

# *2018 Early Childhood Conference*

It's Easy to Be Green

Presented by: Abilities Network Project ACT  
&  
The Community College of Baltimore County

Saturday, October 6, 2018

8:30 am -4:30 pm

CCBC Owings Mills Campus

10300 Grand Central Ave.

Owings Mills, MD 21117



Visit our website for more information  
about other programs and office locations.

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[www.anprojectact.org](http://www.anprojectact.org)

## REGISTRATION

To register contact The Community College of Baltimore County:

**443-840-4700**

Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm or  
Fridays 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Early Bird Registration prior to Monday, **July 31, 2018** – \$70.00

Child Resource Center Member Registration prior to  
Friday, **September 21, 2018**- \$75.00

Registration on or after Monday, **July 31, 2018** – \$80.00

Registration **CLOSES** on Friday, **September 21, 2018**

Groups of 5 or more from the same agency will be discounted \$5.00. Only one discounted rate applies. For more information contact The Community College of Baltimore County.

### **Cancellation Policy:**

No refunds will be issued for this year's conference. Conference Registration can be transferred to another company representative through September 1, 2018. You must contact a Project ACT representative to complete this process.

For more information about how to register, please contact 410-828-7700 or email [crcbc@abilitiesnetwork.org](mailto:crcbc@abilitiesnetwork.org).

## SCHEDULE

8:30 am – 9:00 am  
9:00 am -10:00 am  
10:15 am- 11:55 am  
11:55 am- 12:55 pm  
12:55 pm– 2:35 pm  
2:50 pm- 4:30 pm

Registration  
Opening & Keynote Address  
Session 1: Workshops A-B-C-D  
Lunch & Resource Tables & Vendors  
Session 2: Workshops E-F-G-H  
Session 3: Workshops I-J-K-L

# WELCOME

Abilities Network Project ACT is excited to partner with the Community College of Baltimore County for our 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Childhood Conference.

Participants must register and pay to attend the conference through The Community College of Baltimore County. Breakout session and lunch selections will take place with Abilities Network Project ACT.

**Breakfast will not be provided this year.**

**All conference registrations** are completed by The Community College of Baltimore County. You will need to provide them with a working email address and specific demographic information. The demographic information is confidential and will be treated as such.

Once registered, participants will receive a confirmation email that includes a link to the Abilities Network Project ACT website. All participants will need to select breakout sessions and lunch.

Registrations **are not** complete until you have chosen your breakout sessions and lunch.

- Resource Tables
- Raffles
- Photo Booth
- Free Parking
- Easy access from the metro
- 6 hours of continued training



## **MORNING SESSIONS** **10:15 AM – 11:55 AM**

### Indoor and Outdoor Nature-Based Learning for Infants and Toddlers

*Sue Penix*

Long before electronic toys, Legos, or even stuffed animals, infants and toddlers learned in and from their natural environment – nature! There is an unending list of items to see, touch, feel, hear, climb and explore in nature, contributing to learning in every early childhood domain.

### Recycling our Ideas about Science and Art

*Dawn Baker*

In this workshop, participants will be introduced to the dynamics of STEAM. We will work through STEAM activities and look at the planning and implementation process through the child's and teacher's eyes. In order to excite the child's imagination and love of learning, it will require intentional planning of science and art activities.

### Building Skills, Naturally!

*Karen Madigan*

Can children learn math, language, and pre-reading skills while they are enjoying fresh air and sunshine? How does *real* learning take place outside? Join educators from the Nature Preschool at Irvine Nature Center in a hand-on workshop where you will learn how to use natural and recycled materials to enhance your math, language arts and pre-reading activities. There will even be a few make and take projects to use in your classroom!

### Rebuild by Reusing: How to incorporate recyclables into your classroom

*Shelby Montgomery & Judi Lazo*

Using recycled and reusable items is a great way to get your students (and even parents) excited about the three R's of the environment; reduce, reuse, and recycle! It allows for immense creativity, and endless teaching opportunities. In our classroom we use recyclables for centers, decorations, arts and craft activities, storage, and much more! During this workshop we will show you how simple it is to incorporate recyclables into your classroom. Attendees will also get to participate in hands-on activities and will create their own recycled craft; either a litter bug made entirely of recycled materials or a recycled plastic bottle terrarium! We hope to inspire all participants to begin to incorporate recyclable materials into their classroom.

## **EARLY AFTERNOON SESSIONS** **12:55 PM- 2:35 PM**

### Playing Outdoors for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

*Trish Kane & Neal Lichter*

Neal and Trish will offer attendees a practical understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) using experiential exercises and personal experiences. We will share tips and strategies to consider during outdoor play for individuals with ASD. These considerations include sensory challenges, wandering, and elopement concerns. They will discuss and reveal social stories for going out into the community such as the park, playground, etc.

Pedro Dreams of Music!!! Using Recyclable Materials in the Classroom

*Zulay Joa*

The workshop will introduce the audience to Pedro, a fictional character from the town of Cateura, Paraguay who dreams of becoming a musician who plays with Paraguay's landfilled orchestra. This presentation will expose the audience to ideas on how to utilize recyclable materials in order to be able to create musical instruments.

Creating Earth-Friendly, Child-Friendly Nature Play and Learning Spaces

*Nancy Striniste*

An experienced landscape designer and former teacher shares insights and inspiring images of her earth-friendly, child-friendly designs as well as from a recent schoolyard study trip to Germany and Sweden. Participants will learn about sustainable, engaging spaces that bring nature to the places where children are, research on children and nature, and will explore a process for designing and creating nature play spaces.

The presenter has worked with dozens of public and private schools, EC programs and municipalities to create natural play and learning spaces. Participants will discover essential elements of natural play and learning spaces and their importance for healthy development: natural climbing, digging and pretending places; outdoor art, and literacy spaces; beautiful native and edible kid-friendly plants.

Providing a Space for Creative Play: The Benefit of Natural Playgrounds

*Ron King*

For 22 years, Natural Playground Co., has been the leading expert in designing and building this country's most beautiful, intriguing, cost effective, and philosophically appropriate Natural Playgrounds for K-12 schools, Montessori schools, Head Start programs, childcare centers, and communities. Ron King is a trained architect and designer who started the company when he witnessed children at traditional playgrounds playing in the sand, the woods, and enjoying the natural surroundings rather than the equipment. This journey combines Ron's long-time experience as a designer, creator, and environmentalist. In addition to working with educators, municipalities, and child care providers, Ron has interviewed thousands of children and learned that they love and how they thrive when playing on and learning from the natural environment.

**LATE AFTERNOON SESSIONS**  
**2:50 PM- 4:30 PM**

STEAM Naturally

*Miriam Krause*

In this session, you will explore the Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math that can happen with natural materials in all types of outdoor spaces. We will look at the benefits researchers have found associated with outdoor nature play, experience activities you can bring back to your classroom, and make a plan to include natural outdoor STEAM in your daily routine.

**CONTINUED ON THE BACK**



### Eco-Healthy Childcare: Clean Air Indoors and Out

*Emily Ederer*

Young Children are especially vulnerable to the effects of chemicals and pollutants. Chemicals that we might consider safe can cause damage and exacerbate health problems. Using activities and discussion, this workshop will discuss practical, inexpensive ways to make sure that our indoor and outdoor air is clean and free from environmental toxins. It will also introduce the Eco-Healthy Child Care Endorsement Checklist and resources available through the Children's Environmental Health Network.

### Harnessing the Power of Nature Play

*Lavonne Taylor*

The value of natural materials in both classroom and outdoor exploration is in the way these materials can inspire play. Children are drawn to nature as a focal point for observation, exploration and investigation. These are the building blocks of scientific thinking for children as young as toddlers, and these same principals guide the development of scientific thinking in Healthy Beginnings. Through activities and discussion, our goal is to help teachers move beyond the stagnant classroom nature center where random natural materials are laid out with no guidance or direction to a place where children can be engaged with the materials and the materials can lead to actual learning.

### Indoor and Outdoor Nature-Based Learning for Infants and Toddlers

*Sue Penix*

Long before electronic toys, LEGOS, or even stuffed animals, infants and toddlers learned in and from their natural environment – nature! There is an unending list of items to see, touch, feel, hear, climb and explore in nature, contributing to learning in every early childhood domain.



**OCTOBER 6, 2018**  
**8:30 AM - 4:30 PM**

**Keynote Information**

**Nature is for Every Child**

## Monica French

Monica French is an experienced educator and advocate for nature-based early childhood education. As a former assistant director of a child care center in Laurel, MD, she developed an understanding of developmentally appropriate practice but longed to help children connect with the natural world. She was drawn to emergent curriculum and more authentic ways of facilitating learning, which led her to The Nature Preschool at Irvine Nature Center in Owings Mills, MD. She worked with children, staff, and families as assistant director, establishing a strong, joyful learning community full of enriching outdoor experiences. Monica developed numerous programs including training sessions for Nature & Nurture, a seasonal outreach program which supports educators working in under-served communities in Baltimore City. Monica continues to support, not only young children, but teachers and childcare providers through her work as a Board Member and trainer for the Eastern Region Association of Forest and Nature Schools (ERAFANS). She is currently working with Baltimore City Recreation and Parks and Wild Haven as a founding director to pilot Baltimore City's first forest immersion program. Learn more about Monica's work at: [www.explorenature.org](http://www.explorenature.org), [www.ERAFANS.org](http://www.ERAFANS.org), and [www.wildhaven.us](http://www.wildhaven.us).

Learn how to integrate interactions with nature in your existing curriculum, no matter where you live or what population you serve! Discover how children from all backgrounds are prepared socially, emotionally and academically through hands-on investigation and inquiry in the nature world. Accessibility to nature is each child's right – as facilitators of this experience, we need to be well versed in how to make this play possible for every child and family!

Visit us on the web!  
[www.anprojectact.org](http://www.anprojectact.org)

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SEEING ABILITIES NOT DISABILITIES.



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