

Presenters: Diana Trister Dodge, Founder and President of Teaching Strategies, Author of the Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care.

**Abstract: Building a High Quality Family Day Care / Childminding Program:
The Creative Curriculum Approach**

This session illustrates how a comprehensive curriculum can help providers to offer a program that builds social skills and a solid foundation for children's school readiness

Family child care providers are in a unique position to build the positive relationships with children and families that are essential to children's success in school and in life. How providers interact with children, plan and structure activities and experiences, and the emotional tone and content of daily interactions with each child determine how children feel about themselves and how successful they are in learning.

An increasing body of research supports the value of using a comprehensive, integrated curriculum.¹ Further, use of a comprehensive, integrated curriculum was found to be linked to greater gains in several cognitive and social-emotional areas.²

A new edition of *The Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care* offers providers clear and practical guidance on how to enhance the quality of their program in order to provide a developmentally appropriate and engaging program for children. Participants in this session will learn about the research and theory that underlie the approach, and the five components that enable providers to offer a quality program:

- How children develop—social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development—and the individual characteristics that make every child unique.
 - Setting up your home: organizing the home setting for child care, selecting and displaying materials for different ages, and planning the daily program.
 - What children are learning: how to offer rich experiences that promote learning in language and literacy, math, science, and social studies at each stage of development and prepare children for success in school.
 - Caring and teaching: building relationships with children, observing to learn and plan for children, guiding children's behavior, guiding children's learning, and exploring topics of interest to children.
 - Building a partnership with families: getting to know families, clarifying the relationship, communicating with families, partnering on children's learning, and working through differences.
 - These five components are then applied to five routines—hellos and good-byes, feeding and mealtimes, diapering and toileting, sleeping and napping, getting dressed—and eleven types of activities—blocks, dramatic play, art,
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toys and games, stories and books, sand and water, discoveries, music and movement, cooking, computers, and outdoors. The curriculum shows how