



## Infant and Toddler Symposium

*The Curtis Hotel*

1405 Curtis Street, Denver, CO 80202

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### Speaker Biographies

**Juliet Bromer** is a research scientist at the Herr Research Center for Children and Social Policy at Erikson Institute in Chicago. Bromer's research focuses on family child care quality improvement with a particular focus on relationship-based support. She completed the Family Child Care Network Impact Study in 2009 which examined the association between staffed network supports and quality in licensed family child care homes. Currently, she is conducting a multi-year national research initiative to examine the quality of support offered by agencies and networks to home-based child care providers. Additionally, Bromer and colleagues are investigating approaches to supporting home-based child care in Philadelphia through the development of collaborations and systems to support this sector of the early care and education workforce. Bromer's research also examines the role of family-provider relationships in early care and education and the family and community support roles of child care providers. She is currently conducting an evaluation study of Illinois' family and community engagement standards that are part of the state's new quality rating and improvement system. Bromer received her master's in education from Bank Street College of Education and her doctorate in human development from the University of Chicago.

**Jeanna Capito** has been working in the prenatal to five field for nearly 20 years with experience including the management of child care programming, Early Head Start, Head Start, developmental oriented pediatrics, national home visiting models, and child welfare programming. Capito has spent the last eleven years focused on the development of state and local initiatives to increase quality of programs, access by families and capacity of professionals and communities through systems change across social services agencies, education systems, home visiting services, public health programming and healthcare systems. Capito's work has involved managing projects including the development of birth-to-three Early Learning Guidelines, recommending and implementing quality support structures for home visiting, crafting national scale learning communities for across Head Start and child care with their respective federal offices, and building a technical assistance structure for collaboration building. Capito brings strong working knowledge of both state and local systems, including work on policies and recommendations to ensure that systems at each level inform one another and are built in response to the characteristics of each other. Capito's consulting work is focused around her expertise in budget creation and management, and ability to build the complementary fiscal, governance and management systems that support collaboration and program implementation. Through this work, Capito builds structures to support the integration and efficient use of varied early childhood funding streams.

**Jorge Luis García** is a researcher in family economics, human capital formation and accumulation, and the quantitative study of socio-economic inequality. He was a key researcher on Professor James Heckman's groundbreaking cost benefit analysis on the return on investment for birth-to-five early childhood development. After graduating summa cum laude and as valedictorian from CIDE (Mexico) with a bachelor's in economics, he went on to earn a master's in economics from the University of

Chicago in 2012. Jorge is currently a doctoral candidate in the University of Chicago's Department of Economics.

**Barbara Gebhard** is the assistant director of Public Policy at ZERO TO THREE. As part of the organization's Policy Center since 2006, she leads efforts to support states in the development of policies and systems to meet the needs of infants, toddlers, and their families. She oversees the development of effective materials, tools, and technical assistance for state policymakers. Gebhard coordinates state policy action team meetings on infant-toddler policies and provides technical assistance to public-private teams in states on a variety of topics. Gebhard oversees the work of the federal Programmatic Assistance for Tribal Home Visiting (PATH), is the point of contact for the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Coordination Center. Gebhard has authored or co-authored numerous policy papers and tools for states. She was director of the BUILD Initiative, deputy director of the West Virginia Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families, state early intervention director and state day care specialist in the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, and writer/editor for Appalachia Educational Laboratory. Gebhard holds a master's degree in child development and family relationships from Marshall University and a bachelor's in elementary education from Georgetown College.

**R.J. Gillespie MD, MHPE** is a practicing pediatrician with the Children's Clinic in Portland, Ore., and is also the medical director of the Oregon Pediatric Improvement Partnership. He graduated from Oregon Health Sciences University in 1997, and completed his residency training at Rush Children's Hospital in Chicago, Illinois in 2000. He completed a year as chief resident at Rush in 2001, and has also received a Master of Health Professions Education from the University of Illinois - Chicago. He spent three years as the Medical Director of Quality Improvement for the Children's Health Foundation, and has been active with the Oregon Pediatric Society's Subcommittee on Quality Improvement, where he helped develop and implement the START (Screening Tools and Referral Training) program, which teaches providers to implement standardized screening for developmental disabilities, autism, and peripartum mood disorders. He has also taught Quality Improvement and Efficiency at Portland State University for the school's Healthcare Management Certificate Program.

**Jeanetta E. Green** is director of the Child Care Services Division of the Alabama Department of Human Resources. The division's services include licensing of child care centers and family child care homes, issuing exemptions for faith-based child care centers, overseeing Child Care Subsidy Program eligibility services and training for child care providers, and oversight for the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program. During her 30 year tenure with the Department of Human Resources Green has also worked in the SNAP program and the Child Support programs. She has been with the Child Care Services Division for 20 years in serving in various capacities including policy specialist for eligibility services, overseeing quality enhancement provider training activities, monitoring contract compliance, and acting as the functional project manager for child care information technology projects. Green received a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Alabama. She received the masters of public administration from Auburn University Montgomery with a concentration in state and local government administration.

**Stacey Kennedy** is director of the Child Care Quality Initiatives Unit within the Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood. Kennedy provides oversight and leadership for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant and Quality Provisions within the Child Care Development Fund. These grant efforts address the needs of the most vulnerable children: supporting activities to enhance quality in early childhood education programs, align standards and coordinate disparate elements of early care and education into a more efficient, unified, high-quality system with measurable outcomes. Efforts also ensure that parents and the general public have transparent information about the child care choices available to them.

Prior to this role Kennedy served 13 years in various leadership roles to support Early Intervention Colorado, Colorado's Infant and Toddler Initiative under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Kennedy holds a master's degree in public administration from the University of Colorado.

**Sarah Lytel** is the director of the Outreach and Education division at the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences (I-LABS) at the University of Washington. The I-LABS Outreach and Education team communicates the latest science of child development to those who can act on it, including parents, educators, policymakers, and opinion leaders. Lytle has personally had the opportunity to communicate science to thousands in the early learning community. Under her leadership, the Outreach and Education team has launched an online library of free training modules designed to make science accessible to a broad audience. Lytle was previously a postdoctoral fellow at I-LABS working under the supervision of Dr. Patricia Kuhl. Before coming to the Institute, she earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and Spanish from the University of Notre Dame and a doctorate in developmental psychology at Temple University. Her research focused on the role of social cues in infants' and toddlers' language learning and how social interactions might help toddlers learn from screen media.

**Matthew Melmed** is an internationally recognized leader and tireless advocate devoted to promoting the health and development of infants and toddlers. Since 1995, as executive director of ZERO TO THREE, he has guided the considerable growth of the organization's activities in support of professionals, policymakers and parents in their efforts to ensure that every baby has a strong start in life. Under his leadership ZERO TO THREE has launched numerous programmatic and policy initiatives which have significantly expanded the organization's impact in promoting the importance of early experiences and relationships. Melmed is committed to translating what we know into what we do for very young children and their families. Melmed chairs the board of Generations United which promotes intergenerational collaboration for the enduring benefit of all and is the immediate past board chair of the Food Research and Action Center, America's leading domestic anti-hunger policy organization. He served as the first elected chair of the Children's Leadership Council, a coalition of 55 leading national organizations working together to improve the health, education and well-being of children and youth. He is a trustee of the Turrell Fund, has been a director on such boards as Rob Reiner's I Am Your Child Foundation, and is the recipient of multiple community, state, national, and international honors.

**Michelle Neal R.N., M.S.**, is a Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program director, earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Northern Colorado and a master's degree in Nursing Education from Regis University. Her career has been focused on maternal/child nursing with underserved populations. She has worked in community health as a visiting nurse and coordinator of maternal health care at various community health agencies, as well as having worked in several Colorado hospitals in the labor and delivery area. From 2000 to 2006, Michelle was a home visitor and supervisor in the NFP program. Eleven years ago, she joined Invest In Kids to use her experience in NFP to support nurses in improving their implementation of the program as a nurse consultant and site developer and now serves as the NFP program director. She is proud to have been a 2010 Nightingale Nominee in honor of starting the Colorado NFP Nurse Practice Council. She was a co-author of "Reflective Practice Enhances Public Health Nurse Implementation of the Nurse-Family Partnership" published in Public Health Nursing in March of 2010.

**Lisa Sadar** is the quality resources manager at the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County, a non-profit organization in northern Colorado. She is a current fellow in the Buell Early Childhood Leadership Program at the University of Colorado-Denver, has a bachelor's degree in Biology, an Inter-discipline in Youth Agency Administration and 28 years of experience in non-profit administration including policy creation and implementation at both the state and local levels. Sadar currently oversees coaching and funding supports for child care and education programs in Larimer County, Colo. including five years of local implementation of the Infant Toddler Quality and Availability grant.

**Jennifer Scholl** has been a nurse home visitor with Nurse-Family Partnership since 2009. She is a registered nurse with a bachelor of science in nursing from the University of Colorado and professional certification in Ambulatory Women's Health from the National Certification Corporation. She has served on the Youth and Families Advisory Committee of Denver's Homeless Commission, as well as the Nurse-Family Partnership Innovations Advisory Committee.

**Bev Thurber** is the executive director of the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County, a non-profit organization in northern Colorado. She has masters degrees in social work and public administration, and over 30 years of experience in human services in both the public and non-profit sectors, including 15 years at the executive director level. Her diverse background includes work in early childhood issues, suicide prevention, health care policy, senior services, refugee services, and child welfare. Thurber specializes in developing and evaluating programs, building community coalitions and managing agencies through change. In addition to her active engagement in local early childhood issues, she is current vice president of Colorado's state-wide Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance's Board of Directors.