



2021 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Saturday, September 11

9 – 10:30 AM	Keynote: <i>Playing While Black</i> with Harrison P. Pinckney IV and Corliss Outley
10:30 – 10:45 AM	Break
10:45 – 11:45 AM	Breakout Session 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Books that Help Us Play, Books that Help us Talk</i> with Justin Azevedo, Amanda Foulk, and Susanna Wesenfeld• <i>Adventure Playgrounds and Risky Play</i> with Steve Caudle• <i>There's a Lemon in the Box! Creatively Creating Play Experiences in Virtual Classrooms</i> with Julia Luckenbill
11:45 – 12:30 PM	Lunch Break
12:30 PM – 1:30 PM	Breakout Session 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The Importance of Weapon and Fantasy Play and How We Can Encourage It</i> with Samuel Broaden• <i>From Cover to Cover: Engaging read aloud techniques to support critical thinking skills</i> with Francie Dillon
1:30 – 1:45 PM	Break
1:45 – 2:45 PM	Breakout Session 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Creating Space for Children with Special Needs at the Sacramento Children's Museum</i> with Lysa Twardosz• <i>Growing Whole Children in the Garden: integrating science, art, and multicultural studies into playful outdoor explorations</i> with Dr. Lorie Hammond• <i>What Young Children Need in Their Outdoor Play Spaces</i> with Tammy Tanner
3:00 – 4:30 PM	Closing Session: <i>Calling ALL My Friends: Sustaining Cultural Identity Through Play</i> with Ariana Brazier and Julia Brazier

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Playing While Black

Dr. Harrison Pinckney



This talk will highlight the experiences, concerns, and opportunities that families raising Black children consider when engaging in play. Attention will be given to lessons learned through play and its impact on identity development and self-esteem. Tips will be provided for providing positive play experiences for families raising Black children.

Dr. Harrison Pinckney's research focuses on the systems, institutions, and programs that influence the racial socialization of African American youth. Similarly, he examines the ways in which racial identity manifests itself in the lives of African American youth. Recognizing the role of faith-based organizations in the African American community, he also explores the ways in which this institution serves youth and the outcomes associated with participation in/with these organizations.

Dr. Corliss Outley



Dr. Corliss Outley's research examines positive youth development outcomes during the out-of-school time hours, particularly focusing on racial/ethnic identity and cultural behaviors, health disparities, social justice and built and physical environmental influences. She considers herself a “community engaged scholar” that focuses on improving sociopolitical systems and environments to reduce inequalities through the application of strengths-based empowerment approaches to youth engagement. She also attests that it is only from working side-by-side with communities that we as scholars will learn about their assets, as well as needs, in order to get for these citizens to no longer be considered underserved, but where they are fully represented and active participants in the social, environmental, economic and educational institutions.

Calling ALL My Friends: Sustaining Cultural Identity Through Play

Dr. Ariana Brazier
Julia Brazier



Together, Ari and Juli will provide foundational knowledge about the educational and cultural value of integrating play into daily interactions with your families and communities. Through interactive dialogue and play, their presentation will both identify how race informs our play experiences and identity development and generate a commitment to promoting play as an avenue to celebrate, learn, and be in relationship with one another across all spectrums of life.

Dr. Ariana Brazier is a play-driven community-organizer and educator. She received her doctoral degree in English, Critical & Cultural Studies from the University of Pittsburgh in April 2021. Ari has conducted community-based ethnographic research with Black students and families living in poverty in the southeast United States in order to document how Black child play functions as a grassroots method of community-based storytelling, teaching, and organizing. She is the Founder, CEO and President of the 501c3 nonprofit ATL Parent Like A Boss, Inc. (Parent LAB). Parent LAB's mission is to enhance generational literacies through PLAY in underserved African American communities.

Julia Brazier is a retired mentor for Auburn University Family Child Care Partnerships and served in this capacity for 11 years. She has 30+ years of experience as an early care/education professional, 2 of which were spent as a family child care provider. Julia has 14 years of experience in administrative positions serving, training, and mentoring family child care providers. She also served as the director of child care programs at the Bessemer YMCA for 5 years. Julia is the Board Chairwoman of the 501c3 nonprofit ATL Parent Like A Boss, Inc. (Parent LAB). Parent LAB's mission is to enhance generational literacies through PLAY in underserved African American communities.

Breakout Session 1: 10 – 11 AM

Play with Books

Join a trio of Sacramento Public Library youth librarians as they share a plethora of new picture and board books that provide fun storytimes, play ideas, and prompts for creativity.

Justin Azevedo, Youth Materials Selector, Sacramento Public Library.

Amanda Foulk, Librarian, Sacramento Public Library

Susanna Wesenfeld, Librarian, Sacramento Public Library

Adventure Playgrounds and Risky Play

Building forts, playing in the mud, all in a junkyard atmosphere where the youth decide what and how to play. In this presentation we will cover what a European type of adventure playground is, the lost art of 'play' and why 'risky' play is so important to youth.

Steve Caudle, Play Manager, Sacramento Adventure Playground.

There's a Lemon in the Box! Creatively Creating Play Experiences in Virtual Classrooms

In this workshop, participants will consider the importance of creativity in play-based virtual classrooms. They will examine ways to tie online curriculum to child milestones, tailoring the play in the virtual room to the children. Participants will apply this learning to the creation of learning kits and consider how to adapt the contents of these kits over time. They will leave with an understanding of how to plan kits, as well as gain many more tools for supporting play, creativity, and problem solving in their own virtual settings and interactions.

Julia Luckenbill, Program Coordinator/ Lecturer, U.C. Davis Laboratory School.

Breakout Session 2: 11:15 AM – 12:15 PM

The Importance of Weapon and Fantasy Play and How We Can Encourage It

Should we be allowing our children to play with weapons? YES! In this presentation, we will talk about why this is an important type of play and how we can help support children in it. Ideas talked about will include children's freedom of play, consent and more.

Samuel Broaden, Kindergarten Teacher/Consultant and Trainer, Honoring Childhood.

From Cover to Cover: Engaging read aloud techniques to support critical thinking skills

Participants will learn multiple read-aloud techniques that can encourage imaginative play, lively discussions, and critical thinking skills. Through intentional book selection, participants will learn to choose books that can serve multiple purposes to support language development, critical thinking, and engagement. In understanding how to use one's voice to uncover meaning embedded in the text, participants will find confidence in sharing more expressively when reading aloud. Also, learning how to engage young audiences in open discussions will allow participants to learn how to connect ideas and experiences across text and help their audience make meaning in new ways. This workshop will also help participants connect in fresh and meaningful ways that can be joyful and pleasurable for all.

Francie Dillon, Professor, Children's Literature of Award-Winning Artist, California State University Sacramento.

Breakout Session 3: 1:45 PM – 2:45 PM

Creating space for children with Special Needs at the Sacramento Children’s Museum

We have created programs that allow children with special needs to be inspired, to create, and to explore in a sensory friendly and fully accessible environment. ExplorAbility and Discovery Play are private, free, play sessions reserved for our friends with special needs. ExplorAbility is for children on the Autism Spectrum and Discovery Play serves children with any special need.

Lysa Twardosz, Program Manager, Sacramento Children’s Museum

Growing Whole Children in the Garden: integrating science, art, and multicultural studies into playful outdoor explorations

"Growing Whole Children in the Garden" parallels Lorie's recent book by that title, and will provide both the philosophy behind rich garden-based education and practical activities for doing it. Participants will learn how to create experiences in science and art from common household objects and garden plants. Our goal, which has been carried out at Peregrine School for fourteen years, is for children to learn through play without even knowing they are learning, and to become environmental advocates through simple experiences which ground them in the natural world. It is also to teach multicultural awareness through diverse holidays which integrate agriculture, seasonal change, and cultural traditions. This workshop will be hands on and interactive, despite being online. Participants will learn about 1) staging alternative fall cultural holidays which include everyone, 2) learning from a cyclic sun-based calendar, 3) planting fall crops in our Mediterranean climate, and 4) exploring art and science with fall seeds.

Dr. Lorie Hammond, Director, Peregrine School, Davis, Peregrine School.

What Young Children Need in Their Outdoor Play Spaces

In order to explore limits, try new experiences and develop their capacities through their early play experiences. Activities requiring total body involvement are likely to encourage problem solving. During early childhood, what a child feels about themselves is largely dependent upon what she/he can or cannot do with their body.

Tammy Tanner, Executive Director, Tomorrow’s Adventures.

Speaker Bios



Justin Azevedo is the youth materials selector for Sacramento Public Library, responsible for all children's and teen materials in the multi-branch system. He previously worked as a teen services librarian and branch supervisor.



Steve Caudle has operated the Sacramento Adventure Playground (powered by Fairytale Town) since its inception in 2016. After doing a long stint with Adult sports recreational leagues, Steve found life more rewarding working with children. Amongst his many achievements, Steve is credited with operating the "best in the County" elementary ASES afterschool programs for the City of Fairfield. Like many Americans Steve was previously unaware of what adventure playgrounds were, but has since found a natural inclination to facilitate play and has a passion for making others aware of its many benefits.



Julia Luckenbill has a Master's Degree in Education with an Emphasis in Child Life in Hospitals. She is the program coordinator for the infant and toddler components of the NAEYC-accredited Early Childhood Laboratory School at the UC Davis Center for Child and Family Studies. She has directed preschool programs in California and presents on child development topics for parents, teachers, and students. Luckenbill's book, "This is Play," was offered as the comprehensive benefit for NAEYC this year.



Samuel Broaden has been in the Child Development field for 15 years. He has been a classroom teacher, an Assistant Director and Center Director. He currently is a Child Care Coordinator working with Child Action, Inc. Sacramento County's Resource and Referral Agency. He is passionate about supporting teachers to do what is right for all children.



Francie Dillon is a professor of children's literature at California State University, Sacramento, a national award-winning children's recording artist, and speaker at state and regional early childhood conferences. Her efforts in promoting music and literacy have reached thousands of children and families in elementary schools, city libraries, preschool settings, and special events nationwide. Her most joyful and playful accomplishments include being Sacramento's Voice of Fairytale Town, where Dillon produced, recorded, and co-created the music and stories for the playset recordings.



Lysa Twardosz



Lorie Hammond is a lifelong educator and the founding director of Peregrine School, a progressive school in Davis, California, which features science, gardening, and the arts in its program for preschoolers through sixth graders. Lorie is a professor emerita from the College of Education, CSU Sacramento, where she taught teachers for many years; currently teaches gardening to children of all ages at Peregrine School; and is an active grandparent of three grandsons. In Lorie's view, play is the medium through which children, and in fact all of us, learn most creatively.



Tammy Tanner has an Associate Degrees in Commutation Studies, Liberal Arts, Child Care Studies from West Valley College, B.A Interdisciplinary Studies, M.A in Education and Multiple Subject Credential and Reading Credential from National University in San Jose. She has been in the field for over 20 years. She has taught everything from Infants to School-Age and several years as a Kindergarten Teacher.