ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium

Sheraton Framingham Hotel & Conference Center
Framingham, Massachusetts

Supported by:
- The Arc of the South Shore
- Associates for Human Services, Inc.
- BAMSI Early Intervention
- Behavioral Concepts
- Criterion Child Enrichment
- Professional Center for Child Development
- South Bay Community Services, Early Childhood
- Thom Child and Family Services

Monday
May 7, 2018
and
Tuesday
May 8, 2018

www.meiconsortium.org
**About the Consortium**
The Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium (MEIC) was formed in 1978 to serve as a statewide nonprofit educational and advocacy organization within the Early Intervention community. The Consortium is a statewide community of providers dedicated to supporting a high quality and comprehensive Early Intervention service delivery system across Massachusetts. The Consortium (MEIC) has partnered with the Infant Toddler Advocates (ITA) to advocate, strengthen and advise the Early Intervention Community. For over 39 years, the Consortium has remained dedicated to the following objectives: (1) to provide for and improve the quality of services and care for young children and their families including, but not limited to, toddlers, infants, those with special needs, and others considered at risk for developmental delays or disabilities; (2) to provide information and advocacy to consumers and providers; and, (3) to facilitate coordination among funding agents, providers, and consumers of care and services to young children and their families.

**About the Conference**
The Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium Conference is an annual educational event for service providers and families of children ages birth to three who have or are at risk for developmental delays. This two-day conference provides an opportunity for practitioners, researchers, physicians, higher education faculty, families, and policy makers to join in learning and networking together.

**Objectives include:**
- Instill a sense of confidence, energy, and achievement for continued work on behalf of infants and toddlers with special needs and their families;
- Encourage connections among all early childhood professionals and families;
- Promote interventions that support, challenge, and celebrate individual differences;
- Explore current perspectives, research and trends related to best practice in the field;
- Expand knowledge of issues affecting the development of infants, toddlers, and families.

**Who Should Attend and Why**
Target participants include: early childhood educators, behavioral educators, child care providers, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, social workers, mental health counselors, psychologists, program administrators, parents, higher education faculty, and students working with children ages birth to three who have or are at risk for developmental delays. Please see the MEIC Conference Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy on the conference website, www.meiconsortium.org/annual-conference.

**Planning Committee**

Dawn Hartnett, LICSW, CEIS  
MEIC Conference Committee Chair  
Pediatric Behavioral Health

Rhonda Meisel, LICSW, CEIS/D  
MEIC Board Liaison  
Director, First Early Intervention Program  
Arc of the South Shore

Edith Benisty, OTR/L, CEIS  
Assistant Program Director  
Kennedy Donovan Center Early Intervention

Darla Gundler, MA  
Director, EI Parent Leadership Project, Communications & Marketing for EI  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Jennifer Mackey, MA, CCC-SLP  
Assistant Professor  
MGH Institute of Health Professions

**For More Information**
THE MASSACHUSETTS EARLY INTERVENTION CONSORTIUM  
can be found on the web at: www.meiconsortium.org
Keynote Speaker

Dr. Robert Brooks

Dr. Robert Brooks has lectured nationally and internationally and written extensively about nurturing resilience in children and adults, parenting, family relationships, and creating a positive home, school, or work environment. He is the author or co-author of 17 books, including *Raising Resilient Children: Raising Resilient Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders; The Power of Resilience: Achieving Balance, Confidence, and Personal Strength in Your Life;* and *Handbook of Resilience in Children.* He has won several awards for his work with children with special needs and their families.

Exhibitors 2018

Come prepared to browse and learn! Current exhibitors include:

- Autism Insurance Resource Center
- Bay Path University
- Beacon ABA Services
- Behavioral Concepts
- Children’s Vision Massachusetts Coalition
- Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project (EIPLP)
- HMEA
- Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Integrated Children’s Therapies, Inc
- Ironstone Therapy, Inc
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- Kennedy Day School at Franciscan Children’s
- Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)
- Massachusetts Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program
- Perkins School for the Blind
- Purple Umbrella Jewelry
- Spaulding Rehab Network - Pediatrics
- Thayer Lindsley Family-Centered Program
- The Learning Center for the Deaf
- The New England Center for Children
- Thom Child and Family Services
- Usborne Books & More

and More!
8:30 AM – 10:30 AM KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The Power of Mindsets: Nurturing Resilience in Young Children
Robert Brooks, PhD

Given the high level of stress that many children experience, it is essential that parents, teachers, and other caregivers focus on helping children to become increasingly resilient and better able to manage the many challenges they will face. This keynote will discuss specific, realistic strategies for developing a “resilient mindset” in young children, a mindset associated with behaviors that promote self-discipline, caring, responsibility, hope, and resilience.

TWO-DAY INTENSIVE WORKSHOP

Monday, May 7, 10:45 AM – 4:00 PM (Attendees must attend both days of this workshop. Part II (T1) - Tuesday, May 8, 8:30 AM - 12:45 PM)

M1/T1: Infant and Toddler Development (Part 1)
Tricia Kiefer, MEd, CEIS

In this intensive workshop, developmental theories and milestones, current brain research, and children’s play behaviors will be reviewed and applied to practice. The impact of a variety of factors, such as culture, economics, language, health, etc., will be explored and considered for impact on children’s development and family functioning. Common developmental disabilities and risk factors will be discussed and strategies for intervention will be developed in terms of child/caregiver interactions. (Maximum capacity 30 participants)

CEIS Competencies: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 3.2

10:45 AM – 4:00 PM INTENSIVE 4 HOUR WORKSHOPS

M2: Techniques and Tips for Your Sensory Tool Kit
Lisa van Gorder, OTR/L, CEIS

This workshop will give both clinicians and caregivers an understanding of what a sensory processing disorder is. Focus will be on the ability to identify what may or may not be sensory issues, giving strategies on how to treat issues in the home and community, and how to use those strategies. Additionally, this workshop will address topics on how to use sensory activities to increase attention and how to create a functional sensory diet. (Maximum capacity 40 participants)

M3: Keeping the Wheels on the Bus: Ensuring Continuous Access to Behavior Treatments for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Throughout the Transition from EI
Steve Woolf, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA, Amy Weinstock, MA, and O. Sophia Johansson, Parent

This session will provide early interventionists and parents a plan and strategy for continuing Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) treatment for children affected by ASD following their transition from Early Intervention (EI). Research has indicated that Early Intensive Behavioral Intervention (EIBI) has the best treatment outcomes when implemented over a three-year span. The average EI ASD treatment for children affected by ASD is 1 year 8 months. We need to educate families about the best practice research outcomes for ASD, which recommend a treatment duration of 3 years. Parents and EI staff need to learn how to navigate the health insurance process to maintain best practice services for children affected by ASD. This includes understanding public, private, and secondary health insurance.

View the brochure online at www.meiconsortium.org/annual-conference and register!
M4: Advanced Strategies for Pediatric Feeding Disorders  
Jessica Ironman, MS, CCC-SLP, CLC, CEIS
This workshop will give clinicians functional tools to assess and problem solve a large variety of common feeding problems as well as practical strategies to address a variety of feeding issues. Additional attention will be paid to biomedical etiologies that delay feeding progress, identifying appropriate emotional interaction, social/cultural considerations, sensory issues, and the many factors that influence the feeding process (environment, taste, texture, exposure, etc.). Clinicians will be better able to implement a feeding intervention with families, medical professionals, and children after taking this course. Those who participate in this course will have the opportunity to problem solve several case studies. This session is currently geared toward those who are working with or have some experience with children with feeding or swallowing disorders.

MS: GPS: Group Peer Support for Early Intervention Parents: Ensuring Parent Engagement & Success  
Annette Cycon, LCSW, and Lauren Harris, LMHC
Parents need support to ensure their children’s success. They want to do the best they can but their challenges are great. GPS for EI Parents provides a trauma-informed and inclusive group environment where parents can share their challenges, normalize their experience and increase their resilience, competence, and confidence. In this session, providers will learn the replicable, evidence-informed GPS Group Peer Support Model, developed over 15 years with nationwide success in diverse populations. GPS provides parents with not only a safe space to share and make connections with other parents, but also guides and empowers them to maximize their and their children’s inherent strengths and resilience. Participants in this session will leave with tangible skills that they can immediately utilize to increase positive outcomes in support groups, home visits, and interpersonal interactions.

10:45 AM – 12:45 PM WORKSHOP A SESSIONS

A1: Can You Take Care of Children if You Don’t Take Care of Yourself?  
Robert Brooks, PhD
If the various caregivers in the lives of children are experiencing a high level of pressure and stress, it is difficult for them to help children become more hopeful and resilient. This session will outline a framework with specific strategies that caregivers can use to develop “stress hardiness” and learn to lead a more balanced, meaningful life.

A2: The WHO, WHAT, WHY, HOW, and WHAT’S NEXT?  
Liz Cox and Kris Martone Levine, BS
This workshop provides an opportunity to learn about the MEIC Conference and organization and why the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project supports families to attend every year. Participants will learn about other programs within DPH and ways that families can be engaged in those programs.

A3: Accessing SSI and Other Public Benefit Programs for Families of Children with Special Medical Needs  
Gail Havelick, BA
This workshop covers federal and state public assistance programs that provide cash assistance and/or health insurance for children with physical and/or mental/emotional or developmental/intellectual disabilities or chronic illnesses. Content will include the SSI, CommonHealth, and Kaileigh Mulligan Home Care Program, with details on the eligibility criteria, how to apply for the programs, and the benefits received. Also discussed will be how to screen for which program is most appropriate, and the appeals process if the benefits are denied. This workshop will enable providers to assist families who may be seeking guidance on applying for public benefits and can be helpful directly to families who may not have been aware of their potential eligibility for a particular benefit program.

CEIS Competencies: 5.4

A4: How to Talk to Parents About Sensitive Subjects  
Jill Vetstein, LICSW, MSW, CEIS
This training will address the common mistakes therapists make when communicating with parents/caregivers. These small, subtle comments create significant obstacles in working as a team. There are specific guidelines on how to present information to families so they feel empowered and in control. Even the most seasoned clinicians make mistakes in communication, which push the family away. Learn how to connect with a family so that you are all on the same page.

A5: Why Your Brain Can’t Wear Glasses: Identifying and Addressing Cortical Vision Impairment  
Marguerite Tiabudo, MEd, and Ilse Willems, MEd
Cortical Vision Impairment (CVI) is the leading cause of visual impairments, yet children with this brain-based impairment are often left unidentified or misdiagnosed. This lack of identification can lead to a deficit in the child’s access to critical specialty services and interventions during a crucial period of development. CVI is identified by the presence of 10 visual characteristics that are observable despite a normal eye examination. By identifying and seeking diagnoses, trained parents and educators are able to implement strategies and accommodations that can build the child’s visual skills and improve their use of functional vision. This session will provide an overview of CVI and foundational knowledge including CVI “red flags”, characteristics, and general strategies and accommodations in order to create a visually friendly home environment.

View the brochure online at www.meiconsortium.org/annual-conference and register!
Day 1

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM WORKSHOP B SESSIONS

B1: The Early Interventionist and Feeding
Katherine DeMarco, MS, CCC-SLP, CEIS
This workshop looks at the role of EI providers with regard to feeding development and feeding disorders. Topics that will be covered include typical development of anatomy/physiology and feeding skills, development of cup and utensil skills, identifying signs and symptoms of feeding/swallowing disorders, and evidence-based treatment strategies. The implementation of a sensory-based feeding group within an EI program will also be discussed. The information shared at this workshop will be useful when administering the Battelle, providing parents with developmental information and in-home strategies, and when observing infants and toddlers with feeding concerns.

B2: Supporting Early Communication Skills in Bilingual Children
Rachel G. Aghara, PhD, CCC-SLP
This presentation highlights our current knowledge about typical bilingual language development. Information about bilingual skills in children with barriers to communication development is discussed. Participants learn how to make decisions, give recommendations, and implement strategies based on this knowledge and their own monolingual or bilingual language skills. We can support families and their children’s social, emotional, cognitive, and linguistic development when we know what to expect and what to recommend in early multilingual and multicultural communication development. The knowledge gained and the skills practiced in this session will help adults feel more confident in their roles as caregivers and language models for bilingual children.

B3: Serving Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: What You Need to Know
Kathy Manfield, LCSW, Marian Hartblay, MAT, MEd, LSL-S-AVED, Jennifer Johnston, EdD, CCC-SLP, Barbara Hecht, PhD, Cheryl Bakey, MS, CCC-SLP, Kimberly Bennett, MSED, CEIS, and Sarah Honigfeld, CEIS-DS, SSP
Infants and Toddlers who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HOH) face particular challenges in accessing and acquiring language. Immediate referral to D/HOH specialty providers can significantly improve child outcomes. This panel will include representatives from several Massachusetts D/HOH Specialty Service Providers. Topics include the services available through Specialty Providers, and other important resources, such as the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH), family access to more than one specialty provider, and cotreatment opportunities. Additional resources, including the 2017 Parent Guide to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Early Intervention and just released 2018 national guidelines from the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, will be discussed.

B4: Watchful Eyes on the Young Learner
Carol Kinlan, MBA, MEd
This workshop focuses on the signs frequently seen in young children (ages 2 to 7 years) who may struggle later with language-based learning disorder (LD). Children with LD issues who are not identified and remediated in the first five years of formal schooling are at significant risk for ongoing academic challenges and possible emotional and social problems throughout their lives. Attendees will be better able to understand which symptoms may indicate a learning disorder in a student; they will learn how to understand which tests should be administered, how to interpret them, and how to seek support.

B5: From Initial Intake to Preschool Transition: Collaborating with Specialty Service Providers
Melissa Adams, LCSW, CEIS, Brenda Allair, MEd, TVI, and Rachel Daniels, MS, OTR/L, ATP
This workshop will provide participants with a framework for collaborating with Specialty Service providers for children with vision loss, hearing loss, and complex medical needs, including those with multiple disabilities. From diagnosis to referral, and throughout the child’s EI experiences, all the way through transition at age 3, Specialty Services provide valuable support and information to the family and EI staff, helping to meet individualized family service plan (IFSP) child and family outcomes. Creating a collaborative team of parents, providers, and Specialty Services allows for a comprehensive approach to the child’s needs throughout the critical 0-3 years.

B6: One Early Intervention Program Addresses the NAS Epidemic
Michael Hutton-Woodland, PhD, Kim Moliterno, RN, OTR/L, and Nora Oppenheimer, MSW, LCSW
REACH Early Intervention Program will address a multi-level approach to addressing the startling increase in children coming into EI who have been exposed to drugs in utero or diagnosed with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. We will present interagency collaboration, addressing policy level opportunities, assessment, and treatment for these families and children.

View the brochure online at www.meiconsortium.org/annual-conference and register!
TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM  Registration/Exhibits • Continental Breakfast
8:30 AM – 12:45 PM  Intensive 4 Hour Workshops: T1, T2 and T3
8:30 AM – 10:30 AM  Workshop C Sessions
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM  Break/Exhibits
10:45 AM – 4:00 PM  Intensive 4 Hour Workshops: T4 and T5
10:45 AM – 12:45 PM  Workshop D Sessions
12:45 PM – 2:00 PM  Lunch/Exhibits
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM  Workshop E Sessions

TWO-DAY INTENSIVE WORKSHOP - CONTINUED
Tuesday, May 8, 8:30 AM – 12:45 PM  (Attendees must attend both days of this workshop. Part I (M1) – Monday, May 7, 10:45 AM - 4:00 PM)

M1/T1: Infant and Toddler Development (Part II)
Tricia Kiefer, MEd, CEIS
In this intensive workshop, developmental theories and milestones, current brain research, and children’s play behaviors will be reviewed and applied to practice. The impact of a variety of factors, such as culture, economics, language, health, etc., will be explored and considered for impact on children's development and family functioning. Common developmental disabilities and risk factors will be discussed and strategies for intervention will be developed in terms of child/caregiver interactions. (Maximum capacity 30 participants)

CEIS Competencies:  1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 3.2

8:30 AM – 12:45 PM INTENSIVE 4 HOUR WORKSHOPS

T2: Feeding Picky Eaters: Beyond the Chicken Nugget!
Edith Benisty, OTR/L, CEIS, and Jennifer Scholl, Parent
This workshop is for parents, caregivers, and EI clinicians who are involved in any way in the great battle of feeding a toddler. Whether you are doing the feeding or coaching someone who is, this workshop is for you! We will review toddler feeding skills, habits, and nutritional guidelines and discuss the power struggles that picky eating can bring into a relationship. We will examine the factors that affect toddler meal success. Participants will establish “rules to live by” when feeding a picky eater, strategies on how to expand the palate and increase tolerance to new foods, as well as develop menus, shopping lists, and quick techniques for weekly meal plans. With these tools and the many handouts created, goal setting and treatment planning will be made easy. Participants will leave feeling empowered to try new things and be creative!

T3: Caring for Substance Exposed Newborns: Providers, Peer Mentors, and Families Working Together with a “Trauma Informed” Approach
Karen Welling, LICSW, Laura Sternberger, LICSW, Rebecca Millner, MPH, Kristen Piskator, CARC, Brenda Cassella, and Michelle Gasper
Participants will explore and understand the relationship between substance use disorders (SUDs) and trauma in adults and children. They will learn and practice concrete, best practices to support families, caregivers, and substance-exposed-infants (SENs), including those with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). This workshop will give participants increased knowledge as well as concrete skills and approaches to use in their work with families with trauma and/or SUD issues. Finally, through the work of The Moms Do Care Project, participants will learn about the transformative power of peer support and ways to develop a peer support model of care.

10:45 AM – 4:00 PM INTENSIVE 4 HOUR WORKSHOPS

T4: Feeding Fragile Babies — Bottles and Breast — The Earliest Intervention
Jessica Ironman, MS, CCC-SLP, CLC, CEIS
This workshop is intended to help EI professionals and parents of infants from 0-12 months that were born prematurely or spent time in the NICU environment. This course thoroughly describes the NICU setting, as well as the primary interventions that parents and children are asked to go home with. We will be addressing several of the most frequently occurring obstacles for fragile babies and how to address them. Most importantly, you will be able to identify when an infant is struggling and how to help.

T5: Pregnant and Parenting Families Affected by Substance Use Disorder
Michelle Lennon, MA, and Karen Welford, MPA
This workshop addresses the issue of SUD through a two-generation lens, giving information about the effects of substance use on the mother, the family, and the newborn. Treatment during pregnancy, characteristics of infants born with NAS, the Stages of Change and the Stages of Recovery in the context of the Strengthening Families™ Protective Families framework are discussed. In addition, effective strategies to support the maternal-infant attachment and the family will be shared.

8:30 AM – 10:30 AM WORKSHOP C SESSIONS

C1: Assessing and Developing Communication Interventions for Pre-Verbal Toddlers
Brooke Littleton, MS, CCC-SLP, Tiffany Barry, MS, CCC-SLP, BCBA, and Kelley K. Henry, PsyD, BCBA-D, LABA
The bulk of toddlers enrolled in EI programs are found eligible based on receptive and expressive language delays. The goal of this workshop is to provide general early interventionists with useful strategies to informally assess the pre-verbal child’s communication competencies that can be used to guide treatment interventions accordingly. The presenters will lead a discussion of the use of visual supports, a systematically engineered environment to stimulate communication, as well as the role and the early use of technology and augmented systems to support language acquisition. The overall goal is to provide practitioners with tools and strategies that can be directly applied to their clinical work with young children.
**Day 2**

**C2: Moving, Breathing, and Connecting with Your Young Child: A Workshop with Families**

*Chrissy Collins, MA, CEIS, and Beth Williamson-Ruse, MSW, CEIS*

This experiential and informative workshop is intended for families and will provide the skills to increase the parent/child connection. Participants will learn a variety of breathing exercises and movement routines to foster a connection and a greater wellbeing for parent and child. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring a towel or yoga mat. Families can feel free to bring their child; exercises will be adapted to fit needs. Parents will walk away with the understanding of how mindfulness/yoga (moving, breathing, connecting) can be incorporated into their daily routine. This workshop will foster confidence in parent/caregiver connection in their relationship with their child and allow for moments of mutual enjoyment. *(Maximum capacity 25 participants)*

**C3: A Family Centered Approach to Special Needs Financial Planning**

*Cynthia Haddad, CFP(r)*

This session covers the common mistakes and concerns of families that have children with special needs. This workshop content matters because the state does not have enough funding to provide for everyone that has disabilities especially once they reach the age of 22. This workshop helps families and professionals learn about the government benefits that are out there but also increases awareness about the lack of funding as well. This will help families and professionals to be creative and pro-active in their planning for the future.

**C4: Widening Your Scope: Improved Confidence and Outcomes with Deaf/Hard of Hearing Children**

*Claire A. Miller, CCC-SLP, and Laurie Wallace, CCC-SLP*

Hearing loss is considered “low incidence,” but it is possible that EI clinicians will work with a family with a deaf child. Deaf children have a variety of audiological, linguistic, and family profiles. EI is key to getting children off to a solid start. But what does one do if s/he does not have specialized training in working with this population? What is the role of an EI center vs. specialty service providers? How can we improve collaboration? This presentation will review basics of hearing loss, examine the behaviors of Deaf parents that foster rich language foundations, and provide ideas and hands-on practice to prepare clinicians for effective visits and team collaboration. A parent of a deaf/hard of hearing child will also provide their unique perspective on this journey.

**C5: What to Expect from a Developmental Diagnostic Assessment**

*Jeffrey J. Skowron, PhD, BCBA-D, LABA, and Suzanne M. E. Sanda, PhD, LABA*

This workshop will provide practitioners and families with specific information about the diagnostic evaluation process, and how findings can be translated into individualized intervention goals. We will provide an overview of assessment instruments commonly used when evaluating young children’s functioning across developmental domains, with a focus on what each test can and cannot tell us about the child. We will detail the different developmental skill sets addressed by these instruments, as well as how we use the results to reach any diagnostic conclusion. We will further review how the different components of diagnostic evaluations can be used to inform treatment planning and program development thereafter. Through this in-depth review of the neurodevelopmental evaluation process, both families and practitioners will be better informed regarding what to expect from and how to use the results of the evaluations.

**C6: Transform Difficult Behaviors - Build Critical Social Emotional Competencies**

*Sam Healy, MSW, LICSW*

The Nurtured Heart Approach™ (NHA) is an internationally acclaimed method created by best-selling author Howard Glasser, ‘Transforming the Difficult Child’. This is a relationship-based social emotional curriculum in which children learn through success and clear limits. It is an easy to learn common sense set of strategies used within the context of the classroom and everyday activities. Participants will learn an approach, strategies, and specific techniques to teach children self-regulation, focus, and other critical social emotional competencies within the context of everyday activities and classroom routines. Participants will also understand the effects of temperament and trauma have on classroom behaviors and how to use relationship, clear expectations, and specific interactions to facilitate success in evidence-based academic, social, and emotional competencies.

**C7: Executive Functioning in Early Childhood**

*Jill Vetstein, LICSW, MSW, CEIS*

This training will break down the concepts of executive functioning and how executive functioning reflects early childhood. Many children struggle with these processing skills as they get older, especially those children with special learning needs. There are concrete strategies to help children build the foundation skills they need to develop successful executive functioning skills in the future. This training will identify the three stages of Executive Functioning and how it appears in each developmental stage.

**C8: Families in Recovery: Understanding Addiction and How to Support Caregivers and Their Infants Born Exposed to Substances**

*Kelly Petracic, MEd, CEIS, and Lauren Langevin, RN*

This training is focused on a basic understanding of addiction, the maintenance methods utilized during pregnancy with a comparative focus on methadone and suboxone, and the development of an understanding of challenges faced by families and the effective strategies that can be utilized to support caregivers and their infants. This is a topic of significance when considering the contextual ramifications the Opioid Epidemic is currently having on our communities. This session will support attendees in furthering their basic understanding of how addiction impacts the caregivers and families, as well as strategies that can be utilized to provide ongoing support.

**10:45 AM – 12:45 PM WORKSHOP D SESSIONS**

**D1: Teach Moving, Breathing, and Connecting with Young Children: A Workshop for Providers**

*Chrissy Collins, MA, CEIS, and Beth Williamson-Ruse, MSW, CEIS*

This experiential and informative workshop is intended for providers and will provide the skills to increase the parent/child connection. Participants will learn a variety of breathing exercises and movement routines to foster a connection and a greater wellbeing for parent and child. Please wear comfortable clothing and bring a towel or yoga mat as this workshop includes floor time. Participants will walk away with the understanding of how mindfulness/yoga (moving, breathing, connecting) can be incorporated into their daily routine. This workshop will foster confidence in parent/caregiver connection in their relationship with their child and allow for moments of mutual enjoyment. *(Maximum capacity 25 participants)*

**D2: The Hearing Aid is Buzzing: What Now?**

*Cheryl Bakey, MS, CCC-SLP, and Rupal Bhaktia, AuD*

An audiologist and speech-language pathologist will review different types of listening devices (i.e. hearing aids, cochlear implants, bone conduction hearing aids), provide opportunities for hands-on practice with listening devices, and provide suggestions for supporting parents with increasing use during the home routine. Early identification of hearing loss and EI are associated with better outcomes for children. Children who begin with early use of listening technology and consistently use their device optimize their potential for spoken language development. This session will provide EI providers with the opportunity to become more comfortable with listening devices for children.
Day 2

D3: “1, 2, 3...GROW!!!” - Engaging Families from Different Cultures in Developmental Screening
Elaine Gabovitch, MPA, and Oanh Thi Thu Bui, MHA, MA
Children with ASD and other developmental disorders from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are significantly less likely to be identified for evaluation and services and are also diagnosed at later ages than children from English-speaking families. The concepts of screening, early identification, and EI may be unfamiliar for families from diverse backgrounds. For many families, these concepts are culturally bound and they may perceive that their children will be stigmatized in their communities. 1, 2, 3…Grow!, a cable television show filmed in 7 languages, was developed to help families understand the importance of early developmental screening and what to do if they have concerns. Each show includes a discussion between the host and physician, video clips of developmental milestones, and a parent story that highlights barriers specific to that culture.

D4: Beginning Sign Language for Young Hearing Children (This workshop is also offered from 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (E4))
Nancy Keaveny, MED
There are children participating in EI who have delays in communication and may benefit from using sign language to increase their communication and relationship to their parents and providers. In order to provide modeling for communication and language development, parents and providers require training with initial and/or new signs. This workshop is for novice signers (0-35 signs) who work with hearing children and are interested in starting or increasing their sign language vocabulary. This workshop is NOT intended for more advanced signers. (Maximum capacity 40 participants.)

D5: Vision: Conditions, Assessment, Treatment and Care of Children Birth to Three Years
Danielle Ledoux, MD, Barry Kran, OD, Gayathri Srinivasan, OD, and Amy Pybus, MED, TVI
Vision impairment in young children can be difficult to recognize. Early diagnosis is critical to ensure optimal visual outcomes through treatment and ongoing care. Untreated vision problems may lead to permanent impairment and developmental delays. Children receiving EI services are at high risk for vision problems. It is important that EI Specialists, administrators, other professionals, and parents/caregivers understand vision development, vision’s impact on overall development, signs and symptoms of childhood vision problems, common diagnoses and treatment plans, local resources for facilitating diagnosis and care, and the impact that EI related to vision care can have on a child.

D6: Mediation at the Bureau of Special Education Appeals: Reaching Collaborative Resolution
Myrto Flessas, JD, and Rebecca Stone, MA
This session is an informative workshop designed to introduce participants to mediation at the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. Participants will learn about the mediation process, how to access it, and what to expect in a mediation. Mediation is a voluntary process, provided free of charge, that is available to parents and service providers when they do not agree on services and plans for children receiving EI. It is important that participants are aware of how to access mediation and how to best work collaboratively when parties do not agree on an appropriate plan or intervention for a child. This session is designed to bring information and clarity to participants about special education and EI mediation. It is also designed to reduce anxiety and make the mediation process more accessible to service providers, administrators, and parents.

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM WORKSHOP E SESSIONS

E1: Identifying and Treating Sensory Based Feeding Issues
Lisa van Gorder, OTR/L, CEIS
At least 33% of all children in specialized settings are identified with a feeding issue. A majority of these concerns stem from a physical basis which is typically motor or sensory. Many times, caregivers and staff are at a loss on how to identify the root causes as well as where to start. This workshop gives clinicians and caregivers functional tools to assess feeding problems as well as practical strategies for treating children who are difficult or problem eaters. An additional focus will be on the ability to identify sensory issues and how to create a functional sensory diet.

E2: Identifying Stress and Seeking Help: Talking About the Challenges of Parenting Children with Special Needs
Michelle Petrongolo, PsyD, BCBA, LABA, and Caitlin M. Nichols, PhD
This workshop will discuss stress in parents of children with various special needs and provide an overview of effective strategies to guide the wellbeing of parents. Parenting is a challenging task that becomes even more demanding when caregiving for a child with special developmental or medical needs. The research is clear in demonstrating that parents of children with special needs experience higher levels of stress. Furthermore, behavioral research supports that parent involvement in treatment programming has a positive effect on parent functioning and reducing stress experienced by families. Specifically, evidence-based strategies, including behavioral parent training and Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), can be effective tools in supporting parental wellbeing.

E3: Thinking about the Unthinkable: Family Preparedness Plan for Undocumented Families with U.S. Citizen Children
Ivys Fernandez-Pastrana, JD, and Carmen Rosa Norona, LCSW, MSED, CEIS
Undocumented and mixed status families living in the US struggle with their ability to remain together. Parents of children with disabilities are even more distressed due to the uncertainty of who and how their children with severe Autism, behavioral dysregulation, and/or trauma exposure would be taken care of. The Family Preparedness Plan is designed to help parents, potential caregivers, and providers to think about ways to plan for family fracture and regain some sense of control. Providers will gain knowledge on general immigration laws, the relationship between migratory status and trauma, and the Family Preparedness Plan as a trauma informed resource to support families.

E4: Beginning Sign Language for Young Hearing Children (This workshop is also offered from 10:45 AM - 12:45 PM (D4))
Nancy Keaveny, MED
There are children participating in EI who have delays in communication and may benefit from using sign language to increase their communication and relationship to their parents and providers. In order to provide modeling for communication and language development, parents and providers require training with initial and/or new signed vocabulary. This workshop is for novice signers (0-35 signs) who work with hearing children and are interested in starting or increasing their sign language vocabulary. This workshop is NOT intended for more advanced signers. (Maximum capacity 40 participants.)

View the brochure online at www.meiconsortium.org/annual-conference and register!
E5: Looking to Learn: Understanding the Effect of Visual Impairment on Learning
Amy Pybus, Med, TVI
This workshop addresses children diagnosed with visual impairments and how we can understand the world through their eyes, with a focus on helping them better engage with their environment so they can learn and grow. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on activities that a child with visual impairment experiences on a daily basis. We will demonstrate how assessment-based, simple, and inexpensive supports can improve outcomes for children and their families. We will show the important role that every family and team member of a child with visual and multiple impairments plays in helping them achieve success on a daily basis.

E6: The Developmental Play Assessment for Practitioners (DPA-P): Evaluating Children’s Progress in Play
Karin Lifter, PhD, Stephanie Long, MS, and Jeevita Sidhu, MS
This workshop will provide results on developments in play from over 450 children, with and without delays, from 8 months to 5 years. Children develop knowledge about the world through play with objects, which contributes to what children talk about and what they do in their interactions with caregivers and peers. Evaluation of play contributes to the service of intervention goals.

E7: I’m Too Busy! Thoughts on Supervising Students in EI
Jennifer Mackey, MA, CCC-SLP, Lisa Moran, MS, CCC-SLP, and Jacquelyn Murphy, MS, CCC-SLP, CEIS
This presentation will present the philosophy of supervision of students, including learning style, how to set expectations, how to provide feedback, and how to problem-solve with busy schedules. Becoming a supervisor is an elevation of your career and a way to give back to your profession, as well as mentor the next generation of EI professionals. Attendees will engage in case discussions and leave with ideas about how supervision might happen in their own work day.

E8: Understanding Autism and Related Services
Liz Ferriero, BA, CEIS, and Lauren Bartolotti Busa, MA
EI providers play a crucial role in supporting families of children diagnosed with ASD due to the intimate/established relationship in the natural setting. How we discuss and support families around an autism diagnosis needs to be individualized, culturally sensitive, and medically accurate. In this session, participants will be better informed of the identifying symptoms and diagnostic criteria for ASD, learn strategies for navigating difficult conversations pre and post diagnosis, gain essential resource knowledge, and learn from firsthand parent accounts of these early experiences.

E9: Advocating for Early Intervention – How EI Leaders, Parents and Supporters Can Advocate to Preserve and Enhance EI Services
Mary Ann Mulligan, BS
This workshop will provide EI professionals, parents, and administrators at all levels with a basic understanding of the legislative process and why advocating with the Massachusetts State Legislature is vital to preserving and enhancing the Massachusetts EI Program. This workshop will help participants understand just how powerful their voice is and how their advocacy with their local legislators can help and why advocating with the Massachusetts State Legislature is vital to preserving and enhancing the Massachusetts EI Program. Attendees will engage in case discussions and leave with ideas about how supervision might happen in their own work day.

CEU Questions: Email MEICconference@gmail.com For presenter disclosure information: www.meiconsortium.org/annual-conference
ATTENTION EARLY INTERVENTION PARENTS

The Early Intervention Parent Leadership Project invites you to dinner on Monday evening from 6:00 - 8:00 PM followed by a dynamic parent networking meeting. There is no charge for parents. You must RSVP when you register for the conference.

Location INFORMATION

SHERATON FRAMINGHAM HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER
1657 Worcester Road
Framingham, MA 01701

The host hotel, the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center, is a convenient location for this annual conference. Reservations must be made by April 7, 2018 at 5:00 PM to ensure special room rates and availability.

Please call 508-879-7200 and refer to “Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium” to obtain reduced rates.

TUITION

NOTE: Registrations postmarked/timestamped on or after April 23, 2018 and all on-site registrations will be assessed a $30.00 late fee.

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<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
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CANCELLATION/DEADLINE:
Registrations postmarked on or after April 23, 2018 (including on-site) will be assessed an additional $30.00 fee. Pre-registration will close when space is full or at 5:00 PM on April 27, 2018. Registrations postmarked (mail) or time stamped (online) after 5:00 PM on April 27, 2018 will not be processed but will be accepted on-site space permitting. Please call 617-357-5772 to verify availability prior to arriving on-site to register.

Mail-in Registration:
- Download the mail-in registration form at meiconsortium.org/annual-conference
- Registrations received via mail are subject to a $5.00 service charge
- Mail-in registration MUST include an accompanying payment
- Confirmation will be sent upon receipt of payment and completed registration form

All fees include a continental breakfast and lunch.

Cancellation Policy: Requests for refunds must be made in writing. Full refund, less a $50.00 service charge, will be made for requests postmarked on or before April 28, 2018. No refunds will be made thereafter. Refunds will not be made because of adverse weather conditions. Substitutions are always acceptable with prior notification.

Parent/Caregiver Discount: A discounted registration fee is available to parents of infants or toddlers with disabilities or children with disabilities age 12 or younger, with knowledge of, or experience with, programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

Student Discount: A discounted registration fee is available to students enrolled full time in an undergraduate or graduate educational program with a valid student ID.

Duplication of Conference Brochure: Permission is granted by MEIC to duplicate and distribute any or all of this brochure for the purpose of disseminating to potential attendees.

MEIC is not responsible for any presenter’s or participant’s statements, acts, materials, or omissions. The use of audio or video taping devices is not permitted except where noted. Seminar presenters, content, location, and date are subject to change without notice in the event of circumstances beyond our control. Unregistered guests are not permitted in meeting rooms.
May 7 & 8, 2018

MEIC Conference
C/o Regina Villa Associates
51 Franklin Street, Suite 400
Boston, MA 02110

39 Years
Of advocacy to strengthen Early Intervention service delivery and support families across Massachusetts

Massachusetts Early Intervention Consortium
Sheraton Framingham Hotel & Conference Center • Framingham, MA

Please share copies of this brochure with your colleagues and families.

www.meiconsortium.org