

In Bloom in Santa Barbara

Promising Practices in Nature-based Early Childhood Education

Saturday, November 4, 2017, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Orfalea Family Children's Center

Antioch University will host four *In Bloom* conferences during the 2017-2018 school year. The kick-off to the series is hosted by AU Santa Barbara campus on November 4, 2017 at the Orfalea Family Children's Center at UCSB. The next three In Blooms happen on that other coast—April 7, 2018 in Asheville, North Carolina, April 21, 2018 (Earth Day Eve) in Kittery, Maine and then May 19, 2018 in Brattleboro, Vermont, all hosted by Antioch University New England. Each conference will have nationally (and internationally) recognized keynote speakers and unique workshops by local practitioners. All events will focus on the educational and health benefits of being outside with children.

Nature-based early childhood programs got their start in Scandinavia in the 1960s and then spread throughout Europe and Asia. There's even a Korean Forest Kindergarten Association! Similar programs have taken root in the United States from Seattle to Cincinnati, and from Alabama to Arizona. In New England there are *public school* nature-based kindergartens too! There are now more than 200 nature-based early childhood programs that are giving children the opportunity to climb trees, cook stick bread over fires, whittle sticks, take care of animals AND expand their vocabularies, do real math, conduct investigations, and develop resilience. In Santa

Barbara, children are growing through gardening at the Open Alternative School, singing in the rain at Storytellers Children's Center and making mud-pies at Tucker's Grove Park with the Wilderness Youth Project. Come learn from cutting edge educators who are redefining what's possible in early childhood education.



North Branch Nature Center

Each conference has two keynotes and two workshop sessions, bringing together well-recognized professionals from the conference region and beyond.

"Teach the children. We don't matter so much, but the children do. Show them daisies and the pale hepatica. Teach them the taste of sassafras and wintergreen. The lives of the blue sailors, mallow, sunbursts, the moccasin flowers. And the frisky ones- inkberry, lamb's quarters, blueberries. And the aromatic ones - rosemary, oregano. Give them peppermint to put in their pockets as they go to school. Give them the fields and the woods and the possibility of the world salvaged from the lords of profit. Stand them in the stream, head them upstream, rejoice as they learn to love this green space they live in, its sticks and leaves and then the silent, beautiful blossoms. Attention is the beginning of devotion."

from Upstream, by Mary Oliver

Structure of the Day

8:15 am– 9:00 am	Registration Check-In
9:00 am – 9:10 am	Opening Circle
9:15 am –10:15 am	Morning Keynote
10:30 am –12:00 noon	Morning Workshops
12:00 noon –1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Afternoon Keynote
2:15 pm – 3:45 pm	Afternoon Workshops
3:50 pm – 4:00 pm	Closing Circle



ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY
SANTA BARBARA

Morning Keynote

Nature Preschool in the Urban Wild: Lessons from the Pacific Northwest

Kit Harrington, Fiddleheads Forest School, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Reflecting on her pioneering work at Seattle's first outdoor preschool program, Kit will discuss the opportunities and challenges of providing a quality preschool program in an urban park setting, focusing on the importance of community and place-based education in outdoor classrooms. By examining the evolving relationship between families, teachers, and the environment, as well as the larger context in which urban outdoor preschools operate, Kit will provide a framework that teachers, administrators, and parents can build upon.

Kit Harrington is the Director and co-founder of Seattle's first entirely outdoor preschool, the Fiddleheads Forest School at the University of Washington, which developed a national reputation as one of the first urban outdoor preschools in the United States. In 2015, Kit founded the Washington Nature Preschool Association to support the regional growth of nature-based early childhood education. She is currently participating in the development of the first licensing regulations for outdoor preschools in North America.



Morning Workshops

Nature and Language

Juniper Dwight, Montessori Primary Directress, Meadows Montessori School

The innate powers that allow the child to absorb a functional language are the same powers that allow the child to absorb a rich and beautiful descriptive language. As the adults who offer language, we hold a glorious responsibility. When we choose to use juicy, delicious words and useful nomenclature in our communications with children we expand their ability to observe, describe, identify, remember, wonder and communicate. Along with resources to help you refresh some of the applicable nomenclature for the natural world we will also learn games full of movement, drama, humor and creativity that offer a sensorial experience of word functions. Through experiential activities participants in this workshop are invited to dive into the beauty of language development and the development of beautiful language!

Documenting Nature-based Learning

Sunny Crandell, The Oaks Parent-Child Workshop, AUSB

Documenting authentic emergent nature-based learning, whether working in preschools or nature centers, provides opportunities to share, revisit and build upon those themes with children, parents and teachers. By documenting learning activities, parents can also be invited to share discovery based learning that happens away from school with the school community.

Types of documentation to be covered: 1) video; 2) Learning Stories (Margaret Carr; Wendy Lee, New Zealand; "Journey of Discoveries," Annie White, CSU Channel Islands); 3) Nature Notes (inspiration taken from Claire Warden's Floor Books); and 4) nature journals.



Wilderness Youth Project



Wilderness Youth Project



Eyes of the World Discovery Center

The Garden through the Eyes of a Child

Jolie Colbie, Education Coordinator, Edible Garden at Orfaela Family Children's Center

Great educators seek to view the world through the eyes of their students. This workshop will help participants see the garden through the eyes of a young child. Connect with your inner child through garden song, childlike exploration, and creative engagement with the natural world around you. Garden lessons will be available to take home and use at your school or in your community. These lessons help teachers encourage students to ask questions, engage curiosity, and introduce them to fundamental concepts of garden science.

Music and Nature

Donna Masella-Chiacos, Certified Orff Schulwerk Instructor

With materials drawn from the child's natural environment, this workshop will include rhymes, songs, games and stories that explore movement, music and language. As children play naturally with these elements, they are simultaneously building their music and movement vocabulary. Their pleasure in the freedom to move, consonance of the rhyme, the rhythms of speech, rise and fall of melody, join with their instinctual connection to nature. As they grow in confidence and expression, their sense of wonder grows and imaginations blossom.

Afternoon Keynote

Wild Play: Parenting Adventures in the Great Outdoors

David Sobel, Core Faculty, Antioch University New England, Keene, New Hampshire

When David Sobel's children, Tara and Eli, were toddlers, he set out to integrate a wide range of nature experiences into their family life, play, and storytelling. Blending his passion as a parent with his professional expertise, he created adventures tailored to their developmental stages: cultivating empathy with animals in early childhood, exploring the woods in middle childhood, and devising rites of passage in adolescence. Sobel weaves together parenting experiences, stories he told his children and developmental theory to present a model of healthy parenting in concert with the natural world.

David Sobel is Senior Faculty in the Education Department at Antioch University New England in Keene, NH and he consults and speaks widely on child development and place-based education. He has authored eight books and more than 70 articles focused on children and nature for educators, parents, environmentalists and school administrators in the last 30 years.

His most recent book is Nature Preschools and Forest Kindergartens: The Handbook for Outdoors Learning published by Redleaf Press.



Eyes of the World Discovery Center



Wilderness Youth Project

Registration

Individual: \$125
Group Rate: \$100 each (3 or more from same school)
AUSB Alumni and Students: \$50

To register:

[inbloomsb.eventbrite.com](https://www.inbloomsb.eventbrite.com)

Learn More:

<https://www.antioch.edu/santa-barbara/event/in-bloom-santa-barbara/>

Afternoon Workshops

Utilizing the Environment to Promote STEM Learning

Kit Harrington, Director and Co-founder of Fiddleheads Forest School at the University of Washington Botanic Gardens.

The natural world is a boundless source of dynamic materials with an infinite variety of applications encouraging exploration, problem-solving, and discovery. No environment is more responsive to children's interest than nature, and it fosters the wonder and curiosity that drive STEM learning. In this workshop, attendees will develop a foundational understanding of STEM learning in the context of early childhood development. Through examples, dialogue, and hands-on activities, teachers will begin to develop a framework for designing and supporting STEM learning opportunities as they gain experience facilitating authentic, child-driven learning.

Making Tule and Cattail Chumash Toys from Natural Materials

Gloria Liggett, former faculty at AUSB, Art and Culture in Education

Chumash children in pre-contact days made their toys from natural materials they gathered while their mothers were gathering basket materials. The traditional dolls, made from tule, were patterned after babies in their cradleboards. The babies were carried in these cradleboards so they really don't resemble European dolls.

The boys made tiny ducks from cattail and tule for their imaginative play. Besides giving children toys to play with, the tule and cattail also gave the children skills that they would later use for making baskets, cordage, and tule boat building. It taught their hands to weave and twist cordage that was so essential to their lives.



Spanish Folktales, Nursery Rhymes and Songs

Alicia Jimenez, Preschool Teacher Storyteller Children's Center

Songs, nursery rhymes and folktales are an invaluable source to educators to support language and literacy skills, as well as to contribute to children's gross motor and social-emotional development. There is a vast and rich collection of songs and games in the Spanish language that families in our schools would feel connected to. Singing, dancing and playing are the main purpose of this session. Participants will learn nursery rhymes in Spanish as well as folktales from other Latin American countries.

Places of Wild Character

Andrew Lindsey, Lead Program Staff, Wilderness Youth Project

This workshop will be a walking field trip searching out the places of wild character that surround the conference. Participants will address opportunities and dilemmas that occur when working with young children in such, "off-site," locations. All participants should dress for the weather and bring water.