

Pre-Conference Sessions

July 19 from 1-4 PM Eastern

P1. QRIS 101: Everything You Wanted to Know About QRIS but Were Afraid to Ask

This interactive, introductory session is for anyone interested in learning more about QRIS development and its impact on state early learning systems. Discussion will focus on emerging research and trends; standards, frameworks and supports and their impact on the broader system; and implementation considerations like cross-sector monitoring and supporting diverse provider populations. By the end of this session, participants will have an understanding of the evolution of QRIS over the past two decades and emerging approaches and innovations to state quality improvement efforts.

Presenters: Char Goodreau, NCECQA; Meghan Johnson, Alaska Learn and Grow; Malia Woessner, IdahoSTARS Project

P2. Using and Communicating Data to Advance Racial Equity in Early Childhood Policy

To create an equitable early care and education system, we must apply principles of equity to how we talk about and use data to improve policy and practice. This includes reimagining what research questions and measures we use, rethinking how we engage with stakeholders, and reforming how we communicate data. In this session, join Van-Kim Lin, Esther Gross, and Jessie Laurore of Child Trends to see before and after examples of a brief on Infant and Maternal Inequities that they revised by applying guidelines on equitable communication of data and research. These examples will be used to help guide you/your teams during breakout activities in which you will apply racial equity principles while using and communicating your own data on child care quality.

Presenters: Van-Kim Lin, Esther Gross, Jessie Laurore, Carlise King, and Sarah Daily, Child Trends

P3. Reimagining and Building a System Beyond QRIS

The early care and education system in the United States has long operated from a place of scarcity, failing to meet the needs of educators, children, and parents. New federal attention and investment presents an opportunity to move past entrenched systems that are, by design, inequitable. Hear from a panel of educators and state system specialists. Come to the session ready to acknowledge the limitations of QRIS and other existing ECE policy levers and discuss/imagine what is needed to build an equitable system that centers the rights of educators, children, and families.

Presenters: Ashley Allen, EQuIPD; Caitlin McLean and Ashley Williams, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment; Brooke Skidmore, The Growing Tree Childcare and WECAN Advocacy Group; Patricia Sullivan, Baby Steps Nature School

P4. Making it Count: Data Strategies that Incorporate Inclusive Community Engagement and Promote Equity

Designing inclusive, anti-racist, and equitable early childhood policies requires using data to understand who is impacted and represented, and who isn't. But is that enough to achieve real equity? This pre-conference session will explore data strategies that are inclusive and equity focused, and that can more fully capture the experiences of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, and other children, families, and providers of color. This conversation will include inclusive data collection, use of diverse data sources, cross-agency data sharing, and other strategies.

Presenters: Beth Bye, Connecticut Office of Early Childhood; Tiffany Ferrette, Alyssa Fortner, and Alycia Hardy, CLASP; Carlise King, Child Trends; Elena Trueworthy, Connecticut Head Start State Collaboration Offices

P5. Strengthening Early Learning Systems: Beginning with Equity of Voices

High-quality care and education for all children begins with equity for the adults in their ecosystem. What happens when we elevate, respect, and utilize the wisdom of families, communities, educators, program directors, cooks, bus drivers, and all others who contribute to children's early learning—especially those who experience marginalization? We co-create quality improvements from a place of mutual respect and shared wisdom. Together we will examine lessons from Learning for Children's Learning Network model and consider new strategies for building strong, trusting relationships among adults using Learning for Children's Five Commitments of Optimistic Leadership. By exploring these proven methods for aligning quality improvement and equitable decision making, this session will provide insight into creating early learning systems that counter existing power imbalances and meaningfully represent the communities they serve.

Presenters: Judy Jablon and Nichole Parks, Learning for Children

P6. Early Childhood Trauma: Being Culturally Informed Is Not Enough

As states and territories wrestle with the impact of trauma on young children, how does a state or territory move from being informed and understanding the impact of trauma affecting their most marginalized families, children, and communities to taking action and promoting practices that will enable cultural responsiveness to trauma? This session will investigate universal culturally responsive strategies as well as highlight specific cultural and traditional responses to trauma using an asset-based approach.

Presenters: Danielle Fuentes Johnson and Carey McCann, BUILD Initiative; Monica Noriega, University of California San Francisco; Tonia Spence; Dawn Yazzie, Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

P7. Using Federal Relief Dollars to Advance Toward a Racially Equitable Early Care and Education System for Infants, Toddlers, and their Families

Using Federal Relief Dollars to Advance Toward a Racially Equitable Early Care and Education System for Infants, Toddlers, and their Families

This preconference session is geared to public- and private-sector state leaders who are using/would like to use their authority and influence to shape how their state expends the federal pandemic relief dollars to increase opportunities for infants and toddlers of color, and the adults who care for them. Leaders from several states will share their efforts to spark discussion on strategies to improve workforce compensation, build supply and increase access to high-quality infant and toddler care, connect comprehensive community-level services to support infants, toddlers, their families, and their child care providers, stabilize and support home-based child care, and support racially equitable infrastructure. We'll have resource people available to support cross-state discussions on these topics, which will also include bridging the divide between the marginalized families and communities who experience the problems in state-funded programs/services and the proposed solutions. Join us and work with our facilitators Joan Blough, Director, Child Care Innovation Fund, Early Childhood Investment Corporation (MI); Miriam Calderon, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Learning, U.S. Department of Education; Harriet Dichter, BUILD Consultant; Betty Emarita, President, Development & Training Inc. (MN); Ericka Omena Erickson, Policy and Program Officer, Low Income Investment Fund (CA); Susan Hibbard, Executive Director, BUILD; Lauren Hogan, Managing Director of Policy and Professional Advancement, NAEYC (DC); Brandy Lawrence, Senior Director of Policy & Partnerships, Learning Starts at Birth/Bank Street College of Education (IL); Sara Mickelson, Consultant (OR); Sarah Ocampo-Schlesinger, Director, Family Support & Education, Association for Supportive Child Care (AZ); BB Otero, President, Otero Strategy Group (DC and MD); Bentley Ponder, Deputy Commissioner, GA Department of Early Care and Learning; Natalie Renew, Director, Home Grown (PA); Kylie Wheeler, Project Manager, Children's Funding Project (DC); Tonya Williams, Director, Division of Child Care and Early Education, Arkansas Department of Human Services.