

**Title of Training:** Impact of Teachers' Interactions with Infants and Toddlers

**Board Present:** Jennifer Bowman – President, Rebecca Dunahoo – President Elect, Natasha Kile – Treasurer, Emma Tempest – Secretary, Nicole Bedard – Benton County Member-at-Large, Harmony Benedict – Washington County Member-at-Large, Ex-Officio – Terri Teters

**Participants Present:** 32

The meeting was called to order at 7.00pm by Jennifer Bowman. Jennifer welcomed the participants to the NWAECA meeting. She thanked Sonia Keith and Kindergrove Preschool & Children's Center in Rogers for hosting the meeting and allowing the tour of their program.

**Business:**

1. Jennifer Bowman invited the members to share their thoughts and ideas about how they would like to receive information from NWAECA. She also made a call for anyone who wishes to help the association by becoming a volunteer. Please get in touch if you are willing.
2. Nicole Bedard shared that the next Educator's Night Out will be on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020. You will need to pre-register on the [Amazeum website](#) and then you will get PDR credit once you sign in at the NWAECA table.
3. Jennifer Bowman and Emma Tempest highlighted the membership app Wild Apricot that you can download to get access to membership information. If you are not yet a member, please visit the ['Join Us'](#) page to register, or contact our VP of Membership Michelle Weise at [mdcrain@uark.edu](mailto:mdcrain@uark.edu). Our Secretary Emma Tempest can also help you with any technical difficulties or website queries at [emma.tempest@hotmail.com](mailto:emma.tempest@hotmail.com).
4. Jennifer Bowman noted that the by-laws have been revised and are available on the NWAECA Facebook page for our members to read and give feedback on. Members will be able to vote on these online at a future date to be determined.
5. Terri Teters shared information about the T.E.A.C.H. open house and directed attendees to visit [the website](#) for more information.
6. Rebecca Dunahoo shared that there is going to be a toy drive at Child Care Aware in NWA on Thursday for their Holiday Open House between 10am-12pm.
7. Natasha Kile, NWAECA Treasurer, reported that we have \$557.74 as our current balance.

**Speaker:** Jenny Dura – University of Arkansas Early Care and Education Projects

**Host:** Kindergrove Preschool & Children's Center, Rogers

Jenny Dura thanked everyone for attending and began her presentation with an interactive icebreaker. She asked attendees to find a partner and discuss three things you have in common with that person. There was a great buzz of chatter and excitement as participants engaged with each other. Jenny highlighted that interactions are a crucial part not only in child development, but in our whole lives as human beings. We are wired to connect.

Jenny asked the question, "Who are you in the life of a child?". Answers given included:

Nurturer	Teacher	Carer	Protector	Cheerleader
Comforter	Friend	Model	Listener	Gift Opener
Helper	Anchor	Play Partner	Hero	Learner

Jenny demonstrated the importance of who we are to children by asking participants to give a possession that holds lots of value (monetary or personal) to the person sitting next to them. Then she asked the receiver to (hypothetically) keep that possession for the next 8hrs. This created some interesting feedback from the givers (many of whom were stressed at having their possession not in their hands anymore) as well as the receivers (worried about having to look after someone else's valuable object). Jenny then compared this to parents leaving their children with childcare providers every day. We are asking the parents to hand over their most prized possession and we have a duty to give them the upmost care and protection. Jenny also posed an important question to consider, "Are we valuing parents?"

In order to create positive social interactions, infants and toddlers learn in the context of relationships. They learn best when they feel secure. By providers giving infants and toddlers a secure and connected relationship, they are more likely to experience positive social interactions that then boost their optimal learning time. Experiences shape the expectations of children. Brains are pattern seeking and will develop accordingly dependent on how the child is treated. When educators, carers and families effectively support the regulation of an infant, adapt to the baby's needs and tune in to who that child is, then the child will begin to anticipate how that carer will treat them in the future.

Infants and toddlers begin to learn about themselves from the interactions they have with others. They will begin to understand if they are:

- Listened to...OR not
- Valued for their choices...OR not
- Accepted for how they express their emotions...OR not
- Allowed to explore...OR not
- Able to have their needs met...OR not

Adapted from Lally, J.R.

For care givers to help build self-concept, we need to engage with children to build positive relationships – with us, with parents and family members, and with other children in the setting. Providers need to observe and get to know each child's routines. We need

to provide language to experiences and allow for independence e.g. when eating and diapering. Jenny demonstrated this by showing an example of her as the caregiver feeding a child (Jennifer Bowman played this part!). The first run through of this scene included Jenny talking to another staff member, not making eye contact with the child, blaming them when they split their food and generally being stand offish and not involved with the activity. The second run through had much more interaction between carer and child – eye contact, back and forth discussion (even when the child isn't speaking back to you, you can still have a conversation with them), opportunities for the child to be independent through modelling how to hold a spoon and then encouraging the child to have a turn themselves. We looked at the list of 'Or Nots' and it was clear to see which version of interaction was healthier – not only for the child, but for the adult in that situation to be less stressed and more connected with the child.

Jenny invited participants to email her if you have any questions or would like to find out more about CLASS Group Coaching (MMCI). You can contact her via email: [jheyer@uark.edu](mailto:jheyer@uark.edu)

“A caregiver willing to invest and take care of you is one of the prerequisites for being able to do all this learning babies are capable of doing.” – Alison Gopnik

**Meeting was adjourned by Jennifer Bowman**

**Next Meeting:** February 4, 2020 6.30pm-8.00pm Course ID: 21602

**Host:** The Hill School, 88 W Joyce Blvd, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72703

**Topic: Building Strong Parent Provider Partnerships**

**Presenter:** Sarah Paul

Minutes shared by Emma Tempest