Region 8

Anchored in Mission, Inspired for Tomorrow.

Head Start Association Conference

November 3-5, 2026
The Lodge at Deadwood
Deadwood, SD

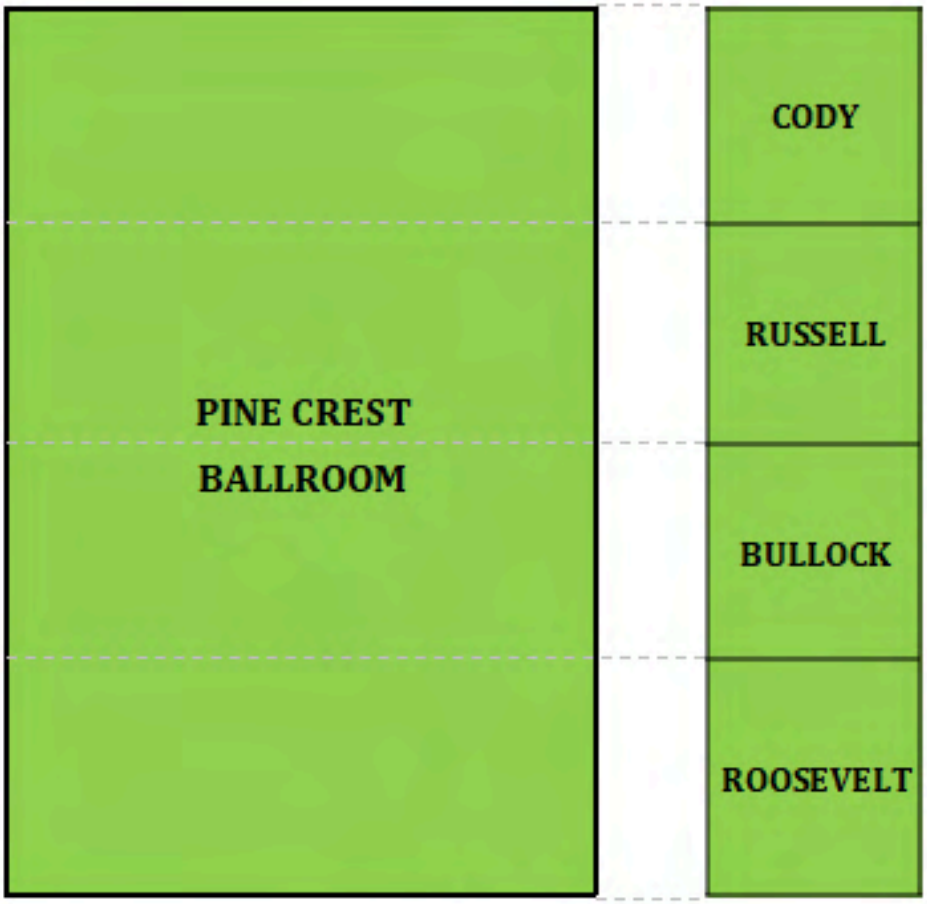
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South Dakota HEAD START ASSOCIATION

Facility Map









Welcome!

Anchored in Mission, Inspired for Tomorrow.

Welcome to South Dakota!

We are delighted to have you join us as we come together under this year's theme, Anchored in Mission, Inspired for Tomorrow.

Head Start has always been rooted in a commitment to children, families, and communities. As we gather to learn, collaborate, and share ideas, we celebrate the work that has brought us here while embracing new opportunities to strengthen our impact for the future.

We hope this conference provides meaningful learning, valuable connections, and renewed inspiration that you can take back to your programs. Thank you for your dedication to making a difference in the lives of children and families every day.

Welcome, and we wish you an engaging and rewarding conference!

For Children and Families,

Vicki Lowry
Region 8 HSA President

Juli Schultz
SDHSA President

College Credit

EDU_SDHS.10 Region 8 Conference
EDU198E.1 ~ Undergrad / EDU539E.1 ~ Graduate

University of Sioux Falls
$50 - 1 credit hour

Conference attendees can register for undergraduate or graduate credit. The conference includes 17.75 hours of educational sessions ~ keynote speakers (4) and breakout sessions (approximately 5 to choose from each session). Participants will need to attend at least 15 hours of educational sessions and keep a log of those sessions. If taken for graduate credit, participants will also need to write a reflection of the overall conference and how they will take back what they learned to their classroom/work setting.

Register for these workshops at http://reach.isiouxfalls.edu and create an account if don't have one already, and search by the course name or course link provided on the SD Head Start website. Payment must be made by credit card, and the registration deadline for each class is Thursday, November 5.

Conference Planning Committee

Tami Hummel
Vicki Lowry
Juli Schultz
Katie Sieverding

Region 8 Head Start Association

Minnetta Armstrong - MT
Rebecca Corona - WY
Christine Ipsen - UT
Vicki Lowry - SD
Linda Meredith - CO
Mindy Monson - WY
Lauren Nordeen - WY
Kallie Stewart - UT
Sandy Tuschen - SD

ANCHORED IN MISSION, INSPIRED FOR TOMORROW

Schedule at a Glance

Tuesday, November 3

8:00 - 9:00 am	Keynote: Michael Hall
9:15 - 10:30 am	Breakout #1
10:45 - 12:00 pm	Breakout #2
12:00 - 1:15 pm	Lunch on Your Own
1:15 - 2:30 pm	Breakout #3
2:45 - 4:00 pm	Breakout #4
4:15 - 5:30 pm	Breakout #5

Wednesday, November 4

8:00 - 9:00 am	Keynote: Tommy Sheridan
9:15 - 10:30 am	Breakout #6
10:45 - 12:00 pm	Breakout #7
12:00 - 1:15 pm	Lunch on Your Own
1:15 - 2:30 pm	Breakout #8
2:45 - 4:00 pm	Breakout #9
5:00 - 7:00 pm	Social: Byron Grey, Mentalist *(Light Appetizers, Host Bar)*

Thursday, November 5

8:00 - 9:00 am	Keynote: Heather DeBoer
9:15 - 10:30 am	Breakout #10
10:45 - 12:00 pm	Breakout #11
12:00 - 1:30 pm	Keynote: Melissa Pickle *(Lunch Provided)*

Sessions at a Glance

Tuesday, November 3		Pine Crest Ballroom	Roosevelt	Bullock	Russell	Cody
Keynote	8:00 - 9:00 am	Mission Possible: Father Engagement to Improve Child Outcomes				
Breakout 1	9:15 - 10:30 am	Before Kindergarten: Coaching Head Start Families to Deliver the Science of Reading at Home	Managing Turnover Turmoil	Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation	Engaging Head Start Fathers in Rural and Frontier Communities - 5 Proven Strategies	Program Governance & Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 1)
Breakout 2	10:45 - 12:00 pm	5 Steps to Staff Wellness: From Burnout to Breakthrough	The Home Multiplier: How Home Visitors Activate the 160+ Hours Between Visits* Duplicate Session (Breakout #3)	Coordinated Approaches to Disability Services	Growing Through Risk: Why Children Need Risky Play	Program Governance & Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 2)
Lunch	12:00 - 1:15 pm	Lunch on Your Own				
Breakout 3	1:15 - 2:30 pm	Finding Our Rhythm: Using Music & Movement to Support Self-Regulation in Early Childhood	The Home Multiplier: How Home Visitors Activate the 160+ Hours Between Visits* Duplicate Session (Breakout #2)	Active Supervision	Low-Cost, High-Impact: Creative Father Engagement Activities for Any Budget	Program Governance & Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 3)
Breakout 4	2:45 - 4:00 pm	NPRM Q &A (A/D) OR Current Trends in Internet Crimes Against Children* Duplicate Sessions (Breakout #5) (B/C)	Home Visitor Safety	Child Health & Nutrition: Serving Health and Nutritious Meals. Small Changes Make a Big Difference	Responding with Intention: What to Do When Challenging Behaviors Push Your Buttons	Fiscal Management
Breakout 5	4:15 - 5:30 pm	NPRM Q & A (A/D) OR Current Trends in Internet Crimes Against Children* Duplicate Sessions (Breakout #4) (B/C)	Supporting Language and Literacy Development in Infants, Toddlers, and Twos	The Missing Middle: Why IECMH Consultation Is the Best Strategy Too Few Are Using Correctly	Promoting Positive Guidance for Infants & Toddlers	Implementing a Culture of Safety

Sessions at a Glance

Wednesday, November 4		Pine Crest Ballroom	Roosevelt	Bullock	Russell	Cody
Keynote	8:00 - 9:00 am	Federal Update & Election Results				
Breakout 6	9:15 - 10:30 am	Lead-Safe Family Fun: Create a Hands-On Awareness Kit for Your Program	Boards That Make A Difference	Read, Talk, Play... Connect! A Literacy Learning and Networking Session (3 Part Series - Part 1: How Do Scribbles Become Words?)	Supporting Mental Health with PLAY!	Organizational Leadership
Breakout 7	10:45 - 12:00 pm	Harnessing the Power of Exploration, Play and Wonder: Conducting Hands on Investigations with Preschoolers	Building Foundations for Success: Ensuring Maintenance and Safety in Head Start Facilities	Read, Talk, Play... Connect! A Literacy Learning and Networking Session (3 Part Series - Part 2: Supporting Early Writing in Everyday Moments)	Collaborative Planning in Home Visiting: Using the Pyramid Model to Support Families	Gallup's Seven Competencies of Great Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 1)
Lunch	12:00 - 1:15 pm	Lunch on Your Own				
Breakout 8	1:15 - 2:30 pm	The Power of Positive Framing: Shifting from Deficit to Strength-Based Father Engagement	Turning Staff into Agency Ambassadors: Building Teams that share the impact of Head Start	Read, Talk, Play... Connect! A Literacy Learning and Networking Session (3 Part Series - Part 3: Stories That Spark Curiosity: Nurturing Literacy and Friendships)	Crucial Conversations	Gallup's Seven Competencies of Great Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 2)
Breakout 9	2:45 - 4:00 pm	Moving from BMI Screening to Family Nutrition Support in Head Start	Engaging Fathers Where They Are: Home Visiting & Early Childhood Father Engagement	Using Pyramid Model Strategies to Support Social Emotional Development so that Children are Ready for Early Academics	Fully Rested: The 7 Types of Rest Every Helper Needs	Gallup's Seven Competencies of Great Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 3)
Social	5:00 - 7:00 pm	Byron Grey, Mentalist				

Thursday, November 5		Pine Crest Ballroom	Roosevelt	Bullock	Russell	Cody
Keynote	8:00 - 9:00 am	Together We Rise: The Power of Collective Efficacy in Shaping Behavior and Fueling Success				
Breakout 10	9:15 - 10:30 am		Enough Abuse: Understanding and Responding to the Sexual Behaviors of Children	Using CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." to Support Home Visiting & Child Development	Effective Staff Onboarding and Development	Change Management (2 Part Series - Part 1)
Breakout 11	10:45 - 12:00 pm		Risky Play is Here to Stay	Making Sense of Your Head Start Systems	Bringing Stories to LIFE!	Change Management (2 Part Series - Part 2)
Closing Keynote Lunch Provided	12:00 - 1:30 pm	From Burnout to Balance: Debunking Myths & What to Do Instead				

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South Dakota Parent Connection
Teaching Stratgies
ZONO Technologies

Keynote Speakers & Presentations

J. Michael Hall



J. Michael Hall, M.Ed. is the father of two sons (both high school teachers) and has been a special education teacher, a teacher of the gifted and talented, and an intermediate and middle school principal. As an educator, speaker and founder of Strong Fathers-Strong Families, he has presented to more than 250,000 fathers and parents at local schools, Head Starts, and regional and national conferences. Mike has worked with over 300 schools in Texas and in over 45 states with Head Starts. He works daily with schools and facilitates all events in English and Spanish. He has written magazine articles for the National PTA, The Southwestern Educational Development Laboratory, and The National Head Start Association's Children and Family Magazine. He is also a contributing author of the book on fathering entitled Why Fathers Count, and is considered one of the country's foremost experts on working with fathers in schools and Head Starts. For his pioneering work over the past ten years in education he was recently honored as a 2012 White House Champion of Change for his work in the fatherhood field around the nation.

Mission Possible: Father Engagement to Improve Child Outcomes

In this interactive keynote, "recovering principal" J. Michael Hall explores the shift from fatherlessness to father-FULL-ness. By stepping away from "death by PowerPoint" and "silver buller" approaches, Hall reveals why traditional male involvement programs often miss the mark with men– and how small, intentional adjustments to culture, language, and event design can fill cafeterias and classrooms with eager, active fathers. Laced with humor, real-world field experience, and actionable insights, this keynote equips educators and community leaders to transform father engagement from a daunting challenge into a seamless, high-impact reality for positive child outcomes.

Tommy Sheridan



Tommy Sheridan is the Deputy Director for the National Head Start Association. In his role, Tommy leads NHSA's efforts in Washington DC to strategize, develop, and implement the Head Start community's vision for the future of Head Start and early learning with a specific focus on ensuring all eligible children and families have access to Head Start's comprehensive model of support for the whole child family, and community

Federal Updates and Election Results

Tommy Sheridan will discuss the latest federal updates regarding Head Start, including key developments affecting the Head Start community, and share results from the previous day's national election, with a focus on what they may mean for Head Start programs, children, families, and communities.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

Heather DeBoer



Dr. Heather DeBoer currently serves as principal of the K-1 Center in Huron, South Dakota. Much of her educational career has been dedicated to early childhood and the primary grades, including working with Head Start programs to support students and families as they transition into kindergarten. Her career has also included principal experience in Watertown, South Dakota, as well as teaching in Pierre and Venezuela. Dr. DeBoer has a passion for building positive school cultures and has experienced significant success in reducing student behavior challenges through proactive, collaborative approaches. Her doctoral research focused on collective teacher efficacy and its impact on reducing disruptive student behaviors.

Together We Rise: The Power of Collective Efficacy in Shaping Behavior and Fueling Success

What happens when a team truly believes in their collective power to make a difference? In this closing keynote, we'll explore how collective efficacy can become the quiet engine behind meaningful change in early childhood settings. Blending research with real-life stories from the field, this keynote will highlight how a shared sense of purpose and belief has led to powerful culture shifts and noticeable reductions in challenging behaviors.

Participants will walk away with practical, realistic strategies to strengthen collective efficacy within their own teams, no overhaul required, just intentional steps that build positivity, trust, consistency, and shared ownership. When adults move in sync, something remarkable happens: classrooms become calmer, connections grow stronger, and outcomes for our littlest learners expand in big, lasting ways.

Melissa Pickle



Melissa Pickle knows Head Start from the inside out. With nearly 30 years in early childhood education, spanning roles as a classroom teacher, home visitor, and program director in Head Start and Early Head Start programs across Alaska, Oregon, and South Dakota, she has lived the mission, the joy, and the weight of this work firsthand. Melissa guides overwhelmed professionals from exhaustion to sustainable balance through lived experience, evidence-based strategies, and immediately actionable tools. Having navigated her own burnout journey, she understands the "helper's paradox" that makes accepting support so difficult for those who give so much to others. With a B.A.in Psychology, M.Ed., and Associate Certified Life Coach credential with a Health and Wellness Certification, Melissa translates stress science into practical techniques that fit real, busy lives. Audiences consistently describe her as "igniting" and "captivating." After hearing Melissa speak, people leave with renewed energy, clarity about what truly matters, and a personalized wellness system they can implement immediately, discovering that sustainable balance isn't just possible, it's essential for those called to make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families.

From Burnout to Balance: Debunking Myths & What to Do Instead

Burnout has reached epidemic levels in the helping professions, with 44% of K-12 teachers reporting they feel burned out often or always, 57-70% of nurses experiencing burnout, 45% of early childhood educators battling mental health challenges, and 75% of social workers reporting burnout at some point in their careers. The people who care for others are burning out and traditional prevention strategies aren't working, Melissa Pickle teaches from lived experience as she burned out multiple times during her career. A series of personal crises, including loss, injury, and profound grief, forced her to confront what she'd been avoiding: her own burnout and the toxic positivity that was making it worse. Drawing upon research in stress science and emotional agility, she teaches evidence-based techniques that actually work: completing stress cycles, recognizing your body's early warning signals, and establishing boundaries that protect your well-being. Through her transformative journey, she challenges five dangerous myths that trap helping professionals in exhaustion cycles, revealing why burnout doesn't come "out of nowhere," "why perfect plans become prisons, and why toxic positivity leads to breakdown. This keynote is particularly powerful for audiences dealing with burnout, change fatigue, or the challenge of maintaining resilience while serving others.



Breakout 1 Descriptions Tuesday 9:15 – 10:30 am

Before Kindergarten: Coaching Head Start Families to Deliver the Science of Reading at Home

Melissa Hamilton

Head Start programs invest deeply in school readiness. But the research is clear: the phonological awareness, print knowledge, and oral language that predict reading success are built most powerfully at home — before a child ever enters a classroom. Most family engagement programs encourage parents to be involved. This session shows what happens when parents are explicitly prepared to deliver Science of Reading instruction at home.

Using three evidence pillars — NELP's six foundational skill domains, Sénéchal's finding that explicitly taught parents produce outcomes six times stronger than informal encouragement, and Joyce and Showers' transfer research — attendees will walk through a live coaching model that prepares every adult in 1 a child's ecosystem. Participants will leave with a concrete framework for extending Head Start's reach into the home and a clear picture of what family preparation looks like when it is grounded in the science.

Managing Turnover Turmoil

Marcia Brown

Retaining talent is essential to the success of agencies such as Head Start. High turnover impacts key program factors such as, but not limited to, served served, program quality, staff morale and compliance. This interactive session will equip Head Start leaders with practical strategies to stabilize teams, reduce burnout, strengthen retention, and maintain quality service services during periods of high staff turnover. During this session attendees will also learn 4 key proven strategies from model agencies throughout the US.

Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

Head Start Regional TTA Network

During this session we will explore what Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMH&C) is and what it is not. IECMHS is a prevention-based approach that pairs a mental health consultant with adults who work with infants and young children in the different settings where they learn and grow. We will explore the three types of mental health consultation.

Engaging Head Start Fathers in Rural and Frontier Communities - 5 Proven Strategies

Patrick Patterson

Engaging Head Start fathers in rural and frontier communities requires strategies that recognize the unique strengths and challenges of serving families across large geographic areas. Transportation barriers, limited services, workforce demands, isolation, and smaller community networks can make traditional father engagement approaches less effective.
This interactive workshop will explore practical strategies for recruiting, engaging, and retaining Head Start fathers in rural and frontier communities. Participants will learn how to leverage trusted community partners, meet fathers where they are, use technology and flexible service delivery, and build stronger connections with fathers who may be difficult to reach. Participants will leave with practical ideas they can immediately apply to strengthen father engagement and expand the reach of their programs.

Program Governance & Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 1)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

In this 3-part series, we will explore a variety of engagement strategies for creating and maintaining an empowering work environment, six elements of organizational effectiveness We'll identify how to leverage your Leadership and Governance systems and properly engage your Board through professional development to strengthen your internal staff systems.

Breakout 2 Descriptions ~ Tuesday 10:45 - 12:00 pm

5 Steps to Staff Wellness: From Burnout to Breakthrough

Baron Warren

Early childhood turnover is not a hiring problem. It is a deputation problem. Staff absorb the trauma of the families they serve, then are handed a self-care flyer and told to hydrate. Wellness initiatives fail because they treat exhaustion as an individual falling rather than an organizational condition. This session names what is actually happening: secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, and the emotional labor of the classroom carried with nowhere to put it. Participants work through five steps - Resume Release, Reset, Reinforce, and New - that give both frontline staff and supervisors concrete language forte conversations wellness programs usually avoid. The tone is direct and conversational rather than clinical. Participants leave with a personal reset plan and practices a supervisor can implement Monday morning without a budget line. Learning objectives: 1. Distinguish burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress, and recognize early indicators in themselves and their colleagues. 2. Apply the five-step wellness framework to build a personal reset plan with specific, measurable practices. 3. Identify at least three no-cost organizational changes a supervisor can implement to reduce staff depletion and improve retention. Target audience: all staff, teachers, home visitors, family service workers, supervisors, managers, human resources.

The Home Multiplier: How Home Visitors Activate the 160+ Hours Between Visits*

Duplicate Session (Breakout #3)

Melissa Hamilton

Federal performance standards require one 90-minute home visit per week. The other 160+ hours belong to the family. Research is clear on what happens in those hours - and who determines whether they compound or evaporate. Sénéchal & LeFevre (2002) found that parents explicitly coached to support foundational literacy skills produced out six times stronger than parents who received encouragement alone. That gap — between a parent who cheers and a parent who knows exactly what to practice — is the home visitor's highest-leverage opportunity. This section teaches home visitors how to shift from delivering content to coaching parents, using the National Early Literacy Panel's six foundational skill domains as the foundation for effective communication, teaching the importance of clear, specific, research-ground practice commitment — and a simple tracking tool for monitoring family follow-through between visits. The result: a home visit model that doesn't end when you walk out the door.

Coordinated Approaches to Disability Services

Head Start Regional TTA Network

All grant recipients create and foster partnerships. The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) require programs to establish ongoing collaborative relationships and partnerships with community organizations.

Growing Through Risk: Why Children Need Risky Play

Cami Thompson

Are you looking for new ideas on building your students confidence and resilience? Come to learn the importance of risky play in early childhood. Learn the benefits of risky play, how it helps build skills, how to encourage risky play (and get administrators on board with risky play).

Program Governance & Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 2)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

In this 3-part series, we will explore a variety of engagement strategies for creating and maintaining an empowering work environdment, six elements of organizzoos 'w eutriamott how' to leveage your Leadership and Gyserran systems are proper engage your Board through professional development to strengthen your internal renal oaf systems.

Breakout 3 Description ~ Tuesday 1:15-2:30 pm



Finding Our Rhythm: Using Music & Movement to Support Self-Regulation in Early Childhood

Carolyn Wolbrink

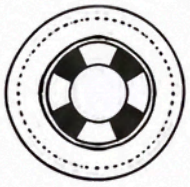
Singing together builds connection and creates an anchor for lifelong learning. Through developmentally appropriate music and movement experiences—playing instruments loud and soft, starting and stopping with music, and participating in interactive SMART activities—young children naturally strengthen self-regulation skills. In this engaging, interactive session, early childhood educators will experience practical ways to use music, movement, and connection-based activities in classrooms and home visits to build strong relationships, support emotional regulation, and inspire confident growth in young learners and themselves. Grounded in connection and anchored in purpose, participants will leave with simple, meaningful strategies they can immediately use to support children today while helping build a strong foundation for tomorrow.



The Home Multiplier: How Home Visitors Activate the 160+ Hours Between Visits*

Melissa Hamilton *Duplicate Session (Breakout #2)*

Federal performance standards require one 90-minute home visit per week. The other 160+ hours belong to the family. Research is clear on what happens in those hours — and who determines whether they compound or evaporate. Sénchal & LeFever (2002) found that parents explicitly coached to support foundational literacy skills produced out six times stronger than parents who received encouragement alone. That gap — between a parent who cheers and a parent who knows exactly what to practice — is the home visitor's highest-leverage opportunity. This session teaches home visitors how to shift from delivering content to coaching parents, using the National Early Literacy Panel's six foundational skill names as the framework. Participants will leave with a structured conversation guide for closing every home visit with one specific, research-grounded practice commitment — and a simple tracking tool for monitoring family follow-through between visits. The result: a home visit model that doesn't end when you walk out the door.



Active Supervision

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Back to Basics for Front Line Staff. Providing a safe and loving environment for children is essential. Whether you have been in Head Start or are new to childcare, join us to review some of the fundamental elements of keeping children safe. We will be discussing the importance of active supervision, strategies to implement and keep active supervision at the front of our thoughts, mandatory reporting and caring for ourselves so that we can bring our best every day.



Low-Cost, High-Impact: Creative Father Engagement Activities for Any Budget

Michael Hall

Federal funding can be tight, but father engagement doesn't have to be expensive. This session will showcase innovative, budget-friendly activities and events that effectively engage fathers and their children. We'll explore ideas for "do-it-yourself" programs that leverage community partnerships, volunteer support, and existing program resources, drawing from the practical, proven events emphasized by Strong Fathers'Strong Families. Examples will include academic-focused activities that naturally integrate father-child interaction.



Program Governance & Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 3)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

In this 3-part series, we will explore a variety of engagement strategies for creating and maintaining an empowering work environment; six elements of organizational effectiveness We'll identify how to leverage your leadership and Governance systems and properly engage your Board through professional development to strengthen your internal staff systems.

Breakout 4 Descriptions ~ Tuesday 2:45 - 4:00 pm

NPRM Q&A

Tommy Sheridan

Current Trends in Internet Crimes Against Children*

Duplicate Session (Breakout #5)

Hollie Strand

This presentation teaches attendees about the current trends in the online victimization of children and teens where computers, phones, tablets, emails, clouds, social media or other technology is used to facilitate a crime. The topics covered will include the following: digital footprints, social media, sextortion, child exploitation, sexting, and other online threats.

Home Visitor Safety

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Feeling safe — and knowing how to maintain personal safety — is essential for home visitors. Home visitors who are anxious or fearful will have trouble creating a comfortable and emotionally safe environment for families during their visits. Feeling safe is crucial to a home visitor's effectiveness. Achieving this takes careful attention and good planning.

Child Health & Nutrition: Serving Health and Nutritious Meals. Small Changes Make a Big Difference

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Head Start programs play a vital role in supporting healthy eating and nutrition for enrolled children and families. Access to healthy foods and other nutrition services helps children grow, develop, and learn. Good nutrition is essential for brain development and provides children with the energy needed to stay active and focused throughout the program day. A balanced diet helps strengthen a child's immune system, reducing the risk of infections and illnesses. It also prevents childhood obesity, which can lead to chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.

Responding with Intention: What to Do When Challenging Behaviors Push Your Buttons

Michelle Farrell

Ever wonder why certain child behaviors seem to bother you so much? Rooted in the evidence-based Pyramid Model framework, this 75-minute experiential workshop equips early childhood educators with a framework for managing their own emotional responses to challenging 'for you' behaviors so they can effectively support young children. Through personal reflection and interactive practice, participants will identify their specific behavioral triggers and learn effective "pause" strategies. You will leave this session with a personalized, concrete neutralizing routine designed to put space between a challenging behavior and your response' giving you an actionable plan grounded in Pyramid Model practices that you can implement first thing Monday morning.

Fiscal Management

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Cost allocation is an integral part of effective fiscal management and supports accurate fiscal planning, budgeting, and reporting. It is the process of assigning the shared cost of an item, goods, or services between two or more programs based on the benefits received. This session will broaden recipients' understanding of cost allocation, blended funding, and the use of restricted and unrestricted funds.

Breakout 5 Descriptions ~ Tuesday 4:15 - 5:30 pm

NPRM Q&A
Tommy Sheridan



Current Trends in Internet Crimes Against Children*

Duplicate Session (Breakout #4)

Hollie Strand

This presentation teaches attendees about the current trends in the online victimization of children and teens where computers, phones, tablets, emails, clouds, social media or other technology is used to facilitate a crime. The topics covered will include the following: digital footprints, social media, sextortion, child exploitation, sexting, and other online threats.



Supporting Language and Literacy Development in Infants, Toddlers, and Twoos

Jenika J. Cormouche M.Ed

Research shows that early language and literacy development are crucial for a child's overall growth and future success in all areas of development. Throughout the session, participants will discuss using engaging, intentional strategies that both foster a love of literacy and encourage language development in infants and toddlers. They will discover ways to incorporate language and literacy into daily routines and experiences, involve families in the learning process, and increase their knowledge of resources within the Creative Curriculum. In addition, the session will include an exploration of GOLD, specifically focusing on authentic assessment of language and literacy for infants and toddlers. *** this part will only take place if the teachers in the audience use Creative Curriculum/GOLD, if not, we will have a discussion of language and literacy experiences that can occur without the curriculum and I will remove those slides.



The Missing Middle: Why IECMH Consultation Is the Best Strategy Too Few Are Using Correctly

Shai Idelson & Dr. Neil Horn

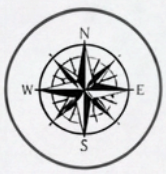
Head Start programs are required to secure mental health consultation. Many cannot find it, and many who find it are not acutely getting consultation. Across a national scan spanning 31 states and more than 500 interviews, the Center of Excellence heard the same pattern: programs contract with licensed clinicians who arrive expecting to treat a child, when what the program needs is someone who can work through the adults in the room. This review reviews what the evidence says about consultation, argues that the field has indeed on credential where it should be indexing on competence, and shares what we learned building a competency-based certificate for nearly 300 candidates across 41 states, most from early childhood education background.



Promoting Positive Guidance for Infants & Toddlers

Head Start Regional TTA Network

This session will focus on positive guidance strategies that will impact quality teacher and child interactions. Participants participants will understand the impact of culture and experience on guidance and be able to describe a relationship-based approach to behavior-support planning.



Implementing a Culture of Safety

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Learn about specific actions that program leadership and staff can use to create an organization culture that prioritizes children's health and wellbeing. Programs can realize a culture of safety through establishing policies and procedures that reflect the 10 actions for a culture of safety.

Breakout 6 Descriptions ~ Wednesday 9:15 – 10:30 am

Lead-Safe Family Fun: Create a Hands-On Awareness Kit for Your Program

Annette Hill, SDDOH & Jodi Berscheid, SDDOE

This interactive session is designed for program teams who want to bring engaging lead awareness activities back to their families. Participants will work together to create a Family-Friendly Lead Awareness Kit that can be used during Family Fun Nights, socials, parent events, and other family engagement opportunities. Through hands-on activities, participants will learn about common sources of lead, why reducing lead exposure is important, ways families can lower their risk, and how good nutrition can help protect the body. Each participating program will leave with a kit of activities and resources they can use to educate and engage families. Space is limited to 25–30 participants to allow time for hands-on kit building. Programs are encouraged to send 1–2 staff members who can work together and bring the completed kit back for program-wide use.

Boards That Make A Difference

Julie Johnson

Boards of Directors have enormous responsibilities and many have little coaching or training. This session will offer some legal and governance tips that can add to the ability of the board to do their jobs and enhance the organization.

Read, Talk, Play… Connect! A Literacy Learning and Networking Session (3 Part Series - Part 1: How Do Scribbles Become Words?)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Early literacy begins at birth and develops through responsive relationships, communication, movement, play, songs, stories, and everyday routines. Across three interactive sessions, participants will explore developmentally appropriate literacy practices for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in classroom, program, and home settings. Teachers and frontline staff will leave with practical ideas they can use right away to recognize children's communication, create meaningful literacy opportunities, and connect everyday practices to positive outcomes for children and families.

Supporting Mental Health with PLAY!

Karen Rieck

We all know play is essential for developing social emotional skills and fostering mental health for young children, but what about the adults who care for them? How do we support our own mental health to avoid burnout? In this session "P.L.A.Y." will be examined through the lens of an adult and why it's so vital to support the metal health outcomes in a profession that can be so emotionally taxing on our mind and bodies. Learning outcomes: What is PLAY? Why do we need PLAY? Benefits of PLAY.

Organizational Leadership

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Learn how to connect everyday work to big goals for children, families, and your program. When teams understand the "why" behind their tasks, they feel more focused, valued, and inspired.

Breakout 7 Descriptions ~ Wednesday 10:45 – 12:00 pm

Harnessing the Power of Exploration, Play and Wonder: Conducting Hands on Investigations with Preschoolers

Jenika J. Carmouche M.Ed

Three and Four-Year-Old children are natural Investigators. They explore their surroundings as they play with materials, wonder and talk. They are also designers, and they use the tools and techniques to build the structures they build with them.

Building Foundations for Success: Ensuring Maintenance and Safety in Head Start Facilities

Dianne Binda

Head Start facilities a key role in fostering safe and nurturing environments for children to learn and thrive! This workshop explores best practices for maintaining high standards of safety and maintenance in these environments. Participants include: on regulatory or community guidelines, safety and security, and implement datactrinamam. Each plans, prioritizes thesis, and maximize astringence of time spent at school. There are also facility menagerors, tracemakers or stationnaries operations, enhance safety outcomes, and foster health, secure learning learning environments for children, families, and staff.

Read, Talk, Play... Connect! A Literacy Learning and Networking Session (3 Part Series - Part 2: Supporting Early Writing in Everyday Moments)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Early literacy begins at birth and develops through responsive relationships, communication, movement, play, songs, stories, and everyday routines. Access three interactive sessions, organizational and non-profit literacy practices for infants, toddlers, and preschools in classroom, program, and home setting. Etiquet each attrontline soffish ideas they can use right away or confirm communication. create meaningful «étal literacy opportunities, and connect everyday practices to positive outcomes for children and families.

Collaborative Planning in Home Visiting: Using the Pyramid Model to Support Families

Michelle Farrell

Home visitors have incredible opportunities to work with families to create plans that support growth in daily routines. In this session, participants will learn about the shared planning process in home visiting using Pyramid Model resources to foster nurturing, responsive relationships among practitioners, families, and children.

Gallup's Seven Competencies of Great Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 1)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Gallup has been able to learn that, statistically, great leaders do seven things well. This session discusses the changing workplace and transit leaders from a constant current and future leadership competencies.

Breakout 8 Descriptions ~ Wednesday 1:15 - 2:30 pm

The Power of Positive Framing: Shifting from Deficit to Strength-Based Father Engagement
Michael Hall

Inspired by Strong Father's proven philosophy, this session will guide participants in reframing their approach to father engagement from addressing deficits to highlighting and building upon fathers's existing strengths. We will explore practical communication techniques and program design elements that empower fathers, foster their confidence, and encourage active participation, even with limited resources. This aligns with Head Start's PFECE focus on building protective factors and enhancing family strength.

Turning Staff into Agency Ambassadors: Building Teams that share the impact of Head Start
Angela Vissia

Every Head Start employee has a story to tell about the impact of their program—but do they know how to tell it? At TREC Badlands Head Start, we recognized that recruitment, community awareness, and advocacy could not belong to one person or one department. Every interaction our employees have with families, community partners, pivotal applicants, and community members is an opportunity to strengthen understanding of Head Start. To build that capacity, TREC developed Staff Ambassador Day, an interactive professional development experience designed to help employees understand the agency's impact, recognize their role as representatives of the organization, and confidently communicate what Head Start does and why it matters. This session will share TREC's Staff Ambassador Day model and provide participants with practical strategies they can adapt for their own situations. The development of a clear, clear, and transparent policy will further guide the development of TTA messages, agency perceptions and misconceptions, telling meaningful impact stories, developing short and consistent agency messages, and practicing responses to real-world questions. Rather than relying exclusively on leadership or designated outreach staff to promote the program, this approach builds an organization in which every employee is equipped to be an informed, authentic ambassador for Head Start.

Read, Talk, Play… Connect! A Literacy Learning and Networking Session
(3 Part Series - Part 3: Stories That Spark Curiosity: Nurturing Literacy and Friendships)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Early literacy begins at birth and develops through responsive relationships, communication, movement, play, songs, stories, and everyday activities. Across three interactive sessions, participants will explore developmentally appropriate literacy practices for infants, toddlers, and preschools in classroom, program, and home settings. Teachers and frontline staff will leave with practical ideas; they can highlight or recognize children's communication, create meaningful literacy opportunities, and connect everyday practices to positive outcomes for children and families.

Crucial Conversations

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Discover ways to prepare for conversations that include challenging topics, in the classroom or during home visits. These conversations can be used to engage families, strengthen relationships, and build trust. It may be difficult to begin discussing a challenging topic with a family.
Explore this resource to learn:

- Why you should prepare for challenging conversations.
- What makes conversations challenging.
- Steps to prepare for conversations with families about challenging topics.
- Strategies to use during conversations with families.

Head Start program staff can use this resource to partner with families. Supervisors and managers can also be used in training, meetings, and individual conversations with staff.

Gallup's Seven Competencies of Great Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 2)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Gallup has been able to learn that, statistically great leaders do seven things well. This session discusses the changing workplace and transitions leaders from past practices to current and future leadership competencies.

Breakout 9 Descriptions

Wednesday 2:45 – 4:00 pm

Moving from BMI Screening to Family Nutrition Support in Head Start

Jason Simon-Ressler SDDOH & Jodi Berscheid SDDOE

BMI screening can identify potential growth and nutrition concerns, but screening alone does not improve children's health. Without thoughtful communication, appropriate intervention, and follow-through, BMI referrals may create family concern or stigma without providing a meaningful path to support. This interactive session will help Head Start professionals examine their current BMI screening and referral practices through a quality improvement lens. Participants will explore the benefits and limitations of BMI, discuss where their referral processes work well or stall, and apply practical tools for recognizing concerns, engaging families, and successfully connecting them with appropriate services.

Engaging Fathers Where They Are: Home Visiting & Early Childhood Father Engagement

Michael Hall

Home visiting programs like Head Start / Early Head Start and Parents as Teachers (PAT) are uniquely positioned to partner with parents right in their natural environments. However, home visitors often struggle to engage fathers and male caregivers—frequently encountering them as passive observers in the background or absent entirely during home visits. Or perhaps even more difficult-creepy dudes!

Drawing on over two decades of experience from J. Michael Hall, M.Ed, (founder of Strong Fathers Strong Families, LLC and co-host of the PAT-collaborative podcast Intentional Partnerships), this interactive workshop equips home visitors, parent educators, and family service staff to intentionally bridge the gap. By aligning Hall's strength-based, solution-focused framework with the Head Start Parent: Family, and Community Engagement (PPCE) Framework and Parents as Teachers Essential Requirements, participants will learn how to transition from viewing fathers through a lens of deficit to actively welcoming them as critical co-parents.

Using Pyramid Model Strategies to Support Social Emotional Development so that Children are Ready for Early Academics

Head Start Regional TTA Network

This session highlights how the Pyramid Model Strengthens children's social-emotional skills to build a solid foundation for early academic & challenging behaviors: Positive behaviors are social, emotional, and communicative skills and behaviors used by children that enable them to engage in and navigate their learning and social environments. These include skills to regulate their emotions, solve problems, and develop and sustain relationships.

Fully Rested: The 7 Types of Rest Every Helper Needs

Melissa Pickle

You're sleeping 8 hours and still waking up exhausted. Drawing from the groundbreaking research of Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith, physician and author of Sacred Rest, this workshop goes far beyond traditional self-care to reveal the real reason helpers are chronically exhausted—and what to actually do about it! Participants complete a personal rest audit and leave with a concrete, personalized rest plan.

Gallup's Seven Competencies of Great Leadership (3 Part Series - Part 3)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Gallup has been able to learn that, statistically, great leaders do seven things well. This session discusses the changing workplace and transitions leaders from past practices to current and future leadership competencies.

Breakout 10 Descriptions ~ Thursday 9:15 – 10:30 am

Enough Abuse: Understanding and Responding to the Sexual Behaviors of Children

Jessica Broullire

This session equips professionals with a clear, developmentally grounded framework for understanding and responding to children's sexual behaviors across childhood and adolescence. Drawing from evidence-based prevention principles and the Enough Abuse Campaign model, participants will learn how to distinguish green—yellow, and red-light behaviors; assess power differentials and impact; and respond in ways that promote accountability, safety, and healthy development—without blame or shame. The workshop also addresses prevention of future perpitation, focusing on early intervention, caregiver communication, and trauma-informed responses when concerns or disclosures arise. Practical scenarios, discussion, and concrete tools will help participants leave with increased confidence to respond appropriately, fulfill mandated reporting obligations, and support both child victims and children with concerning sexual behaviors.

Using CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." to Support Home Visiting & Child Development

Lisa Sanderson

This session will introduce and strengthen participants' use of CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early (LTSAE) resources to support home visitors. LTSAE offers free, evidence-based, easy-to-understand tools that help parents and professionals monitor developmental milestones from birth through age—celebrating progress, identifying potential concerns early, and connecting children to support when delays are suspected. Participants will explore how LTSAE is being used across South Dakota, discuss practical ways to incorporate materials into home visiting routines and staff professional development, and identify strategies to engage families in simple, meaningful activities they can use to boost learning and development at home.

Effective Staff Onboarding and Development

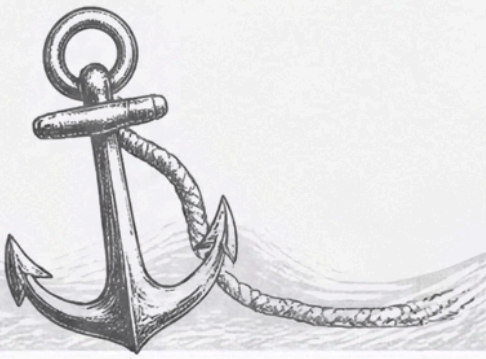
Rachael Elyhaus

This session will focus on best practices for onboarding new staff and developing existing staff skills to build a positive culture, promote retention, and increase the quality of services provided to children and families in Head Start.

Change Management (2 Part Series - Part 1)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Understand the fundamental principles of change management and its importance in achieving organizational success. Explore various change frameworks that guide effective transitions. Learn practical skills for communicatingand engaging with stakeholders at all levels during times of change.



Breakout 11 Descriptions ~ Thursday 10:45 – 12:00 pm

Risky Play is Here to Stay

Darren Barkhouse

The opportunities for children to engage in risky play and uncertainty are few and far between these days. Many times we see educators trapped in policy requirements, or have misconceptions on what true risk actually is and the positive impacts it has on children. We will explore our own risk evaluation mechanism and identify the barriers educators face when allowing risky play opportunities. The outdoors provide a natural canvas for risky play opportunities, problem solving through uncertainty, building social connections, and that begins to dig into the dirt. Learn the benefits of risky play and how it supports child development, developing critical risk management and assessment skills. Learn how risky play promotes physical confidence and refined motor skills that actually decrease the risk of future injuries. Explore how it supports emotional regulation, reduces anxiety and elevated behaviors, increases social connections, and enhances conflict resolution skills. Indoors or Outdoors, Risky Play is Here to Stay!

Making Sense of Your Head Start Systems

Amy Corkery

Head Start programs rely on multiple systems every day, yet for many teams those systems do not fully work together. Information lives in different places. Processes feel harder than they should. Staff rely on workspaces just to keep things moving.

This session offers a practical way to step back and understand how systems are functioning across tools, workflows, people and leadership expectations. Participants will learn how to recognize common signs of misalignment and what those signs reveal about how work is actually happening across the organization.

Participants will examine how leadership decisions, priorities and expectations influence day-to-day operations. The session will examine how misalignment can affect communication, accountability, organizational culture and overall effectiveness, even when teams are working hard and making progress.

Bringing Stories to LIFE!

Karen Rieck

Reading with children is such a vital part of their development through all stages of life. When reading with a child you are building a relationship, increasing knowledge through literacy, and setting up a future love of literature. Children's story books are full of imagination, thought provoking questions, and relatable events. In this session you will engage in a story time unlike any other. One that sparks creativity and imagination in your early learners and helps embrace the wiggles and giggles that are often associated with story time.

Change Management (2 Part Series - Part 2)

Head Start Regional TTA Network

Understand the fundamental principles of change management and its importance in achieving organizational success. Explore various change frameworks that guide effective transitions. Learn practical skills for communicatingand engaging with stakeholders at all levels during times of change.

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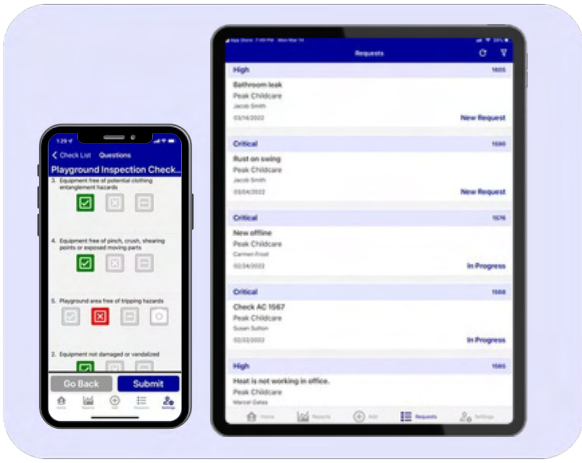
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Katie Sieverding
Executive Director
SD Head Start Association

South Dakota HEAD START ASSOCIATION

Region 8 Head Start Association Conference
November 3-5, 2026
Sessions Attended for Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Credits

Session	Title	Hours	Sticker
Keynote	Michael Hall - Strong Fathers	1.00	_____
Breakout 1	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 2	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 3	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 4	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 5	_____	1.25	_____
Keynote	Tommy Sheridan - Federal Updates	1.00	_____
Breakout 6	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 7	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 8	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 9	_____	1.25	_____
Keynote	Heather DeBoer - Together We Rise	1.00	_____
Breakout 10	_____	1.25	_____
Breakout 11	_____	1.25	_____
Keynote	Melissa Pickle - From Burnout to Balance	1.00	_____

Attendee Name: _____ Total Hours: _____