

Early Childhood Special Education Professional Development Offerings

STAR NET and Early CHOICES

JANUARY

[Book Study: A Twist On The Plot](#)

Date: 1/22/25, 2/5/25, 2/19/25, 3/12/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: Virtual

Description: We all have bookshelves filled with children's books that we read every day. The books are fun to read, and we ask questions of the children to make sure they understand what's been read. But how can we take our read-alouds to the next level? How can we make sure the read-alouds are inclusive for all children and that we are intentionally teaching a message and helping our students learn to apply the message in addition to being fun?

Join us for an interactive webinar during which we will take children's books and use activities to enhance the reading experience and make sure children are getting the most out of every book. Each participant will receive one book for each session in the themes of empathy, perseverance, inclusion, and emotions. In each session, we will be discussing how to introduce the topic and provide an activity to go along with the read-aloud. Participants will brainstorm another activity to use the book in a different way. We will focus ways to embed Individualized Education Program (IEP) objectives into these book activities to be sure our students are understanding the message and learning ways to apply what they are learning from the story.

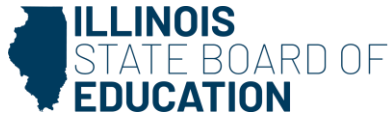
[An Overview of IDEA](#)

Date: 1/23/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This session is about key special education rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including who is eligible, what services are possible, and IEP basics. Important parental rights pertaining to access to information, participation, the right to challenge school decisions when there is disagreement, and strategies for advocating effectively for your child also will be discussed.



[Enhance Team Collaboration and Success for all of our Littlest Learners Through Data-Based Decision-Making, Part 1](#)

Date: 1/23/25

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: Virtual

Description: In Part 1 of this presentation series, participants will identify developmentally appropriate assessment tools to support preschoolers with and without disabilities and categorize data by four purposes for school decision-making (Screening, Progress Monitoring, Diagnostic and Program Evaluation). Participants will then apply these decisions within tiered early childhood team structures to enhance planning, including schoolwide initiatives, classroom staff collaboration, individual problem-solving, and family engagement practices, for all learners. Let us make data more “playful” for all early childhood special education professionals, including some crucial early childhood-specific areas -- relationship building and team teaching!

[Sign Language Basics: Talking with Your Hands](#)

Date: 1/28/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This workshop will provide participants with the basic knowledge behind sign language of who, what, where, when, and why sign language is used. Participants will learn basic signs that will help them when working with individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have not yet acquired language. All participants will be encouraged to actively participate in the training. Come prepared to laugh, learn, and fall in love with the beautiful language of sign!

[Pyramid Model of Social Emotional Support – Cohort Series](#)

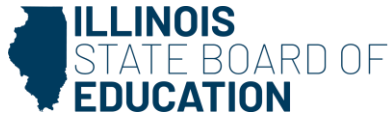
Date: 1/28/25, 2/11/25, 2/25/25, 3/11/25, 3/25/25, 4/8/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: Webinar

Description: The Pyramid Model is a scientifically based positive behavioral framework that promotes evidence-based practices to teach social-emotional competencies to young children. The framework

Updated January 2025



identifies key skills for supporting relationships, creating learning environments, teaching targeted social emotional skills, and supporting children with challenging behavior. Registrants will complete three learning modules of pyramid content and the associated lessons with each module on their own. An agenda will be provided to inform participants regarding which lessons will be reflected on during each group-facilitated meeting, with a focus on reflection and application of the content in the modules. Credit for full participation will include 27 hours of credit for completing these E-modules and participating in six group cohort discussions (each 1.5 hours long). No partial credit will be given. Full attendance at each cohort session is required in order to receive credit. Go to the [Pyramid Model Consortium website](#) to learn more about the pyramid framework. Participants will be provided with a license for access to the modules once accepted into the training. Cohort attendance will be small to encourage conversation and interaction; therefore, limited slots are available. Prior to each cohort webinar, participants will:

1. Complete the designated ePyramid module lessons.
 2. Complete the items on the checklists at the end of the ePyramid lessons.
 3. Be prepared to discuss and reflect on the content during the cohort webinars.
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[I Sign Language Basics: Talking with Your Hands](#)

Location: Webinar

Date: 1/28/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 5

Event Type: Webinar

Description: This workshop will provide participants with the basic knowledge behind sign language of who, what, where, when, and why sign language is used. Participants will learn basic signs that will help them when working with individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have not yet acquired language. All participants will be encouraged to actively participate in the training. Come prepared to laugh, learn, and fall in love with the beautiful language of sign!

[Universal Design for Learning in the Early Childhood Classroom Book Study Series](#)

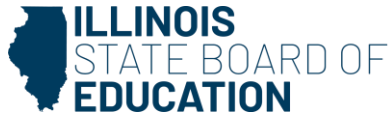
Date: 1/28/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: Webinar Series

Description: This four-part webinar series explores the book *Universal Design for Learning in the Early Childhood Classroom, 2nd Edition*. It will focus on proactively designing inclusive instructional environments in pre-K through Grade 3 classrooms. The study will include the exploration of methods for using assessment information that teachers can use to accommodate the needs of all the students in their classrooms. The book features language and examples to elevate discussions about inclusion and

Updated January 2025



access, with an anti-bias focus, trauma-informed practice, strength-based approaches, and family partnerships.

[The Intersection of Trauma, Play and Learning](#)

Date: 1/29/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: In person, Countryside, Illinois

Description: Early childhood trauma occurs more often than is realized. And while it can be evident in all children, children with disabilities are at a higher risk of experiencing trauma than their nondisabled peers. Adverse child experiences, which are potentially traumatic events, are associated with neurological changes that impact behavior, development, and learning. Interestingly, play can be both observed as an indicator of trauma as well as utilized as an important component of trauma-informed care. In this workshop, we will begin with an exploration of the stress response system. We will define trauma (including medical trauma, which some children with disabilities have experienced) prior to investigating its pervasive developmental impact on the young child. And, while the contents of this workshop may be a bit emotionally heavy, we will be sure to focus much of our conversations and practice on what we can do in the service of hope and healing. The important role of relationships will be highlighted. We will play together. And we will discover the intersection of trauma, play, and learning.

[High Quality Inclusive Practices: An Overview of the Inclusive Classroom Profile](#)

Date 1/29/2025

Host: Early CHOICES

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Does your program implement high-quality inclusive practices? If you do, you will want to consider applying for the Outstanding Practices in Inclusion recognition. Early CHOICES, as part of the ISBE inclusion initiative, and the Early Childhood LRE Stakeholders Consortium administer the recognition. Join this webinar to learn who qualifies, how to apply, and what the process involves.

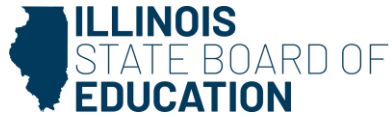
[Inclusion Practices Series – Part 1](#)

Date: 1/29/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: Virtual

Updated January 2025



Description: The physical environment can create excitement about learning. The classroom should be a place where children feel safe but also comfortable expressing themselves. We will discuss looking at your space from the perspective of evaluating how you see the children interacting with the learning environment after these past five months of school and what changes you may need to make to ensure that you are supporting the developmental needs of all the children in your room.

[Pushing Past Conflicts with Adults: Navigating Uncomfortable Conversations in Early Childhood](#)

Date: 1/30/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Advice for Navigating Challenging Conversations in Early Childhood Programs takes a positive approach by embracing differences and meeting families and colleagues where they are. Get nonjudgmental, practical advice for navigating conflict. Discover strength-based, evidence-based techniques that lead to professional growth and learning in your early childhood program. Inclusion of children with disabilities requires a high level of interaction with other adults. Having the skills for navigating difficult conversations is a necessity.

[Book Study: NAEYC Observation and Assessment, Volume 2](#)

Date: 1/30/25, 2/20/25, and 3/13/25

Host: STAR NET Regions 1 and 3

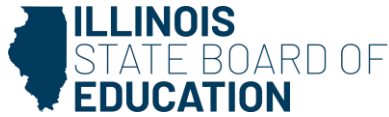
Event Type: Virtual

Description: This webinar series will explore the most recent book on observation and assessment from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We will spend time covering all three sections of the book: Purposes of Observation and Assessment, Strategies for Observing and Assessment, and Assessment Practices to Support Inclusion. We will include other resources to help with observation and assessment, such as example documentation forms, schedules for observation, and exploration of a system for taking documentation for students with IEPs. Participants will work on an action plan during each meeting to include ideas of strategies and methods they'd like to implement in their setting. Each registrant accepted into the book study will be provided with the book.

FEBRUARY

[Inclusive Classroom Environment: Where All Children Can Learn](#)

Updated January 2025



Date: February 3 – February 28, 2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: On Demand

Description: In this webinar, we will discuss ways to set up your environment so children of all abilities can learn and thrive in their early childhood classrooms. Specific examples will be shared of ways to adapt, accommodate, and differentiate for children with IEPs throughout your schedule. Researched-based information from the Inclusive Classroom Profile, the DEC Recommended Practices and the ECTA Practice Improvement Tools will be included. Join us for this interactive informational session as we delve into the who, the what, and the why of how to make all children full, active participants in their classrooms.

[New Administrator Cohort- Supporting New Leaders in Special Education Requirements: Social Emotional Learning and Measurable IEP Goals](#)

Date: 2/3/225

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: Online

Description: This three-part series is designed to support new program leaders as they navigate the many specific requirements of managing early childhood programs that include preschool students with IEPs. Join us as we engage in discussion and share important information that will guide you through some of the intricacies of early childhood leadership in special education compliance requirements. This session will focus on social-emotional learning and supports and measurable IEP goals.

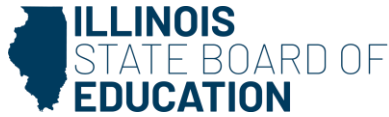
[Developmentally Appropriate Strategies, Environments, and Assessment for All Preschoolers](#)

Date: 2/4/2025

Host: STAR NET Regions 1 and 3

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Developmentally appropriate practice can be used as a foundation for inclusive play-based learning for young children. The three meetings of this training will focus inclusive environments, adaptive supports and strategies, and assessment. Presenters will be using the DEC Recommended Practices as a tool to support inclusion and accessibility in their classrooms. Participants will have opportunities to practice, reflect, and seek solutions based on their own teaching and learning environments. This training, which has a goal of sustained implementation, will include four hours of independent work assignments. Photos of your classroom environment (not including children) may be



requested as be part of these assignments. Full participation in the meetings and completion of assignments are required to receive a certificate.

[Measurement is More than a Tape Measure in Preschool](#)

Date: 2/5/2025

Host: STAR NET Regions 1 and 3

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This session will share ideas and strategies to help early childhood teachers and families bring measurement to life. Also, the vocabulary related to measurement that adults need to model for young children will be addressed. Ideas of ways to make adaptations and modifications and meet the needs of all children, including children with disabilities, will be discussed. Come and discover why measurement is more than using a tape measure.

[Building an Inclusion Team: Using the Inclusive Inquiry Cycle](#)

Dates: 2/5 and 2/26/2024 1-2:30

Host: Early CHOICES

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Looking to increase access to inclusive opportunities for young children in preschool in your program or community? This two-part series will help get you started in building a community inclusion team or a leadership inclusion team in your program. We will review each stage of planning for an inclusive program. This first event will focus on building your team, analyzing data, identifying key issues, and setting learning and improvement goals. This second event will focus on creating action plans and implementing those plans.

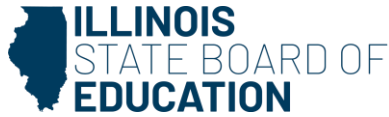
[A book Study on: "Inclusion Includes Us"](#)

Date: 2/6/2025 and 2/13/25

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: The book study on "Inclusion Includes Us: Building Bridges and Removing Barriers in Early Childhood Classrooms" by Mike Huber will focus on changing educators thinking from binary thinking to constellation thinking. We will discuss how to create true inclusion and belonging in each classroom. "Inclusion Includes Us" includes many real-life examples, practice strategies, and prompts



for reflecting practice to help educators include everyone – children and adults – in their programs/classrooms.

[Using Tiered Instructional Practices to Support Early Math Learning for Children with Disabilities](#)

Date: 2/6/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4 and ROE 30

Event Type: In Person, Murphysboro

Description: In this workshop, we will discuss how to support all young children, including those with disabilities, to learn math in preschool classrooms. We will discuss how to ensure access, support engagement, consider specific learning needs, and use tiered instructional practices. We will provide examples to illustrate concepts and will discuss application to participants' classrooms. Each participant will leave with an implementation plan for their classroom.

[ADHD: Everything You Need to Know but Didn't](#)

Date: 2/11/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 5

Event Type: Virtual

Description: In this session, participants will learn what ADHD is, what it looks like, and how it affects children beyond the issue of attention and focus. Participants will learn what other nontraditional supports may be needed for children with ADHD. Participants will get a clear understanding of how to advocate for their childhood during the early childhood years and beyond.

[Enhance Team Collaboration and Success for all of our Littlest Learners through Data-Based Decision Making Part 2](#)

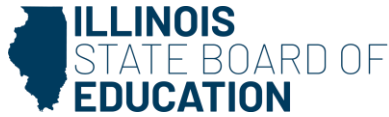
Date: 2/11/25

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: Virtual

Description: In Part 2 of this presentation series, participants will continue to organize developmentally appropriate assessments across four purposes for school decision-making (Screening, Progress Monitoring, Diagnostic and Program Evaluation). Participants will then apply these decisions within team referral and case study. Let us make data more “playful” for all early childhood special education professionals, including some crucial early childhood-specific areas – embedded opportunities for skill

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development, behavior intervention planning, and best practices in naturalistic instruction to increase play skills.

[Working with Families of Young Children with IEPs Community of Practice \(CoP\)](#)

Date: 2/12/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This is an opportunity for educators to come together and share ideas on how to support families of young children with disabilities. We share resources and offer support to one another.

[Changing a Child's Behavior Starts with Changing Adult Behavior: The Power of Reflective Teaching](#)

Date: 2/13/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 5

Event Type: Virtual

Description: When children exhibit challenging behaviors, the problem is often localized within the child. However, behavior is complex and seldom centers around one reason. Research shows in order to gain a meaningful understanding of student behavior, there must be a meaningful understanding of adult behavior and the context in which all these behaviors occur. This workshop looks beyond the contextual elements, interactions, and classroom variables that might contribute to challenging behaviors.

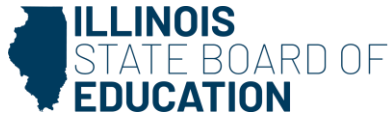
[Responsive Small Group Instruction in the Inclusive Classroom-Using Ongoing Data Collection to Inform Instruction for All Students](#)

Date: 2/19/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Join us for an engaging webinar that explores how ongoing data collection can shape responsive small group instruction in an inclusive classroom. Participants will learn how to deconstruct standards and objectives to make meaningful use of data and create actionable plans for individualized instruction. This session will provide practical strategies to ensure all students receive tailored support based on their unique learning needs.



Understand how data collection can shape responsive small-group instruction. Learn to deconstruct standards and objectives to make meaning of data. Create action plans for individualized instruction based on data.

[Music Across the Curriculum: The Tortoise and the Hare](#)

Date: 2/22/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra education team equips early childhood educators with the knowledge and tools to engage their students in music daily. Simple activities and engaging lessons emphasize using music within the framework of current early childhood curricula to teach all children, including those of diverse abilities and neurotypes. This workshop, which focuses on the book “The Tortoise and the Hare,” will explore ways to use music and creative movement to teach early literacy, math, and social-emotional concepts.

[Inclusion Practices Series – Part 2](#)

Date: 2/26/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Assessing the social environment that has been established in your room these past five months is very important and something that should be done on a regular basis. We will discuss the importance of looking at how the students interact with each other as well as how they interact with the adults in the room. A sense of safety and care should be established by now.

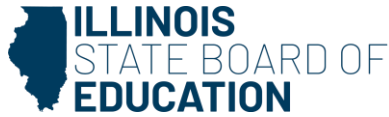
[Embracing Every Learner: Building Inclusive Early Childhood Environments](#)

Date: 2/28/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: In person, Wheaton Illinois

Description: This interactive experience is designed to empower early childhood educators with actionable strategies for fostering inclusivity in early childhood settings. This presentation will focus on effective practices that engage all learners, emphasizing the importance of creating environments and activities where every child can thrive. This experience is ideal for early childhood professionals who are



passionate about fostering an inclusive learning environment. Together we can create a space where every child feels valued and capable!

MARCH

[Using SMART Goals to Target Appropriate School-Based Interventions for Selective Mutism](#)

Date: 3/3/2025

Host: STAR NET Region II

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This presentation will provide an overview of selective mutism and additional information on how to use data-based decision-making to identify, write, and monitor school-based goals for children with selective mutism. This presentation will highlight critical information about school-based goal-setting more generally and specific to development of a child's IEP. This presentation will highlight 1) common target areas for goal-setting to address selective mutism symptoms in schools based on current selective mutism functioning and presenting symptoms, 2) behavioral intervention supports that could be used to help reach identified goals, 3) the process for developing goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely (SMART) related to symptoms of selective mutism, and 4) data-based goal-tracking systems for measuring and assessing growth and progress over time specific to selective mutism intervention.

[Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment](#)

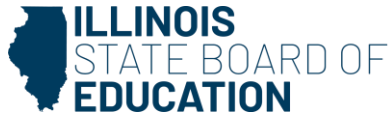
Date: 3/4/25 – 3/5/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: In Person, Tinley Park

Description: Play-based assessment is a functional, observational approach to assessment of infants and preschoolers. Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment-2 (TPBA-2) is a comprehensive assessment system, including family involvement materials, vision and hearing screening, a format to bridge assessment and intervention, and procedures for monitoring outcomes. In this presentation, participants will learn how to use the TPBA-2 protocols how to be part of a transdisciplinary team; observe children in playful interactions with parents, adults, and peers; determine developmental levels and needs; and make a functional intervention plan. Participants will practice using the materials by observing videos of actual assessments.

[Family Series: What are the Benefits of Inclusion?](#)



Date: 3/4/2025

Host: Early CHOICES

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Inclusion benefits children, families, and communities. Learn about current laws, policies, and research that supports inclusion and inclusive practices and how you can use these in meetings. Parents will share their thoughts and stories about how inclusion worked for their child. Topic and reflection guides, along with new resources, will be provided to help you put your vision into action. This is open to family members of children with disabilities and all attendees will receive a Certificate of Attendance.

[Hey! Geometry IS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN – Shapes & More!](#)

Date: 3/6/2025

Host: STAR NET Regions 1 and 3

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Geometry is all around our children. In this session, we will explore how geometry can be introduced to young children and give them many opportunities to learn about shapes and spatial relationships. We will discuss ideas, strategies, and materials that can help children understand geometric concepts in developmentally appropriate ways. We will discuss adaptations of materials and strategies that can meet the needs of all children, including children with disabilities.

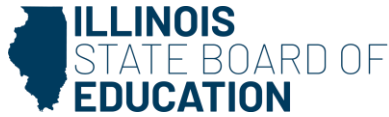
[Putting it All Together: From IEP to Intentional, Individualized Instruction](#)

Date: 3/12/25

Host: Early CHOICES

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Using IEPs to develop intentional and individualized inclusive instruction can feel overwhelming, but it's the key to supporting the unique needs of each child in an inclusive environment in early childhood. This session will guide participants through practical strategies for linking IEP goals to daily classroom practices. Attendees will learn how to utilize a collaborative planning cycle to guide them in making an IEP at-a-glance, planning as a team, and gathering assessment data. By the end of this session, educators will feel confident in designing and implementing early childhood instruction that truly supports the unique needs of each learner while aligning with IEP objectives in an inclusive classroom.



[Working with Families of Young Children with IEPs Community of Practice \(CoP\)](#)

Date: 3/12/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This is an opportunity for educators to come together and share ideas on how to support families of young children with disabilities. We share resources and offer support to one another.

[Transition from Early Intervention to Early Childhood Services: Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Date: 3/13/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: Virtual

Description: ISBE and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) developed this standardized training to address the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act to ensure a smooth and effective transition process is in place for children and their families who will be transitioning from early intervention into early childhood special education. This training will cover requirements regarding timeline, role responsibilities, transition process meetings, state forms, as well as vital partnerships, collaborative relationships and positive strategies. (Updated 12/23)

[Family Series: What Are the Benefits of Inclusion?](#)

Date: 3/20/2025

Host: Early CHOICES

Event Type: Virtual

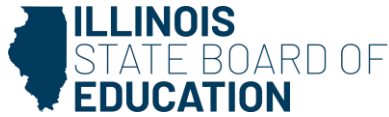
Description: Are you a family member of a child with a disability? Do you want to learn more about placement options and inclusion? This series is for you! Explore and learn about what inclusion is and what the least restrictive environment is all about. Learn about the benefits of inclusion and how to advocate for inclusion. Listen and learn from other parents as they share their stories of inclusion.

[Building Self-Regulation Skills in the Home](#)

Date: 3/20/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Updated January 2025



Event Type: Virtual

Description: Children from birth to age 5 are learning the foundational skills of executive function -- self-regulation, cognitive flexibility, and working memory. These skills are critically essential when developmental delays, disabilities, or sensory issues are present in children. Participants will learn how to create routines, use co-regulation skills, and determine the types of games that help build these fundamental skills.

[Transition from Early Intervention to Early Childhood Services: Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Date: 3/26/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: ISBE and IDHS developed this standardized training to address the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act to ensure a smooth and effective transition process is in place for children and their families who will be transitioning from early intervention into early childhood special education. This training will cover requirements regarding timeline, role responsibilities, transition process meetings, state forms, as well as vital partnerships, collaborative relationships, and positive strategies. This workshop is being held in collaboration with the Illinois Early Intervention Training Project.

[Inclusion Practices Series – Part 3](#)

Date: 3/26/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: Virtual

Description: We will be discussing how you have reflected individual children's strengths and interests through daily routines, materials for exploration, and learning experiences.

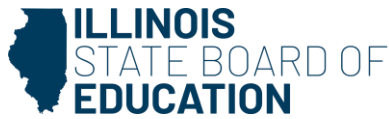
[Family Series: How do I implement and Advocate for Inclusion?](#)

Date: 3/27/2025

Host: Early CHOICES

Event Type: Virtual

Updated January 2025



Description: Want to know how to advocate for inclusion? Parents will learn about common barriers to inclusion and learn tips to effectively overcome roadblocks. There are types of supports and strategies that are helpful to promote success in inclusive settings. Receive tips and tools that you can use to increase your advocacy skills to better support your child. Parents will share their thoughts and stories about how inclusion worked for their child. Topic and reflection guides are available. This is open to family members of children with disabilities and all attendees will receive a Certificate of Attendance.

APRIL

[Transition from Early Intervention to Early Childhood Services: Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Date: 4/2/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 1 and 3

Event Type: Virtual

Description: ISBE and IDHS developed this standardized training to address the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act to ensure a smooth and effective transition process is in place for children and their families who will be transitioning from early intervention into early childhood special education. This training will cover requirements regarding timeline, role responsibilities, transition process meetings, state forms, as well as vital partnerships, collaborative relationships, and positive strategies.

[Embedding Assistive Technology and Core Vocabulary in the Preschool Classroom](#)

Date: 4/10/25

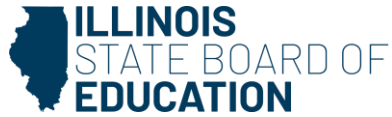
Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Join us for an engaging and practical session on embedding assistive technology and core vocabulary into the preschool classroom throughout the school day. This session will explore a model of a district's Core Vocabulary Initiative in which a focus on specific core words each month can be implemented. As the year progresses, these core words build on each other, enhancing preschoolers' communication opportunities. The importance of team collaboration will be highlighted to create a resource that identifies phrases and sentences all staff will use that identifies phrases and sentences aligned with monthly words and their use into centers, activities and lesson planning

This webinar will also address creative ways to integrate assistive technology during playtime to make communication accessible and engaging. Attendees will learn how dedicated augmentative and alternative communication users can interact with eye-gaze technology to control infrared-controlled toys, use switch-adapted toys with battery interrupters, and even explore brain-controlled interfaces with Sphero robots and more. This session will empower staff to support expressive and receptive communication and interaction using tools that make language and play accessible for every learner.

Updated January 2025



[Collaborative Leadership: How Administrators Can Support Families in Decision-Making](#)

Date: 4/15/2025

Host: Early CHOICES

Event Type: Virtual

Description: Explore the critical role early childhood administrators play in fostering collaborative, family-centered leadership within their schools, child cares, and communities. Learn about the importance of planning and engagement as you develop practical strategies for actively involving families in decision-making processes, from policy development to community initiatives. This session will highlight best practices for building strong family-community partnerships, engaging diverse family voices, and creating an inclusive leadership environment that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community. Interactive discussions and actionable takeaways will enable attendees to learn how to cultivate a leadership culture where families are not just participants but active contributors to shaping the inclusive early childhood educational experience. This session is designed for leaders looking to strengthen their relationships with families and ensure that every voice is heard at the leadership table.

[Working with Families Of Young Children with IEPs Community of Practice \(CoP\)](#)

Date: 4/16/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This is an opportunity for educators to come together and share ideas on how to support families of young children with disabilities. We share resources and offer support to one another.

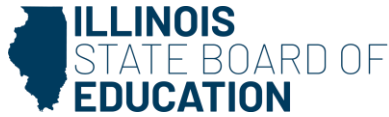
[Transition from Early Intervention to Early Childhood Services: Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Date: 4/16/25

Host: STAR NET Region 2

Event Type: Virtual

Description: ISBE and IDHS developed this standardized training to address the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act to ensure a smooth and effective transition process is in place for children and their families who will be transitioning from early intervention into early childhood special education. This training will cover requirements regarding



timeline, role responsibilities, transition process meetings, state forms, as well as vital partnerships, collaborative relationships, and positive strategies.

[It's Time to Bring Joy Back to the Classroom & Who Wants To Laugh and Play?](#)

Date: 4/29/24

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: In Person, Tinley Park

Description: **Morning session** -- Join us for the "It's Time to Bring Joy Back to the Classroom" workshop as we take a close look at the things that bring us joy as adults and how we can incorporate these ideas back into our classrooms. We have all felt that our jobs have changed over the past few years. It is time to step back and remember why we got into this profession. We love students (all of our students), we love to play, we love to be silly, and we love seeing youngsters "get it" for the first time. We will discuss the things we loved playing when we were young, what we love playing with now, and plan ways to incorporate this "fun" back into our classrooms so we can reach and teach all of our students. Come and share the joy of loving to play. Join us! We all need this JOYFUL refresh.

Afternoon session -- Do you want to go outside and play? All children can be part of the fun. One of the most important aspects of childhood is getting outside and playing, exploring and discovering the world around them. Playing and learning outdoors is just as important for social-emotional, physical and cognitive development as being in the classroom. All children (with and without IEPs) need to spend time outside, which can be challenging for children in special education and/or who need extra support. Join us for this interactive workshop as we discuss and demonstrate ways to make outdoor time engaging, supportive and intentional. Weather permitting, part of this workshop will take place outside to put into practice some new tools and strategies.

[Inclusion Practices – Part 4](#)

Date: 4/30/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: Virtual

Description: In this session, we will be discussing various inclusive teaching practices and what has and has not worked for you. What are you still wondering about as you look back and reflect on your inclusive practices so far?

MAY

[When Strategies Aren't Working for Challenging Behavior, It's Time to Push Past It!](#)

Updated January 2025



Date: 5/1/25-5/30/25

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: On Demand

Description: Dr. Angela Searcy introduces the learner to positive solutions to working through challenging behaviors of children in inclusive classrooms. Supportive information will be provided to educators to encourage new strategies for working with challenging behaviors and discover when it is time to push past it!

[Working with Families Of Young Children with IEPs Community of Practice \(CoP\)](#)

Date: 5/14/2025

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: Virtual

Description: This is an opportunity for educators to come together and share ideas on how to support families of young children with disabilities. We share resources and offer support to one another.

JUNE

[Professional Emergencies, Dr. Lilian Katz, World Forum, June 22, 2011](#)

Date: 6/2/25-6/30/25

Host: STAR NET Region 4

Event Type: On Demand

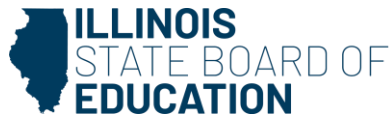
Description: Dr. Katz's presentation from the World Forum in 2011 addresses key challenges she terms as "professional emergencies" in education. Her knowledge and wit make the discussion engaging and offers practical examples and encouragement to reflect on the pressing issues in education. Dr. Katz's emphasis on equality in education underscores the need for fair and inclusive practices that ensure all students have access to the same opportunities, regardless of their background.

[Early CHOICES Summer Inclusion Institute](#)

Date: 6/11/25 and 6/12/25

Event Type: In Person, Marriott Normal

Updated January 2025



Description: This conference is designed for early childhood education professionals seeking to enhance their understanding and implementation of inclusive practices in classrooms. This event offers a unique opportunity to engage with leading experts in the field, participate in interactive workshops, and collaborate with peers from around the state of Illinois. Keynoters include Paula Kluth and Bridget Brown.

Family Fun with Yoga

Date: 6/17/25

Host: STAR NET Region 6

Event Type: In Person, Tinley Park

Description: Be part of an interactive movement experience for caregivers, parents, and children to do together. This is a special hour in which adults and children can connect through a variety of single poses and partner poses. Breathing is a very important part of yoga and will be part of the practice in a playful, engaging way. Modifications can be made as the yoga practice will honor each child and adult's diverse abilities. This is an hour in which caregivers, parents, and children participate together. Please dress comfortably and bring a yoga mat.
