

# Friday, May 3 AM Breakout Session Descriptions

## Friday Breakout Session 1: 10:30-12:00

### Place Based Learning and Adventuring

**Michel Eldridge**, The University of Chicago Laboratory Schools

PBL and Adventuring are rooted in progressive education and experiential learning. You will be introduced to this practice and learn more about this model of learning through narratives, photos, and practical experience.

### Nature-based emergent curriculum: The power of children & place for planning

**Rachel Larimore**, Samara Early Learning.

It sounds counterintuitive, but an emergent curriculum requires intentional planning. Especially if the goal is an emergent curriculum that is rooted in play and driven by children's interests. This session will focus on intentional planning that connects play to children's interests, events happening in the natural world, and broader curricular goals.

### Forest School without a Forest: Educating Outdoors in the City

**Angela Wildermuth**, Wilderkids Urban Forest School

Get a snapshot of play-based, forest-school inspired programming in a variety of urban environments with practical tips to overcoming emotional hurdles, seeing hyper-local possibilities, and leaning into risk.

### Wild Plants - Foraging with Children

**Tracy Stephens & Nora Miller**, Creekside Nature School

Rural Champaign County Special Ed Cooperative, Spectrum Program (PFA classroom). Join us in identifying and harvesting local wild edible and medicinal plants safely. We will take a walk, please bring a water bottle and comfortable shoes.

### Nature Play: Not Just Woods & White Kids

**Kisa Marx**, The Play Lab Foundation

Identify the benefits of outdoor learning, examine the systemic barriers standing in the way of equity, and explore actionable changes to provide nature play in any space.

### Presence as a Practice

**Gabrielle DeLoach**, Kodo Kids

In this session, we will understand the impact of presence on child and adult interaction, learn strategies to help center presence in your daily play with children, and be wondrous in our reflection of teaching practices.

### Guardians of Play

**Jennifer Rosinia**, PhD, OTR

You are invited to become a member of an elite team of early childhood professionals who have been selected for a mission like no other – to protect play! There is a dark force rising up and taking over early childhood that uses developmentally inappropriate practices. Early childhood has come under attack. With an increase demand for academic outcomes at younger ages, an emphasis on assessment and a decrease in play-based learning. Early childhood education is in danger. We need you!

In this session you will be given the tools you need to serve as a Guardian of Play. You will be empowered with the knowledge of the research findings related to the importance of play in early childhood education. We will identify ways to educate and encourage parents to become allies in our efforts to protect play based learning. You will work alongside other Guardians to create a play plans that you will be able to take with you back to your galaxy.

Guardians of Play are superheroes! So, whether you've always wanted to be a play superhero or are stumbling into this role because of your love for young children, welcome to the team!