

The Washtenaw Early Childhood Directors Association (ECDA)



The Washtenaw Early Childhood Directors Association (ECDA) is a professional organization for the directors, administrators, and leaders of early childhood programs. Our goals are to support directors, to serve as advocates of children's issues, and to provide resource and networking opportunities for early childhood professionals. The ECDA Steering Committee is composed of program directors and representatives from local organizations.

You will have the opportunity to attend 8 talks on relevant early childhood education topics as well as network with your peers and be a part of the local early childhood community. Membership is required to attend. Newly interested programs may attend one meeting for free before having to join to participate.

Doors open at 11:15, lunch is served by 11:30 am. We will begin the presentation promptly at Noon. We start with announcements and news and then the speaker will present. Meetings end at 2:00pm.

****We meet at the Washtenaw Golf Club, located at 2955 Packard St, Ypsilanti, MI 48197****

Registration Information: Annual Membership Fee (September-May): \$75 per program

*Multi-site programs pay \$50 for each additional site

Monthly Training Fee: \$30 includes lunch, dessert, drink and gratuity

A MiRegistry link will be sent out monthly for each training. Membership is set up as an add-on to the training registration and payable with your first training registration.

Questions? Contact Candy at cls@childcarenetwork.org or 734-249-5108.

September 24, 2025: Leading with Heart: Positivity, Appreciation, and Conversations that Keep Your Team **// Amy Bond**

In early childhood education, our teams are the heart of everything we do. Yet too often, great staff leave not because of the children or the work, but because they don't feel valued, heard, or supported. This interactive session will explore how leaders can foster a culture where educators want to stay, grow, and thrive. We'll dive into simple but powerful ways to show authentic appreciation, from noticing people's presence and contributions, to respecting their lives outside of work, to supporting their professional growth. You'll also learn how to use "stay conversations" intentional check-ins designed to help staff feel engaged and supported before challenges lead to burnout or turnover. Building on ideas from Industrial/Organizational psychology, we'll also introduce pulse surveys, quick feedback tools that help leaders understand staff well-being in real time, so they can act quickly and effectively. This session is designed to be upbeat, practical, and full of real-world strategies that early childhood leaders can put into action right away.

October 22, 2025: 2025 New Center Rules Training for Providers // Child Care Licensing Bureau

The Child Care Licensing Bureau will join us to go over the new center rules established in 2025.

November 12, 2025: Child Care Directors Panel – Leading with Vision and Heart

Join us for an engaging session with other child care directors as they share real-world insights, innovative ideas, and lessons learned from leading their centers.

This interactive discussion will spark fresh perspectives, practical strategies, and plenty of inspiration!

January 28, 2026: Common HR pitfalls // Etta Heisler & Paychex

Details available at a later date!

February 25, 2026 *VIRTUAL* Self Reflection and Perspective Taking for Leading Programs and Building Professional Relationships // Christine Snyder

Through interactive activities and discussions, participants will articulate their professional values, recognize personal blind spots, and practice reimagining situations by considering multiple perspectives. The session emphasizes empathy and the significance of questioning assumptions, aiming to help educators build more understanding relationships with children, families, and colleagues. Attendees will leave with strategies for reflective practice and tools to foster open-mindedness and growth in their professional roles.

March 25, 2026: Creating Safety for All: Integrating Infant Mental Health Practices // Morgan Peterson and Erica Sneller

Session participants will discuss the importance of fostering positive caregiver-child relationships with the young children in your classrooms, how attachment impacts early childhood mental health, and the fundamental role early childhood educators play through family engagement, support, and advocacy. Additionally, session participants will consider the differences and similarities between their role as an early childhood educator and that of an Infant Mental Health home visitor, as well as learn additional strategies that can be used to further support caregiver-child relationships for both the classroom and in the home.

April 22, 2026 Sensory Processing // Corah Watson

Bring your teachers and join us for an introduction to sensory processing and what it means for the classroom setting. From sensory seeking to sensory avoidant and the in between, this will provide tools and tactics to utilize in the classroom as well as follow up steps.

May 20, 2026 Lead Like a TED: Using Powerful Talks to Inspire Early Childhood Leadership // Heidi McFadden

Looking for fresh inspiration in your leadership journey? This interactive session introduces early childhood leaders to the power of TED Talks and podcasts as tools for growth and reflection. We'll explore thought-provoking talks that highlight resilience, emotional intelligence, and visionary leadership—connecting each theme to the real-world challenges of leading in early childhood settings.

2025-2026 Steering Committee

[Shannon Peitz](#) - President
Gretchen's House - Dhu Varren

[Patty Sherwood](#) - Venue/Events
Adventure Center

[Michelle Freund](#)
UM North Campus

[Tammie King](#) - Vice President
WCSACCA Liaison
Bemis Farms Preschool & Childcare

[Laura Griswold](#) - SBS/QPP Liaison
Gretchen's House - Administration

[Angela Vogel](#)
Alaina's Child Care

[Karin Nowak](#) - Secretary &
Public Policy
Gretchen's House - Oak Valley

[Candy Sorensen](#) -
Membership/Communication
Child Care Network

[Carrie Anderson](#)
Morning Star Child Care

[Shannon Steinbach](#) - Treasurer
Gretchen's House -
School-Age Coordinator

Members at Large:

[Chrissy McKiddie](#)
Gretchen's House - Mt. Vernon