

# **FEBRUARY 2024**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**This month's edition:**

- **Upcoming Workshops**
- **EEC News**
- **Advocacy Resources**
- **Articles**

**LOOKING TO ADVANCE YOUR CAREER IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION? EEC'S CAREER PATHWAYS PROGRAM AT ALL COMMUNITY COLLEGES ACROSS THE STATE CAN HELP YOU OBTAIN ECE COLLEGE CERTIFICATES AND EARN CREDITS TOWARDS ASSOCIATE DEGREES, INCLUDING FREE EARLY CHILDHOOD COURSEWORK, BOOKS, TUTORING, ADVISING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.**

**ATTEND AN UPCOMING INFORMATION SESSION TO HEAR DIRECTLY FROM THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES ON OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE:**

**[HTTPS://WWW.MASS.GOV/.../DEPARTMENT-OF-EARLY.../EVENTS...](https://www.mass.gov/.../DEPARTMENT-OF-EARLY.../EVENTS...)**

**#EARLYCHILDOODEUCATION #HIGHERED #EARLYCHILDHOOD**



## **Advance your Career in Early Childhood!**

Join us at an upcoming info session to learn about opportunities to take free college courses.



**MASSACHUSETTS  
Department of  
Early Education and Care**

**MASSACHUSETTS  
Department of  
Higher Education**



# Upcoming Workshops

CONTACT AES TO BOOK FIRST AID,  
CPR & AED TRAINING.



We can even come to you!



# **Live On-line Workshop**

## **Guiding and De-escalating Toddler Behaviors**

**Join AES and Amy Scott Wednesday, February 21, 2024 from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm**



This workshop will review the basics of social/emotional development and the meaning of challenging behaviors. Self-reflective activities around handling challenging behaviors, identifying personal "hot buttons," creating a plan for continued behavior. This workshop will allow for participants to discuss personal experiences with challenging behaviors; what worked and what didn't. We will look at documentation and how develop individualized strategies to best support positive outcomes.

**This workshop covers the EEC Core Competency Areas:**

- Core Competency Area 1: Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth
- Core Competency Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth
- Core Competency Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum
- Core Competency Area 6: Observation, assessment, and documentation

Cost is \$10.00

Registration is limited!

**[Click here to register](#)**

# Live On-line Workshop

## Understanding Sensory Integration in Toddler and Preschool Classrooms

Join AES and Danielle Powers Wednesday, March 6,  
2024 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm



Gaining knowledge of sensorimotor development theory is crucial for understanding how children interact with their environment through sensory experiences and motor activities. By observing and planning for sensory differences in diverse learners, educators can ensure that all children have access to learning experiences that cater to their individual needs. Implementing sensory activities throughout the classroom's daily schedule provides varied opportunities for engagement and development.

Reflecting on children's experiences and engagement with these activities is key to understanding their impact and effectiveness.

**This workshop covers the EEC Core Competency Areas:**

- Core Competency Area 1: Understanding the Growth and Development of Children and Youth
- Core Competency Area 2: Guiding and Interacting with Children and Youth
- Core Competency Area 5: Learning Environments and Implementing Curriculum

**Cost is \$10.00**  
**Registration is limited!**

**[Click here to register](#)**

# Strategies for Children

Join us in thanking Governor Healey for prioritizing early education and care investments in her Fiscal Year 2025 state budget proposal!

Add your name and/or organization to the [sign on letter here](#) before 5pm on Monday, February 19.

If you sign-on as an individual, your full name and city/town will be listed on the letter.

If you sign-on as an organization, your organization (and not your own name) will be listed on the letter. All types of organizations (associations, child care providers, advocacy organizations, unions, and any other organization that supports ECE) from anywhere in Massachusetts are welcome to sign on.

Read the full letter here:

[Thank You Healey-Driscoll Administration for FY25 Investments.](#)



**In January, the Healey-Driscoll Administration released their FY25 state budget proposal. Strategies for Children is grateful to see the Healey-Driscoll Administration prioritize investments in early education and care in a year with a difficult economic environment and limited revenue growth.**

**Governor Healey's FY25 budget proposal includes these investments:**

- \$475 million in annual funding to sustain the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) operational grants to early education and care (EEC) providers**
- \$75 million to increase access to EEC financial assistance for additional families**
- \$20 million to increase the reimbursement rate for providers who accept family financial assistance, bringing it closer to the cost of care today**
- \$18 million to expand the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI), which supports local communities to establish a district-wide preschool program utilizing the mixed delivery system (community-based EEC programs and public schools)**

**While we ask that you join us in thanking Governor Healy, we also know that this is just the beginning of the budget process ...**

**The House Ways & Means budget recommendations come out in April. In the next few weeks, we'll encourage you to contact your state representatives and ask them to continue prioritizing early education and care.**

**Budget season is a busy time of year for advocacy - see below for more opportunities to get involved today!**

**Thank you,  
Strategies for Children**

# Advocacy Coalition Resources



**SFC serves on the steering committee and data working group of the Boston Opportunity Agenda's Birth to Eight Collaborative.**



**SFC is a member of the Common Start Coalition, a cross-sector campaign for affordable, high-quality child care in Massachusetts. Common Start filed legislation in 2019. Read the bill fact sheet and coalition sign-on letter to the Legislature.**





**SFC partners with statewide early education associations and member organizations, including Massachusetts Association of Early Education and Care (MADCA), Alliance of Massachusetts YMCAs, Massachusetts Head Start Association and others, to promote high-quality early education and out-of-school time programs. We collaborate on legislative and state budget strategy, and co-sponsor the annual early education Advocacy Day at the State House. We have come together with these and other groups for daily COVID-19 check-ins, information sharing, and advocacy.**



**MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATION  
EQUITY PARTNERSHIP**

*There is no excellence without equity*

To address racial, economic, and geographic inequities in our state's education systems, SFC is a member of the Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership, and endorses the findings of its "#1 for Some" report.

The Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership (MEEP) is a collective effort of civil rights, social justice, and education advocates from across the Commonwealth working together to promote educational equity for historically underserved students in our state's schools. MEEP mobilizes a diverse group of leaders across sectors to strategically enhance opportunities for all Massachusetts families. MEEP is advocating for successful implementation of the historic Student Opportunity Act, and in the COVID-19 era, for equitable school reopening that works for all students and families. Learn more at [masseduequity.org](https://masseduequity.org).

# Trauma and the Growing Brain

## Article by: Melissa Coffey PsyD.

Toddlers are amazing small humans, but sometimes their thoughts and emotions are a mystery. Insert Joy from Inside Out saying, “what is going on inside their heads”? Toddlers and children are consistently exposed to learning and new information. Their brains are literal sponges to information. When children experience trauma at such a young age this impacts growth and development in parts of their brains that will affect how they learn and receive information in the future. The hippocampus is the part of the brain best known for learning new information as well as housing memory. Think about how involuntary memory can be, such as smelling apple pie at Thanksgiving and remembering your grandmother. Trauma impacts a child’s ability to retrieve information and memories from the hippocampus. When a traumatic event occurs the information is processed abnormally which means that the retrieval and presentation of information has a negative impact. This looks like a trigger that could lead to a tantrum, or a flashback or nightmare. With deficits in the hippocampus it can impact learning as children will need more pre-teaching and re-teaching of concepts before it can be stored in long term memory. Trauma also impacts memory of events as children might block out the trauma and forget about it until much later in life.

The prefrontal cortex is known for attention and processing stimuli. But what does that mean? As children gain experiences they learn about consequences and rewards. An example would be if you eat your dinner, then you get dessert. If you pick up your toys you can have time on your tablet. When trauma experiences occur, there is a disconnect in the prefrontal cortex to understand reward systems. This will look like really big reactions to small problems.



Trauma also impacts the ability to have relationships, which can lead to big behaviors such as tantrums, bed wetting, fidgeting, and issues sustaining attention even on preferred tasks. Deficits in the prefrontal cortex can impact learning as attention issues are connected to memory (which was previously discussed) as well as processing speed (the speed in which your brain processes information). This can affect performance on bigger multi step projects or tasks. It can also affect other areas of executive functioning such as organization. This would look like a student whose backpack or desk is messy and unorganized. The amygdala is our warning system for risk. Once a traumatic event happens it is imprinted into the amygdala. If there is a similar situation the amygdala activates the fight or flight warning, and somatic events occur. The body feels anxiety, there might be shaking, crying, running, hiding etc. The more trauma a child experiences the more active their amygdala will be.

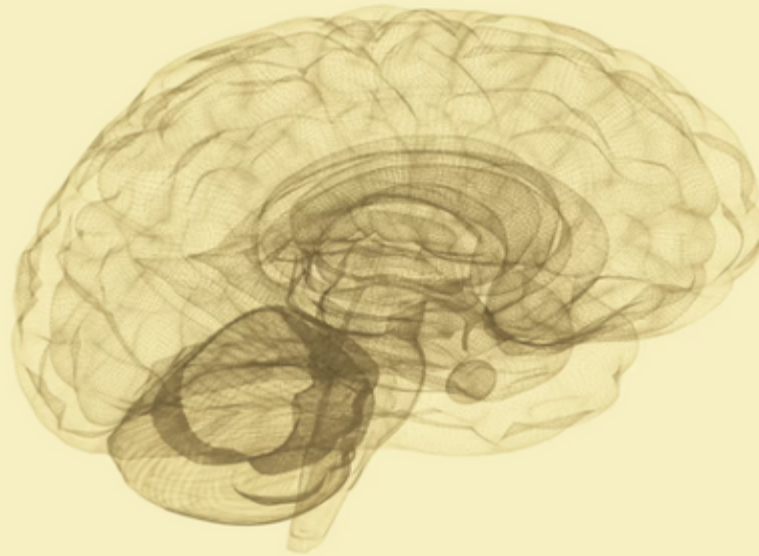
With supportive, trauma informed adults, children can rewire their brains through safety and processing to lead productive lives. Using resources such as therapy, solid expectations and routines with safe adults, children can have healthy meaningful relationships with peers and adults. By understanding behavioral responses tied to brain function can help educators be better trauma informed while working with children.

### References

- Image from: Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Can Traumatic Stress Alter the Brain? Understanding the Implications of Early Trauma on Brain Development and Learning, Victor G. Carrion, M.D., and Shane S. Wong: Journal of Adolescent Health



# Mental Health Articles



## Early Childhood Mental Health

As early experiences shape the architecture of the developing brain, they also lay the foundations of sound early childhood mental health.

 Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University /



## Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

Home Mental health is the foundation of early childhood development. Babies come into this world ready and wired to form relationships. From the moment of birth, children are forming connections, developing soci...

 ZERO TO THREE

**Visit our Website of Facebook page!  
Links are below!**

The logo for AES Educational Consulting is a dark gray circle containing the text "AES Educational Consulting" in a black, serif font. The text is arranged in three lines: "AES" on the top line, "Educational" on the middle line, and "Consulting" on the bottom line.

**AES  
Educational  
Consulting**

**AES Educational Consulting | early childhood and elementary education**

AES Educational Consulting provides comprehensive workshops, trainings, coaching and mentoring for organizations and educators.

 AES Ed