



THE #1

CONFERENCE

FOR ECE TEACHERS & LEADERS

**ECE ALL-STAR CONFERENCE
OFFICIAL GUIDE**

**HOUSTON, TEXAS
JULY 10-13, 2025**

WELCOME TO THE BORN TO TEACH CONFERENCE: ECE ALL-STAR EDITION!

This year, we're rolling out the red carpet for the real MVPs of early childhood education—**YOU!** Welcome to the Born to Teach Conference, where champions of the ECE field are born, made, and celebrated.

You didn't just show up. **You showed OUT**—ready to grow, ready to level up, and ready to lead your classrooms and centers like the All-Star you are. This year's theme, **ECE ALL-STAR**, is all about recognizing the greatness within you—the hustle, the heart, the leadership, and the passion it takes to pour into children, families, and teams every single day.

Over the next three days, get ready to be coached, challenged, and cheered on like never before. We're diving into game-changing strategies around teaching, enrollment, leadership, and systems—and we're doing it with style. You'll hear from powerhouse keynote speakers, learn from top-tier sessions, and make connections that could change your entire trajectory.

And don't worry—we didn't forget the fun! **From our All-Star Tailgate to our signature BTT experiences, we've mixed business with a whole lot of joy, laughter, and inspiration.**

So let's make this your winning season. Show up like the All-Star you are. Shine like only you can. And leave this conference ready to play bigger than ever in your business, your classroom, and your purpose.

Let the games begin!

Latrice "The Childcare Chic"
Founder, Born To Teach Conference

ABOUT THE Founder!

Meet **Latrice Galloway-Crawford**, affectionately known as **The Childcare Chic**—a trailblazing leader, educator, and powerhouse in the early childhood education space with over 17 years of experience.





Latrice is the founder and **CEO of KidZville Learning Academy**, the largest privately owned childcare center in Fort Bend County and one of the fastest-growing companies in America, as featured on the INC. 5000 list. **Her award-winning program has served over 10,000 families, employed more than 500 early educators, and continues to raise the standard of excellence in ECE.**

In 2022, she launched **The Childcare Clique**, one of the largest and fastest-growing communities for childcare owners. Through her **ELITE coaching program**, online platform, and engaging content—reaching over 100,000 followers and garnering 5 million+ views—Latrice equips childcare leaders with the tools to start, grow, and scale sustainable businesses without burnout.



She is also the visionary behind the **Born To Teach ECE Conference**, a game-changing event that brings together childcare owners, educators, and leaders for transformative professional development, real connections, and powerful inspiration. With five sold-out events and counting, Latrice has proven herself as one of the most impactful voices in the industry.

A proud wife, mom of three, and advocate for equity in early education, Latrice's passion runs deep—from preschool classrooms to influencing state-level conversations. **Her leadership and dedication make Born To Teach more than just a conference—it's a movement.**





WHY BORN TO TEACH ECE CON?




EVIDENCE / RESEARCH BASED

Immerse yourself at the Born To Teach Conference, where knowledge meets action. Elevate your ECE journey with evidence-based insights and research-driven strategies.

LEARN TODAY, IMPLEMENT TOMORROW

Level up your teaching and leadership game instantly! The Born To Teach Conference isn't just about insights – it's about actionable strategies. Learn today, implement tomorrow.

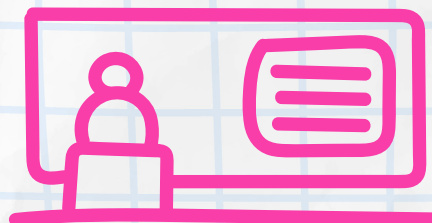



CURATED SPEAKERS

Experience excellence in ECE at Born To Teach! Our conference features speakers who are not only vetted and experienced, but also excel in incorporating engaging strategies into their sessions.

COLLABORATING & CONNECTING

Get ready to network and collaborate at Born To Teach! Connect with fellow educators, leaders, and experts in the ECE industry and join forces to shape the future of early learning.





WHAT YOU GET AT BORN TO TEACH



1 2 ½ days of Amazing Keynotes and Engaging Sessions for Leaders & Teachers

2 Time to Network with Other ECE Professionals and Presenters

3 Certificate for 20 Clock Hours of Professionals Development

4 Discounts on Future Born to Teach Events

5 Time to Connect with Many Vendors in the ECE Space to Learn About the Latest

6 Introduction to products and services for your childcare centers

7 Swag Bags that Include BTT Merch



2025 LOCATION AND VENUE

MARRIOTT MARQUIS 1777 Walker St, Houston, TX 77010



We have limited rooms left at
DISCOUNTED RATES
in the Marriott Marquis Hotel

**CLICK HERE TO
BOOK YOUR ROOM**

BTT 2025 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, July 10, 2025

3 p.m. – 7 p.m. Registration

7 p.m. – 9 p.m. Tailgate Welcome Party / Born To Teach Merch Shop opens

Friday, July 11, 2025

7 a.m. – 8 a.m. Registration

7:30 a.m. VIP Entrance

7:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

8 a.m. Kickoff and Opening Keynote
Eric Thomas

9 a.m. – 9:10 a.m. Break

9:10 a.m. – 10:20 a.m. Session I

10:20 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. – 11:40 a.m. Session II

11:40 a.m. – 12:50 p.m. Chat 'n Chew
Lunch provided by BTT

12:50 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Break

1:00 p.m. – 2:10 p.m. Session III

2:10 p.m. – 2:20 p.m. Break

2:20 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Session IV

3:30 p.m. – 3:40 p.m. Break

3:40 p.m. – 4:40 p.m.
Keynote The Childcare Chic,
Games & Giveaways

4:40 p.m. Comedian DJ Pryor

5:15 p.m. The Childcare Chic
Official Book Signing

7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
The BTT Open Upscale Game Experience
(VIP & Clique ONLY)

Saturday, July 12, 2025

8:30 a.m. VIP Entrance

8:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

9 a.m. Fireside Chat
The Childcare Chic & Sydney Carter

10 a.m. – 10:10 a.m. Break

10:10 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. Session I

11:20 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Break

11:30 a.m. – 12:40 p.m. Session II

12:40 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Private VIP Luncheon
General Admission: Lunch on your own

2 p.m. – 3 p.m. Games, Giveaways &
Keynote Tameenah Adams

3 p.m. – 3:10 p.m. Break

3:10 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. Session III

4:20 p.m. – 5 p.m. Visit Merch Shop
& Exhibitors

8 p.m. – 11 p.m. BTT ESPYS Sneaker Ball &
Awards with Special Performance

Sunday, July 13, 2025

8:30 a.m. Entrance

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Kickoff & Keynote Kim Bearden

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Childcare Panel

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Giveaways, Networking, & Fun

12:30 p.m. – 1 p.m. Closing



BORN TO TEACH – FRIDAY, JULY 11, 2025

7 a.m. - 8 a.m. Registration

7:30 a.m. VIP Entrance

7:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

8 a.m. Kickoff and Opening Keynote
Eric Thomas

9 a.m. - 9:10 a.m. Break

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12:50 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Break

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Official Book Signing

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
The BTT Open Upscale Game Experience
(VIP & Clique ONLY)

8 a.m. - 9 a.m. Houston Ballroom- Keynote: Eric Thomas

Fort Bend

Montgomery

Galveston

Session I
9:10 a.m. -
10:20 a.m.

One Band, One Sound:
Building Strong
Classrooms Through
Teamwork & Leadership

Stacey Byes-Byarse
Teachers only

Go DJ: Building Student
Confidence

Alexia Pendleton
Teachers only

Tiny Steps, Big Wins: The
Infant/Toddler Teacher
Toolkit

Sheika Petteway
Teachers Only

Session II
10:30 a.m. -
11:40 a.m.

Game Plan for Success:
Effective Strategies for a
Well-Managed Classroom

Mr.Jay
Teachers only

Ace Your Feelings:
Strengthening Social &
Emotional Development

Erin Squared
Teachers only

From Hustle to Harmony:
The All-Star Teacher's
Guide to Thriving, Not Just
Surviving

Stacey Byes-Byarse
Teachers only

Session III
1:00 p.m. -
2:10 p.m.

Mathletes in the Making:
Moving, Grooving, and
Counting!

Alexia Pendleton
Teachers only

Happy Baby, Happy
Teacher: Scoring Smiles,
One Little Victory at a Time

Lakeshia Nnamani
Teachers Only

Play Like a Pro: The Power
of Dramatic Play In Early
Learning

Robin Harris
Teachers only

Session IV
2:20 p.m. -
3:30 p.m.

Little MVP's: Training
Future Scientists with
STEM & Sensory Play

Michael Newman
Teachers only

Stay in the Game:
Preventing Burnout and
Staying Energized

Erica Saccoccio
Teachers Only

Game On! Leveling Up
Your Circle Time

Lakeshia Nnamani
Teachers Only

3:30 p.m. Houston Ballroom - Keynote: Latrice Galloway

4:30 p.m. Entertainment



BORN TO TEACH – SATURDAY, JULY 12, 2025

8:30 a.m. VIP Entrance

8:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

9 a.m. Fireside Chat
The Childcare Chic & Sydney Carter

10 a.m. – 10:10 a.m. Break

10:10 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. Session I

11:20 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Break

11:30 a.m. – 12:40 p.m. Session II

12:40 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Private VIP Luncheon
General Admission: Lunch on your own

2 p.m. – 3 p.m. Games, Giveaways &
Keynote Tameenah Adams

3 p.m. – 3:10 p.m. Break

3:10 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. Session III

4:20 p.m. – 5 p.m. Visit Merch Shop
& Exhibitors

8 p.m. – 11 p.m. BTT ESPYS Sneaker Ball &
Awards with Special Performance

9 a.m. - 10 a.m. Houston Ballroom- Keynote: Sydney Carter

Fort Bend

Montgomery

Galveston

Session I
10:10 a.m. -
11:20 a.m.

Knocking Out Engaging
Lesson Plans
Erin Squared
Teachers only

Winning with Words:
Hands-On Strategies for
Teaching Early Literacy
Tangee Peek
Teachers only

The 5-Point Play: Creating
an Aesthetic Environment
for Learning
Ernesto Gonzalez
Leaders only

Session II
11:30 a.m. -
12:40 p.m.

Play Like a Champion:
Purposeful Play Strategies
for Early Learners
Michael Newman
Teachers only

The Power of Storytelling:
Bringing Books to Life for
Young Learners
Robin Harris
Teachers Only

Childcare, Federal
funding, Policy &
Advocacy: How It Works
and Why It Matters
Jerletha McDonald
Leaders only

2:00 p.m. Houston Ballroom- Keynote: Tameenah Adams

Session III
3:10 p.m. -
4:20 p.m.

No Timeouts Needed:
Smooth Transitions that
Keep Kids in the Zone
Mr. Jay
Teachers only

No Child Left on the
Sidelines: Supporting
Special Needs in ECE
Dr. Sumiko Hamilton
Teachers only

Let Them but Let me:
From Insurance Crisis to
Confidence
Samantha Phillips
Leaders Only



BORN TO LEAD – FRIDAY, JULY 11, 2025

7 a.m. - 8 a.m. Registration

7:30 a.m. VIP Entrance

7:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

8 a.m. Kickoff and Opening Keynote
Eric Thomas

9 a.m. - 9:10 a.m. Break

9:10 a.m. - 10:20 a.m. Session I

10:20 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. - 11:40 a.m. Session II

11:40 a.m. - 12:50 p.m. Chat 'n Chew
Lunch provided by BTT

12:50 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Break

1:00 p.m. - 2:10 p.m. Session III

2:10 p.m. - 2:20 p.m. Break

2:20 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Session IV

3:30 p.m. - 3:40 p.m. Break

3:40 p.m. - 4:40 p.m.
Keynote The Childcare Chic,
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4:40 p.m. Comedian DJ Pryor

5:15 p.m. The Childcare Chic
Official Book Signing

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
The BTT Open Upscale Game Experience
(VIP & Clique ONLY)

8 a.m. - 9 a.m. Houston Ballroom- Keynote: Eric Thomas

Salon 1

Salon 2

Salon 3

Session I
9 a.m. -
10:10 a.m.

Turning Parents into
Raving Fans: Customer
Service in Childcare

Vernon Mason
Leaders only

Walk Away Wealthy:
Secrets to a successful
Exit

Chelsea Reue
Directors only

The Coach Approach

Beth Cannon
Leaders only

Session II
10:20 a.m. -
11:30 a.m.

Training Camp: How to
Create an Effective
Onboarding & Training
Program

Beth Cannon
Leaders only

The Ultimate Assist:
Systems to Help You Win in
Childcare

Lakeshia Nnamani
Leaders Only

Stop the Revolving Door:
Fun, Fast and Effective
Staff Retention Strategies

Michelle Thomas
Leaders only

Session III
1:00 p.m. -
2:10 p.m.

Ready for the Big Leagues:
Scaling Your
Childcare Empire

Jamarrion Tabor
Leaders Only

Game Plan for Success:
Accountability, Incentives,
and Rewards

Vernon Mason
Leaders only

Master Your Finances:
Building a Strong Budget
for Childcare Center

Chelsea Reue
Directors only

Session IV
2:10 p.m. -
3:20 p.m.

Compliance is the
Playbook: Mastering
Licensing Like a Pro

Ronnae Williams
Teachers/ Leaders

The Grant Playbook:
Strategies to Find, Apply,
and Win Big

Jekwenta Primm
Leaders only

On the Money: Cashflow
Control and KPIs Every
Childcare Owner Should
Track

Ephraim Egebele
Owners only

3:30 p.m. Houston Ballroom - Keynote: Latrice Galloway

4:30 p.m. Entertainment



BORN TO LEAD – SATURDAY, JULY 12, 2025

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8:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

9 a.m. Fireside Chat
The Childcare Chic & Sydney Carter

10 a.m. – 10:10 a.m. Break

10:10 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. Session I

11:20 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Break

11:30 a.m. – 12:40 p.m. Session II

12:40 p.m. – 2 p.m.
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2 p.m. – 3 p.m. Games, Giveaways &
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3 p.m. – 3:10 p.m. Break

3:10 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. Session III

4:20 p.m. – 5 p.m. Visit Merch Shop
& Exhibitors

8 p.m. – 11 p.m. BTT ESPYS Sneaker Ball &
Awards with Special Performance

9 a.m. - 10 a.m. Houston Ballroom- Keynote: Sydney Carter

Salon 1

Salon 2

Salon 3

Session I 10:10 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.

Own the Court: Mastering
the Art of Leadership in
Your Own Way
Jamarrion Tabor
Leaders Only

Filling the Stands: Winning
strategies for Enrollment
Kate Woodward Young &
Carrie Casey
Owners only

Conflict Management in
Childcare: Play Hard, Play
Fair, Play Together
Albert Wright
Leaders only

Session II 11:30 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.

Tax Strategies for
Childcare Pros: Play to Win
Ephraim Egebele
Owners only

Keep Your Head in the
Game: Strategies to Avoid
Burnout
Kate Woodward Young &
Carrie Casey
Owners only

Check-Ins That Change the
Game: Appraisals That
Actually Matter
Tameenah Adams
Leaders only

2:00 p.m. Houston Ballroom- Keynote: Tameenah Adams

Session III 3:10 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.

No More Boring Staff
Meetings! Keep Your Team
Engaged & Inspired
Albert Wright
Leaders only

The Grant Playbook:
Strategies to Find, Apply,
and Win Big
Jekwenta Primm
Leaders only

All-Star Marketing &
Multiple Streams: Don't
Just Enroll...Expand
Latrice "The Childcare
Chic" Crawford
Leaders Only



BORN TO TEACH CONFERENCE – SUNDAY, JULY 13, 2025

8:30 a.m. Entrance

9:00 a.m. Welcome/Games/Giveaways

9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Opening Keynote

10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Fast Break
Networking/ Giveaways

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Panel Discussion

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m Final Pep Talk

Houston Ballroom

Opening Keynote: Kim Bearden

Real Talk in Real Time: The Wins, The Wrecks & The Work

Fast Break Networking

Meet fellow ECE All-Stars.
The goal? Real convos, new connections, and big energy—fast!

Let's Get Loud Giveaway!!!!

Inside the Locker Room Panel

Unfiltered Conversations from the Heart of the Childcare Field

Final Pep Talk + Goodbye



DAY 1

THURSDAY, JULY 10

WELCOME TO BORN TO TEACH "ALL-STAR" EDITION



Thursday, July 10, 2025

3 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Registration

7 p.m. – 9 p.m.
Tailgate Welcome Party / Born To
Teach Merch Shop opens





TAILGATE WELCOME PARTY

KICKOFF THE BORN TO TEACH CONFERENCE WITH YOUR WINNING TEAM!



 **HOUSTON,
TEXAS**
JULY 10
7 P.M. – 9 P.M.

SPONSORED BY



playground

ATTIRE: REP YOUR CENTER

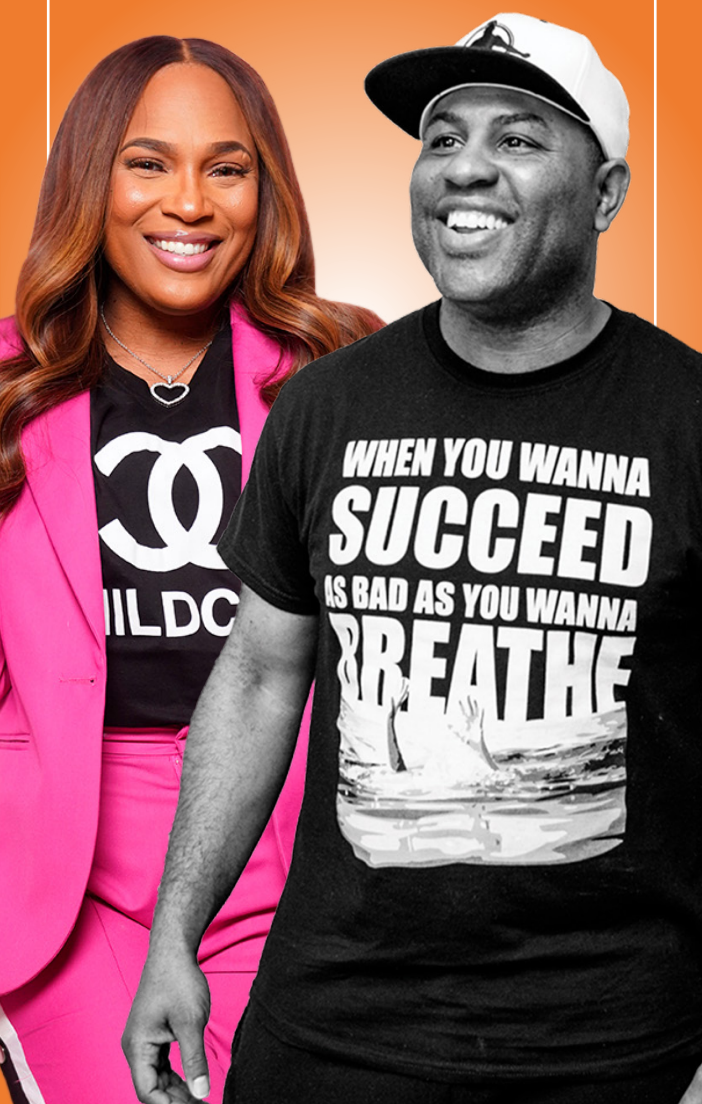
Wear your center merch head to toe!
The person/team to REP YOUR CENTER the best will win a prize!



DAY 2

FRIDAY, JULY 11

**FEATURING
ERIC THOMAS &
THE CHILDCARE CHIC**



Friday, July 11, 2025

7 a.m. - 8 a.m. Registration

7:30 a.m. VIP Entrance

7:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

8 a.m. Kickoff and Opening Keynote
Eric Thomas

9 a.m. - 9:10 a.m. Break

9:10 a.m. - 10:20 a.m. Session I

10:20 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Break

10:30 a.m. - 11:40 a.m. Session II

11:40 a.m. - 12:50 p.m. Chat 'n Chew
Lunch provided by BTT

12:50 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Break

1:00 p.m. - 2:10 p.m. Session III

2:10 p.m. - 2:20 p.m. Break

2:20 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Session IV

3:30 p.m. - 3:40 p.m. Break

3:40 p.m. - 4:40 p.m.
Keynote The Childcare Chic,
Games & Giveaways

4:40 p.m. Comedian DJ Pryor

5:15 p.m. The Childcare Chic Official Book
Signing

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
The BTT Open Upscale Game Experience
(VIP & Clique ONLY)

BTT CHAT & Chew

**FRIDAY, JULY 11 / SALONS 1-3
DURING LUNCH**

Want to keep the conversations going about the hottest topics in childcare? Ready to connect with other childcare leaders and teachers? **Grab your lunch and join a table discussion that interests you.** You never know which speaker or special guest might stop by to share valuable insights!

TOPICS

BORN TO LEAD

#1-2: Childcare Owner 101 (new & aspiring owners)

#3-4: Developing Leadership Skills in Early Childhood Education

#5-6: Financial Management and Budgeting for Childcare Centers

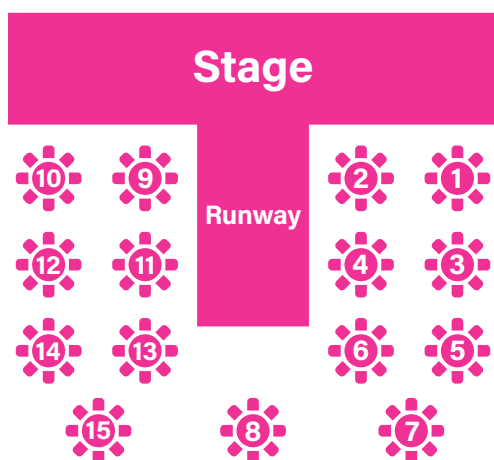
#7-8: Effective Staff Recruitment and Retention

#9-10: Marketing Strategies to Increase Enrollment

#11-12: Grant Opportunities in Childcare

#13-14: Engaging with the Community and Building Partnerships

#15: Implementing Technology in Childcare Administration



BORN TO TEACH

#1-2: Addressing Challenging Behaviors in Young Children

#3-4: Creating Culturally Responsive Classrooms

#5-6: Incorporating STEM in Early Childhood Education

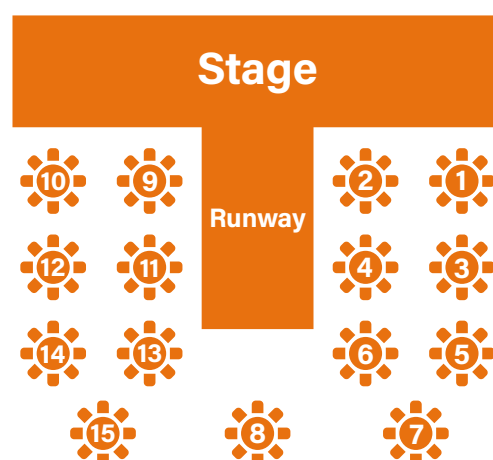
#7-8: Creating Effective Transition Routines

#9-10: Supporting Social-Emotional Development in Young Children

#11-12: Strategies for Promoting Language and Literacy

#13-14: Adapting Curriculum for Children with Special Needs

#15: Best Practices for Assessing Child Development



HOW IT WORKS:

1. Check out the BTT Chat & Chew topics list.
2. Pick a topic from the list that interests you.
3. Grab your lunch in the foyer area.
4. Look for your table number, enjoy your lunch and engage in discussions about your topic with other attendees.



BTT OPEN TENNIS-THEMED GAME NIGHT

VIPS + THE CLIQUE ONLY

**GAMES, KARAOKE,
FOOD, DRINKS**

DRESS CODE: COUNTRY CLUB COOL
- THINK TENNIS SKIRTS, POLOS, AND
SPORTY GLAM!



HOUSTON,
TEXAS

JULY 11

7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.





DAY 3

SATURDAY, JULY 12

FEATURING
SYDNEY CARTER &
THE CHILDCARE CHIC



Saturday, July 12, 2025

8:30 a.m. VIP Entrance

8:45 a.m. General Admission Entrance

9 a.m. Fireside Chat
The Childcare Chic & Sydney Carter

10 a.m. – 10:10 a.m. Break

10:10 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. Session I

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12:40 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Private VIP Luncheon
General Admission: Lunch on your own

2 p.m. – 3 p.m. Games, Giveaways &
Keynote Tameenah Adams

3 p.m. – 3:10 p.m. Break

3:10 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. Session III

4:20 p.m. – 5 p.m. Visit Merch Shop
& Exhibitors

8 p.m. – 11 p.m. BTT ESPYS Sneaker
Ball & Awards with Special
Performance



VIP PAR-TEE *Luncheon*

DRESS CODE: COUNTRY CLUB CHIC – PASTELS, POLOS, AND GOLF GLAM ENCOURAGED!



HOUSTON,
TEXAS

JULY 12
12:40 P.M. – 2 P.M.

BORN TO TEACH

ESPYS **SNEAKER BALL** **AWARDS**

ENTERTAINMENT, FOOD, FUN, DRINKS

ATTIRE: FORMAL ATTIRE W/ SNEAKERS



JULY 12
8 P.M. – 11 P.M.

BORN TO TEACH

ESPYS

SNEAKER BALL

AWARDS

NOMINEES

ECE EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



Adneris Rodriguez
Taylor'd to Learning Academy
Winter Haven, FL



Ahnieya Kincy
World of Little Angels
Altadena, CA



Mariah Taylor
Taylor'd to Learning Academy
Winter Haven, FL

ECE DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR



Deleasha Meier
De Valle ISD Child
Development Center South
Austin, TX



Maiya Mosby
Destination Education
Memphis, TN



Tredenia Dixon
KidZville Learning Academy
Rosenberg, TX

ECE OWNER OF THE YEAR



Antoinette McMillan
MiMi's Early Learning Village
Philadelphia, PA



Michelle Amons
Gates and Bridges
Learning Academy
St. Petersburg, FL



Shardaja Taylor
Taylor'd to Learning Academy
Winter Haven, FL

ECE FAMILY CHILDCARE CENTER OF THE YEAR



Chiquita Christoff
Christoff's Learning Academy
Gonzales, LA



Shantell Washington
Future Scholars
Learning Academy
Slidell, LA



Lashanda Fraser
Marcy Precious
Little 1s Daycare
Queens, NY

ECE CENTER OF THE YEAR



Charvon Jones
Centinela Christian Child
Development Center
Inglewood, CA



Me'Chelle Hobbs
Cornerstone Learning Center
Conyers, GA



JaColbie Hardy
Destination Education
Memphis, TN



DAY 4

SUNDAY, JULY 13

**FEATURING
KIM BEARDEN**



Sunday, July 13, 2025

8:30 a.m.
Entrance

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Kickoff & Keynote Kim Bearden

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Childcare Panel

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Giveaways, Networking, & Fun

12:30 p.m. – 1 p.m.
Closing



ON THE MAIN STAGE



**ERIC
THOMAS**



**LATRICE
GALLOWAY**
"THE CHILDCARE CHIC"



**SYDNEY
CARTER**



**KIM
BEARDEN**



**TAMEENAH
ADAMS**

KEYNOTES

KEYNOTE

Eric Thomas

YOU OWE YOU



Dr. Eric Thomas, also known as ET the Hip Hop Preacher, is a world-renowned motivational speaker, author, and educator whose powerful voice and unwavering passion have inspired millions. From high school dropout to Ph.D. graduate, his journey fuels his mission to empower others to pursue excellence through education, discipline, and resilience.

Dr. Thomas brings an electrifying presence to the Born To Teach ECE Conference, reminding every educator that their work changes lives and legacies. His messages on purpose, perseverance, and impact speak directly to those shaping the hearts and minds of the next generation. Whether you're in the classroom or leading an organization, ET will challenge you to level up.

You Owe You

In this high-energy, transformational keynote, Dr. Eric Thomas—widely known as “ET, The Hip Hop Preacher”—delivers a powerful message of personal accountability and purpose. Through real-life stories and undeniable truth, You Owe You challenges attendees to stop waiting for permission and start owning their greatness. This session will ignite your drive, shift your mindset, and inspire you to show up for yourself like never before.

ON THE MAIN STAGE

KEYNOTE

Latrice Galloway

"THE CHILDCARE CHIC"

EVERY CHILD NEEDS A CHAMPION
BUT SO DO YOU



Latrice Galloway-Crawford is a trailblazer in early childhood education and the visionary behind KidZville Learning Academy, a seven-figure childcare center she founded in 2007. With over 17 years of entrepreneurial experience, Latrice has built a thriving business rooted in accessibility, quality, and care. Her leadership recently earned her recognition as an INC 5000 honoree, solidifying her place among the nation's most impactful business owners.

Known as The Childcare Chic, Latrice also leads The Childcare Clique and Clique ELITE, where she trains and mentors aspiring childcare center owners through coaching, courses, and community. She is passionate about helping others succeed in this industry without the costly missteps she once faced. A dedicated wife and mother, Latrice brings both heart and strategy to her work, making her a powerful voice for transformation in early childhood education.

Every Child Needs a Champion but So Do You

In this powerful keynote, Latrice brings the entire room together — owners, leaders, and teachers — to remind us that every role in a childcare center plays a vital part in the mission. Whether you're leading a classroom, a building, or the business, how you show up matters. This session will challenge you to take ownership of your position, elevate your standards, and walk away with a renewed sense of purpose and practical gems you can apply immediately. Because when everyone plays their position with intention — everybody wins.

ON THE MAIN STAGE

KEYNOTE

Sydney Carter

**ALL FIRED UP: A FIRESIDE CHAT ON
TEAMWORK & LEADERSHIP**



Sydney Carter is a former professional athlete, coach, and motivational speaker who uses her platform to inspire others to lead with authenticity and confidence. Best known for her dynamic presence on and off the court, Sydney brings messages of resilience, personal power, and self-worth to every audience she meets.

A former Texas A&M basketball standout and WNBA player, Sydney now empowers women and youth to step boldly into their purpose. She is celebrated not only for her fashion and flair but for her fearless stance on confidence and personal growth. At Born To Teach, she reminds educators that their presence matters and that how they show up can transform everything.

All Fired Up: A Fireside Chat on Teamwork & Leadership

Get ready to turn up the heat at Born to Teach with this powerful fireside chat featuring college basketball coach and style icon Sydney Carter and The Childcare Chic herself, Latrice Galloway-Crawford.

In "All Fired Up," we're talking all things teamwork, leadership, and what it really takes to build an All-Star team—on the court and in your center. From coaching through challenges to creating a winning culture, this conversation will leave you inspired, empowered, and ready to lead like never before.

Because whether you're leading a classroom or running the entire center, one thing's for sure: you can't win the game without a strong team.

ON THE MAIN STAGE

KEYNOTE

Tameenah Adams

KNOWING HOW TO PLAY THE GAME
WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW THE SPORT



Tameenah Adams is a dynamic speaker and seasoned organizational leader with over 25 years of experience in human resources, business management, and leadership development. She holds a degree in Organizational Leadership with a focus on HR and business management and is a Certified HR Professional, John Maxwell Certified Coach, and Business Coach with the Childcare Success Company. She is also the founder of ChildcareHR.

A former owner of four successful child care centers in the DC Metro area, Tameenah brings real-world expertise in building teams, streamlining operations, and scaling businesses. Her journey from single motherhood to entrepreneurship inspires and informs her work.

Tameenah empowers child care leaders through impactful keynotes, workshops, and coaching, offering practical strategies for building high-performing teams and sustainable, profitable operations. As the force behind ChildcareHR, she helps clients navigate HR, compliance, and leadership challenges, moving them from daily struggles to long-term growth.

Whether training business leaders or child care professionals, Tameenah captivates audiences with her energy, expertise, and commitment to their success—transforming how they lead in an evolving industry.

Knowing How to Play the Game When You Don't Know the Sport

This keynote is for every underdog who's ever felt stuck on the bench while the big dawgs run the court. In this high-energy session, Tameenah Adams brings the heat, breaking down how any owner, leader or teacher can learn the rules, master the plays.

ON THE MAIN STAGE

KEYNOTE

Kim Bearden

THE HEART OF THE TEAM: BUILDING A CULTURE THAT MOTIVATES & MOVES PEOPLE



Kim Bearden is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the world-renowned Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta, GA. With over 35 years of experience in education, she is an award-winning teacher, best-selling author, and a beloved speaker known for her dynamic energy and real-world insights.

Kim's passion for creativity, connection, and compassion in the classroom inspires educators to lead with both rigor and heart. She has received over 30 awards in education, including Disney's American Teacher Award, and was selected as a top 40 "Leadership Legacy" honoree by Education World. Her keynote will reignite the spark in educators and remind them why they were born to teach.

The Heart of the Team: Building a Culture that Motivates & Moves People

Kim will motivate, inspire, and remind participants of the powerful impact they can have despite the pressures and challenges of their profession. Kim will also share the importance of building relationships among staff, families, and students that will motivate, engage, empower, and create success for all. She will share strategies that ignite a passion for learning, provide support and encouragement, hold high expectations for student behavior, promote parental involvement, and ensure a safe, secure environment.

ON THE MAIN STAGE



BORN TO TEACH

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

BORN TO TEACH: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

STACEY BYES-BYARSE



Stacey Byes-Byarse is a seasoned early childhood education professional, leadership trainer, and systems thinker with decades of experience in program development and quality improvement. Known for her sharp insight and deep commitment to excellence, Stacey has supported countless educators and center leaders in building classrooms—and cultures—that honor both children and staff. She currently serves in multiple leadership capacities, consulting nationally to raise the standard of early care and education. Stacey is passionate about mentorship and equity, and her voice brings both accountability and affirmation to those she serves. She challenges leaders to operate with clarity, intentionality, and heart.

One Band, One Sound: Building Strong Classrooms Through Teamwork and Leadership

Creating a strong classroom environment starts with a united team. This session will explore how collaboration and clear communication lead to a more effective and supportive teaching environment. You'll leave with tools to build stronger relationships with your co-teachers and create a consistent learning atmosphere for your students.

From Hustle to Harmony: The All-Star Teacher's Guide to Thriving Not Just Surviving

Being a teacher can feel overwhelming, but it doesn't have to. Learn strategies to bring more balance, joy, and fulfillment into your workday without losing your drive. This session will help you shift from simply getting by to truly thriving in and out of the classroom.

SHEIKA PETTEWAY



Sheika Petteway is a respected childcare business strategist, speaker, and multi-site owner who empowers women to build and scale profitable childcare programs with purpose. With a background rooted in service and success, Sheika uses her expertise to mentor educators and entrepreneurs alike, helping them align vision with operations to create lasting impact.

Her transparency, business acumen, and genuine care make her an in-demand speaker and trainer across the country. Sheika is also the founder of the Early Education CEO Network, a thriving community for childcare leaders to grow together. Her sessions are filled with clarity, confidence, and calls to action.

Tiny Steps, Big Wins: The Infant/Toddler Teacher Toolkit

Caring for our youngest learners is both rewarding and demanding. This session provides practical tools and developmentally appropriate strategies for infant and toddler classrooms. Learn how to support early learning, build routines, and celebrate small milestones that lead to big growth.

BORN TO TEACH: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

JEREMY “MR. JAY” STURDIVANT



Jeremy Sturdivant, Sr. also known as Mr. Jay is a proud father and is a native of York, Alabama. Mr. Jay is a Lead Pre-K teacher and has been teaching and living in Atlanta, GA for 8 years now. With a great passion for teaching our youth, new ideas and strategies, Mr. Jay enjoys being the person in a child's life who listens to their thoughts and feelings. Being able to watch children grow and learn is amazing. Teaching in ECE is special to him because he believes he helps with setting the educational foundation in their journey of becoming respectful, intelligent, and well-rounded individuals.

Mr. Jay has a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and is currently in grad school to obtain a master's degree in Secondary Education of Mathematics with an emphasis in STEM. Although academics is important, Mr. Jay focuses on daily interactions that encourage social, emotional, and physical development.

Game Plan for Success: Effective Strategies for a Well-Managed Classroom

A well-managed classroom allows both teachers and students to thrive. This session offers tried-and-true strategies for maintaining structure, engagement, and positive behavior. You'll leave with a game plan that helps reduce stress and create an environment where everyone can win.

No Timeouts Needed: Smooth Transitions That Keep Kids in the Zone

Transitions don't have to be chaotic. In this session, learn how to keep your classroom moving smoothly from one activity to the next with minimal disruptions. You'll gain practical techniques to maintain student focus and flow throughout the day.

ERIN HIGHTOWER & ERIN GRAVES



Erin Grace

Hey y'all! My name is Erin Graves and I've been shaping the minds of preschoolers for over 8 years! Setting the developmental foundation of preschoolers has been a passion of mine since I was younger. Working in early childhood education has blossomed my ability to be creative, patient, and flexible. I love creating fun, challenging, and engaging activities for my students. In my free time, I enjoy shopping and creating content for my fashion and preschool platforms. I'm excited to be a speaker at Born To Teach! I can't wait to hug, laugh, and learn with y'all.

Erin Hightower

Hello. My name is Erin Hightower and I am a Pre-K teacher and the owner and founder of TWP Private Tutoring! I am a fun, passionate, and engaging teacher who has been nourishing children and impacting children for over 10 years! As an educator, I believe in elevating students' needs and capabilities by helping them through activities and encouraging them to adapt to new and different learning techniques! I also enjoy making learning fun and have a passion for seeing children grow and maximize their full potential!

Ace Your Feelings: Strengthening Social & Emotional Development


Helping children develop strong social-emotional skills is just as important as teaching ABCs. This session will focus on how to build trust, empathy, and emotional regulation through daily classroom routines. Discover fun and easy strategies to turn tough moments into meaningful learning opportunities.

Knocking Out Engaging Lessons Plans

Lesson planning doesn't have to be a chore—it can be a source of creativity and fun. This session walks you through how to design engaging, purposeful lessons that keep children curious and excited. You'll leave with ideas that are ready to use and easy to adapt.

BORN TO TEACH: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

LAKESHIA NNAMANI

A circular portrait of Lakeshia Nnamani, a Black woman with her hair styled in a bun, wearing a black top and a pearl necklace, smiling. The background of the entire page is orange with white geometric shapes like stars and arrows.

Lakeshia Nnamani, M. Ed., has over a decade of experience as an early childhood educator. She is adept in identifying and implementing high quality instruction for young children. Not only does she have a strong educational background, but also has several years of experience instructing CDA courses.

As an early childhood educator, she served as a pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teacher, preschool owner, child development professor and early childhood trainer. Moreover, while her on-the-job experience has afforded her a well-rounded skill set, she also has a solid educational foundation and a passion for teaching the youngest learners and supporting early childhood professionals.


Happy Baby. Happy Teacher: Scoring Smiles, One Little Victory at a Time

When babies are happy, teachers can thrive. This session focuses on how to build strong bonds with infants and toddlers, manage challenging behaviors, and celebrate their everyday wins. Discover how small changes can lead to big successes in your classroom.

Game On! Leveling Up Your Circle Time

Tired of the same old circle time routine? It's time to switch it up and bring the energy! In this session, we're turning circle time into game time—filled with movement, music, connection, and learning that sticks. You'll get fun, practical strategies to keep kids engaged, participating, and actually looking forward to circle time. Let's level up and make it the best part of your day!

DR. SUMIKO HAMILTON- HERVEY

A circular portrait of Dr. Sumiko Hamilton-Hervey, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a red top and red earrings, smiling. The background of the entire page is orange with white geometric shapes like stars and arrows.

Dr. Sumiko Hamilton-Hervey is a dedicated educator, author, and advocate for children with disabilities, with extensive experience teaching Special Education across elementary, middle, and high school levels. She holds multiple degrees, including a Doctor of Education in Special Populations from the University of Houston, and master's degrees in both Public Administration and Educational Administration. As the visionary behind Smartie Pants Academy Center Houston, Dr. Hervey collaborates closely with school districts such as Katy ISD and CyFair ISD to ensure students receive appropriate placements, accommodations, and support services. Her center is a haven where children with special needs are loved, nurtured, and taught based on their individual learning styles. She is also the author of *I'm Normal Too: Josh and His Voice Output Device*, a children's book that reflects her passion for inclusion and advocacy.

No Child Left on the Sidelines: Supporting Special Needs in ECE

All children deserve to feel included and supported. This session explores how to identify and meet the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities in the early childhood setting. Learn how to partner with families and specialists to create a classroom that welcomes every learner.

BORN TO TEACH: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

ROBIN HARRIS



Robin Harris is a multi-center owner with over 20 years of experience in education. With her Masters in Educational Leadership, Robin worked as a public school teacher for 15 years. While teaching in elementary school, she noticed the need for a solid foundation in younger children in which Harris Academic Club, Robin's first center was born. She left the public school district to focus on helping students thrive by providing one-on-one attention. Currently, Robin is owner of Future Leaders Learning Academy, a child care center, and Harris Academic Club, a mini college, which is catered to our school aged students in a homeschool learning environment. She is currently in the building process of opening a new campus Exceptional Scholars Leadership Academy. This is an after school program focused on building academic, leadership and entrepreneur skills.

The Power of Storytelling: Bringing Books to Life for Young Learners

Books can spark imagination, build language, and open hearts. This session will explore how to turn read-aloud time into an immersive experience that helps children connect with characters, emotions, and themes. Learn techniques to bring books off the page and into real life through drama, voice, and classroom activities.

Play Like a Pro: The Power of Dramatic Play In Early Learning

Dramatic play is more than dress-up—it's where confidence, creativity, and real-life skills come to life! In this session, we'll talk about how to set up fun, meaningful dramatic play areas that keep kids engaged and learning. You'll walk away with fresh ideas to turn your classroom into an all-star arena where every child can imagine, explore, and shine.

MICHAEL NEWMAN



Michael Newman is an educator, national speaker, and social media influencer passionate about transforming STEM education. He serves as the Elementary STEM Facilitator for La Porte ISD and Adjunct Professor at Houston Christian University, where he mentors future educators.

A La Porte ISD graduate, Michael holds degrees in Educational Technology Leadership from Lamar University. He empowers students and teachers through hands-on learning, dynamic workshops, and creative strategies as founder of The Evolutionary Classroom.

Michael is also the author of *The STEM Alphabet Coloring Book* and *Toby and the Magic of STEM*, aiming to spark a love for STEM in young learners. A devoted husband and father, his mission is to inspire, empower, and help others realize their potential.

Little MVPs: Training Future Scientists with STEM & Sensory Play

STEM and sensory activities aren't just for big kids—they're perfect for early learners too. In this hands-on session, you'll learn how to introduce science, technology, engineering, and math concepts through play. Discover how sensory experiences can help children explore, experiment, and problem-solve.

Play Like a Champion: Purposeful Play Strategies for Early Learners

Play is serious learning in early childhood education. This session explores how to guide play with intention to support learning goals. You'll learn how to balance fun and structure so your students grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

BORN TO TEACH: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

ERICA SACCOCCIO



Erica Saccoccio is an early childhood education powerhouse, entrepreneur, and leadership coach with more than two decades of experience in business ownership and child development. As the founder of multiple successful childcare centers and a sought-after consultant, Erica equips educators and leaders with practical tools to build sustainable programs and thriving workplace cultures. Her blend of business savvy and heart-centered leadership leaves a lasting impact on every stage she graces. Erica is also the host of the “Business with a Twist” podcast, where she mentors educators and entrepreneurs on mindset, money, and management. Her straight-talk approach and deep commitment to transformation make her a must-hear voice in the field.

Stay in the Game: Preventing Burnout and Staying Energized

Teaching is a demanding profession, and burnout is real. In this session, learn how to maintain your energy, passion, and purpose through simple self-care and mindset shifts. You'll leave with practical strategies to recharge and stay in the game long-term.

TANGEE PEEK



Tangee Peek is an early childhood education leader, center owner, and visionary mentor who believes in cultivating strong foundations—both for young children and the adults who teach them. With a passion for quality care, workforce development, and professional excellence, Tangee has helped transform childcare programs across the country. She is known for her clear communication, compassionate leadership, and commitment to raising the standard of care in every classroom. Tangee also serves as a coach and trainer for emerging childcare leaders, helping them navigate growth with grace and grit. Her story and strategies inspire educators to take ownership of their work and lead with purpose.

Winning with Words: Hands-on Strategies for Teaching Early Learning

In the session, the importance of creating a firm foundation of early literacy and numeracy about how early childcare educators can be the bedrock of a child's educational success will be discussed.

The ways of creating a learning environment that encourages strong phonemic awareness, oral language development, and number sense—all while engaging children in a multisensory experience—will be explored with participants. A breakout of experiences including letter chants and dances, interactive activities and games will be sampled to give a full immersion experience of what such activities will look like in their classroom.

BORN TO TEACH: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

ALEXIA PENDLETON



Alexia Pendleton is a powerhouse educator, choreographer, and speaker who brings joy, movement, and purpose into every learning environment. A celebrated Kindergarten teacher from Atlantic City, NJ, and 2020–2021 Teacher of the Year, Alexia is a leader in curriculum innovation and school leadership. Known as @dancerteacher on social media, she energizes educators with transformative, high-impact sessions that blend movement, trauma-informed practices, and joy-centered teaching. Her award-winning choreography and classroom strategies have been featured in *Woven Together* by Dr. Courtney Rose, and she's presented at major events like Elevate, the NJ Teacher Convention, and the Revolutionary Ed Conference. Whether in the classroom or on stage, Alexia inspires educators to teach with passion, purpose, and creativity.

Go DJ: Building Student Confidence

In this dynamic and interactive session, participants will explore the powerful intersection of hip hop culture and student leadership development. Through the lens of hip hop pedagogy, we will uncover innovative strategies to engage and inspire children to take on leadership roles within their schools and communities.

Mathletes in the Making: Moving, Grooving, and Counting!

Join us for an interactive session designed specifically for PK teachers who want to infuse movement into their math instruction. In this session, we will delve into innovative ways to integrate physical activity with fundamental mathematical concepts, making learning math not only fun but also kinesthetically engaging for young learners.



BORN TO LEAD

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

BORN TO LEAD: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

JAMARRION TABOR



Jamarrion Tabor is a visionary leader in the childcare industry, owning five successful 24-hour centers across Atlanta. Known for her exceptional staff retention and waitlisted programs, she creates environments where teams feel valued and families feel confident.

A former Navy servicewoman and 2021 Childcare Rockstar, Jamarrion now coaches entrepreneurs on building profitable, multi-site childcare businesses. Her focus on systems, team building, and sustainable growth helps others create thriving, parent-centered operations.

Her journey—from burnout to balanced success—reflects her passion for profit, freedom, and family, making her a sought-after expert and inspiring mentor in the field.

Ready for the Big Leagues: Scaling Your Childcare Empire

Ready to grow your center—or open a new one? This session covers how to scale successfully with systems, people, and planning. Learn the key steps to expansion and how to keep quality high as you grow.

Own the Court: Mastering the Art of Leadership in Your Own Way

Leadership isn't one-size-fits-all. This session helps you discover and refine your unique leadership style so you can show up with confidence and clarity. Learn how to inspire others while staying true to yourself.

LAKESHIA NNAMANI



Lakeshia Nnamani, M. Ed., has over a decade of experience as an early childhood educator. She is adept in identifying and implementing high quality instruction for young children. Not only does she have a strong educational background, but also has several years of experience instructing CDA courses.

As an early childhood educator, she served as a pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teacher, preschool owner, child development professor and early childhood trainer. Moreover, while her on-the-job experience has afforded her a well-rounded skill set, she also has a solid educational foundation and a passion for teaching the youngest learners and supporting early childhood professionals.

The Ultimate Assist: Systems to Help You Win in Childcare

Strong systems make strong centers. Learn how to create and implement operational systems that improve staff performance, family communication, and daily routines. This session is perfect for leaders looking to take their program to the next level.

BORN TO LEAD: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

BETH CANNON



Beth Cannon is a dynamic keynote speaker, trainer, and entrepreneur specializing in early education leadership. She's the founder of Beth Cannon Speaks and the Leader's Lounge ECE Summit, training thousands through impactful keynotes and coaching.

A certified ECE trainer and top Stretch-n-Grow franchise owner, Beth also leads corporate training worldwide. With a background in communications and education, she delivers practical, high-energy strategies that inspire and empower leaders.

The Coach Approach to Team Leadership

Do you trust your teachers to create their own solutions or have you trained them to come to leaders to fix every detail? Managing is typically a one-way street; Coaching relies on open communication in both directions (employee to leader and leader to employee). In this workshop, you'll learn the benefits of The Coach Approach and some take-home tools to implement this with your team.

Training Camp: How to Create an Effective Onboarding and Training Program

In this masterclass, you will learn the exact strategies to cut your training time in half. By the end of our time together, you'll know the most effective way to onboard new employees WAY more quickly and efficiently.

VERNON MASON



Vernon Mason is a seasoned early childhood administrator with over 24 years of experience and a master's degree in Early Childhood Administration. In 1991, he and his mother launched a small childcare center with a \$5,000 credit card, growing it from 30 to 248 children—even rebuilding after a natural disaster.

Today, Vernon is a sought-after consultant, trainer, and keynote speaker known for his real-world insights, storytelling, and humor. His engaging presentations draw from decades of hands-on experience in childcare leadership.

Turning Parents into Raving Fans: Customer Service in Childcare

Great customer service builds loyalty and trust with families. This session teaches how to turn everyday interactions into positive experiences that leave a lasting impression. Learn simple shifts that can lead to higher satisfaction, more referrals, and better parent relationships.

Game Plan for Success: Accountability, Incentives, and Rewards

Want to build a stronger team? This session dives into how to create a culture of accountability by using smart systems, clear expectations, and meaningful rewards. Discover how incentives can motivate staff while improving consistency and performance.

BORN TO LEAD: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

JEKWENTA PRIMM



Jekwenta Primm, widely known as Coach K, is a dynamic speaker, grant strategist, and entrepreneur dedicated to helping educators and small business owners access funding and build sustainable ventures. After overcoming personal adversity at 13, she transitioned from a successful corporate career to inspire others through speaking and coaching. Through her engaging online presence as @itsscoachk, Jekwenta offers practical guidance on securing grants and business credit, empowering individuals to achieve financial independence. Her sessions are renowned for their actionable insights and motivational energy, making complex financial topics accessible and inspiring.

The Grant Playbook: Strategies to Find, Apply, and Win Big

Grants can open big doors—if you know how to find and apply for them. This session walks you through the grant process step-by-step, from research to writing to reporting. Learn how to fund your dreams and expand your impact without draining your budget.

SAMANTHA PHILLIPS



Samantha (Sam) Phillips, a Texas native, is a leading expert in childcare insurance. After discovering that many childcare owners relied on general insurance agents, she made it her mission to educate the industry and provide tailored protection plans. Sam has helped programs nationwide—from in-home care to franchises—secure specialized coverage through comprehensive analysis and trusted partners.

As COO of Comply, she built their in-house insurance agency from the ground up, expanding her impact beyond insurance to include HR, payroll, and benefits support. Sam continues to advocate for smarter, customized coverage and stronger business support for childcare providers.

Let Them, but Let Me: From Insurance Crisis to Confidence

This session tackles the real fears and frustrations childcare leaders face with liability and insurance. Learn how to navigate tough decisions and set clear policies without sacrificing your peace. Walk away feeling more confident, protected, and empowered to lead boldly.

BORN TO LEAD: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

EPHRAIM EGBELE



Ephraim Egbele, CPA is the Founder and Managing Director of EFS Group, PLLC, where he serves as a fractional CFO and strategic advisor to 7- and 8-figure entrepreneurs. With a background in auditing Fortune 100 companies at PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ephraim now specializes in helping business owners—particularly in the childcare and education sectors—maximize profits, manage cash flow, and build financially resilient organizations. A sought-after speaker and educator, he brings clarity and confidence to complex financial topics, empowering leaders to make informed decisions that drive sustainable growth. Ephraim holds a BBA in Accounting from the University of Houston and is a proud member of the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA) and the AICPA.

On the Money: Cashflow Control and KPIs Every Childcare Owner Should Track

Strong financial decisions start with knowing your numbers. Learn the key performance indicators (KPIs) that every childcare owner should track—and how to use them to guide your business. Gain tools to monitor cash flow, plan ahead, and make smart money moves.

Tax Strategies for Childcare Pros: Play to Win

Taxes can be tricky, but this session breaks them down in a way that's clear and useful. Discover strategies to reduce your tax burden, stay compliant, and take advantage of deductions that matter to your business. You'll leave with tips you can use right away.

JERLETHA MCDONALD



Jerletha McDonald is the founder and CEO of the Arlington DFW Child Care Providers Association. She is a licensed family care provider with a degree from Stephen F. Austin State University in Early Childhood Intervention. McDonald is a leading professional in family child care and family child care advocacy.

Childcare, Federal Funding, Policy & Advocacy; How It Works and Why It Matters

This session helps demystify federal childcare funding and policy in a way that's easy to understand. Learn where funding comes from, how it's distributed, and how key policies impact your program. You'll also leave with clear steps to become an effective advocate for your center, your team, and your profession.

BORN TO LEAD: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

MICHELLE THOMAS



Michelle Thomas is a dedicated early childhood educator with over 30 years of experience in the field. She has served as a principal for the past four years, leading a dynamic campus of over 300 three- and four-year-old students. Under her leadership, the school has become known as a model of hands-on, play-based learning, maintaining a worksheet free environment that fosters curiosity, creativity, and foundational skill development. With a strong focus on systems and routines, Michelle has created a structured, efficient school where both students and teachers thrive. Her expertise in early childhood education and leadership ensures a seamless, engaging experience for young learners.

Stop the Revolving Door: Fun, Fast, and Effective Staff Retention Strategies

Keeping good teachers starts with creating a place where they love to work. In this session, learn quick and impactful ways to build morale, show appreciation, and keep staff excited to come back every day. Discover how culture, communication, and recognition can change everything.

ALBERT WRIGHT



Albert Wright is a master trainer, author, and host of "2 Minutes with Albert" who has over 20 years in the childcare industry. He has also had the privilege of being chosen as Trainer of the Year three times and was named one of the top 25 trainers in the nation by the National After School Association NAA17. Albert is a much sought-after master trainer who has presented on platforms such as conferences for the National Association of Education for Young Children, Southern Early Childhood Association, Children's Learning Institute, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children, and many more. He consults with Businesses, Schools, Churches, and Nonprofits to strengthen the relationships between the children, educators, administrators, and parents.

Conflict Management in Childcare: Play Hard, Play Fair, Play Together

Conflict happens—but how we respond makes all the difference. In this session, learn techniques for handling difficult conversations and resolving issues with staff and families. Gain confidence in managing conflict while keeping your team strong and your relationships positive.

No More Boring Staff Meetings! Keep Your Team Engaged & Inspired

Tired of staff meetings that drag? This session will show you how to make them interactive, purposeful, and fun. Learn how to turn your meetings into team-building opportunities that drive engagement and action.

BORN TO LEAD: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

CHELSEA REUE



Chelsea Reue, an owner with a decade of expertise in the preschool industry. Recently joining the Preschool Exchange team as a Childcare Sales Specialist, Chelsea brings her extensive ownership experience to the forefront. Having also served as a Preschool Secret Shopper, she offers a distinctive blend of practical knowledge and a sharp understanding of market dynamics. As the host of the “Business of Preschool” podcast and an engaging presenter, Chelsea is ready to share invaluable insights drawn from her multifaceted background, offering a comprehensive understanding of the preschool industry.

Master Your Finances: Building a Strong Budget for Childcare Centers

Money management is key to running a sustainable center. This session will help you understand your budget, track expenses, and plan ahead for growth. Learn how to make financial decisions that support your mission and your bottom line.

Walk Away Wealthy: Secrets to a Successful Exit

Whether you're years away or thinking about it now, planning your exit is essential. This session walks you through how to build long-term value, organize your financials, and prepare to sell or retire with confidence. Discover how to leave your legacy and walk away on top.

ERNESTO GONZALEZ



Ernesto Gonzalez is a Houston-based interior and lifestyle designer renowned for his vibrant, approachable style and engaging digital presence. As the founder of Ernie Gonzalez Designs, he transforms everyday spaces into personalized sanctuaries that reflect his clients' unique tastes and lifestyles. With a passion for accessible design, Ernesto shares practical tips and creative inspiration through his popular Instagram account, @erniegonzalezdesigns, where he connects with a broad audience seeking to elevate their living environments. His work seamlessly blends functionality with aesthetic appeal, making him a sought-after designer for those looking to infuse their spaces with both comfort and style.

The 5-Point Play: Creating an Aesthetic Environment for Learning

The classroom environment is a powerful teaching tool. In this session, learn how to design spaces that are beautiful, organized, and support active learning. Discover how small design choices can have a big impact on student behavior, focus, and joy.

BORN TO LEAD: BREAKOUT SESSIONS

RONNAE WILLIAMS



As an early childhood education expert and professional with over 15 years of experience, **Ronnae Williams** has firsthand knowledge of the industry as she has served as a lead preschool teacher, member of childcare center management, state licensing consultant, regional manager and marketing project manager for a nationally recognized childcare franchise, strategic partnership sales manager, and so much more. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Development and a Master's in Business Administration with an emphasis in Management. Williams' experiences within the early childhood industry along with her education have allowed her to support hundreds of childcare facilities across the U.S. with licensing compliance, compliance for accreditation, licensing complaint investigations, civil actions, franchising, and so much more.

Compliance is the Playbook: Mastering Licensing Like a Pro

Understanding licensing doesn't have to be overwhelming. This session breaks down the must-know rules and best practices to keep your classroom or center in compliance. Learn how to stay organized, confident, and ahead of the game when it comes to regulations.

KATE WOODWARD YOUNG & CARRIE CASEY



Kate Woodward Young and Carrie Casey are nationally recognized early childhood trainers, keynote speakers, and business strategists with over 30 years of experience each. As Master Trainers in multiple states, they've credentialed 2,500+ Texas directors and trained over 5,000 nationwide.

Co-hosts of the top-ranked Childcare Conversations podcast and authors of nine books, they share real-world strategies for leadership, staff development, and business success. Their engaging, hands-on workshops equip educators and leaders with practical tools they can use right away.

Filling the Stands: Winning Strategies for Enrollment

Enrollment is the lifeline of your business. This session shows how to attract and retain families through strong marketing, clear messaging, and great customer experiences. Learn how to build a steady pipeline of new students who are the right fit for your program.

Keep Your Head in the Game: Strategies to Avoid Burnout

Owning a center can be stressful, but burnout doesn't have to be your story. This session shares strategies to manage stress, set boundaries, and build in rest and recovery. Learn how to protect your passion and preserve your peace while running a successful business.



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