

The 5th Annual Art of Play and Wonderment Conference

FOSTERING BELONGING

April 13, 2024 Program

8:30–9:00 a.m.	CHECK-IN / LIGHT BREAKFAST (SERVED THROUGH 9:45)	LOCATION: 1st FLOOR
9:00–9:05 a.m.	WELCOMING REMARKS BY MANSI VASA, ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL	LOCATION: 4th FLOOR GYM
9:05–9:35 a.m.	OPENING KEYNOTE BY SCOTT G. EBERLE, PH.D., PLAY THEORIST & ESSAYIST	LOCATION: 4th FLOOR GYM

9:45–11:00 a.m. BREAKOUT SESSIONS I (Choose one of 6)

2nd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

"Bad Guy Machines" and "Shooters": The Importance of Holding Space for Children to Explore Difficult Concepts – Even the Scary Ones
Abigail Cook-Gonzalez, M.S.Ed., Director of Early Childhood, Friends Academy

1st Grade
→ 3rd Floor

Playworlds in Brooklyn: School Within a School
Beth Ferholt, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Brooklyn College

Library
→ 2nd Floor

Play Therapy with Young Children and Helping Parents Play
Lisa Dubinsky, PsyD, M.S.W., Faculty & Supervisor, William Alanson White Institute - Child & Adolescent Psychotherapy Training Program

Gym
→ 4th Floor

What's Play and What's Not
Scott G. Eberle, Ph.D., Play Theorist and Essayist

Kindergarten
→ 3rd Floor

Science in Our Backyard – Joyful Learning
Shaheen Usmani, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor, Brooklyn College
Hibsa Arif, Student, Brooklyn College
Safeya Musaid, Student, Brooklyn College

3rd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

You Are a Math Learner and Doer: Nurturing Belonging Through Asset-Based Instruction in Early Childhood Classrooms
Shequana Wright-Chung, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor, Brooklyn College

11:15 a.m.–12:30 p.m. BREAKOUT SESSIONS II (Choose one of 6)

3rd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

Rough-and-Tumble Play: Hands-On Learning and Self-Reflective Facilitation
Andrew Hauner, M.F.A., Head Teacher, Beginnings Nursery School

1st Grade
→ 3rd Floor

The Beauty of Brown
Jahidah Diaab, M.S.Ed., Curriculum Specialist/(M)atelierista, Barrow Street Nursery School

2nd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

Shhh... Listen to Your Pebble: Connecting with Nature, Ourselves, and Others
Jeanie Yeo, M.A., Archival Development and Teaching Associate, The Touchstone Center for Children

4th Grade
→ 4th Floor

Educational Leaders Creating a Sense of Belonging in Schools
John D'Amico, M.S.Ed., Special Education Teacher, ADAPT Community Network Manhattan Children's Program

Kindergarten
→ 3rd Floor

Powerful Interactions
Steve Castar, M.S.Ed., Early Childhood Coach, New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute

Gym
→ 4th Floor

Belonging, Becoming, Being: How Play Impacts Sensory Learning and Movement (and More) in Children's Development
Tommaso Lana, M.A., Founder and Facilitator, Embodied Learning



12:45–1:30 p.m.

LUNCH BREAK

LOCATION: 4th FLOOR GYM

1:30–2:45 p.m.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS III (Choose one of 7)

2nd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

Six Early Childhood Routines Designed to Empower Students to Think
Antonia Cameron, Co-Founder and CEO, ReimaginED Teaching
Chelsea Coussens, M.S.Ed., Educational Consultant, ReimaginED Teaching

4th Grade
→ 4th Floor

Making Space for Messing About
Brian Billings, M.S.Ed., M.P.S., Director, Brooklyn Schoolhouse & Adjunct Professor, Brooklyn College
Kim Turnbull, M.S.Ed., Founder, Brooklyn Schoolhouse
Zoe Halatyn, Teacher and Studio Artist, Brooklyn Schoolhouse

Library
→ 2nd Floor

Let's Wonder About Wonderment
Hillary Goldman, M.S.Ed., Early Childhood Developmental Specialist, Corlears School

Kindergarten
→ 3rd Floor

Superheroes: Empowering Play
Michelle Malakoff, M.S. Ed., Head Teacher, Corlears School
Jameel Johnson, Associate Teacher, Corlears School

3rd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

Floortime in the Early Childhood Classroom
Maya Krueger, M.S.Ed., Head Teacher, Churchill School and Center

Seedlings Yellow
→ 2nd Floor

Using a Theory of Temperament to Inform Our Work with Children and Families
Meredith Gary, M.S.Ed., Co-Director, Downtown Little School

1st Grade
→ 3rd Floor

What Do You See? Using Multicultural Works of Art to Foster a Sense of Belonging in Young Children
Saundra Ayala, M.A., M.S.Ed., Early Childhood Integration Manager, Grand Street Settlement

3:00–4:15 p.m.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS IV (Choose one of 7)

Seedlings Red
→ 1st Floor

Reflective Teaching Practice: How to Build Trust, Supportive Relationships, and Engage in Positive Conflict Resolution in Your School Community
Benna Cheung, Seedlings Head Teacher, Corlears School

2nd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

Box of Stories
Brenna Fisher, M.A., Curriculum Specialist, Barrow Street Nursery School

Kindergarten
→ 3rd Floor

You Are Seen, You Are Heard, Your Uniqueness Is Valued!
Mayra Baldi, M.S.Ed., Adjunct Lecturer, Brooklyn College

Art Studio
→ Basement

Puppetry and Playfulness: The Philosophy of Dr. Smartypants
Michael Perreca, M.F.A., Executive Director, Puppetry in Practice
Jason Leinwand, M.F.A., Education Director, Puppetry in Practice
Dr. Smartypants, Ph.D., JKLMNOP, Senior Member, Puppetry in Practice

1st Grade
→ 3rd Floor

Stories in the Classroom: Using Stories for Community, Fun, and Learning
Poppy H. O'Neill, M.S.Ed., Lead Teacher, Montessori Day School of Brooklyn

Gym
→ 4th Floor

Fostering Belonging in Early Childhood Through the Therapeutic Power of Symbolic Play
Silvia Juarez-Marazzo, LCSW, NCPsya, Co-Executive Director, Chances for Children NY

3rd Grade
→ 3rd Floor

The Belonging of Planful and Playful Math Activities in DAP
Dr. Xia Li, Associate Professor, Brooklyn College
Fatima Shoukat, Student, Brooklyn College
ShuTing Weng, Student, Brooklyn College

4:30–5:00 p.m.

CLOSING REMARKS BY SILVIA JUAREZ-MARAZZO, LCSW, NCPsya

LOCATION: 4th FLOOR GYM

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS – BREAKOUT SESSIONS I

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW ALL SPEAKER BIOS

**“Bad Guy Machines” and “Shooters”: The Importance of Holding Space for Children to Explore Difficult Concepts – Even the Scary Ones**

Abigail Cook-Gonzalez, M.S.Ed., Director of Early Childhood, Friends Academy

In this workshop, participants will hear about two emergent curricula, each developed years apart in Reggio-inspired preschool programs. In both settings, what began as an invitation for children to deepen their ideas took an unexpected turn and pivoted to conversations about guns, shooters, bad guys, and right vs. wrong. In this updated presentation, participants will learn how the educators embraced and navigated this sensitive topic in very different ways. This presentation will share the learning that took place for both the children and the adults, and how the lessons learned while developing the first curricula empowered them to act in the moment – even when faced with new environmental pressure. In this discussion, the goal is to raise as many questions as there are answers, and invite participants to reflect on practices and comfort levels when embracing challenging topics with young children.

Playworlds in Brooklyn: School Within a School

Beth Ferholt, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Brooklyn College

Playworlds are a form of adult-child joint play in which adults actively enter into the fantasy play of young children as a means of promoting the development and quality of life of both adults and children. Well-known in Sweden and Finland, playworlds arrived in early childhood classrooms in Brooklyn relatively recently. In this workshop, participants will learn about the arch of playworld development at a Brooklyn public school. They will see how the inclusion of the most-often-excluded Kindergarten students led to the blossoming and growing of playworlds. Participants will see photos and videos of playworlds in action, and they will be encouraged to speak with some of the imaginary characters, artists, and teachers who create playworlds in Brooklyn. Open discussion will also explore playworlds and their potential.

Play Therapy with Young Children and Helping Parents Play

Lisa Dubinsky, Psy.D., M.S.W.

In this workshop, participants will learn some of the theories about play therapy and its usefulness but will focus mainly on the practical aspects of play therapy. This session will also outline how to help parents understand the benefit of play as the child’s natural means of practice, self-learning, social and emotional communication, and how parents can participate. Both teachers and therapists working with young children will find this session useful to their practice; participants will come away with a greater understanding of the basis for play therapy, the therapeutic techniques that can be adjusted for the classroom, and how effective communication with parents on this subject can provide a long-term foundation for the parent-child relationship.

What's Play and What's Not?

Scott G. Eberle, Ph.D., Play Theorist and Essayist

This presentation explores the criteria for play and the contrasting correlatives of play. By the conclusion of this session, participants will have a usable working definition of play and a good and useful sense of its opposites, and be equipped with the tools to understand and navigate the changing boundary between that which is play and that which is not.

Science in Our Backyard – Joyful Learning

Shaheen Usmani, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor, Brooklyn College

Hibsa Arif, Student, Brooklyn College

Safeya Musaid, Student, Brooklyn College

You may have seen children chasing a bird on the beach or staring at a worm squirming on the playground after a rainfall. Children are fascinated and often look engaged in observing things around them. These joyful childhood experiences are perfect for both the spontaneous and the intentional teaching of science. As educators, we strive to provide an environment that allows children to become more observant of the world around them. Taking a holistic, experiential approach to science education benefits critical thinking skills. We can most effectively create this study of science right in our backyard that includes problem-solving exercises and addresses nature study projects.

Through joyful exploration, we will concentrate on science in our backyards which brings children closer to nature and expands their knowledge of the world. Scientific knowledge is not just information; it's about understanding the world that transforms us. Participants will get a hands-on experience of nature study projects relating to their immediate environment and will develop their own resources. By the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to implement and develop simple science projects from their natural surroundings.

You Are a Math Learner and Doer: Nurturing Belonging Through Asset-Based Instruction in Early Childhood Classrooms

Shequana Wright-Chung, Ph.D., Early Childhood Leadership Coach, NYC Public Schools
& Adjunct Assistant Professor, Brooklyn College

Fostering a sense of belonging is paramount to cultivating a positive, responsive, and meaningful learning environment in early childhood education. This fundamental concept is even more crucial when exploring mathematics, a subject that has the potential to either inspire or intimidate learners of all ages. When educators begin with children's assets, they can support and extend the unique strengths and brilliance each child brings to the mathematical learning spaces all around them. The intent of this workshop is to convey the idea that every child is a math learner and doer, equipping educators with tools to establish a culture of belonging that integrates mathematics into the fabric of children's everyday experiences.

By the end of the session, educators are expected to gain the skills necessary for implementing strategies rooted in an asset-based approach. These strategies aim to not only deepen children's mathematical understanding but also instill a lifelong love for learning, ensuring that each child feels valued and connected on their mathematical journey.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS – BREAKOUT SESSIONS II

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW ALL SPEAKER BIOS

**Rough-and-Tumble Play: Hands-On Learning and Self-Reflective Facilitation**

Andrew Hauner, M.F.A., Head Teacher, Beginnings Nursery School

Participants in this workshop will develop a research-informed and personally meaningful pedagogical stance toward the early childhood phenomenon of rough-and-tumble play by reviewing how theorists and practitioners of early childhood education have defined rough-and-tumble play and have explained its fundamental role in a young child's overall development and by identifying why – on both conceptual and personal levels – rough-and-tumble play remains one of the most challenging forms of early play to understand and support. The workshop will provide multiple access points to understanding and facilitating rough-and-tumble play by retracing the presenter's own experience with conducting autoethnographic research, and visual research with children, into rough-and-tumble play. We will discuss several critical theoretical aspects of rough-and-tumble play – namely, gender socialization and intercorporeality – and connect rough-and-tumble play to the cultural forms of kinesthetic experience of dance and stage combat.

Participants will be invited to explore how rough-and-tumble play can inform the emergence of curricula that not only respond to children's lines of inquiry and developmental needs but also unpack teachers' biases, even unlocking their own creative interests and empowering them to want to develop their own takes on rough-and-tumble play with the help of their young students.

The Beauty of Brown

Jahidah Diaab, M.S.Ed., Curriculum Specialist/(M)atelierista, Barrow Street Nursery School

What if we could immerse young children in experiences that give prominence to the color brown, while making brown a color to celebrate, manipulate, and create? This workshop aims to inspire educators to use hands-on approaches that celebrates "The Beauty of Brown" with our youngest learners. Whether the play material is a doll, a marker, a piece of paper, or even that lonely brown color that always gets chosen last, there is a way we can inspire a different perception in young minds and engage children on a journey toward the beauty of brown. How can we use repurposed materials to help children appreciate all the possibilities of the color brown? This presentation focuses on the historical experience, the social experiments, and the language and perceptions surrounding the color brown. The colors of the rainbow are wonderful to see but when mixed together by design they create a "Beautiful Brown." By the conclusion of the session, participants will know the importance of using the color brown purposefully in the spirit of inclusion and diversity, and gain the tools to talk to very young children about the beauty of brown that is all around.

Shhh... Listen to Your Pebble: Connecting with Nature, Ourselves, and Others

Jeanie Yeo, M.A., Archival Development and Teaching Associate, The Touchstone Center for Children

In this workshop, participants will explore the pivotal role of play, imagination, and nature in developing empathy and fostering belonging in young children. By implementing mindfulness education through nature, children are empowered to become caring, critical thinkers. The session will be composed of an experiential activity, brief presentation, and open discussion where participants will share thoughts and ideas on how to nurture an inviting learning environment full of wonder, meaning, and joy.

Educational Leaders Creating a Sense of Belonging in Schools

John D'Amico, M.S.Ed., Special Education Teacher, ADAPT Community Network Manhattan Children's Program

In this workshop, participants will learn about strategic inquiry. Participants will learn how the spread of strategic inquiry can be foundational in addressing how to overcome problems and challenges that have a negative impact on the school as a whole.

Administrators, principals, and teachers that take on leadership roles in schools have the power to create an environment that gives students and staff a sense of purpose and belonging. In creating this environment, school leaders need to work together in creating a hierarchy of problems that need to be addressed. When this hierarchy is created, staff members need have the courage to say, "This is a problem that needs to be addressed," as well as be willing to bring their "skills to the table" in an effort to help solve these problems.

By the conclusion of this session, the hope is that participants will gain the tools to act as school leaders. Participants will work with other school leaders in identifying problems that have a direct impact on a student's sense of belonging and their overall achievement.

Powerful Interactions

Steve Castar, M.S.Ed., Early Childhood Coach, New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute

What is a powerful relationship for learning that you've held in your life? Do you play that role currently for someone in your work? The three steps of Powerful Interactions: Be Present, Connect, and Extend Learning, are an entry point to building productive relationships with the adults in your workplace. This session will outline the Powerful Interactions framework and how this can lead to transformational relationships that foster belonging and learning at work.

By the end of this workshop, participants will gain an understanding of the three steps of Powerful Interactions and leave the session with specific strategies for implementing the three steps of Powerful Interactions with colleagues and all the constituents they interact with at their place of work.

Belonging, Becoming, Being: How Play Impacts Sensory Learning and Movement (and More) in Children's Development

Tommaso Lana, M.A., Founder and Facilitator, Embodied Learning

"If the child's relationship to the Earth is not secure, then all other relationships fail to develop optimally." (A.J. Ayres, 1979) In this fun, dynamic workshop, participants will embody – individually and in group – how young children's senses and movement develop through different "forms" of play. This way, participants will learn a new approach on how to support children's play that leads to the discovery of the self (body and mind), of peers (SEL), and their community (belonging).

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS – BREAKOUT SESSIONS III

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW ALL SPEAKER BIOS

**Six Early Childhood Routines Designed to Empower Students to Think**

Antonia Cameron, Co-Founder and CEO, ReimaginED Teaching
Chelsea Coussens, M.S.Ed., Educational Consultant, ReimaginED Teaching

How do we support our youngest learners and develop their confidence in their abilities to think and communicate their ideas? In this session, we will explore six 7-to-10-minute routines that can be used to develop reasoning and communication in early childhood. In addition to sharing materials (PowerPoints and lesson write-ups), we will also use video and transcripts of children engaging in these lessons to help teachers think about how they might implement these activities with their own students. In this session, participants will have an opportunity to think about high-leverage routines that can be used to develop early childhood students' ability to reason and communicate their thinking.

The routines shared focus on different content areas (math, literacy, movement, music) and are designed to bring joy into the early childhood classroom and foster a sense of belonging within their community. Meeting the learning needs of all students is a challenge all teachers confront on a daily basis. One way to help students thrive in our classrooms is to provide rich learning experiences that give them opportunities – no matter what their backgrounds – to think and to communicate their ideas and listen to those of others. There are lessons that have been specifically designed to help teachers accomplish this challenging goal – this session is designed to share these lessons with them.

Making Space for Messing About

Brian Billings, M.S.Ed, M.P.S., Director, Brooklyn Schoolhouse & Adjunct Professor, Brooklyn College
Kim Turnbull, M.S.Ed., Founder, Brooklyn Schoolhouse
Zoe Halatyn, Teacher and Studio Artist, Brooklyn Schoolhouse

This workshop will explore how designing opportunities for children to meaningfully explore and experiment with behavioral schema can serve to create a more inclusive space for children. Participants will become familiar with behavioral schema and gain insight into how behavioral schema present themselves in the classroom. By deepening their understanding and appreciation of children's play, participants will be able to identify the "what" they are seeing with greater ease, acceptance, and wonder.

Let's Wonder About Wonderment

Hillary Goldman, M.S.Ed., Early Childhood Developmental Specialist, Corlears School

This workshop is designed to provide participants with a guided and collective experience of wonder, empowering them to foster similar feelings of wonderment in their own classrooms. Participants will come away with the ability to understand and define the concept of wonderment in early childhood, and acquire best practices for facilitating wonder in their classrooms.

Superheroes: Empowering Play

Michelle Malakoff, M.S.Ed., PreK Head Teacher, Corlears School
Jameel Johnson, PreK Associate Teacher, Corlears School

One morning in the PreK classroom at Corlears School, three students arrived all wearing Spider-Man shirts. This wardrobe coincidence sparked excitement among all the students. A conversation kicked off that day about favorite superheroes and general knowledge about heroes, which eventually evolved into a comprehensive study. The study involved each child creating their own superhero character and comic book. Throughout this study, every child received celebration from their peers, families, and the school community, instilling a strong sense of pride and enhancing their sense of belonging within the classroom.

By sharing how this study was created, it is hoped that participants will understand the benefits observed from this superhero play. Participants will witness how superhero play nurtured creativity, cooperation, empathy, empowerment, problem-solving skills, and imaginative play. The discussion will also cover the importance of consent and safety within this context.

Floortime in the Early Childhood Classroom

Maya Krueger, M.S.Ed., Head Teacher, Churchill School and Center

Participants will learn the basics of DIR Floortime as an intervention method for improving relatedness and connectedness in children who tend to be withdrawn or disconnected to the world or the people in it. DIR Floortime sees the whole child and prioritizes regulation first in order for the child to be ready to connect; the theory being that if a child is not regulated they cannot move beyond their discomfort and therefore deepen meaningful relationships. This workshop will explore ways to utilize basic concepts of Floortime through relationship and play in the early childhood classroom. By the conclusion of the workshop, participants will have a basic working knowledge of the theories and be able to implement them in their own classrooms.

Using a Theory of Temperament to Inform Our Work with Children and Families

Meredith Gary, M.S.Ed., Co-Director, Downtown Little School

This workshop is based on the work of Stella Chess, Alexander Thomas, and Herbert Birch. It draws specifically from their book *Your Child is a Person*. Among the questions that this workshop will answer are: What is temperament, and how did a theory of temperament change the way that early childhood educators think about children? How does a theory of temperament and "goodness of fit," affect the way we think about parents and how we support them? We all know that different children have different needs, strengths, personalities, etc. But too often, as educators, we have uniform expectations for very different children. We expect all the children in the class to sit quietly for a story, for example, even though this might be a more challenging expectation for some children than for others. We may expect all the parents to leave at the same time rather than using a more individualized approach to separation. The goal of this workshop is to use the framework of temperament to look more closely at individual differences and discuss ways of adapting the school experience so that those differences are taken into account and so that all children and families feel a sense of belonging. We will also explore how to involve parents in an understanding of "goodness of fit," and offering support that is tailored to the child rather than one-size-fits-all.

What Do You See? Using Multicultural Works of Art to Foster a Sense of Belonging in Young Children

Sandra Ayala, M.S.Ed., Early Childhood Integration Manager, Grand Street Settlement

This session is designed to provide early childhood educators with practical and creative ways to integrate art into their daily curriculum and learn the benefits of using art to foster a sense of belonging. Works of art can support language development and social and emotional development in young children, and participants will learn skills they can use to create engaging, inclusive, and meaningful learning experiences for their preschool students. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of the important role that art can play in promoting holistic development and a love of learning in young children.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS – BREAKOUT SESSIONS IV

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW ALL SPEAKER BIOS

**Reflective Teaching Practice: How to Build Trust, Supportive Relationships, and Engage in Positive Conflict Resolution in Your School Community**

Benna Cheung, Seedlings Head Teacher, Corlears School

This is an interactive workshop including self-reflection and peer conversations. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own identity development, reflect on their own teaching practice, and think about ways to engage in supportive cross-cultural dialogue with colleagues, supervisors, and in the school community.

Box of Stories

Brenna Fisher, M.A., Curriculum Specialist, Barrow Street Nursery School

Our stories empower us. In this workshop, the facilitator will teach, model, and play with a unique teaching tool developed to foster belonging through storytelling and plan: box of stories. Each story box is a curated collection of loose parts, found objects, and natural materials. In a safe and inspiring environment, this session will share documentation of children using boxes of stories, and then invite participants to play with and create their own boxes, too.

You Are Seen, You Are Heard, Your Uniqueness Is Valued!

Mayra Baldi, M.S.Ed., Adjunct Lecturer, Brooklyn College

This workshop will empower participants with the skills to enhance their curriculum and embrace each child's uniqueness and whole identity to foster belonging in the classroom. By the conclusion of this session, participants will acquire practices and strategies to meet the needs of culturally diverse students, students of different abilities, and students with different learning styles.

Puppetry and Playfulness: The Philosophy of Dr. Smartyants

Michael Perreca, M.F.A., Executive Director, Puppetry in Practice

Jason Leinwand, M.F.A., Education Director, Puppetry in Practice

Dr. Smartyants, Ph.D., JKLMNOP, Puppetry in Practice

Puppetry is an invaluable tool for early childhood educators to engage more playfully with students while promoting literacy and language learning. In this workshop, participants will engage with puppets, puppet-making, and performance to build skills and develop the confidence to bring new friends into their classrooms. Participants will learn how to activate stories and develop characters while exploring vocal techniques and possibilities. Participants will discuss the uses of puppetry for curriculum learning as well as social and emotional learning. Puppetry is for everyone! Teachers do not need to be professional performers or artists to effectively engage in puppet play or creative play.

Stories in the Classroom: Using Stories for Community, Fun, and Learning

Poppy H. O'Neill, M.S.Ed., Lead Teacher, Montessori Day School of Brooklyn

In this session, Poppy O'Neill, M.S.Ed. will explore the different ways that she has used storytelling in her early childhood classroom and help others consider ways they can use it in their own application. Storytelling creates opportunities for many important elements of the classroom: participation; individual contribution; gains in vocabulary, language, and literacy; stronger community identity; and fun! The first part of the session will include information, description, and lots of pictures and videos of storytelling in action. The second part of the session will include opportunities to talk, share, and engage in storytelling with others. By the conclusion of this session, participants will have a greater understanding of how and when storytelling can be folded into the early childhood classroom.

Fostering Belonging in Early Childhood Through the Therapeutic Power of Symbolic Play

Silvia Juarez-Marazzo, LCSW, NCPsyA, Co-Executive Director, Chances for Children NY

In early childhood, play can be seen as "the great regulator," with symbolic play specifically acting as the royal road to supporting young children in building a strong sense of self – "I am," "I am seen," and "I belong." In this workshop, participants will learn about the evolution of symbolic play and its impact on learning and development, and explore the psychological underpinnings and developmental themes of symbolic play from birth through age 5. Participants will also learn how to structure rich, developmentally sensitive dramatic play centers, and how to create play-based strategies that address specific social and emotional challenges in early childhood.

The Belonging of Planful and Playful Math Activities in DAP

Dr. Xia Li, Associate Professor, Brooklyn College

Fatima Shoukat, Student, Brooklyn College

ShuTing Weng, Student, Brooklyn College

The workshop entails presentation on math power and its components, features a teaching video from a PreK class in Beijing, China, and the discussion of developmentally appropriate math activities for young children; the audience will also be invited to play a few math activities towards the end. By the conclusion of this session, participants will know the guidelines of designing math activities for 2- to 5-year olds and features of worthwhile math activities. The workshop is intended to promote the use of inquiry-based explicit math tasks in preschools. Key math concepts do not always emerge from children's play or everyday routine. It is compatible with DAP to plan or design math activities that promote young children's math skills.