



**Rutgers Southern Regional Child Care
Resource and Referral Agency**

10th Annual Early Childhood Conference

GROWING STRONG

Reflecting on the Past, Embracing the Present,
and Shaping the Future of Early Childhood
Development and Resilience

MONDAY
OCTOBER
13TH

THE GROVE AT
CENTERTON
1022 Almond Rd.
Pittsgrove, NJ
08318

8:00 AM - 3:15 PM

Registration

Please visit:

www.rusouthernccrr.org/conference

\$50 Per Person

Registration deadline September 29th

**Directions to The Grove at Centerton,
1022 Almond Rd., Pittsgrove, NJ**

Via Route 40: Take Route 40 and make a left on Oak Rd. Take a Left on Delsea Drive and then a Right onto Almond Road. Make a right on Centerton Country Club into The Grove

Via 47N: Follow 47N. To Route 55 N. Take exit 32 B toward NJ-56 W/Rosenhayn. Merge onto NJ-56 W/W Landis Ave. Turn right on Alvine Road and a left on Almond Ave. Turn right onto Centerton County Club into The Grove

From Route 55S: Follow Route 55 South and take exit 45 for County Rd 53 toward Clayton/Glassboro/Centerton. Turn left onto Centerton Rd/Salem County 610 and turn left onto Almond Rd. Make a right on Centerton Country Club into The Grove.



Hot Lunch Included. Options include:

Mixed Field Greens

Chicken Parmigiana Linguini Pasta with Fresh Marinara
Pan Seared Salmon with Miso Glaze and Ponzo Sauce
Vegetarian Stir Fry Rice and Teriyaki Sauce

Miniature Pastry Presentation

Coffee, Hot and Iced Tea and Soft Drinks

(for lunch only - please bring your own morning beverage)

Agenda

Registration 8:00 AM - 8:30 AM

Welcome 8:30 AM - 8:45 AM
Marianna Finamore,
Director

Keynote 8:45 AM - 9:45 AM

Give-Away Time 9:45 AM - 10:00 AM
AM Break

AM Sessions 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Lunch 12:00 PM - 1:15 PM

PM Sessions 1:15 PM - 3:15 PM



Keynote Speaker - Paula Hartley



About the Presenter: Paula Hartley has over 25 years of experience in the childcare field and is currently a Coach and Trainer at the Early Childhood Leadership Institute within the Center for Access, Success, and Equity in Rowan University's College of Education. Paula has held roles as an Infant Toddler Specialist, Quality Improvement Specialist, and center director. She is committed to sharing her passion for knowledge in human development through engaging and dynamic teaching methods, customizing training sessions to meet the specific needs of the participants. Paula has honed her skills to provide effective training and support to early childcare professionals. Further enriching her expertise, she completed an IECMH Fellowship through Montclair University, PITC Training, and NeuroLeadership Institute's Brain Based Coaching Certificate. Paula's impact extends to a national level, where she has presented alongside state and regional leaders, contributing to the creation of an environment that values individuals and encourages them to be the best version of themselves.

About the Presentation: *Rising Strong: Cultivating Resilience in Early Childhood*

Professionals You bring your whole self to work every day! Nurturing hearts (big and small), naming and calming big feelings. Growing brains with spilt milk, broken crayons, potty accidents and questions you don't have the answers to. But in a profession that demands endless giving, how do you keep your own cup from running dry?

Let's explore how resilience, your resilience can become the quiet superpower that transforms exhaustion into energy, frustration into curiosity, and isolation into connection.

Together, we'll explore how your brain and body navigate stress, uncover simple, science-backed strategies to reset in the middle of a chaotic day, and reframe challenges as opportunities to model the very emotional strength you're teaching. Through storytelling, practical tools, and mindset shifts, we'll learn how to turn challenges into opportunities and build the mental agility needed for long-term success. Resilience is about growing roots deep enough to stand tall, no matter which way the wind blows.

Professional Workshops for FCC's, Center Teachers & Staff

Free-standing 2-hour AM Sessions

Foundations First: Understanding Infant-Toddler Care Versus Preschool:

Infants and Toddlers are not simply “younger preschoolers”. This training explores the foundational differences between infant-toddler care and preschool settings, emphasizing the critical importance of responsive relationships, continuity of care and primary caregiving. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how developmental needs, classroom structure, and caregiving practices must be tailored to support the youngest learners during their most formative years. **Maria Cardona and Cheryl Welte, Infant Toddler Specialists, Rutgers Southern Regional CCR&R Agency**

Social Connections:

Using the Protective Factors Framework, we will discuss and understand resilience and its importance for parenting and caregiving. Participants will gain an understanding of how resilience fits within the Protective Factors Framework and how positive social connections play an important role in caregiving/parenting. Cultural factors that impact the formation and maintenance of social connections will be examined, and the concepts of inclusion and belonging will be explored. **Sandra Kennedy, Pamela Sparks, Ana Carvajal, Family Engagement Specialists, Rutgers Southern Regional CCR&R Agency**

Be Prepared, Not Scared: Simple Steps for Supporting Children with Special Health Needs in Child Care:

The idea of caring for a child with special health needs can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools and preparation, it doesn't have to be. In this workshop you will learn simple steps to help you feel confident and ready. We will walk through key components of care, including how to gather important health information, learn the importance of individualized care plans, set up safer daily routines, communicate with families and health providers, and plan for emergencies. Whether you are new to supporting children with medical needs or looking to strengthen your approach, this training offers practical tips you can use right away. **Renee Pettit, RN, CPN Child Care Health Consultant; Central Jersey Family Health Consortium**



Professional Workshops for FCC's, Center Teachers & Staff

Free-standing 2-hour PM Sessions

Child Directed Play: Loose Parts and Other Imaginative Play in Early Childhood:

Children learn every day through experiences. How do we bring the fun into daily planning for children? How can we support learning without using “cookie cutter” copies and developmentally inappropriate “arts and crafts”? Learn how YOU can facilitate daily experiences that are developmentally appropriate in early diverse childhood settings. Learn how to create environments that support children’s natural curiosity and creativity to promote learning experiences. Come play and learn! **Beverly Ramos and Cristine Dell-Priscoli, Trainers, Rutgers Southern Regional CCR&R Agency**

Connections Matter:

As an Early Childhood professional, you hold the key to healthy child outcomes. Get introduced to Connections Matter, a healing-centered curriculum designed to equip adults with strategies to build healthy relationships, support brain development, prevent and heal from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and strengthen community resilience. Finally, use this training to create stronger links with your fellow colleagues and community partners. **Christina Nahar, Infant Toddler Specialist and Rosemaria Andon, Family Engagement Specialist, Rutgers Southern Regional CCR&R Agency**

Staying Well to Care Well: Strategies for Care and Restoration:

Through experiential exercises and reflective discussion, this workshop will encourage participants to learn about and experience strategies to restore energy that is required for wellness. Participants will be introduced to evidence-informed strategies for energy restoration and be asked to reflect on their own practices for wellness. We will also discuss the connection between the wellness of the caregiver and the wellness of children. **Mariah Morrison, MSW, LSW, IMH-E, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Clinician, Socio-Emotional Formation & Inclusive (SEFI) Health College for Education and Engaged Learning Montclair University**



Leadership Forum

2 hour track in AM

2 hour track in PM

Playing to Read: Building the Foundation for Literacy:

This engaging and practical training challenges early childhood educators to rethink the “letter of the week” approach to literacy. We will explore the essential foundational skills young children need to prepare for reading and writing and how child-led play naturally fosters the growth of these skills.

Through interactive discussion and hands-on examples, teachers will be examining common classroom practices and consider possibilities for creating an environment where children learn through playful, meaningful, and developmentally appropriate activities.

Vicky Sullivan and Jenna Giordano, Quality Improvement Specialists, Rutgers Southern Regional CCR&R Agency

Leading with Purpose: The Role of the Early Childhood Director in Building Strong Teams:

In this interactive training, participants will explore the dynamic role of the early childhood director as a visionary leader and team builder. Directors and administrators will reflect on what defines a high-quality staff member and how to attract that quality. Discussion will center on leadership practices that foster a reliable, positive, high performing workplace culture. Peer discussion and resources will provide actionable strategies for hiring and retaining staff.

Ideal for both new and seasoned directors.

Vicky Sullivan and Jenna Giordano, Quality Improvement Specialists, Rutgers Southern Regional CCR&R Agency

How to Register

Register online



www.rusouthernccrr.org/conference

Make payments online, by mail, or in-person.

Payments by mail or in-person should be mailed to:

Rutgers Southern Regional CCR&R Agency

Attn: Finance Department

6 N. Broad St., Suite 300

Woodbury, NJ 08096

Registration \$50.00 pp

We accept business/company checks, money orders, and

cash. If you would like to pay by credit card or e-check

you will need to visit our website at

www.rusouthernccrr.org/conference

Please make checks payable to "Rutgers". All payments

must be received within five (5) business days of

submitting a conference registration form to guarantee

your attendance.

Registration will close on September 29th.

Please register early to guarantee your spot.

Questions

(General Conference)

Beverly Ramos, Trainer

Questions

(Registration or Payment)

Leslie Addison, CFO



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Professional Workshops

Free-Standing 2 Hour Professional Workshops
Choose one (1) AM Session and One (1) PM Session

AM SESSION

	Be Prepared, Not Scared
	Social Connections
	Foundations First: Understanding Infant-Toddler Care vs. Preschool
	Leadership - Literacy Through Play Part 1

PM SESSION

	Child Directed Play
	Connections Matter
	Staying Well to Care Well
	Leadership - Literacy Through Play Part 2