



Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children

VAAEYC E-Newsletter

Serving Virginia's Early Childhood Educators and Advocates

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From the President



Happy New Year! As we embark on yet another revolution around the sun, it's a great time to reflect on the moments that made 2024 great as well as those that helped you grow. It is my hope that you are looking forward to a fresh start with knowledge that you have gained in the years that have passed. VAAEYC is here to support you in your journey as an educator and advocate of young children.

Sometimes, the best thing you can do as an educator is hold on to your role as student. Even Olympic athletes have coaches to motivate, teach, and hold you accountable to your goals to help you reach your potential. Whether you have new year's resolutions, or you're simply trying to maintain, we hope that you will invite us to participate in your growth by registering for our upcoming conference in April, attending one of our Facebook Live PD sessions, or supporting your local chapter and their events. You are also welcome to join VAAEYC as we engage in advocacy activities in January with SCAN and their Advocacy Summit and Virginia Promise Partnership's Lobby Day in Richmond. In February, we will participate with NAEYC's Public Policy Forum in DC.

Finally, we want to support and celebrate you educators, the foundation of our profession. VAAEYC recognizes early childhood educators and advocates for their tireless work towards the betterment of all children in the Commonwealth of Virginia. These annual awards are to recognize individuals who have made positive impacts in their programs, communities, or all of Virginia. Please take a moment to nominate a professional that you believe meets one of the following criteria. The nomination deadline has been extended to January 10th.

Dr. Christy John
VAAEYC President





VAAEYC recognizes early childhood educators and advocates for their tireless work towards the betterment of all children in the Commonwealth of Virginia. These annual awards are to recognize individuals who have made positive impacts in their programs, communities, or all of Virginia. Nominations are now open for the following VAAEYC Awards:

VAAEYC Educator of the Year

Honors outstanding service and accomplishments in the delivery of services to children.

Award of Excellence

Honors outstanding service and accomplishments in the field of Early Childhood Education and Child Care.

Outstanding Service to Young Children

Recognizes a member or non-member who has on a large scale influenced others in the community or influenced public policy in the area of Early Childhood Education and Child Care.

Annual Award winners receive:

- A \$200 award stipend.
- Complimentary registration to the VAAEYC Annual Conference in the year of their award.
- A plaque recognizing their achievement.
- Recognition in VAAEYC Annual Conference Program, bi-monthly newsletter, VAAEYC website and Facebook page.

Nominations are now open through January 10.

For additional information, award criteria, and to submit nominations

[CLICK HERE](#)

Advocacy and Public Policy



vaaeyc

Capitol Steps – Lobby Day

VAAEYC is joining forces with the Virginia Promise Partnership to have a greater impact when meeting with state legislators.

Registration is open for the **2025 Virginia Promise Partnership (VPP) Lobby Day and SCAN Advocacy Summit**.

Join parents, child care providers, and advocates from across Virginia to make sure that lawmakers hear us loud and clear: we **GOTTA HAVE CHILD CARE!** Register for a one or two-day advocacy experience! Start off with dynamic speakers and trainings at the optional Save the Children Action Network (SCAN) Advocacy Summit. Then you'll take your new advocacy skills and put them into practice at the VPP 2025 Legislative Lobby Day where you will meet with lawmakers at the Virginia General Assembly.

SCAN Advocacy Summit

When: Sunday, January 12, 2025 from 1pm to 6pm

Where: Delta Hotels Richmond Downtown, 555 East Canal St, Richmond, VA 23219

Virginia Promise Partnership Lobby Day

When: Monday, January 13, 2025 from 8am to 2pm

Where: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 815 E Grace St, Richmond, VA 23219

The events are **FREE**. [REGISTER HERE](#)

Space is limited! Register now! Breakfast & Lunch provided; child care available on VPP Lobby Day



naeyc®

2025 Public Policy Forum

Feb 23-25 | Washington, D.C. | #naeycPPF

Registration for the annual Public Policy Forum is now open for everyone! NAEYC's annual Public Policy will bring together hundreds of early childhood educators and stakeholders to strengthen our advocacy skills, expand our policy knowledge, deepen our relationships with Congressional offices, and build a powerful movement across states and communities! Whether you have tons of advocacy experience, or none at all, NAEYC's Public Policy Forum is THE place for you to sharpen your skills and help us move a nonpartisan agenda in support of young children and the early childhood education profession!

REGISTER Here

Early Childhood Education Advocates Highlight Recent Progress in Expanding Access to Child Care Services, Urge Lawmakers to Act on Commitment to Serving Virginia's Children and Families

Business leaders and concerned parents representing the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF), the Virginia Business Roundtable for Early Education (VBREE) and the Virginia Promise Partnership (VPP) reacted to Governor Glenn Youngkin's proposed amendments to the biennial budget.

Sponsoring organizations of the "Gotta Have Child Care" campaign highlighted the prior work the Youngkin Administration and General Assembly have done to ensure reliable and long-term funding for early childhood education services and urged legislators in the General Assembly to continue to prioritize access to essential child care for all Virginia families. With more than 10,000 eligible children on child care waitlists across the Commonwealth, additional funding (\$160 million) and action (establishment of a funding formula and dedicated fund) are needed to support Virginia working families in FY26.

"It's time for our elected leaders to turn power into action," said **Tomashia Cornitcher, Chair of the Virginia Promise Partnership Parent Advisory**. "As parents, there is nothing more imperative than ensuring our children are cared for, educated, and given the tools they need to succeed. We hope that members of the General Assembly will work to prioritize policies that support all Virginia families, ensure access to essential services, and invest in our children's future—because when families thrive, our Commonwealth thrives."

Gary Thomson, Vice Chair of the Board of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) added "Last year, Governor Youngkin and his administration made it a priority to meet the record demand from working families seeking child care services. The Governor and the General Assembly made measurable progress that will contribute to Virginia's future for years to come. However, thousands of Virginia families remain on waitlists, meaning parents are on the sidelines of our workforce and kids are missing out on the opportunity to jumpstart their education. Members of the General Assembly must continue to prioritize and invest in early childhood care and education programs to reach the full potential of Virginia's economy."

"Access to affordable, high-quality child care is not just a basic need—it's an economic and workforce imperative that drives Virginia's growth and long-term economic success," said **Mike Chinn, Chair of the Virginia Business Roundtable for Early Education (VBREE)**. "Business leaders across the Commonwealth recognize the critical role quality child care plays in enabling parents to join and remain in the workforce. Our children are the foundation of tomorrow, and ensuring they have the support they need today is an investment in a brighter, more prosperous Virginia. We encourage the General Assembly to prioritize access to child care in the upcoming session."

Quality, affordable childcare impacts children, families, and our communities.

Over the last few years, Virginia has made significant progress in expanding child care access and choice. Despite historic investments in Virginia's early childhood care and education system in the FY25-26 biennial budget, there is a gap in funding for demand beyond FY24 enrollment levels. Sustained state investment in quality child care services is critical to supporting school-ready children, work-ready parents, and a thriving economy.

OUR VOICES, OUR FUTURE

INTERGENERATIONAL ADVOCACY DAY

Join Voices as we unite advocates of all ages to champion critical issues impacting Virginia's children and families.

WHEN & WHERE:
 January 27th, 2025
 7:30 AM - 2:00 PM

**RED BIRD SOCIAL
 DOWNTOWN RICHMOND**

VOICES FOR VIRGINIA'S CHILDREN

Join Voices on January 27, 2025 for Our Voices, Our Future: Intergenerational Advocacy Day!

This day of action will unite advocates of all ages to champion critical issues impacting Virginia's children and families, including early care and education, mental health, health equity, child welfare, and economic security. Join us by registering below.

What to expect:

- Connect over breakfast
- Meet with lawmakers
- Rally at the Bell Tower
- Wrap up with lunch

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Do you have question about Public Policy, Advocacy, and what you can do? Contact us at Publicpolicy@vaaeyc.org.

Public Policy issues and advocacy are fluid and the most up-to-date information is posted on VAAEYC's Facebook page [HERE](#). Information and critical advocacy needs are time sensitive so be sure to follow us to know when action is needed!



Crystal Howser
VAAEYC Public Policy Lead



Show your vaaeyc pride!

Check out the fun merchandise available for you and your staff to show you are proud vaaeyc members!



[CLICK HERE to Explore](#)



Equity and Anti-Racism Circle

The end of each year naturally ushers in a time of reflection. As I think of this past year, I am undoubtedly reminded of the obstacles I have faced as an early childhood educator and early learning program owner. As I revisit those trials, I am also reminded of a recurring theme throughout my experiences of 2024, which is community. Despite the hurdles, I was able to connect and build community with professionals and organizations that helped me combat the obstacles I faced and ignite a new passion for advocacy! As I acknowledge the inequities within the early childhood education field that impacts children, their families, and early educators, I feel compelled to do more and lean into the support that will make those initiatives possible. I am reminded of NAEYC's recommendations for advancing equity in early childhood education ([Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education Position Statement | NAEYC](#)).



As I embark upon the journey of 2025, I will use those recommendations as a tool to focus on what we can do, as a community, to support and advocate for those within the field of early childhood education. In my moments of difficulty throughout this past year, I was able to be sustained by the purpose in my work and the beautiful relationships with the children and families that I serve. The community that I built held my hand and gave me the push that I need to continue in this field. I am grateful for the trials of 2024 as they helped me grow as an educator and advocate. My hope for 2025 is that we can connect, and together, do the work that desperately needs to be done to combat inequities within this field of early childhood education and early care. Through community, we give children, families, and early childhood educators the opportunities and experiences that they all deserve.

With hope and love,
Shemik Sellars

Please join the equity and anti-racism circle meetings every other month on the 4th Wednesday as we deep dive into the funding crisis and explore ways that we can advocate and build community to support families and early childhood educators.



Shemik Sellars
VAAEYC Equity and Anti-Racism Circle Lead

Wednesday, January 22 @ 6:30 PM

These meetings are open to all VAAEYC, NVAEYC members and Non-members.

You are invited to attend and bring to the conversation any issues that are impacting you, or your program regarding equity.

[Equity Circle Meeting Zoom Link](#)

Membership and Communication

vaaeyc Membership

Current **vaaeyc** Membership Numbers as of December 31, 2024

- NAEYC 732
- SECA 102
- **vaaeyc** Life Members 5
- Past Due: 113

Total VAAEYC Membership: 952



Need to renew? **You can easily renew by CLICKING HERE.**

Don't forget to keep your membership current and make sure your contact information is current too!

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CHAPTER SURVEY

Share your thoughts!

CLICK HERE

Help VAAEYC Chapters meet your needs by answering this short survey.

Respondents will be entered into a drawing to win a \$100 Amazon Gift Card!

Drawing will be on 12/20/2024 and winner notified by email.

Extended through January 12, 2025!

CHAPTER SURVEY EXTENDED!

VAAEYC Chapters are the grassroots, on the ground, in the trenches, local connection to this organization.

All early childhood educators share the same passion, purpose, and commitment – but each region in Virginia has its own challenges, needs, and celebrations. Chapters are a way for you to gather and connect with others in your region and community, to share resources, plan events that work for you, celebrate and network with others that understand what you do, and why.

You are invited to explore what a local chapter could do for you. Please complete [this short survey](#) to help VAAEYC understand your local needs.

Respondents will be entered into a drawing to win a \$100 Amazon Gift Card! Drawing to be done on JANUARY 12, 2025 and winner notified by email.



Beth Anderson
VAAEYC Membership & Communications Circle Lead

As always you can reach out to me with any questions at Membership@vaaeyc.org.

Professional Development

Reflection: To End and Begin

As we wind down 2024 and bring in the new year, I find myself again thinking about my reflective practices. The power of reflection on our teaching and work as early childhood education professionals has proven to be profound. However, I admit if I don't schedule it and then ensure that it doesn't get bumped for something else, I don't put pen to paper and practice deep reflection.

As we wrap up 2024 and look to 2025, I would like to encourage you to pause with me for 10-15 minutes and practice a bit of reflection. This process brings awareness to our practices over the last year that can assist you in developing a personal professional development plan to support our 2025 goals. I find strategies such as the [3 R's or Two Stars and a Wish](#) and the below questions recently shared in a [Bright Morning](#) seminar help jumpstart my reflective journey.

1. What is a bright spot in my current work?
2. What is the main theme that I share on repeat about my work?
3. How is this theme reflected in my daily practices and work with children?
4. How does the theme that I repeat influence the way I approach my daily work?
5. What would another 5 minutes with these questions unveil for me as a professional?

As you reflect and move into 2025, the PD Circle wants you to know we are on this journey with you. Our daily work and impact are strengthened by the power of the community we foster, and we want to be in community with you. So, mark your fresh and new 2025 calendars with our upcoming FB Lives and reach out to us with needs and news. Thank you for all your consistent efforts to provide quality early care and education to the children, families and communities of the Commonwealth.

In appreciation,



Kim Thomason
VAAEYC Professional
Development Circle Lead

Be sure to keep tabs on [educational resources HERE](#) on the VAAEYC website. You can always reach us at pd@vaaeyce.org



VAAEYC Professional Development Opportunities for Educators and PD Specialists

ABCs of Managing Challenging Behaviors | Dr. Stacey Park
January 24, 2024 – 1:00 p.m. | [Register Here](#)

One of the greatest challenges of teaching is effectively managing behaviors to create a positive learning environment. In this workshop, we will explore varieties of challenging behaviors, causes, and implications on learning and development. Additionally, participants will learn research-based strategies for effectively managing challenging behaviors in the early childhood classroom.



VCOM Coffee Chats for Early Childhood Educators



Join VT ECEI and VCOM for a 45-minute coffee chat via Zoom, where VCOM medical students will share information on **managing temper tantrums** in young children and **managing separation anxiety** in early care and education programs.

The session will be held on **January 14 at 12:30pm**, and will explore practical strategies for supporting children through **separation challenges**, understanding their **emotional needs**, and fostering a **smooth transition into the classroom** setting.

Meet the Team:



Prutha Patel

- Third year at VCOM-VA
- VCU graduate



Yash Desai

- Third year at VCOM-VA
- VCU graduate

Register Here





2025 vaaeyc

Annual Conference

April 3-5 in Richmond, VA

Heartfelt Beginnings: Nurturing Early Childhood

Heartfelt Beginnings for a New Year

As you take time to reflect on the past year and set goals for 2025, be sure that your professional growth is part of that plan. Join your community of friends and colleagues in Richmond to learn, connect, and grow. We will save a seat for you and I hope to meet you there.

- Enhance your professional development with stellar keynote speakers.
- Over 85 knowledge-expanding workshops.
- Heartfelt networking opportunities.
- Opportunity to earn up to 6.5 CEUs per day.
- Three full days of conference.



Belinda Ryberg
VAAEYC Conference Circle
Lead

2025
vaaeyc
Annual Conference
April 3-5 in Richmond, VA

**Workshop Schedule
Announced!**
Click Here for More
Information and to Register

**Early Bird Discount: SAVE \$30 BY REGISTERING BY
JANUARY 31, 2025**

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Exhibit Hall

The Exhibit Hall is a great way to look for exciting products and services from organizations in early childhood education.

T-Shirt

Be sure to get your VAAEYC swag! Purchase the 2025 conference t-shirt when you register before the Early Bird Deadline for **only \$15**. The price goes up to \$18 after then, and very few will be available for sale onsite for \$20.

Lunches

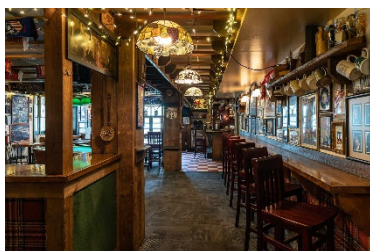
Don't miss engaging keynote speakers because you are trying to track down lunch in or around the Greater Richmond Convention Center. In order to maximize your time in general sessions and visiting with exhibitors, you can pre-order a box lunch and have it waiting for you! There are three lunch options each day and these will **ONLY** be available if purchased in advance. (By March 7, 2024.) All lunch options are \$25 and include the entrée/sandwich, chips, sweet treat, and a drink.

Lunch Options

Thursday Pre-Order Options	Friday Pre-Order Options	Saturday Pre-Order Options
Chicken Salad Sandwich	Chicken Caesar Salad	Smoked Turkey BLT Sandwich
Italian Wrap	Roast Beef Sandwich	Chicken Caesar Salad
Portabella Garden Salad	Hummus & Roasted Veggie Sandwich	Portabella Garden Salad

Friday Night Fun

Join your friends and colleagues to enjoy some food and drink at three different restaurants in Downtown Richmond – all within walking distance of the Greater Richmond Convention Center and the Hilton Richmond Downtown. Visit one, two, or all three restaurants and nurture your network with the heartfelt community of early childhood educators on Friday, April 4 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Participating restaurants are Penny Lane Pub, Wong Gonzalez, and Capital Ale House. \$25 per person.



Conference Schedule

Thursday, April 3, 2025

- 8:00 – 8:15 a.m. | Conference Opening – Welcome
- 8:15 – 8:30 a.m. | Conference Warm Up by WolfTrap
- 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. | **Opening Keynote Session: Dr. John Almarode, James Madison University**
- 9:30 – 9:45 a.m. | Room Change & Exhibit Hall Open
- 9:45 – 11:15 a.m. | Concurrent Workshops
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. | **Thursday Public Policy Luncheon**
- 1:30 – 5:15 p.m. | Concurrent Workshops
- 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. | VAAEYC Board Meeting
- 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. | VAAEYC Leadership Circle Meeting

Friday, April 3, 2025

- 7:30 – 8:00 a.m. | Public Policy Coffee Chat
- 8:00 – 8:15 a.m. | Welcome Remarks, Awards
- 8:15 – 8:30 a.m. | Conference Warm Up
- 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. | **Keynote Session: Mister B, AVA Educational Consulting, LLC**
- 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Exhibit Hall Open
- 9:45 – 11:15 a.m. | Concurrent Workshops
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. | **Lunch & Learn Keynote: Dr. Mary Louise Hemmeter, Vanderbilt University**
- 1:15 – 5:15 p.m. | Concurrent Workshops
- 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. | **Friday Night Fun Social Event***
- 8:00 – 9:30 p.m. | Legacy of Leadership Presidents Reception

Saturday, April 4, 2025

- 8:00 – 8:15 a.m. | Welcome Remarks
- 8:15 – 8:30 a.m. | Conference Warm Up
- 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. | **Keynote Session: Dr. Jim Harris, Opportunities Consulting, LLC**
- 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Exhibit Hall Open
- 9:45 – 11:15 a.m. | Concurrent Workshops
- 12:00 – 1:15 p.m. | **Lunch & Learn Keynote: Allison Learnard, WolfTrap**
- 1:30 – 4:15 p.m. | Concurrent Workshops

*\$25 per person

Projected full conference CEU possibility for one person: 19.5 contact hours

Hotel Accommodations

Rates are escalating in Richmond and VAAEYC has secured guest rooms at the **Hilton Richmond Downtown** for conference participants at a discounted rate. [CLICK HERE for more information](#) and to reserve your room. Rooms will go very fast, so don't delay.

SECA Corner



For more information on SECA contact them at info@seca.info
Visit SECA [online HERE](#)
You can also find SECA on [Facebook HERE](#)



Cindy Brown
VAAEYC SECA Representative

SECA Annual Conference 2025 🇺🇸

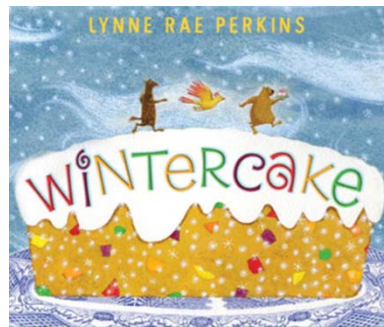
Calling all early childhood educators! 🌟 Mark your calendars for March 20-22, 2025, and join us at the Royal Sonesta in Houston, Texas for an unforgettable experience at the SECA Annual Conference!

This year's theme is all about inspiring the next generation to shoot for the moon! 🌕 Whether it's in the classroom or in life, we believe every child has the potential to reach the stars, and it's our mission to help them get there!

Who inspires YOU to shoot for the moon? 🌟 Who pushes you to aim higher, dream bigger, and go further! Let's celebrate those who encourage us to reach new heights. We can't wait to see you there!



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Snow is falling and the animals are excited! It is time for their winter celebration, and they look forward to enjoying their delicious wintercake.

However, there is now a great problem. The dried fruit necessary for the cake is missing! Thomas and his bird friend, Lucy, look everywhere, but they have no success. Thomas wonders how they could possibly have a Winter Eve celebration without wintercake! Lucy flies off to continue their search but is caught in a terrific snowstorm, crashes, and finds herself near the animal tearoom. It is there that she discovers that an unknown animal has the missing fruit. When the stranger leaves the tearoom, Lucy follows him. However, she is very surprised when the stranger takes the missing fruit to Thomas. Lucy had mistaken the unknown stranger for a thief, but in fact, he was a helpful new friend. Now Thomas can bake a delicious wintercake. Thomas and Lucy want to share the cake with the animal who found and returned the lost fruit, but they do not know where he lives. By following footprints in the snow, and overcoming many obstacles, they find their new friend and enjoy a wonderful Winter Eve together. They learn that mistakes can sometimes lead to something good, even new friendships.

Wintercake, written and illustrated by Lynne Rae Perkins, was published in 2019 by Greenwillow Books, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.



Dear NAEYC Community,

As we close out 2024, we want to take a moment to reflect on our shared work, and to honor the strength, dedication, and innovation that each of you have brought to face this year's challenges and opportunities.

We have seen and supported you as you worked tirelessly in early childhood programs, higher education institutions, and state capital buildings to make sure young children and their families had equitable access to the nurturing, education, and support they need to thrive.

Your expertise, dedication, and adaptability has meant quality learning experiences and a sense of stability for families during uncertain times. And through our collective voice, our continued advocacy has raised awareness and influenced policy conversations, keeping early education issues front and center at local, state, and national levels.

As we look ahead to next year, we want to highlight four key priorities that will inform NAEYC's work and communications with you:

- **Introducing a New Membership Model:** Early next year, we will introduce a single-tier membership model, informed by your feedback and designed to strengthen our collective voice by simplifying access to professional development, research, advocacy tools, and community support.
- **Revamping Early Learning Program Accreditation:** Around the same time, we'll launch our streamlined accreditation system, clearly aligned with updated early learning program standards. It's more inclusive, more manageable, and reflects insights from pilot testing and equity-focused partners, positioning programs for continual growth and recognition.
- **Celebrating Our Centennial:** The coming year marks the official start of our centennial planning. For nearly a century, this association has championed the promise of early education. We look forward to commemorating our legacy, recognizing the pioneers who built this field and our organization, and mapping our path for the next 100 years.
- **Engaging in Policy and Advocacy:** With a new administration and Congress being sworn in, and with new legislatures and governors in many states, our team is working hard preparing to respond to new policy challenges and opportunities that will impact the ECE field and the children and families you serve. Stay tuned for more information early in the new year about opportunities for you to engage in our advocacy work, including upcoming webinars, survey opportunities, and events.

In the months ahead, we'll share more details, invite your participation, and welcome your engagement. Our community's strength lies in our shared mission and collective expertise. Your feedback, your leadership, and your day-to-day efforts fuel our work and inspire our vision. Thank you for being part of this community. Here's to a new year filled with hope, cooperation, and a deeper appreciation for the value that early childhood education brings to us all.



*Tonia Durden*

Tonia Durden  
NAEYC Governing Board President



*Michelle Kang*

Michelle Kang  
NAEYC Chief Executive Officer

# **nvaeyc** News from the Northern Virginia Affiliate

The NVAEYC Board welcomed the winter season by gathering in person and celebrating our connections (and yummy food!). We gathered together at the Pozez JCC in Fairfax, VA and enjoyed meeting in person to learn more about each other and ways we can connect with other educators in our affiliate.

NVAEYC also wrapped up our CDA Scholarship program. This is our 2nd cohort of 10 educators who received their CDA in Spanish through our scholarship program. We are grateful to Maria-Isabel Ballivian, the ACCA Center Director, who hosted and led the instruction. Way to go!



## Chapters & Local Groups

### Chapter Updates

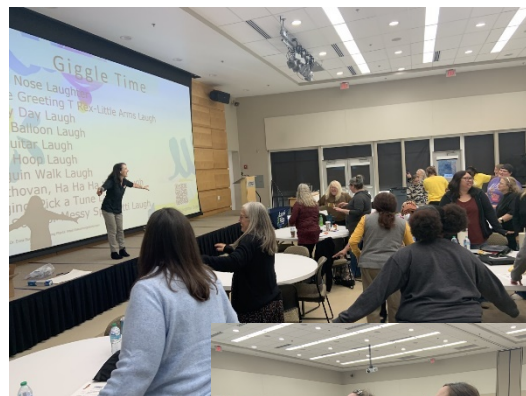
#### Apple Valley

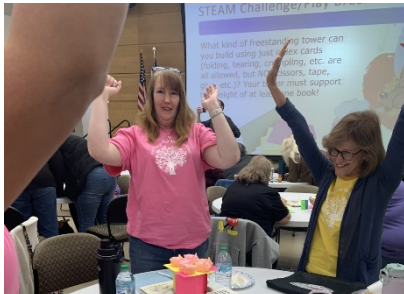
**Chapter Leadership:**

- Jennifer Strickler, President
- Dr. Stacey Park, Vice President

**Contact the Apple Valley Chapter here**

We were happy to have another successful annual conference at Laurel Ridge Community College for our regional early childhood educators. Dr. Jason Robertson, MD spoke of the challenges that technology poses for the development of young children and Dr. Diane Schnoor, PhD spoke on “STEAM in the Early Childhood Class.”





Our next meeting is on Wednesday, January 29 at El Centro Restaurant in Old Town Winchester at 1:45pm. Come join us as we plan for our spring Seminar and a Slice event and WOYC activities!

## New River Valley

### Chapter Leadership:

- Emily Perkins, President
- Caroline Hornburg, Vice President

### [New River Valley AEYC Facebook Page](#)

Greetings from the New River Valley. We met in November at New River Community College, Uptown Christiansburg Mall Site. Those attending shared challenges of the education field along with resources for our teachers, families and community. Julie Fox gave a presentation on Trauma Informed Care.

The new year plans included brainstorming ways to increase chapter participation and planning the WOYC.

## NRV Chapter of the VAAEYC 2024-25



You are invited to join the NRV Chapter of the Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children!

Contact Caroline Hornburg to join our email list: [chornburg@vt.edu](mailto:chornburg@vt.edu)

Find us on Facebook: [NRV Chapter of VAAEYC](#)

### Who We Are:

The New River Valley Chapter of the VAAEYC (Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children) promotes and supports our early childhood education professionals.

- ◆ We empower them to provide quality early childhood education and support to their students and families.
- ◆ We advocate for quality early childhood experiences and the need for living wages for our early childhood educators.
- ◆ We believe our local efforts to support both the parents and the professionals in the early childhood field help children to be prepared with the skills they need for the next developmental stage and life.

### Dates to Note:

- ◆ **April 3rd-5th, 2025:** VAAEYC conference in Richmond, VA
- ◆ **April 5th-11th, 2025:** NAEYC Week of the Young Child
- ◆ **May 5th-9th, 2025:** Teacher Appreciation Week

### Chapter Meetings:

#### Quarterly Chapter Meetings

- ◆ Mon., Sept. 9th, 2024, 6:30-7:30pm
- ◆ Mon., Nov. 4th, 2024, 6:30-7:30pm
- ◆ Mon., Feb. 3rd, 2025, 6:30-7:30pm
- ◆ Mon., Apr. 7th, 2025, 6:30-7:30pm
- Each at the NRCC Christiansburg Site, with access to the Reuse Center before and after the meeting!

**End-of-Year Social (Location TBD)**  
Celebrating Early Childhood Educators!  
◆ Mon., May 5th, 2025, 6:30pm

Blue Mountain School in Floyd, VA paused on November 13th to recognize the importance of celebrating kindness.

The whole school, from youngest students all the way to the teachers, used art, hearts and hands to create tangible representations of kindness.

May you be safe, May you be happy, May you know peace, May you be well, May you live with ease. This was their desire as they celebrated World Kindness Day!

It is the NRV Chapters' wish for everyone as we enter 2025!



**Get Connected:**

- Find us on [Facebook](#) - "NRV Chapter of VAAEYC"
- Follow us on Instagram! @nrv\_vaaeyc
- [Email us HERE](#) if you would like to be added to our google group listserv.



Take control of your health one meal at a time. In this FREE class series, explore how to add fiber foods to the meals you already eat.

This way of eating can lead to more energy, lower cholesterol, better blood sugar, and weight loss. Adopt eating habits that work for YOU.

For more information, contact Stephanie Spencer, Health Educator, [sdspencer@carilionclinic.org](mailto:sdspencer@carilionclinic.org)

Register by January 3rd. Meeting link will be sent when you register. To sign up, scan the QR code, visit [CarilionClinic.org/Calendar](http://CarilionClinic.org/Calendar) or call 800-422-8482.

**Attend all 8 sessions!**

**Wednesdays,  
Jan 8th to Feb 26th  
6:00 – 7:00 p.m.**

**Virtual**  
Hosted through  
Microsoft Teams



## Richmond

**Chapter Leadership:**

- Margina Grow, President
- Alex Strabley, Past President

[Richmond Chapter Facebook Page Here](#)  
[Instagram Here](#)



Board Appreciation: We love our RECA Board (Richmond Chapter of VAAEYC). These ladies do such an amazing job providing training and networking events for Early Childhood Professionals in the Richmond area. Dinner at Tarrant West on December 12 was just our way of saying "Thank You" for all you do.

**Upcoming Events for 2025:**

**February 21, 2025 | 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**Training for Directors**

**Creative Learning Center**, River Rd. Richmond  
Participants will receive a certificate for 1.5 hours of training.

Distinguished panel of professionals to answer questions regarding neurodiversities and resources for support in our area. The training is free and open to all Directors and support staff. [To register click Here](#). List questions you may have for the panelists when you register.

**March 19, 2025 |**

**Training for Directors and Educators**

Jewish Community Center, Richmond, VA  
"Bringing the Outside Inside" and touring the outdoor classroom at the JCC. Presenter: Tarneshia Evans, Donna Peters and the amazing teachers at the JCC. Dinner will be provided.

## Southeastern

### Chapter Leadership:

- Beth Anderson, Co-President
- Cindy Brown, Co-President

### [Southeastern Chapter Facebook Page Here](#)

On November 2, we hosted our 18th “Raising the Bar” Conference in partnership with



Children’s Harbor Community Training Department. Over 450 early childhood professionals from our region spent the entire day networking and learning together. The SECOVA team worked to provide a special environment for ECE professionals where they could choose from over 60 workshop presenters. Our theme, “Happiness is...”, created the landscape for lively music and over 45 engaging vendors. To top it off, we really raised the bar this year! Through a generous donation from Square One, keynote speaker Eric Litwin, the original author of Pete the Cat books, presented on positivity strategies and teaching.



In mid-December, we celebrated our SECOVA team retreat with a night out at Waterside in Downtown Norfolk. We visited a holiday-themed pop-up restaurant, Miracle, where we reflected on our 2024 successes and dreamed big together about 2025!



We’re already busily planning our next professional development event, Winter Wonderland, where we will welcome ECE professionals back for an engaging workshop. This will take place February 12, 2025.

Are you in the Southeastern area? We’d love for you to join our lively meetings each month on ZOOM (with some in-person sessions mixed in)! Have questions or concerns? Please reach out to our co-presidents: Beth Anderson (757) 739-2256 or Cindy Brown (757) 339-1097.

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## Announcements



## VDOE News and Updates

### Virginia Child Care Provider Survey – we want to hear from you!

One More Chance to Share Your Experiences and Help Improve Early Care and Education in Virginia!

To hear from as many providers as possible, our partners at UVA have extended the deadline for the Child Care Provider Survey!

If you are not one of the more than 1,700 center and family day home leaders who have already done so, you now have until January 10 to complete the survey and receive a \$30 gift card! Eligible respondents will also be entered in a raffle to win \$100.

Our partners at UVA have sent emails with your site's unique survey link (from [noreply@surveys.virginia.edu](mailto:noreply@surveys.virginia.edu)). Please see the FAQ ([www.see-partnerships.com/providersurveyfaq.html](http://www.see-partnerships.com/providersurveyfaq.html)) with any questions, or contact our UVA partners at [see-partnerships@virginia.edu](mailto:see-partnerships@virginia.edu) or 434-297-6882.

### Child Care Centers and Family Day Homes

#### Spanish Version of Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Reporting Training is Now Available

The VDOE is pleased to announce the release of CHLD 2015 - Abuso y Negligencia Infantiles: Detección y Denuncia de Casos en la Primera Infancia, the Spanish language version of CHLD 2015 - Child Abuse and Neglect: Recognition and Reporting. Please review the memo distributed to child day programs for more details. This training continues to be offered for free through the Community College Workforce Alliance and satisfies training requirements for child care providers related to recognizing and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect. **Learn more about local and external CLASS observation requirements on the [VQB5 Measuring Quality Interactions webpage](#).**

### Early Childhood Special Education

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#### Training and Reliability Session for Indicator 7: Early Childhood Outcomes

This interactive session to be held February 20 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., is designed for team members who participate in the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) Process to rate children at entry and exit from early childhood special education services. The purpose is to assist local school division teams in completing the COS process accurately and with consistency. The COS process is designed to be completed by a team of individuals who know the child, providing

multiple sources of information for consideration when completing the ratings. Teams are encouraged to attend the session together and work collaboratively through case studies provided. Registration information will be available January 2025.

## Early Learning Support

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### Give families the gift of fun this year with ECE Resource Hub Take Home Strategies!

The [ECE Resource Hub's Take-Home Strategies](#) are perfect for families who want new and engaging activity ideas to support children's core skills at home. Each take-home strategy page includes:

- A short description of the skill.
- Multiple, easy-to-adapt activity ideas.
- Quick tips for things adults can do or say to strengthen the skill.
- Engaging book recommendations.

## Join STREAMin<sup>3</sup> for Professional Development in the New Year

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Good news! STREAMin<sup>3</sup> monthly PD sessions will continue in 2025! Check out January offerings below and register at the [STREAMin3 Training and Events Page](#).

- **January STREAMin<sup>3</sup> Webinar (30mins):** January 8 - New Year, New Transitions!
- **January STREAMin<sup>3</sup> Live Online (90 mins):** January 21 - Planning for Effective Transitions

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## You. Are. Doing. An. Amazing. Job.

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### Positive New Year's Resolutions for Teachers

#### Resolve to:

- ✦ **Make Actual Me Time**
- ✦ **Say No**
- ✦ **Make Work-Free Time**
- ✦ **Ask for Help**
- ✦ **Set Achievable Goals**
- ✦ **Not Take It Personally**
- ✦ **To Forgive**



[\(Read more from this article.\)](#)

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# Calendar of Events

## [VPP State Lobby Day & Capitol Steps - VAAEYC State Lobby Day](#)

January 12 - 13, 2025  
Richmond, VA

## [VCOM Coffee Chat with Early Childhood Educators](#)

January 14, 2025 | 12:30 PM  
Zoom

## [VAAEYC Professional Development - ABCs of Managing Challenging Behaviors](#)

January 24, 2024 - 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.  
Zoom and FB Live

## [New River Valley Chapter: Quarterly Chapter Meeting](#)

February 3, 2025  
NRCC Christiansburg Location Board Room

## [RECA Training for Directors](#)

February 21, 2025  
Creative Learning Center, Richmond, VA

## [NAEYC Public Policy Forum](#)

February 23 - 25, 2025

Gateway Marriott - Arlington, VA

## **RECA Training for Directors and Educators: Bringing the Outside Inside**

March 19, 2025  
Jewish Community Center, Richmond, VA

## [SECA Annual Conference](#)

March 20 - 22, 2025  
Houston, TX

## [VAAEYC 69th Annual Conference](#)

April 3 - 5, 2025  
Greater Richmond Convention Center &  
Richmond Hilton Downtown

## [New River Valley Chapter: Quarterly Chapter Meeting](#)

April 7, 2025  
NRCC Christiansburg Location Board Room

## [New River Valley Chapter: End of Year Social](#)

May 5, 2025  
Location TBA