



**2026 KAIMH Conference April 23-24, 2026**  
**Asbury Church, 2801 W. 15th St. N, Wichita, KS 67203**

**Thursday, April 23**

7:30 registration opens/breakfast  
8:30 – 11:45 Keynote  
11:45 – 1:15 Annual lunch  
1:15 – 2:45 breakout sessions  
2:45 – 3:00 break  
3:00 – 4:30 breakout sessions  
KDHE Clock hours: 6

**Friday, April 24**

7:30 Registration, breakfast  
8:30 – 10:00 Keynote  
11:45 – 12:30 lunch  
12:30 – 2:00 breakout sessions  
KDHE Clock hours: 4.5

**Evening Mixer**

5:00 – 6:30 pm  
Join us for bingo and other games, snacks music and fun!

**Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> Keynote Presentation 8:30 – 11:45 Gym**

***\*Resilience: Building Children’s Capacity to Bend Without Breaking - Part 1:***

***Rooted in Brain Architecture*** Nicki Patton-Rowe

In this opening session we will explore what resilience is, how it develops, and why it depends on the integration of the emotional and thinking systems of the brain. What makes some children bounce back from adversity while others fall apart? Resilience isn’t a personality trait—it’s a brain-based capacity built over time through experience and relationships. In this powerful and practical keynote, you’ll explore how the developing brain—especially the emotional and thinking systems—lays the foundation for resilience. Discover why self-regulation and executive function matter, how stress shapes behavior, and why co-regulation is essential. Whether you’re in the classroom, clinic, or home, this session will deepen your understanding of resilience from the inside out.

**\* Denotes sessions approved for KDHE in-service**

## Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> Breakout sessions 1:15 - 2:45

### **\*Co-Regulation and Challenging Behaviors, Part 1 – Gym,** Laura Evins

This two-part session explores the critical role of co-regulation in supporting young children with challenging behaviors in early childhood settings. In Part 1, participants will examine how development, stress, and relationships influence behavior, with a focus on understanding challenging behaviors as communication. Participants will learn foundational co-regulation strategies that build safety, connection, and emotional regulation. Practical tools, examples from child care and preschool settings, and strategies for collaboration with families and support teams will be shared throughout both sessions. Participants must attend Part 2 to receive KDHE in-service credit.

### **\*Trust the Process: The Power of Reflective Supervision/Consultation – Atrium, Rm 105** Jessica Mostaffa & Joy Hooper

Join us in this introductory session on reflective supervision/consultation. We will explore two frameworks of RSC and how it can be applied to various work settings.

### **\* Building Resilience in Early Childhood Professionals, Part 1 – Fireside Room,** Chad Childs

In this 2-part series of sessions, learn more about identifying early warning signs, normalizing support-seeking, and promoting behavioral health for early childhood professionals. The first session will provide an overview of suicide and substance use prevalence, prevention, treatment, postvention, and recovery and how this relates to early childhood providers. The sessions will build upon strategies across transdisciplinary teams, peer-to-peer learning experiences, and using reflective and inclusionary practices throughout their lifespan.. Participants must attend Part 2 to receive KDHE in-service credit.

### **\*Postpartum: A Parent's Perspective To Supporting Children & Families – Rm B111,** Alisha Turner

Join this session for a personal story about a mother's journey with postpartum depression and anxiety. We will discuss ways to support families during those early days and how to help them build their village and share a spark of hope and resilience.

## Breakout sessions 3:00 - 4:30

### **\*Co-Regulation and Challenging Behaviors, Part 2 – Gym,** Laura Evins

This two-part session explores the critical role of co-regulation in supporting young children with challenging behaviors in early childhood settings. Part 2 focuses on applying co-regulation strategies in real-world early childhood environments. Participants will practice responding to challenging behaviors using relationship-based approaches, reflect on common classroom scenarios, and explore how intentional adult responses can reduce behavior escalation and support long-term self-regulation. Participants must attend Part 1 to receive KDHE in-service credit.

**\*Who Am I? (More Importantly, How Does it Impact My Work?) – Atrium, Rm 105, Christine Mars**

This course explores the risks and long-term impact of substance use by caregivers on children. Participants will gain an understanding of the risk factors that contribute to substance use endangering children’s physical and emotional wellbeing. The training will highlight effective practices for engaging and supporting families using substances and emphasize community collaboration in providing hope, help, and support for children and families. It will help attendees understand that they have opportunities to change the trajectories of the lives of drug endangered children and break multigenerational cycles.

**Building Resilience in Early Childhood Professionals, Part 2 – Fireside Room, Chad Childs**

This follow-up session will build upon the knowledge gained in the first session and incorporate this in creating a support network and Community of Practice for those interested in taking the next steps in their skill building and workforce support. Participants must attend Part 1 to receive KDHE in-service credit.

**Supporting Drug Endangered Children – Rm B111, Jennifer Gassmann and Shelly Schneider**

This course explores the risks and long-term impact of substance use by caregivers on children. Participants will gain an understanding of the risk factors that contribute to substance use endangering children’s physical and emotional wellbeing. The training will highlight effective practices for engaging and supporting families using substances and emphasize community collaboration in providing hope, help, and support for children and families. It will help attendees understand that they have opportunities to change the trajectories of the lives of drug endangered children and break multigenerational cycles.

**Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> Keynote Presentation 8:30 – 11:45 Gym**

***Resilience: Building Children’s Capacity to Bend Without Breaking – Part 2:***

***Shaped by Experiences and Built Through Relationships,* Nicki Patton-Rowe**

Resilience doesn’t grow on its own—it’s shaped by what children experience and who they experience it with. In this dynamic session, we move from the “what” to the “how,” exploring the everyday interactions and environments that build a child’s capacity to bounce back and bend without breaking. Discover how self-regulation, executive function, and co-regulation grow through relationships, routines, and responsive teaching. If you care for children, you’re already shaping resilience—this session shows you how to do it with intention.

**Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> Breakout sessions 12:30 - 2:00 pm**

**Just Breathe: Use Belly Breathing to Calm Big Feelings and Bring Young Brains Back Online – Gym, Nicki Patton-Rowe**

When big feelings take over, little brains go offline. Stressed, anxious, or upset children can’t access the part of the brain they need to learn, problem-solve, or even listen. That’s where belly breathing comes in—a simple, powerful tool that

helps young children calm their nervous systems, re-engage the thinking brain, and return to learning. This interactive session explores the science behind the stress response and how intentional breathing rewires the brain for resilience.

Join us to:

- Discover how deep belly breathing helps deactivate the stress response and bring the brain back “online.”
- Explore playful, practical ways to teach belly breathing to young children.
- Learn how to weave this calming practice into your daily routines to build emotional regulation and support healthy brain development.

Walk away with tools you can use immediately to protect growing brains and help children manage their emotions—one breath at a time.

**RSC Reunion: Enhancing Skills for Reflective Supervision and Consultation– B105 Atrium**, Jessica Mostaffa and Joy Hooper

This session is designed for Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RSC) facilitators to connect/reconnect, reflect, and strengthen their facilitation practice. Join fellow facilitators to share experiences, explore challenges, and deepen reflective practice skills. The session will focus on enhancing strategies that support meaningful reflective dialogue and effective facilitation of RSC groups.

**Introduction to Play Therapy - Fireside Room**, Rick Gaskill

Join us for an introductory session exploring the core principles of play therapy and how play can support strong parent-child relationships. This presentation will provide a basic overview of play therapy concepts, including key principles, stages of play, common materials, and practical techniques that can be used to support children and families. While this session is not formal play therapy training, it will introduce foundational ideas drawn from Child-Parent Relationship Therapy (CPRT) and other play-based approaches. Participants will learn simple ways to encourage meaningful play interactions and support parents in using play as a tool to strengthen connection, communication, and development. This session is a starting point for understanding how play-based strategies can be incorporated into everyday interactions with children and families.

**Understanding the Triad of ACES, Resilience and Protective Layers: A Deep Dive- Rm B111**, Tiffany Bartley and Danielle Mapes

The Triad of ACEs, Resilience, and Protective Layers is a comprehensive training that explores how early adversity, buffering relationships, and supportive environments interact to shape children’s development. Through an infant and early childhood mental health lens, we will explore how trauma affects the developing brain and how resilience is built through connection, co-regulation, and culturally grounded strengths. Participants will learn practical strategies to strengthen protective layers across families, classrooms, and communities. By the end, learners leave equipped with actionable tools to promote healing, safety, and thriving for young children and the adults who care for them.

**Room B113** (Library) is reserved for our attendees that would like a sensory stimuli break. This room includes soft lighting, fidgets and soft blankets. You are welcome to bring and use any sensory supports that will make your conference experience more enjoyable.

### **Conference Evaluations**

We want to hear about your experience and suggestions for improvement! Our conference evaluation is quick to fill out and available for multiple entries so you can share your thoughts after each session, throughout the day, and following the conference. Just scan the code below to begin.

