representational failure. Based on Dynamic Behavior Theory of Autism (DBTA), early treatment should focus on interventions that promote object-to-person interest and focus on part-to whole-object thinking, combined with meta-representational thinking and imagination. Through video modeling, overview, and small group discussion, participants will learn how the Meta-Play Method is based on four pillars: object-to-person, the transition from part-to-whole, activities that foster imagination, and the absence of control and predictability. It is designed to shift attention and identification from objects to people, engage the child in activities that encourage meta-representational thinking, build tolerance for unpredictability, and increase understanding of whole versus parts.

#### **About the Presenters:**

Erin Tyler is the Lead National Education Consultant for TeachTown. She provides exceptional educational opportunities for all students and supports educational improvement through the use of evidence-based methodologies and the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis. Previously, Tyler was a Behavior Consultant for Shelby County/ Memphis City Schools where she supported school-based and district staff in the implementation of positive behavior supports within the school setting as well as provide trainings focused on antecedent strategies, behavioral interventions, positive reinforcement and crisis management.

## **3 Ways to Foster Meaningful Connection**

### **Board Room 2**

**Presenter:** Alek Reaves

**Settings:** Early Care and Education, Family-to-Family Support

**Targeted Protective Factors:** Social connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development

#### **Workshop Description:**

This session will provide a space for participants to discuss child sexual development, how to nurture their development, and how to foster a meaningful connection using three techniques that can be modeled in the home and classroom. Using this analysis, participants will examine the impact of language and messages received about sexuality. Using multidisciplinary research, this session will provide participants with the knowledge and skills to nurture healthy sexual development by providing accurate, non-shaming, and developmentally appropriate information about sexuality.

#### **About the Presenter:**

Alek Reaves is the Elementary Education Coordinator at Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands. Alek is an experienced presenter, having lead sessions at the Women's Health Forum and Palmetto Association for Children and Families. In her current role, she provides primary prevention education to youth and their families throughout the midlands. She passionately believes in adult responsibility for the safety of children, as well as supporting parents in having ongoing, age appropriate conversations. Through community partnerships and public awareness, she hopes to promote healthy childhood development so children can thrive and be protected from experiencing abuse.



# 2019 Champions for Young Children Symposium Planning Committee

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Eric Bellamy, *Children's Trust of South Carolina*

Anne Bergin, *South Carolina Program for Infant Toddler Care*

Jennifer Buster, *SC Department of Health and Human Services, BabyNet*

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