CREATING EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE READY FOR ALL CHILDREN: THE ROLE OF OBSERVATION, REFLECTION & COURAGE

Friday, April 24, 2015
Contois Auditorium
Burlington City Hall
149 Church St.
Burlington, VT

6:30  Registration

7:00  Welcome and Introductions

7:15  *Brick by Brick: A Community’s Seventy-Year Commitment of Resources, Resolve and Love to its Young Children and Families*

Lella Gandini, U.S. Liaison for the Dissemination of the Reggio Emilia Approach, will share the story of the internationally acclaimed infant toddler centers, preschools and recently established elementary school in Reggio Emilia, Italy, while also offering us the opportunity to observe and reflect on the nature and quality of daily life experiences of the children, teachers and families in its classrooms.

8:00  *What Can We Learn from the Experiences of Reggio Emilia? Reflections and Possibilities*

Jeanne Goldhaber, UVM Associate Professor Emerita in Early Childhood Education, will reflect on the role that observation and reflection play in creating early childhood environments that are ready for *all* children.

8:30  Concluding Remarks

Saturday, April 25, 2015
Fleming Museum Auditorium
61 Colchester Ave.
University of Vermont
Burlington, VT

8:15  Registration

9:00  Welcome

Trish Shabazz, Administrative Director
Campus Children’s School

Fayneese Miller, Dean
College of Education and Social Services
9:15  Shoe and Meter: “We must have the courage to interpret.”

Lella Gandini and Jeanne Goldhaber will revisit one of Reggio Children’s early publications, Shoe and Meter, as an invitation to think more deeply about the multiple roles documentation plays in creating rich and joyful learning encounters for children and their teachers.

10:00 From baskets to ipads

Dee Smith and Jeanne Goldhaber will highlight the rich complexities (and painful bumps!) we have encountered in our efforts to engage in the process of documentation at the Campus Children’s School. They will discuss how the cycle of inquiry has guided the school’s pedagogical, relational, and structural decisions and provided opportunities to revisit experiences through different lenses and perspectives.

11:00 Brunch Break!  

Davis Center  
University of Vermont

12:15 Breakout Sessions A – E  

Living Learning Center  
University of Vermont

A. The interplay between individual identities and the identity of the group

What can we know about the children from the works they create? What is the teacher’s role in scaffolding children’s efforts to be representational? We will share a year-long investigation of children’s use of media to represent their thinking and points of view and discuss the role that documentation played in the choices and decisions we made to support their efforts.

Dawn St. Amour  
Mentor Teacher, Preschool South

B. STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics): A toddler’s dream curriculum!

Teachers working with a group of one and two-year-old children followed the cycle of inquiry to guide experiences based on the children’s exploration of concepts related to the realms of science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM). We will share examples of materials and experiences that engaged the children in encounters that invited discovery and collaboration.

Erika Norris  
Mentor Teacher, Young Toddlers

Dee Smith  
Co-Program/Pedagogical Leader
C. *Literacy through the infant/toddler years*

This session will cover a teacher's three-year investigation of literacy development in early childhood classrooms. We will discuss what literacy engagement looks like in an infant room, young toddler room, and older toddler room, and discuss the use of observation and reflection to support and further children's interests and literacy learning.

Emily Creller  
Mentor Teacher, Older Toddlers

D. *Clay: Creating three-dimensional worlds where stories come to life*

Clay is a medium that presents a multitude of possibilities for children of varying ages. Because of its malleability, transformative properties, and open-endedness, clay offers children opportunities to engage in rich exploration and increasingly representational play and narrative. We would like to share the journey we experienced alongside the children as we all gained a deeper understanding of how we could expand our learning through the medium of clay.

Naomi Trautman  
Mentor Teacher, Older Toddler

Morgan De Varney  
Mentor Teacher, Preschool South

E. *From superheroes to dance*

It happens most years. Superhero play erupts, generating a highly energetic form of play that overwhelms the classroom and makes teachers ask questions like, “What is superhero play about?” “Why does it hold such power to young children?” “How does a classroom navigate the different family and cultural values about this type of play?” Guided by the documentation process as a cycle of inquiry, we decided to study the meaning of the superhero play of a group of preschoolers. We will discuss our process and the unexpected curriculum and culture that our study of superhero play generated.

Amanda Terreri Ferguson  
Co-Program /Pedagogical Leader

1:45  Breakout Sessions F – J

F. *Gifting: How the exchange of literacy products can develop and maintain children's social connections*

This session will share literacy stories from Preschool North. We will examine children’s artifacts, transcribed conversations and video segments to consider the relational agenda of children's literacy behaviors and
products and explore the possibility that it is in play in all our classrooms but perhaps below our teacher "radar".
Kate Cowles
Mentor Teacher, Preschool North

G. *The work of caring in schools: From a father's Master's thesis to a daughter's classroom research*

Recall instances of caring in your own life and learning. How do they make a difference? Can we talk about caring in order to promote it? What is your hypothesis about the value of caring for teaching and learning? Let's look at what research has to say and how one teacher's research in her preschool classroom may help us think about the role of caring differently.
Cecelia Puleio John Puleio, M.Ed
Mentor Teacher, Preschool North

H. *Movement as both a right and a form of expression*

We try to understand how children engage with their community and environment by understanding how each individual interprets the world in his or her own way. We begin with a story about a group of young children who consistently seek out opportunities to climb, run, and jump both inside and outdoors. Reflecting on our knowledge of young children and seeking to support and advocate for the rights of children, we take a closer look at movement in terms of its value and its role as a form of expression.
Jennifer Chicoine
Mentor Teacher, Older Toddlers

I. *Cultivating a Relationship with Paint*

Come see how a group of children (starting as infants) explored paint over a three year time period. We will talk about the role of the teacher and the decisions made along the way in order to create supportive opportunities and environments for presenting paint to young children, using both traditional and non-traditional tools.
Erika Norris
Mentor Teacher, Infant/Toddlers

J. *Cirque du preschool*

We will share and reflect on a teacher-produced video that captures a mixed media collaboration with an art exhibit, preschoolers and a co-teaching team. The behind-the-scenes but pivotal ingredients that include the power of the
team teaching relationship and non-traditional professional development opportunities will also be discussed.

Amanda Terreri          Adam Deyo
Co-Pedagogical /Program  Technology Integration and
Leader                 Support Specialist

3:15                      Closing Remarks
3:30                      Campus Children's School Open house and Reception