



**MAESA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS CONFERENCE**  
**Friday, October 25, 2019**

**“School, Family & Teacher Partnerships: Working Together for Success”**

Hosted by  
St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes School Lower School Campus  
400 Fontaine Street, Alexandria, Virginia

Ms. Jalene Spain Thomas, Head of Lower School

Conference Agenda

8:00 – 8:40 a.m. Registration and Refreshments/Lobby  
8:45 – 9:00 a.m. Welcome in MacKinnon Multi-Purpose Room  
9:00 – 10:10 a.m. Keynote Speaker (All Attend)  
10:10 – 10:25 a.m. Break/Visit Vendors/Travel time to Session One  
10:30 – 11:45 p.m. Workshop Session One  
11:45 – 12:30 p.m. Lunch with Affiliated Professional Discussions & Book Signings  
12:30 – 1:45 p.m. Workshop Session Two  
1:50-2:45 p.m. Closing Plenary (All Attend)  
2:45 p.m. Complete Surveys & Pick up Certificates

**Keynote Address: Getting In Sync at Home and School**  
**Carol Stock Kranowitz, MA**



Sammy has Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) and is easily over-stimulated. He is comfortable at home where the environment is quiet, every moment and mouthful is predictable, and he doesn’t have to share his toys. School is a different story; there, Sammy is out of sync. Angie also has SPD and craves stimulation. She thrives in the invigorating school milieu; at home, where she is constantly, messily on the go, she confounds and irritates her parents and siblings. Let’s consider putting on “sensory spectacles” to see why these kids behave as they do, how they meet their sensory needs with “self-therapy,” and what parents and teachers can do to help home and school get in sync.

*Carol Stock Kranowitz introduced Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) to parents and educators around the world through her groundbreaking book, *The Out-of-Sync Child*, the first publication in her “Sync” series. Carol learned about SPD at St. Columba’s Nursery School, which her sons attended*

*and where she taught for 25 years. She speaks nationally and internationally about SPD's effect on children's learning and behavior and how families, teachers, therapists and other professionals can support children as they grow — at home, at school, and out and about. A graduate of Barnard College, Carol earned her master's degree in Education and Human Development from The George Washington University. She lives in Bethesda, is a classical cellist, and dotes on five grandchildren.*

*Carol will be offering several titles for sale and also a book signing during the lunchtime.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Child Growth & Development; Inclusive Practices; Learning Environments**  
**MD & VA Core Knowledge Areas: Child Development; Curriculum; Special Needs**

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## ***Please select two sessions from the workshops offered below***

### **Workshop 1**

**Feeding and Oral Motor Development in the Preschool Years: Picky Eaters or Problem Feeders**

**Michael Lemieux, MS, CCC/SLP**

**Skill Builders, LLC**

Breathing, eating, and speech are each intricately connected. As each develops, it assists the others in developing further. What are the expected physiological changes within the preschool years? How can difficulties in one area affect other areas? Participants will discuss oral-motor development and observe how structural issues can affect both oral-motor development and general development. What can be done within the preschool setting to assist children who develop into "Picky Eaters or Problem Feeders?"

*Michael Lemieux attended George Mason University earning a bachelors in Developmental Psychology. Afterward, he worked as an Early Intervention educator and then managed daycare centers and preschools in New Hampshire for 7 years. While earning his masters in Communication Disorders at the University of New Hampshire he worked as a speech-language pathology assistant in the school districts. He earned an additional Master Certificate in Autism Spectrum Disorders at the University of Antioch and attended advanced training in DIR/Floortime, All Kinds of Minds, and the Hanen program for early intervention. Michael returned to Virginia in 2006. He has pursued advanced training in myofunctional, oral-motor planning, feeding, auditory processing, and augmentative communication while working as Lead SLP at Skill Builders LLC. Additionally, he has taught early childhood courses at Trinity College, and guest lectured at Gallaudet University and George Washington University. He is currently working on his certification as an oral myofunctional therapist. In his spare time, he enjoys gardening in his extensive herb, fruit and perennial gardens, hiking, and traveling with his husband, children and grandchild.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Child Growth & Development**

**MD & VA Core Knowledge Areas: Child Development; Health, Safety & Nutrition; Special Needs**

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## **Workshop 2**

### **Coding & Robotics with Our Youngest Students: The Why & How**

**Keri Gritt, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School**

**Lower School Technology Coordinator, Department Chair**

Thinking about implementing a coding & robotics curriculum with your youngest students? Starting with the “why,” we'll cover the rationale behind teaching coding to students in the early elementary grades. Moving to the “how,” I'll then highlight a few resources that I've found especially powerful for coding with students starting in Pre-K. This session will be interactive, and participants will gain hands-on experience programming several different robots.

*Keri Gritt is the Lower School Technology Coordinator and Technology Education Department Chair at St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School. She has a Masters of Arts in Teaching as well as a Masters of Educational Technology. Keri focuses on helping teachers integrate technology into their classrooms in meaningful and intentional ways. She especially enjoys working with students on 3D design and printing projects, coding and robotics, and multimedia creation.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Curriculum; Child Growth and Development**

**MD & VA Core Knowledge Areas: Curriculum; Child Development**

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## **Workshop 3**

### **Technology and Today's Youth: Parenting in the Digital Age**

**Christina Frank, LMFT**

This workshop inspires and empowers parents, educators, and members of the mental health community by building awareness of the impact of technology and social media on today's youth and family systems. During the presentation, we will address the impact on health and well-being through the stages of development from childhood into adulthood. From screen time to online presence to safety, this workshop provides tools and techniques on how to speak to and educate families from a systemic prospective. This workshop increases awareness of the signs and symptoms of unhealthy media use while encouraging the implementation of boundaries that can provide the foundation for healthy media use.

*Christina is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT). She completed her Master of Science in Marriage and Family Therapy at Virginia Tech University and is a member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. Christina provides counseling to individuals, couples, families, adolescents, young adults, and adults who are experiencing a range of issues including family conflict, anxiety, stress, anger, and depression. Christina is trained in teaching teens and families Digital Citizenship, and uses a systemic perspective to help parents create healthy boundaries while increasing trust and connection within the family. Christina offers community education to help families build awareness and increase safety around the use of technology and social media.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Social Emotional Development & Mental Health; Child Growth and Development**

**MD & VA Core Knowledge Areas: Child Development; Health, Safety & Nutrition**

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#### **Workshop 4**

##### **Exceptional Language: A Link to Strong Literacy Skills**

**Kate Maxwell Baker, MS CCC-SLP**

Classrooms with rich language and vocabulary improve the ability of students to gain and further develop literacy skills. But how do we create this oasis in the midst of all the academic requirements that we have as teachers? How do we know what is “typical” language development and what is delayed? What do we do if we see red flags? How can we encourage our students to love books and want to jump into the stories they read, even if they are struggling? What does a struggling reader look like? What is phonemic awareness and why is it so important? This presentation will focus on how early language development is a key marker in the development of strong literacy skills and what we can do to facilitate these skills in all of our students – typical, delayed, and advanced.

*Kate Maxwell Baker, MS CCC-SLP is a pediatric Speech Language Pathologist and Dyslexia specialist with 18 years of experience helping children achieve their potential in communication and in reading. As a mom of a 9-year-old and a 7-year-old, she knows first-hand the joys and challenges of creating a language and literacy rich environment both at home and in the classroom. Her passion is instilling a love of language, reading and writing in the hearts of her students, while also helping teachers and parents to understand the needs of these small people and incorporating small things into their day that make a big impact over time.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Child Growth and Development; Inclusive Practices; Curriculum**

**MD & VA Knowledge Areas – Curriculum; Child Development; Special Needs; Health, Safety & Nutrition**

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#### **Workshop 5**

##### **Psychologists Must Be a Part of the Team Too: Tools for Partnering with Psychologists to Understand Children and Help Them Meet Their Potential**

**L. Isabelle Blackwood-Ellis, Ph.D. Clinical Psychologist**

**Psychological and Educational Associates, PLLC**

Psychologists can be key to understanding the emotional, social, educational, and intellectual functioning of children and can be an important part of the team which seeks to help children meet their potential. This workshop will focus on the varied ways that psychologists can contribute to the important team of school, family, and teacher and on when and how to have them join the team to assist children on their path to healthy development, positive self-esteem, and empowerment. This workshop will address topics such as what do children really need to be successful in life, when to refer children for additional services, how to help parents understand the need for a referral, what information is necessary to facilitate the referral, what is psychological testing and therapy and when is it warranted, what are insights that psychologists could contribute to the team which might be helpful, what do and should teachers bring to the

partnership, and what type of relationship fosters a team approach between school, family, and teachers.

*Dr. L. Isabelle Blackwood-Ellis is a Clinical Psychologist with over 25 years of experience providing psychological services to children, adolescents, adults, schools, and organizations. She is licensed to practice in Maryland and the District of Columbia. She is trained as both a school psychologist and clinical psychologist. She provides individual, family, and couples therapy; psychological and psycho-educational testing; consultation; and training.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Social Emotional Development & Mental Health; Child Growth and Development**

**MD & VA Core Knowledge Areas: Child Development; Health, Safety & Nutrition; Special Needs**

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### **Workshop 6**

**Facilitating Sensory, Motor and Executive Functioning Development in Early Childhood**

**Amanda "Amy" Seymore, MOTR/L**

*This workshop is appropriate for teachers of children age preK through third grade. We will review developmental milestones for fine and gross motor and sensory development as well as red flags for atypical development. Hands on activities for facilitating sensory integration, fine motor and gross motor skills in the classroom through play will be performed with participants. Connections between early childhood play and the foundations of executive functioning will be discussed along with sample scenarios of how to develop EF in the classroom.*

*"Ms. Amy" graduated from James Madison University with a Masters of Occupational Therapy in 2008. During her early years of her career, she became experienced in running occupational therapy groups for elementary aged children including sensory motor, self-regulation, handwriting, and executive functioning. She has her Handwriting Without Tears level one certification. Amy uses natural environments and child-led play to reach therapy goals.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Child Growth and Development; Inclusive Practices; Learning Environments; Social-Emotional Development and Mental Health**

**MD & VA Core Knowledge Areas: – Child Development; Special Needs; Health, Safety & Nutrition**

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### **Workshop 7**

**Dyslexia for a Day: Simulation by Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center, ASDEC**

**Co-Presenters: Ellen O'Neill, Executive Director, ASDEC & Elin Paier, Decoding Dyslexia Virginia Volunteer (lead presenter)**

Dyslexia for a Day: Are you the parent or educator of a child with dyslexia? Have you found yourself wondering what individuals with dyslexia experience during the reading or writing process? This highly rated simulation provides similar frustrations and feelings through targeted reading and writing tasks to help participants gain a better understanding of and empathy for those children and adults who struggle with dyslexia. In this scripted simulation, witness how

students with dyslexia engage with the English language in the course of a school day and in the classroom. Between each simulation Ellen O’Neill will lead a discussion on guided techniques and practices that are effective for supporting students with dyslexia.

*Ellen O’Neill With a Master’s degree in Human Services management from Brandeis University, Ms. O’Neill has over 20 years of experience in management, research, grant writing, and advocacy. Ms. O’Neill has served on the Board of Directors of the Chelsea School, Maryland Nonprofits, and the Prince George’s County Child Care Resource Center. As a parent of a dyslexic child, Ms. O’Neill brings a passionate commitment to delivering high quality training and education services to children and adults with learning disabilities.*

*Elin Paier is a parent advocate with Decoding Dyslexia - Virginia (DD-VA). She has a masters degree from Stanford University in Health Psychology Education. She currently works at home, raising her two sons, both of whom have been diagnosed with dyslexia. DD-VA is a nationwide grassroots movement of parents striving to improve the lives of those with dyslexia.*

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Child Growth and Development; Inclusive Practices; Learning Environments; Social-Emotional Development and Mental Health**  
**MD & VA – Child Development; Special Needs; Health, Safety & Nutrition**

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### **Workshop 8**

**Supporting Equity and Inclusion for Preschool and Elementary Aged Children**  
**Nicole Lee Bayard, Founder of Lee Bayard Group LLC and Inclusive Life**

This workshop will focus on the importance of equity and inclusion efforts in the social and emotional development of young children. Research shows that cultural competency is supports positive identity development for the benefit of individual children and community building. The session will highlight how administrators can support teachers and teachers can support students in a healthy inquiries and understandings of difference.

**DC Core Knowledge Area: Social Emotional Development & Mental Health/ Building Family & Community Relationships**  
**Maryland Core Knowledge Area: Child Development**

*Nicole Lee is a diversity, equity and inclusion expert, leadership coach and strategist who regularly consults with nonprofits, schools and businesses to improve their organizational climate for their workforce and all those that they serve. Nicole is a nationally recognized speaker and commentator who has appeared on CNN, MSNBC, NPR, and BBC and is completing a book on strategies to support children in embracing diversity, equity and inclusion.*

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### **Closing Plenary Session**

**Maintaining Your School’s Spirit of Joy in Times of Uncertainty**  
**Laurelle Sheedy McCready, Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations,**  
**The Lab School of Washington**

The essence of an early childhood education is warmth, welcome and inclusion. But what parents really expect is that their children will be kept safe. How do we protect our children and staff while maintaining

the spirit of joy in our schools? We can no longer hide behind the “that will never happen here” philosophy. We hope it doesn’t – but that is not a plan. We will share best practices and help you design and implement actions that fit your culture. We will help you discern what will work for you, how to talk to your Vestry, your Trustees, your faculty, how to reassure parents, and how to lead your students. From the adjustments required to keep students safe, and faculty and families calm, during the DC sniper weeks, to devising shelter-in-place protocols in the event of a dirty bomb, to crafting age-appropriate lockdown drills, to designing actions for severe weather events, we as educators have entered a new unwelcome world. But with thought and planning we can give our constituents the comfort that we and they are prepared for the unimaginable, so that we can proceed with what we really love to do – teach God’s children.

*Laurelle Sheedy McCreedy has been managing risk at churches and schools for twenty years. Of necessity, Laurelle has brought to the institutions under her care learnings from FEMA, the US Department of Homeland Security, Montgomery County, Fairfax County, DC Police, as well as numerous conferences and trainings. Laurelle is currently Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations at The Lab School of Washington. Previously she was Chief Financial Officer at National Presbyterian School, and The National Presbyterian Church. She served on the Board of St. Columba's Nursery School. Additionally, she has advised her parish, St. Columba's Episcopal Church, on risk management strategies.*