

Krystina Cummins

April 25- April 27th, 2018

National Head Start Conference: Anaheim, California

Notes

Wednesday April 25th, 2018

Opening Session: 9 am – 11am

During the opening session we had an opportunity to learn so much about the national Head Start Association. I learned that there are multiple policy councils across the Nation as well as sites Across the Nation that raise money and donate their money that they raised to the National Head Start Association. They get a chance to go up on stage and presented check to National Head Start Association and it was a great big thing. So then I question why our policy Council doesn't do that. I learned that the money that we raise actually goes to our parent ambassador program. Parent Ambassador's does not have much funding or backing behind it so all the money that we bring in through in kind actually gets put towards our parent ambassador program. I think this is an amazing program and I think that we should continue to support our parent ambassadors we are in our 10th here now and it's an opportunity that nobody should pass up.

Parents Have the Power: Engaging Parents through a Group Model 1pm-2pm

Parents have more power to support their child's language and brain development more than anyone. We explored the active ingredients of a successful parent group model the agencies across the country have implemented to Target increasing interactive talk at home and by extension support their child's School Readiness. He discussed ideas for solving common challenges programs face around parent Recruitment and engagement. We have learned the research behind the 30 million word gap early language exposure is a key component and academic success. We also examined and discussed the elements of a group engagement program. We discussed strategies for recruiting participants and engaging families and diverse Community Based initiatives.

Speaker:

Traci Martin, M.S., CCC-SLP

Program Manager

LENA

Understanding Stress and Trauma: How to Transform Aggression into Learning 2:30- 3:30 pm

We all know how challenging it can be to understand where a child's stress is coming from and how to help them overcome it. But every challenge is an opportunity and dealing with stress and trauma is critical to maintaining a healthy, responsive environment for the children. We explored how the brain uses symptoms of behavior to signal a need for help and how to intergrade best practice teaching strategies into these lessons.

We identified effective intervention strategies to support children with problem behavior applying brain-based knowledge. We learned to relate prevention strategies to support problem behavior using best practice teaching strategies. Developed mini lessons that implement prevention/intervention strategies to use during morning routines.

Speaker: Unknown

Note: Although this was mostly for site staff there where take home strategies. Tips and lessons that can be used at home such as making a routine and sticking to it. Helping children regulate feeling and offering choices.

Parents: Children's First Teachers, and Teacher's Best Allies

It is critical that Head Start programs do not become internally soiled as they work for the children. At this Workshop we learned and practiced strategies how together you can be more actively involved with children as a team of parents and staff. We also discussed and practice strategies that support opportunities for children to thrive at home and in school as staff and parents work together. We discussed have family involvement positively impacts academic and Social Development. How to encourage parents to support children's active learning by becoming active Learners themselves. And also discussed and practice strategies and resources that support opportunities for children to thrive at home and in school.

Speakers:

Karen Kay Rush, M.Ed.

Early Childhood Specialists

HighScope Educational Research Foundation

Kenneth Sherman

Training Specialist

HighScope Educational Research Foundation

Note: This was one of my top two favorite sessions that I attended. There was so much to learn and it was so amazing to see how in-tune the speakers were with the fact that parents are a child's first teacher. There were strategies and lessons taught that staff took back and really discussed about how important a parent is in a child's life no matter what the aspect be a school home work as a mentor as a role model Etc.

Thursday April 26th, 2018

Challenging Behaviors: What to Do When Nothing Else Works 9- 10:30 am

Children Showing challenging behaviors in and outside the classroom is nothing out of the ordinary, and Head Start teachers and parents do an amazing job of being there for them. But even so, many do not have the resources or knowledge to deal with certain types of challenging behavior in children. At this workshop we were provided with knowledge of effective prevention and intervention strategies for children who exhibit challenging behaviors. Through active participatory methods, we learned how to implement these practical and effective strategies immediately into our home and Head Start programs. We learned to identify inappropriate behaviors in young children. We developed a preventative strategy focusing on restricting their environment. Developed a replacement behavior that focuses on function of the challenging behaviors.

Speaker:

William DeMeo

Developmental Psychologist

Specialty Psychological Services

Out of the Twilight Zone: Discipline from the Inside Out 10:30- 12pm

Discipline is never easy, but if we are mindful of the underlying emotion in psychological issues that arise in children and adults and discipline situations, they can be productive. As adults we need to understand our own feelings and needs and insecurities to more effectively and appropriately discipline children. At this Workshop we discussed how to make accurate diagnosis of the discipline situation so they may be able to effectively apply the discipline techniques that are needed. We learn short and long-term consequences of unsuccessful disciplined children. Who learned a systematic hierarchy of discipline to understand child

behavior and to discipline appropriately. We also learned ways the adult frustration affects the quality of discipline decisions.

Speaker:

Ronald Mah

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

Note: this was my favorite session that I attended. So realistic and so in tune with parents and children and everyday life and everyday situations and the reality that was spoken of was the most amazing and the best analogy that I have heard of yet.

Head Start Children in Transition: Coordinating with Public Schools 2- 3:30pm

For too long the burden of Early Childhood coordination with schools has fallen on to Head Start. Now under federal law school districts have the responsibility of making agreements with Head Start and other Early Learning programs to ensure that children and families are supported as they enter Elementary School. Learning about the partnership tools that local education leaders and Head Start programs are using to strengthen this process was what this session was all about. We heard about federally required Ways school districts must coordinate with Head Start. We learn to understand why school district and Head Start coordination is critical for young children and their families. And how local educational agencies and Head Start are partnering including using tools from the national Head Start Association tool kit.

Speaker:

Scott Groginsky

Senior Advisor for Policy and Effective Parenting

National Head start Association

Public Policy Institute: Addressing Substance Abuse and Addiction

Substance abuse and addiction is an issue threatening the success of our children and their families wherever you are in the country and our leaders in Washington are taking note. This session explored what national Head Start Association is doing to support and expand efforts at reducing the impacts of opioids and substance abuse on children. It was also a discussion session to be able to provide feedback recommendations and advice to the National Head Start Association and the national Head Start Association partners. We learn to understand the work the national Head Start Association is doing around opioids and substance abuse addiction. We

shared our recommendations and thoughts about how to best address neonatal abstinence syndrome and substance abuse in general. We also identified possible solutions and best practices that can be scaled to other Head Start programs Across the Nation.

Speaker:

Thomas Sheridan

Senior Director of Government Affairs

National Head Start Association

Note: I was very interested in going to this session. I waited for the session moment after moment. I was very upset and saddened to see that there were only about 7 people in attendance total at this session. Opioid addiction and substance abuse addiction is still such a taboo. Was so sad to see the videos of the children that are born with addictions and substance abuse problems. To see how being born with such issues and how it affects you going forward in life was so prevalent to our discussion. There's so much to learn and there are not enough people trying to learn.

Friday April 27th, 2018

Valuing Diversity: Understanding and Respecting Your Culture, the child's culture and the culture of your school/center. 9- 10:30 am

Our culture is the framework of Our Lives. Children naturally develop the characteristics that their own culture values. They begin to construct their identity to understand who they are. From understanding their own culture and by responding to how others see and relate to them. We explored how understanding the impact of culture influences on both the educator and the child can improve a teacher's ability to prevent and respond to challenging Behavior. We became aware of their cultural values, assumptions and biases and how they affect their teaching style and behavioral expectations in the classroom. We learned how to be able to identify and utilize the skills and values each child brings with them to their classroom better. We also assess the interactions of culture and learning and develop plans for using what we've learned to make changes in our practices.

Speaker:

Barbara Kaiser

Author, consultant

Closing session 11am-12pm

During closing session we had the opportunity to view a video that was created during our time in Anaheim. It was amazing to be able to see the out of the hundreds of people that were there that my fellow colleagues had the opportunity to be in the video. It was great to hear from fellow parents that were represented in in the video to hear their voices loud and clear. To see their faces and no that they were there to represent us and to learn for us and to advocate for us in the future. Was great to see the many faces that I meant as well as the many faces that came with me. I have been so humbled by this opportunity and appreciate the knowledge that I gained the friends that I gained the memories that I gained. Being able to grow Within Myself and be able to watch my peers around me grow and to be able to expand our minds and be able to advocate for more families not just ours.