Nannies are educators, too

Action Research:

Contextualized Professional Development for ALL Home-Based Carer-Educators
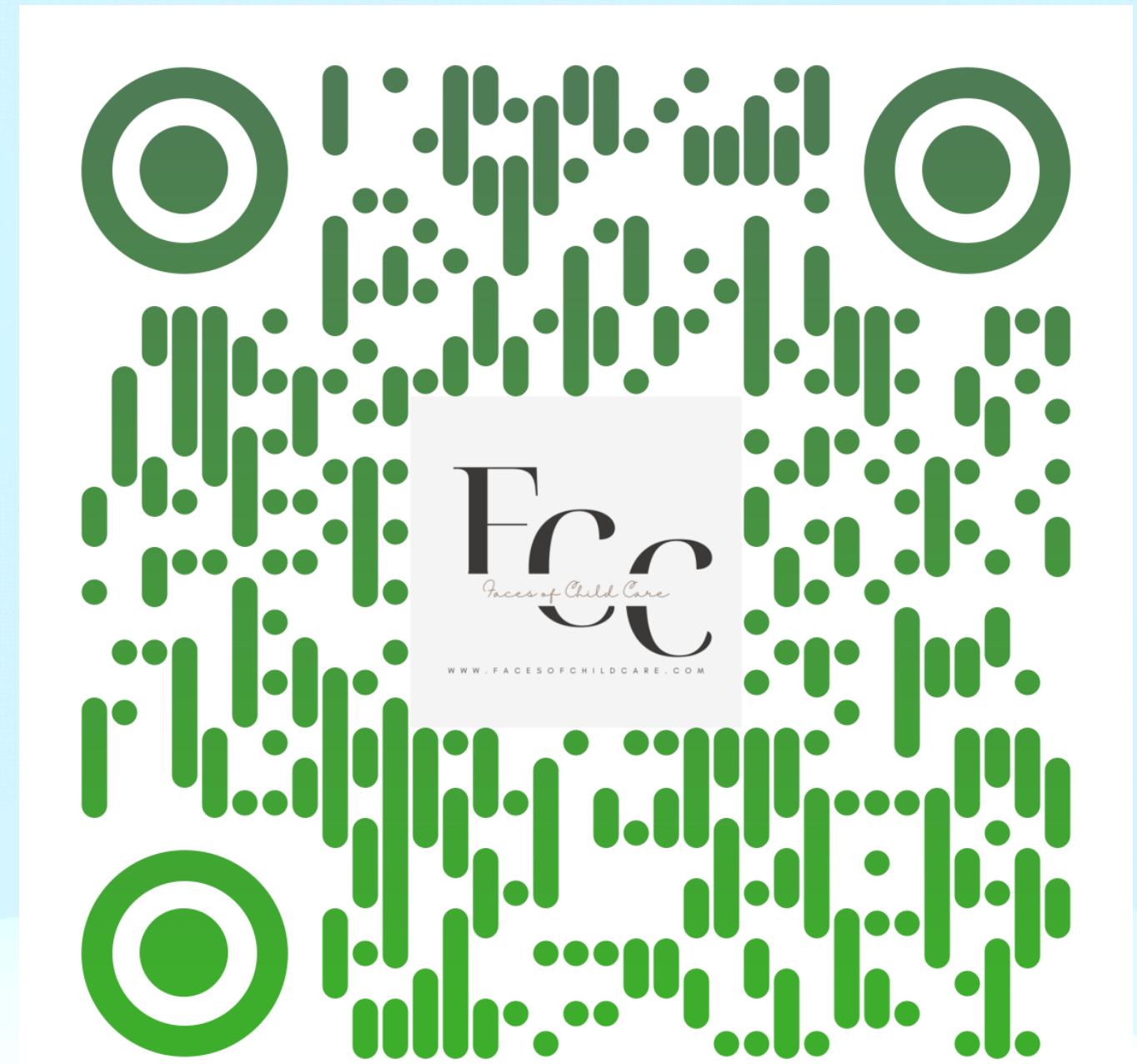

Nannies: Faceless and Unrecognized in the world of ECCE

The "Faces of Child Care" project

Danielle McLellan-Bujnak (M.Sc., Portland State University)

Handout online:

https://facesofchildcare.com/conference-handout

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What We Know:
Background

- We know very little about nannies; the academic literature about nannies is scant, and generally includes nannies as an afterthought, or as a sign pointing to another (important) phenomenon.

  - Nannies represent a marginalized population within the relatively marginalized early childhood and caregiving workforce

  - Further, many nannies experience intersectionalities in their work including (but not limited to) through being Black & Indigenous Persons of Colour, immigrants, non-native speakers of the dominant language, and predominantly female-identifying.

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The Knowledge Gap:
What We Don't Know

- **No study of nannies has been conducted with the perspective of the population itself**, so the existing literature represents outsider perspectives evaluating the performance, relevance, and experience of this marginalized group.

- This action research project, on the other hand, was conceived and executed **by a professional career nanny at the request of other professional nannies**

- The project included offering an **8-hour professional development course** to nannies in North America and the U.K.

- The professional development course was **contextualized for nannies in their job setting**

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Methods:

Action Research + Qualitative Thematic Analysis + Quantitative Measurements

- Over a period of two years, more than 100 nanny participants co-created a completely new and unique data set.

- The data gathered included **documenting their image of the child at the start of the course day, and again at the end of the day** after interacting with the content in the professional development course.

- These qualitative responses were **thematically analyzed** and then the changes were **measured quantitatively**.

- Themes analyzed were **"seeing the child as competent"** and **"seeing the child as a partner in teaching and learning"**

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Methods:

Example data collection sheets: start + end of day

Respectful™ Care Los Angeles 04/20/2019   Words about Children

Please share any of your thoughts, words, phrases, concepts or ideas about infants, toddlers, and/or children:

Respectful™ Care Boston 09 November 2019   Images of the Child

This form is very similar to one that you completed prior to the course today, but this time after a day of dialogue and reflection, it can begin to represent a more intentional and thoughtful "image of the child."

Please share any thoughts, words, phrases, concepts or ideas that are related to your image of the child:

Start of day: "WORDS ABOUT CHILDREN"

End of day: "Images of the Child"

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Methods:

Thematic analysis: example data points

Examples of "positive image of the child":

- Infants & children as competent
- Teaching & learning as an interactive partnership

"Resilient"

"Competent"

"Creative"

"Communicators"

"Do-ers"

"Self learners"

Examples of "negative image of the child":

- Infants & children as incompetent
- Teaching & learning as a power dynamic

"Dependent"

"Needy"

"Helpless"

"Blank canvas"

"Mold them"

"Unable to communicate"

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RESULTS:

Participants' image of the child showed BOTH:

AN INCREASE in **POSITIVE** image of the child from

34.9% to 67.0%
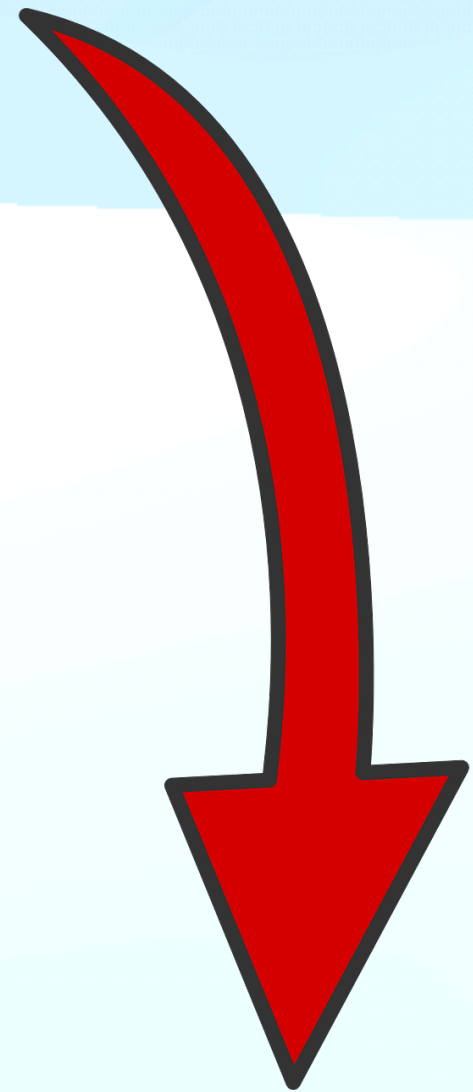
+

A DECREASE in **NEGATIVE** image of the child

from

15.6% to 3.5%

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WHY THIS MATTERS:
Future directions in research

- This result indicates stunning evolution and growth in the participating nannies' evidence-based image of the child - and enduring attendant changes in their professional practice and relationships with infants and children and their families through multiple years since the project - after **the experience of just one single day of appropriately contextualized professional development instruction**.

- Nannies are also **uniquely positioned to support and inspire parents to make and maintain important shifts in their relationships** with their infants and children.

- As a professional field, ECE is missing out on **creating relationships for supporting the development of these faceless but dedicated, intelligent, and enthusiastic early childhood professionals.**

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WHY THIS MATTERS:

Future directions in research

- Complete data analysis for all measures & participants, and

- Develop and implement an action research project in collaboration with the other (not quite as) marginalized population of home-based carer-educators: **the family child care/ famiy day home workforce**

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OUTLINE:
## Nanny & Newborn Care Specialist (NCS) PD Course

- We covered core concepts and principles that many nannies had not heard defined, but which all of them **recognized as being foundational to their professional practice** with infants and children and their families

- Grounding this population in a professional vocabulary **empowered them to advocate more effectively for the infants and children in their charge**

- They also felt **confident to implement more of the practices** they wanted to introduce, but were not sure how to explain to the parents

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EXAMPLE CONTENT + SLIDES:

Nanny & NCS PD Course

We began by **co-creating a shared vocabulary**, defining core concepts in collaborative discussion and writing our shared and enriched definitions on large poster-sized post-it notes on the walls, which we consulted and referred to throughout our course day together

- **Caring**
- **Teaching & Learning**
- **Freedom**
- **Respectful/Disrespectful**

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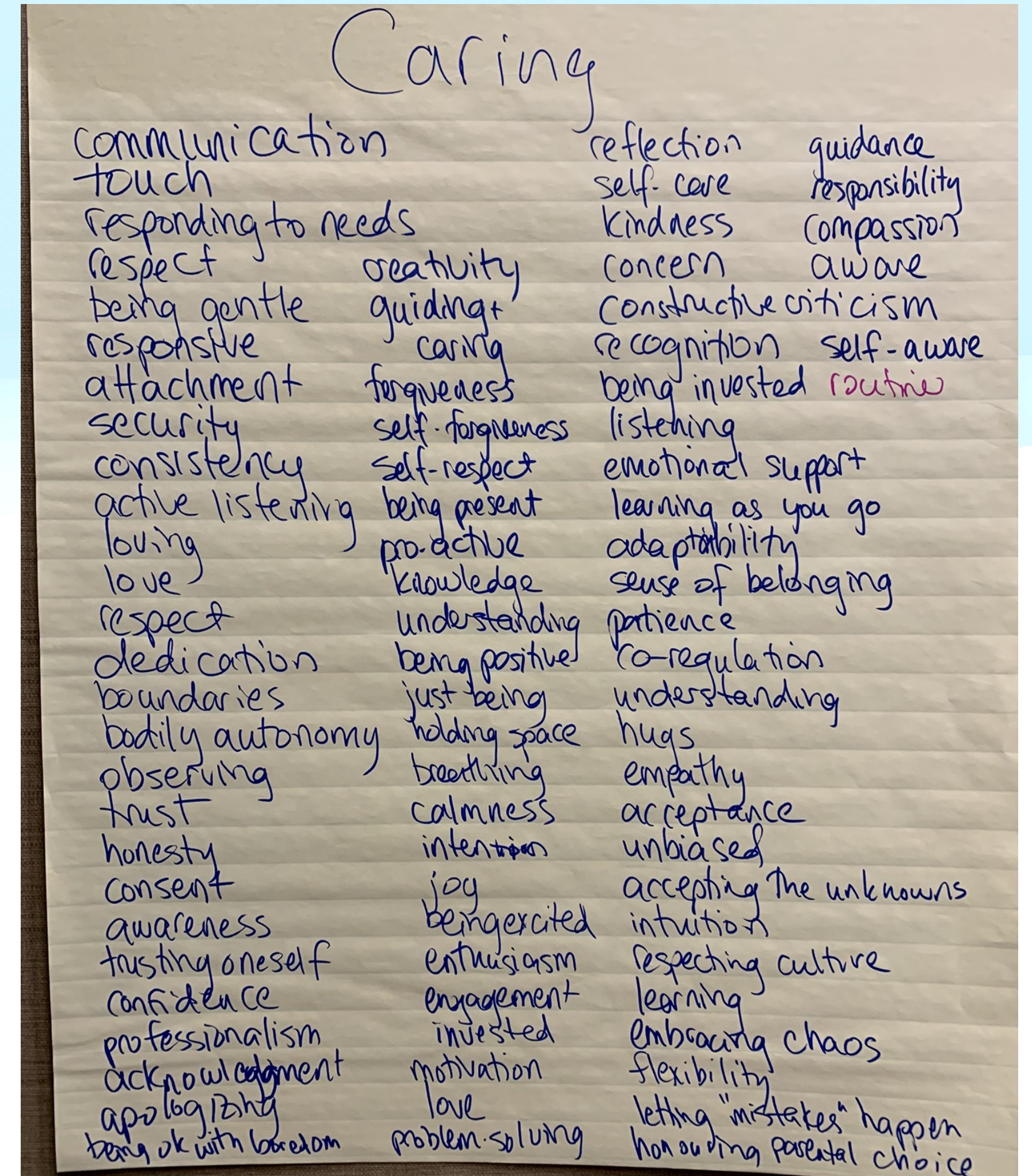
What is a "Pedagogy"?

pedagogy

▶ *noun (plural **pedagogies**)*

the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept

❖ *source: OxfordReference.com*

Waldorf Education®, the Montessori Method, RIE®, and the Reggio Emilia Approach® are examples of well-known pedagogies in early childhood care and education

What does "Image of the Child" mean?

Image of the child is a phrase used by educators influenced by the Reggio Emilia philosophy of early childhood education (Fraser & Gestwicki, 2002; Gandini, 1997; Scheinfeld, Haigh, & Scheinfeld, 2008).

It refers to what a person, or group of people, **believe, understand, and assume about the role of children** in education and society.

This image includes how people think about children's **capabilities, development, motivations, purpose, and agency**.

source: https://www.southernearlychildhood.org/upload/pdf/Dimensions_Vol40_3_Martalock.pdf

What does "Image of the Child" mean? (cont'd)

Social, cultural, and historical experiences influence a person's image of the child.

Everyone develops an image of the child through their experiences as part of a community and culture, as well as through what they have been taught both in school and at home (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999; Lancy, 2008).

People **may not be consciously aware of the image they hold**, or even recognize the beliefs and assumptions that are part of their image of the child.

source: https://www.southernearlychildhood.org/upload/pdf/Dimensions_Vol40_3_Martalock.pdf

overview:

I. Foundational Principles
of Evidence-Based Care

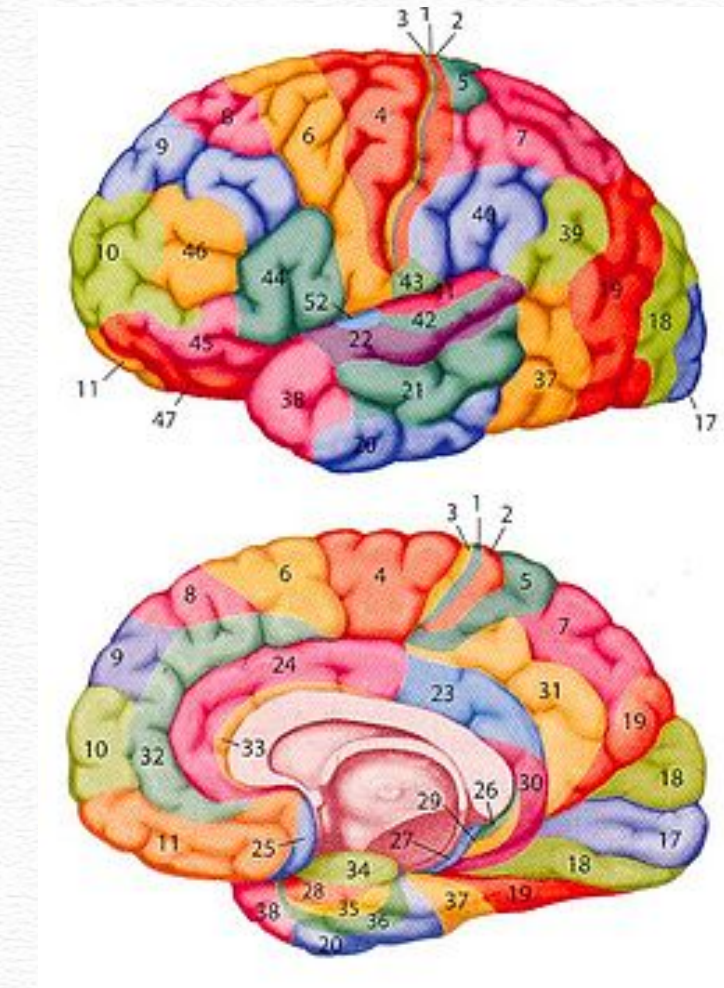## 1. Attachment theory

2. Relationship-based care

overview:

III. Concepts in *Neuroscience 1 - 6*

1. Internal motivation

2. Nature & nurture

3. Interpersonal neurobiology

4. Co-regulation or Interactive Regulation

5. Self-regulation

6. Affective Neuroscience

overview:

V. Concepts from the Classic P*edagogies: 1 - 4*

1. Unfolding Development (Steiner & Montessori)

2. Absorbent Mind & Sensitive Periods (Montessori)

3. Selective Intervention (Pikler®/RIE®)

4. Experiential learning (Steiner, Montessori, Pikler®/RIE® & Reggio)

ACTION & REFLECTION:
Example activity from the Nanny/NCS PD course

- Please find a partner or number off by alternating "1" and "2"

- 1's please come to me up front for a moment, to receive your instructions for action

- Then go back to your partner, who will be] sitting down such that you can stand behind them

- As soon as everyone has finished their "actions," we will have an opportunity for "reflection" on the experience

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FUTURE ACTION:

What can YOU do in YOUR community and context?
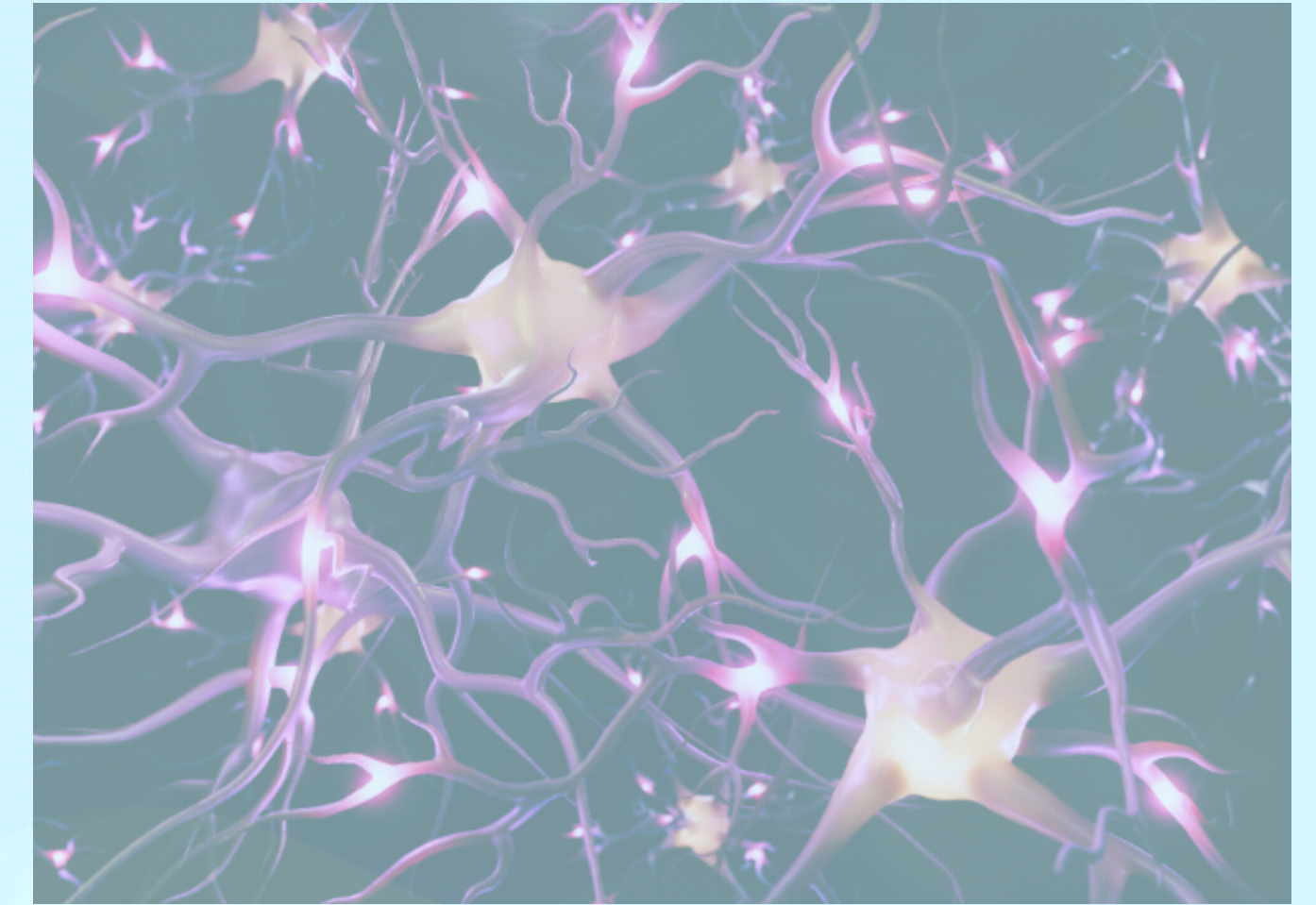
1. When you go back to your jurisdiction after this conference:

• How can you see and amplify the voices of nannies and other home-based carer-educators in your own community, and support the development of diverse, high-quality training and continuing education resources for nannies in each cultural context?

• How can you identify and partner with existing training organizations to produce and share quality professional development resources that are contextualized for the home-based carer-educator scope of practice, in your region/community?

2. What can NAEYC and CA-AEYC do to support your efforts?

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And our social media (linked from the web page)

or email me:

info@facesofchildcare.com

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