

Arizona Department of Education

Early Childhood Education



NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2016

Please share this publication with all of your preschool and related services staff (speech pathologists, occupational therapists, etc.) and other interested parties. <u>Past publications</u> are online.

We are excited to announce the release of a highly-anticipated resource for early childhood assessment—<u>The Assessment Continuum Guide for Pre-K through Third Grade in Arizona</u>. This guidance document was developed to promote best practices for this kind of beneficial assessment process in an early childhood setting. The recommendations are for components of a comprehensive assessment system that utilizes a robust continuum of tools and resources. The recommendations rely on researched and/or evidence-based practices that meet rigorous professional standards that have been shown to positively affect outcomes for all children and families within our communities. This document is intended as a resource for all administrators and teachers who use screening measures, environmental assessments, teacher-child interaction assessments, formative assessments, and Kindergarten entry assessments (KEA). The data collected in a comprehensive assessment system can help inform practices at the local level, as well as decisions made at the state level. Thus, an emphasis is placed on the four parts of an appropriate early childhood assessment cycle: collection, analysis, planning, and implementing.

The process for developing this rich document included focus groups conducted in various regions across Arizona, with diverse groups of early learning professionals whom work in multiple settings. These settings include Head Start/Early Head Start classrooms, in-home care, and district programs. Groups were also convened with district and other program administrators, representatives of Arizona's institutes of higher education, and ADE personnel. Our purpose for these groups was to discuss assessment from varied perspectives and to develop a resource that may be useful to a variety of stakeholders.

We have planned a four-module professional development series to support the use of the document. To receive a printed copy of the document, interested persons will need to participate in the first module—Assessment for Young Children: Why and How? The module will be made available on ADE's Events Management System (EMS) in late summer. The schedule for the release of subsequent modules will be announced in a future ECE newsletter.

I hope you will join us in this endeavor to become rooted in the collection and analysis of data to inform planning and implementation of early childhood issues.

Be well.





- ⇒ PDG and IDEA Preschool Grant Revisions are due May 30, 2016
- ⇒ IDEA Preschool Applications are due May 1, 2016
- ⇒ Save the Date for the Head Start Infant Toddler Summit May 11-13, 2016. To learn more, click <u>HERE</u>. To register, please email <u>Janell.Stringfellow@phoenix.gov</u>

The Kindergarten Experience



Learn more about our collaborative
Kindergarten initiatives by following steps 1 to 3!

1

Visit our webpage at www.azed.gov/earlychildhood/

2

Click the image you see above on the right hand menu

3

Click on the links to download helpful publications and listen to webinars

Kindergarten Transition for All Children Summit Recap

By Alma Quintana, ADE ECE Program Specialist

This year's 2nd Annual Kindergarten Transition Summit, held in collaboration with Arizona's Head Start Training and Technical Assistance providers, was an opportunity for over 200 teachers, directors, principals, and head start staff from all around the state to gather to learn more about this important topic. We began the day with brief message from



the Early Childhood Education, Deputy Associate Superintendent, Nicol Russell and continued with the keynote speaker Dr. Michelle Taylor. Dr. Taylor is an assistant research professor in the T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics at Arizona State University. Her primary research interests include examining contextual and relational influences on young children's school readiness.

One of the highlights of the Kindergarten Transition summit was the superintendent panel. This panel brought together six superintendents from Maricopa, Mohave, Pima, and Yuma Counties. The emphasis of this panel was or the audience to understand that kindergarten transition is a continuum from preschool to the K12 realm. Emphasis was placed on the importance of relationships between preschool and kindergarten educators, administrators, support staff, families, and people in the community. The quality of those relationships are what ultimately contributes o a successful transition.

In addition, two breakout sessions were provided for participants. One sessions was for new participants, which gave them an opportunity to learn the current research on kindergarten transition; hear successes and challenges from teams already implementing; work on a written kindergarten transition plan for their communities. Returning participants were given the opportunity to re-connect, reflect on and evaluate their progress since the first summit, and receive information on the next phase of implementation.

Resources

Arizona Early Learning Standards ECQUIP Manual

HELP Manual

Early Literacy Guide for Families

Summer Reading

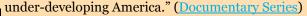
Read On Arizona



Watch All 5 Episodes of "The Raising of America" for Free until April 17th:

Don't miss your chance to view all 5 episodes of the documentary series, "The Raising of America" for free. The documentary seeks to answer the questions of, "Why are so many children in America faring so poorly? What are the consequences for the nation's future? How might we, as a nation, do better?" (http://www.raisingofamerica.org/about-documentary-series)

Current research focused on child development brings light to the notion that the quality of environment in which children spend their early years is critical to their cognitive and social emotional development and sets the stage for how well they will relate to others as they get older. Although all parents want to make available unlimited time and resources to their children, it is an unfortunate reality that parents are often pressed for both time and money. "By squeezing young families and under-investing in early childhood we are also





Each episode ranges from 32-58 minutes and explores answers to the questions above through varied viewpoints. To watch the full series, click http://www.raisingofamerica.org/watch

Supporting Kindergarten Readiness in the Digital Age:



Text Messages for Parents to Support the Transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten!

Are you or do you know a parent with a child about to start Kindergarten? Looking for bite-sized, practical tips to help prepare children for kindergarten? A program designed by Stanford University and grounded in current child development research, Ready4K text messages, available in English and Spanish, offer parents snackable, yet substantial content through text messages that engage children in learning activities and build kindergarten readiness skills. Turning daily routines into teachable moments, text messages are sent three times a week to subscribers and are meant to "break down the complexity of parenting into small steps that are easy to achieve". (http://cepa.stanford.edu/cepalabs/ready4k) There is no fee for this service, however standard texting rates apply.

Two ways to enroll families in Ready4K:

- ⇒ Include an informational flyer and enrollment form about Ready4K in Pre-K enrollment packets (sample enrollment form <u>HERE</u> and sample flyer <u>HERE</u>, please note a code is needed before using the flyer). Ready4K will send interested schools a text code to sign up.
- \Rightarrow Bulk enroll families, who have requested to receive Ready4K text messages through the enrollment forms above, by recording their information in the <u>Bulk Enrollment Spreadsheet</u> and sending it to <u>littlek@stanford.edu</u>.

Connecting All the Pieces: Educating the Young Learner Conference

June 8-10, 2016

Prescott Resort and Conference Center

1500 AZ-69, Prescott, AZ 86301

Cost: \$190.00/person

The Arizona Department of Education's Early Childhood Education Unit, in collaboration with the Arizona Head Start Collaboration Office, is hosting a summer conference, "Connecting All the Pieces: Educating the Young Learner." This conference will focus on information related to meeting the varying educational needs of young learners and approaching the work with a holistic view of those students. The intent is to support the work of administrators and teachers of young children in their preschool and kindergarten years.

Sessions will be offered on topics such as social emotional development, assessment, language & literacy, family engagement, brain research, early childhood special education, and much more. This conference is designed for Pre-K and Kindergarten Teachers, Administrators, coordinators and related support staff.

To learn more and to register click below:

https://ems.azed.gov/Home/Calendar?sd=1187

Physical Development

Cognitive-STEAM

Dual Language Learning

Social Emotional Development

Brain Research

Family Engagement

Language & Literacy

Assessment





Children have a natural sense of wonder and curiosity about the world and those around them and often express themselves in unique and imaginative ways. Early childhood educators play a critical role in a young child's educational development as they are often granted the important task of igniting creative thinking and instilling confidence in young learners. Penn State Extension's Better Kid Care offers a plethora of online resources that integrates research to provide practical tips for educators working to inspire creative expression in their classrooms. Though the Better Kids Care News feed located HERE, readers can stay informed on ECE best practices and articles highlighting current research relating to ECE. Online professional development is provided though Penn State's On Demand system that builds upon the knowledge of ECE professionals though video tutorials and lessons. Lesson titles range from "Beyond Counting: Strategies to Support Preschool Math Development" to "Early Intervention (EI): An Introduction" and many more. Access the Better Kid Care website and additional resources provided by Penn State Extension below.

Better Kid Care Website

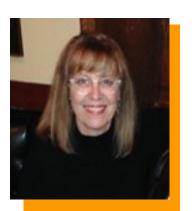
Penn State Extension On Demand Lesson List

Arts and Creativity in One-Year-Olds

Arts and Creativity in Two-Year-Olds

Arts and Creativity in Three-and-Four-Year-Olds

ADE's Early Childhood Education Unit Welcomes Two New Employees to the Team



Suzanne Perry

Early Childhood Special Education Director

Suzanne Perry has been with the ADE since 2011, having worked as both a monitoring specialist and training specialist in the area of autism and low incidence disabilities. Prior to ADE she was a special education teacher for the Madison School District for 15 years, teaching students with autism and emotional and behavioral disabilities. She achieved National Board Certification in 2001 in the area of Early Childhood Exceptional Needs, and received several other awards including district teacher of the year and the Shaklee Special Educator award. Suzanne has worked in private settings

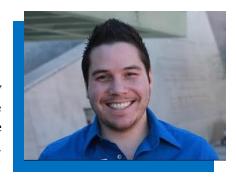
(Devereux, ACCEL, Menehune Montessori) both as a preschool teacher and special educator.

The most recent accomplishments are supporting the early and visionary work of Arizona Department of Education's Early Childhood Unit to develop sustainable practices in the area of autism by supporting teachers to implement key evidence based practices. Since 2013 more than 700 educators around the state have participated in training from the preschool to the high school levels. Several of the districts have elected to become training sites, to coach and train new practitioners within and outside of the district to enhance the educational experience of all of their students. Suzanne is proud to have developed the ADE's web page on Autism Resources and Supports, further enhancing learning opportunities for families and educators. She has presented at conferences on disability-specific topics, inclusive practices, and Statewide Systems of Support using Implementation Science in Arizona, Mexico, and Ireland. She attended ASU, University of Phoenix and NAU, and has two fantastic daughters (one of which is an educator herself).

Eric Bucher

Early Childhood Education Program Specialist (STEM)

Eric an Early Childhood Program Specialist whose special project is early childhood sciences, and he is an early childhood adjunct faculty with Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC), a NAEYC-accredited A.A.S. program. He also serves as the Vice President of Professional Development on the Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children (AzAEYC) board.



Eric's work includes nearly 8 years of dedication serving children, their families, educators, and the community around Arizona. Before joining ADE's Early Childhood Unit in December 2015, he facilitated high quality early childhood science professional development and family engagement with Arizona Science Center, serving thousands of children and adults each year. Eric's experience also includes providing job-embedded professional development with educators serving infants and toddlers, constructing and presenting meaningful workshops, and teaching and learning with children in a mixed-age program.

Eric attained a M.Ed. in Early Childhood Leadership and a B.A.S. in Early Childhood Education from Northern Arizona University (NAU). He received an A.A.S. in Early Childhood Education from PVCC through the TEACH scholarship. Eric is working towards an Ed.D. in Leadership & Innovation with Arizona State University (ASU).

Eric currently serves Northwest Maricopa and Yavapai counties and Litchfield Park.

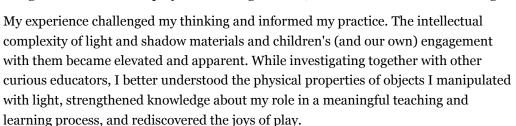
In the Spirit of the Studio: Innovative, Intentional Professional Development at Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC)

A Review By Eric Bucher, ADE ECE Program Specialist (STEM)

If adults intentionally play with and investigate materials and subsequently uncover their many affordances and possibilities before offering them to children, "how much richer might we make the learning environment for young

children, and how much more engaging and meaningful might learning be?" (Nell et. al, 2013).

On a journey to explore answers to this question, I participated in "In the Spirit of the Studio" seminar, an inquiry-centered approach to professional development at PVCC. Our facilitators Dr. Lella Gandini, U.S. liaison for the Dissemination of the Reggio Emilia Approach, and Dr. Gigi Yu, Early Childhood Art Resource Teacher with Albuquerque Public Schools, provided a rich forum to study documentation and images of children, encounter complementary experiences playing with light and shadow by using tools like overhead projectors and light tables, and stimulated reflective dialogue.



Are you interested in exploring this question, too? Consider:

- ⇒ Seek and participate in inquiry-based PD with opportunities to play with materials like those offered by ADE. For PD opportunities: azed.gov/early-childhood or azegistry.org
- \Rightarrow Design opportunities within your program's PD plan to:
- Intentionally explore a set of materials (light and shadow, recycled parts, blocks, etc.) with colleagues
- Discuss and reflect on your experience with the materials
- Offer those materials to children
- Document what happens
- Share and reflect together to inform and improve practice
- Try it again with the same (with children's and your interest) or another set of materials

Resources:

- ⇒ In the Spirit of the Studio: Learning from the Atelier of Reggio Emilia, Second Edition edited by Gandini, Hill, Cadwell & Schwall (2015)
- ⇒ "Encounters with Sunlight and a Mirror Ball" by Spahn (2011): https://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/Voices/voices/flat.PDF
- ⇒ Excerpt from From Play to Practice: Connecting Teachers' Play to Children's Learning by Nell, Drew & Bush (2013): https://www.naeyc.org/store/files/store/TOC/180%20From%20Play%20to%20Practice.pdf



Educators immerse themselves in studying the interactions between light and watercolor paint. (Credit: Yu)



An educator studies her photograph of tree's shadow and represents the image using black and white Tempera paint. (Credit: Colunga)

Thoughts on Inclusion...

By Suzanne Perry, ECE Special Education Director

My first preschool teaching job in which I was expected to include children with significant disabilities was a very long time ago. I'd had no background or training, had never even seen a child with a recognizable disability. I was given no particular guidance on how to go about it and when the little girl arrived on the first day in her conveyance, I couldn't tell if she could see me, hear me, or even wanted to be a part of the

group. Our unspoken fears were probably pretty obvious and I'm sure the family was worried as well. I went about things initially like a scientist—reading books, asking therapists what to do, just trying to keep her in proximity to the fun. The turning point came a few months later when I saw kids initiating interactions with her, not because I set it up, or urged them to include her. In spite of her physical limitations, some of our children also learned what would make her happy. No elaborate contraption, extensive training or complex activity was responsible. It was the simple friendly act of a child dancing a small toy in front of her that elicited the best reactions. She had made a friend. Twenty five years later I still see that image—and now I am there for you in your journey to include all children in your programs.



Teacher - Room 5

NAEYC's Week of the Young Child TM

Help NAEYC Celebrate Our Youngest Learners April 10-16, 2016

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) -sponsored Week of the Young Child™ kicks off April 10th! The purpose of this celebration is "to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs." (http://www.naeyc.org/woyc/faq) A full week of engaging activities to do with young children is available on the NAEYC website located here. Learn ways to create experiences that help children explore math and science concepts and develop their fine motor and early literacy skills. Need ideas to get your Week of the Young Child™ started? Read below how communities chose to celebrate:

WEEK of the YOUNG CHILD



"We held a Family Writing Workshop where parents were invited to create a book with their children. A book-writing kit was provided, and children and parents shared their books at a show and tell. The books are now part of our library collection." (WOYC)

"A group of parents and children marched to City Hall. The mayor joined us and read a proclamation adopted by our City Council about the Week of the Young Child. Additionally, we held a press conference sharing information about the importance of quality early care and education." (WOYC)

NAEYC's Week of the Young Child 2015 Activities

The Kindergarten Experience

Focus on English Language Arts in Kindergarten

By Lauren Zbyszinski, ADE ECE Program Specialist

In 2013, the Arizona Department of Education joined a multi-state consortium led by North Carolina to develop and implement a Kindergarten Developmental Inventory (KDI) that will be rolled out in Arizona for kindergarten classrooms in the 2017-18 school year. The Kindergarten Developmental Inventory (KDI) is an assessment that kindergarten teachers will use to obtain an in-depth understanding of the developmental strengths and needs of every child. It is intended to be used as a formative assessment—as a tool used throughout the entire school year to help



teachers identify the depths of each child's knowledge and abilities in all areas of

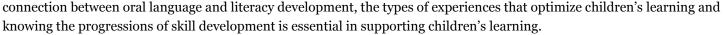
development: (1) Social and Emotional, (2) Language and Communication, (3) Approaches to Learning, (4) Cognitive, and (5) Physical and Motor Development.

In the spring of 2015, The Kindergarten Experience was launched with a Social and

Emotional Development in Kindergarten conference. The Kindergarten Experience, is a series of dynamic professional development

trainings, workshops and opportunities that offer a comprehensive lens for evidence-based practices that support the whole child in kindergarten. These identified practices are the foundation for the effective and successful implementation of the Kindergarten Developmental Inventory.

According to research, kindergarten is the foundational year that sets the stage for academic success. Having a thorough understanding of child development, the



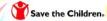
On February 26th and 27th, the Alesi Group in collaboration with the Arizona Department of Education presented *The* Kindergarten Experience: English Language Arts in Kindergarten. The two day conference focused on meaningful and

authentic leaning experiences, developing a balance between teacher led and child initiated experiences, and strategies to practice and strengthen children's developing language, listening, speaking, and writing skills. Participants had the opportunity to engage in interactive whole group experiences, as well as break out session with topics of Phonemic Awareness, Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Book Making. This work will be continued on April 22 and 23 with the next conference, Bringing Math to *Life.* Participants will the big ideas in early mathematical development so teachers can create intentional learning opportunities for children to interact with numbers and construct their own learning.





Chinle Elementary School in partnership with









Hear Local pediatrician share important information about Early Literacy

Receive: A high quality children's book just for coming!

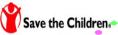
When: April 13, 2016 from 1:00 p.m.—2:30 p.m.

Where: Chinle Elementary School

Refreshments will be served.



Ganado Elementary School in partnership with





Invite YOU and your child to a Community-Wide event!







Hear: Local pediatrician share important information about Early Literacy

Receive: A high quality children's book - just for coming!

When: April 14, 2016 from 10:00 a.m.—11:30 a.m.
Where: Ganado Elementary - South Building

Refreshments will be served .









READ & RISE RADIO FORUM

APRIL 12, 2016 | 6-8 P.M. DST LIVE BROADCAST KTNN-660 AM & KWRK-96.1 FM

Community members are invited to participate in a live and interactive discussion about the benefits of early literacy for children birth through age 5.

Broadcast live via radio, this forum provides a unique opportunity to:

- Increase access to information about the importance of early literacy and resources that can support and prepare young kids for kindergarten and beyond;
- Recognize parents and caregivers as their children's first and best teacher; and
- Enhance skills to encourage adult-child interactions as a way to nurture the development of young kids.

FACILITATOR

Barsine Barney Benally, Diné College

PANELISTS

Dr. William Flood, Reach Out and Read
Sharon Hudson, Tuba City Library
Mark Povich, Three Rivers Education Foundation
Karen Spencer, Save the Children

CONTACT

Elyse Dempsey edempsey@azftf.gov NAVAJO NATION GROWING IN BEAUTY PROGRAM

Hoozhóógo Hwéé Awéé Biłjóóaash

11TH ANNUAL PARENT CONFERENCE

Experience and explore the developmental process of how your child grows. We will have many presenters and exhibitors on- site to share early care & healthy start activities which affect children with disabilities on the Navajo Nation. We look forward to your participation!

WHERE

Navajo Nation Museum Window Rock, AZ

WHEN

Thursday, April 7, 2016 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM (Registration begins at 8:30 AM) On-Site Registration day of event

WHO

Parents, teachers, educational leaders, and all others serving children on the Navajo Nation are invited to attend this conference.

FREE LUNCH

Lunch is provided to the first 120 registered participants.

REGISTRATION

We will have on-site registration on the day of the event. You may also register on-line at www.nnosers.org.

CONTACT

Navajo Nation Growing in Beauty Program at: P: (928) 871-6338 F: (928) 871-7865





A special thanks to our early literacy partners:









Early Childhood Contact Information

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ECE Program Specialist	High Needs Community (HNC)	Monitoring	School Improvement	Counties
Alma Quintana 602-364-1910 Alma.Quintana@azed.gov	Avondale Tolleson Littleton Paloma	Paloma	Peach Springs	Mohave County (Littleton and Peach Springs) Coconino County (West of 64) Maricopa County(South West) Arlington, Buckeye, Gila Bend, Laveen, Liberty, Mobile, Murphy, Palo Verde, Phoenix, Riverside, Union, Saddle Mountain, Sentinel
Erika Argueta 602-542-3160 Erika.Argueta@azed.gov	Gadsden/San Luis Crane Somerton	Parker	N/A	La Paz County Pima County(West – Ajo) Yuma County Mohave County (except Littleton and Peach Springs)
Elizabeth Hamilton 602-364-1948 Elizabeth.Hamilton@azed.gov	Fowler Glendale Pendergast	Heber- Overgaard Winslow Duncan	N/A	Greenlee County Navajo County (South of 1-40)
Lauren Zbyszinski 602-542-1102 <u>Lauren.Zbyszinski@azed.gov</u>	Roosevelt	Dysart	Eloy Akimel O'Otham	Pinal County (only 2 districts/ charters) Eloy Akimel O'otham
Lori Masseur 602-542-3136 Lori.Masseur@azed.gov	Alhambra Wilson Osborn	Tuba City	Red Mesa	Apache County Coconino County (East of 64) Navajo County (North of I-40)
Ariana Lopez 602-542-4615 <u>Ariana.lopez@azed.gov</u>	Douglas Wilcox Santa Cruz Nogales	Douglas Apache Ele- mentary	N/A	Cochise County Graham County Santa Cruz County

ECE Program Specialist	High Needs Community (HNC)	Monitoring	School Improvement	Counties
Millie Archer 602-364-1966 Millie.Archer@azed.gov	Sunnyside Flowing Wells Tucson Uni- fied Nogales	Vail Amphitheater San Fernando	Sunnyside	Pima County (East) Santa Cruz County Pinal County –Mammoth San Manuel, Picacho, Oracle, Ray, Red Rock, Superior, Toltec
Eric Bucher 602-542-3143 Eric.Bucher@azed.gov	Washington Deer Valley Peoria	Prescott Litchfield	N/A	Maricopa County (North) Aguila , Cartwright, Cave Creek, Isaac, Litchfield, Madison, Morris- town , Nadaburg, Wickenburg Yavapai County



Diane Douglas

State Superintendent of Public
Instruction