



MINDFULNESS

What the children have taught us: Listening to the stories of grieving children

Presented by: Andrea Lurier, Highmark Caring Place

This workshop will draw from the stories and lessons of the children who attend Highmark Caring Place. It will address questions including: What is grief and what is unique about the grief of children? How can we, as adults, invite the stories of grieving children and why is our presence so important for children in deep emotional pain? Finally, we will consider the impact of these stories on us and the importance of taking care of ourselves as we do this difficult work.

Creating Healthy Environments

Presented by: Chelsea Holmes, Women for a Healthy Environment

Pound for pound, children breathe more air, drink more water, and consume more food than adults. They ingest, inhale and absorb environmental toxins found in everyday settings, including the school and home environments. The American Academy of Pediatrics' Council on Environmental Health has stated that "those who care for children (child care staff, parents or guardians, physicians, schools) should make every effort to minimize the negative health and developmental effects of toxin exposure. Caregivers in particular must take precaution, become informed about environmental hazards, and make efforts to reduce or eliminate certain toxins in their environments." In this workshop, providers will learn about the environmental hazards (and solutions!) that can be found in large and small early learning centers and in houses of home-based centers, all impacting the health and development of children.

Teachers Guide to a Fall Garden

Presented by: Let's Move Pittsburgh, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

Teachers often want a garden to share with their students, but do not realize how much potential a cool weather garden has and how rewarding it can be! The talk will cover different types of gardens, varieties of cool weather plants, and tips and tricks for planting and basic care. We will also discuss healthy activities that can be done in and around the garden during the grow season.

Mindfulness and Contemplative Art in Early Childhood Education

Presented by: Bonnie Weiss, The School of Mindful Arts

This workshop offers a brief overview of the history of Mindfulness in Education and the neuroscience behind its contribution to many key factors of successful SEL development and community building. Participants will practice three basic breathing exercises/games and a song appropriate for the toddler-K age group. Then, the session features a Mindful World lesson appropriate for grades K-5 which teaches body awareness through a Chinese Folktale, simple Chi Gong movements and a hands-on art project. Each person will make a stick shadow puppet create a short play or vignette with fellow attendees.