

**The Sixth Annual  
Infant & Toddler Connection  
of Virginia  
Early Intervention  
Conference**

*Creating Connections:  
Viewing the Future through the  
Windows of Opportunity*



**April 30 and May 1, 2008  
The Hotel Roanoke and  
Conference Center**

**Sponsored by:  
VA Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and  
Substance Abuse Services with federal funds under  
Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities  
Education Act**



Infant & Toddler  
Connection of Virginia

Department of Mental Health,  
Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services

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Dear Conference Participants:

It is with pleasure that I welcome you to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia Early Intervention Conference, *Creating Connections: Viewing the Future through the Windows of Opportunity*. Thank you for your continued commitment to the Commonwealth's youngest children and families.

This year's conference will focus on "Windows of Opportunity." These windows of opportunity may be in the development of the very young child, in conference attendees who learn new information or in colleagues who have time to network for the first time in many months.

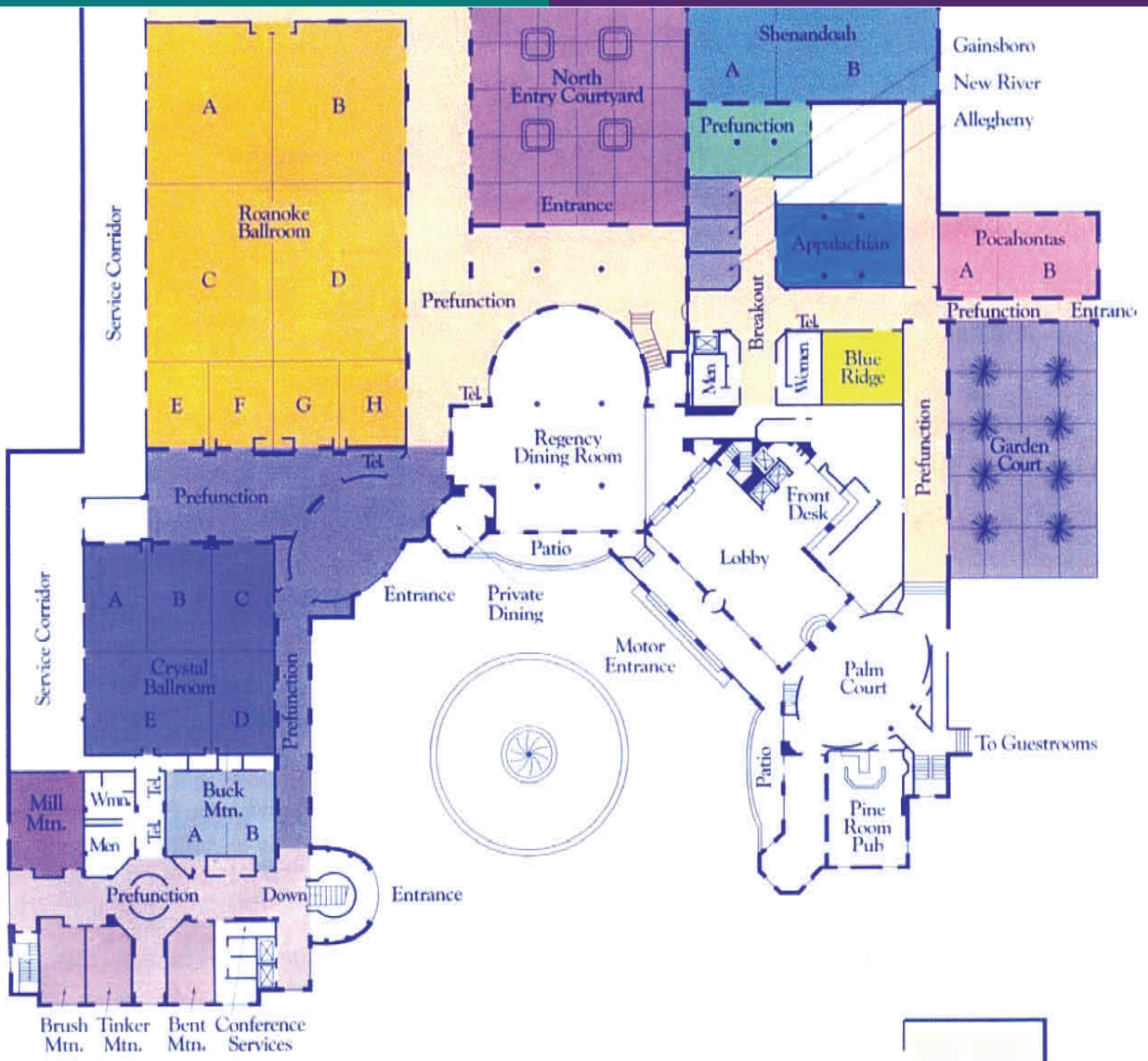
We are fortunate to have Dr. Pam Schiller and Ms. Karen Gaffney as our featured speakers. Dr. Schiller is an early childhood curriculum specialist, author and speaker from Texas. She will be sharing her extensive knowledge of early brain development. Ms. Karen Gaffney is the president of a non-profit organization dedicated to full inclusion. She is also a presenter and an avid swimmer.

Roanoke is beautiful in the spring! There is plenty to do and see all within walking distance! Ask conference committee members or the hotel front desk if you need ideas for dining, shopping, or sightseeing.

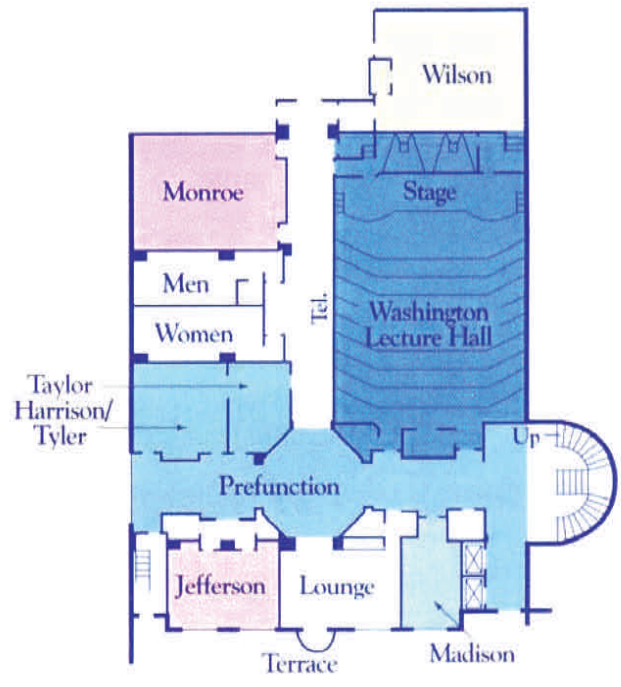
Enjoy this opportunity to learn and share together with your colleagues. This is an exciting time to be involved in Virginia's early intervention system, as we open windows of opportunity related to funding, service delivery, personnel training and recruitment, and data collection and monitoring. I hope you will leave energized and eager to continue your work with infants, toddlers, and families in Virginia.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Discenza



*Ballroom level*



*Conference level*

# 2008 Creating Connections Conference Committee Members

A special "thank you" to these volunteers who willingly shared their time and talent to make this conference a success.

Nancy Bailey Cheri Beverly Deana Buck Carol Burke Dana Childress Corey Clemente  
Bev Crouse Heidi Faustini Adrienne Frank Debra Holloway Dianne Koontz Lowman  
Eva Thorp Beth Tolley Lynn Wiley

## Important Information

### **Cell Phones and Pagers**

Please turn cell phones and pagers off or on vibrate during sessions so that all participants can fully participate in the conference without being disrupted. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

### **Vendors/Displays**

Participants are encouraged to visit the displays in the Roanoke Foyer beginning Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. Displays will be available until 3:00 p.m. on Thursday.

### **Announcement Board**

An Announcement Board is available for your use in the Roanoke Foyer. Please feel free to post job announcements or messages for your colleagues.

### **Materials**

A list of the Creating Connections handouts will be available on the Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia website at [www.infantva.org](http://www.infantva.org) after the conference.

### **Evaluation Forms**

The conference evaluation form is available in your conference packet. Please complete and place in marked baskets at the end of the conference. We also request that you complete a concurrent session evaluation form for each session you attend. Thank you!

# Conference Agenda

April 30, 2008

7:00-8:30

**Registration, Refreshments, Displays-Roanoke Foyer**

8:30-8:45

**Welcome -Roanoke Ballroom C and D**

8:45-10:15

**Keynote**  
**What You Teach Me Birth to Three...**  
Dr. Pam Schiller

10:15-10:30

**BREAK**

10:30-12:00

**Session I**

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(E&F)*

**What You Teach Me Birth to Three Applications**  
Pam Schiller, Ph.D.  
Keynote Speaker/Early Childhood Curriculum Specialist

Scientific research is daily providing us with information relative to optimizing brain structure and capacity during the first three years of life. Learn how to encourage language, stimulate thinking skills, solidify social-emotional stability and promote physical development for infants and toddlers.

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(G&H)*

**Playtime: Teaching Parents and Professionals How to Promote Peer Interactions**  
Corey Clemente, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Radford University

Playing with peers is important and impacts both social and language development. Children with special needs, however, often struggle to engage in play opportunities. By the end of this session, early intervention specialists and parents will be empowered with knowledge to set up groups in which peer interaction skills are directly targeted.

*Shenandoah  
(A)*

**Exploring Medicaid Waiver Opportunities for Individuals and their Families**  
Debra Holloway  
Manager/Waiver Mentor  
The Arc of Virginia, Family Involvement Project

Medicaid Waivers were developed to encourage people with disabilities to access services in their homes and communities. During this session we will explore waiver options for families with young children, the eligibility requirements, the resources waivers can provide and the process to request a screening for waiver services.

*Shenandoah  
(B)*

**Challenging Behavior in Natural Settings: Positive Behavior Supports: What the Research Says**  
Kathryn Hoover, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Radford University

Parents, interventionists and care providers may find children's challenging behaviors difficult to address. Research shows that finding the reason for the behavior, teaching appropriate behavior to meet the same needs, and providing positive behavior supports are effective in addressing challenging behavior in natural settings as well as in the classroom.

**12:00-1:15**

**Buffet Lunch, Displays, Networking-Roanoke Ballroom A and B**

**1:15-2:45**

**Session II**

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(E&F)*

**Promoting Language and Literacy: It's as Easy as 1-2-3!**

Jean Chase, M.Ed.  
Early Literacy Trainer Coach  
Child Development Resources

This session provides an opportunity for participants to learn how to use 1-2-3 READ!, a story book approach for infusing early literacy activities within daily routines for infants and toddlers, including those with disabilities. Evaluation data indicates using 1-2-3 READ! results in children achieving gains in their language and cognitive development.

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(G&H)*

**New Autism Screening Guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics**

Colleen Kraft, M.D.  
President  
Virginia Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics

This session will examine the new guidelines, "AUTISM: Caring for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Resource Toolkit for Clinicians." These include screening and surveillance tools, guideline summary charts, management checklists, developmental checklists, developmental growth charts, early intervention referral forms and tools, sample letters to insurance companies and family handouts. A discussion of these reports and the development of parent-professional partnerships for children with autism will be highlighted.

*Shenandoah  
(A)*

**Helping Families with Children with Special Needs**

Debra Holloway  
Manager  
The Arc of Virginia, Family Involvement Project  
  
Heidi Faustini  
Parent to Parent Coordinator/Richmond Region Parent Representative  
The Arc of Virginia, Family Involvement Project  
  
Carol Hagen  
Northern Virginia Parent Representative  
The Arc of Virginia, Family Involvement Project  
  
Natalie Fleet  
Tidewater Region Parent Representative  
The Arc of Virginia, Family Involvement Project

As parents of children with disabilities, developmental delays or chronic illnesses, we will be members of many teams throughout our children's lives. This session looks at ways a family can define and strengthen their role as primary caregivers for a child with special needs.

*Shenandoah  
(B)*

**Updates, Uplinks, & Downloads for Infants and Toddlers with Hearing Loss**

Sarah Peters, Ph.D.  
Speech Language Pathologist  
Henrico Parent Infant Program  
  
Ellen Rolader, M.A.  
Early Intervention Service Coordinator/Special Instructor  
Infant & Toddler Connection of Shenandoah Valley  
  
Melinda Smyth, M.A.  
Teacher of the Deaf  
Infant & Toddler Connection of Hanover County

This session will inform providers and families of current efforts to provide guidance for early intervention services to children with hearing losses. Participants will identify resources related to early intervention. They will learn Virginia protocol and future needs for state of the art practices.

**2:45-3:00**

**BREAK**

**3:00-4:30**

**Session III**

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(E & F)*

**The Many Benefits of Inclusive Community Playgroups in Early Intervention**

Patricia Eitemiller, M.Ed.  
Infant Development Specialist  
Infant & Toddler Connection of Alexandria

Deatrice Williams, M.Phil.  
Infant Development Specialist  
Infant & Toddler Connection of Alexandria

The Infant & Toddler Connection of Alexandria has been facilitating several community-based playgroups for many years that are open to all children aged 0 to 4 who live in the community and/or receive early intervention services. These groups provide opportunities for inclusion, parent education, promoting parent/child interactions, learning opportunities, networking and preparing young children for public and private preschool based programs.

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(G & H)*

**Collaborating with Families to Address Challenging Behavior**

Karin Spencer  
Project Director  
Project ITAP: *Training Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers*

Lucia Ortiz  
Research Assistant  
Project ITAP: *Training Personnel to Serve Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*

During this session, participants will develop an understanding of the functional behavioral analysis/behavioral intervention plan process through the eyes of both families and early interventionists. They will learn effective strategies for working in partnership with families of very young children with disabilities to address challenging behavior. Emphasis will also be placed on understanding the ecological context and the perspectives of culturally and ethnically diverse families and caregivers.

*Shenandoah  
(A)*

**Transition from Part C Services: To Beyond and Part B**

Phyllis Mondak  
Educational Specialist  
VDOE, Office of Special Education Instructional Services

Heidi Faustini  
Parent-to-Parent Coordinator/Richmond Region Parent Representative  
The Arc of Virginia

Beth Tolley, M.I.S., PT  
Technical Assistance Consultant  
Infant & Toddler Connection of VA

From the beginning of a family's involvement in early intervention, discussions about what the family will do beyond Part C should be part of the process. Regulations, guidelines, and suggested best practices from the federal level to the local level will be reviewed to help with guidance and improvement of the process and the activities available to families and service providers.

*Shenandoah  
(B)*

**Cross-Cultural Communication with Families of Young Children with Disabilities or Life-Threatening Illnesses**

Marian Jarrett, Ed.D.  
Associate Professor  
George Washington University

Lorelei Emma  
Graduate Assistant  
George Washington University

This presentation on communication is designed to help providers increase their cultural competence and sensitivity in the area of cross-cultural communication. The first part of the presentation will address communication issues caregivers might encounter in working with families from different cultures. Part two will offer general principles of effective cross-cultural communication, and part three will focus on the implications of cultural-specific information by providing recommendations for cross-cultural communication.

*Buck Mountain*

**The EI Paradigm: Getting from "Now" to the Future**

Sue Mackey Andrews  
Consultant  
Solutions Consulting Group, LLC

Over the past 2 years, Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia has been undertaking a pretty substantial review of itself as a result of many external influences, not the least of which are the implications and opportunities for Medicaid funding for EI services under the Federal Deficit Reduction Act (DRA). This Session provides an opportunity to hear about the work conducted through a participatory process to examine all components of this System as they relate to financing, options considered and recommendations made. The Facilitator will bring all of the pieces together and provide a comprehensive overview for participants, as well as a time for inquiry and reaction. We will compare "now" to "then" and talk about how we partner to arrive at this destination!

**4:30-5:30**

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**CoCoA Annual Meeting-Appalachian Room**  
*(All System Managers welcome)*

**4:45-6:30**

**Creating Connections Reception—Roanoke A & B**  
Featuring live music with **Panamania Steel Drum Band**  
Cash bar and light hors d'oeuvres  
**Please join us for a relaxing evening with friends and colleagues!**



# Conference Agenda

May 1, 2008

**7:30-8:30**

**Registration, Refreshments, Displays-Roanoke Foyer**

**8:30-9:45**

**Welcome/Opening Remarks-Roanoke Ballroom C and D**

Ms. Mary Ann Discenza, Virginia Part C Coordinator

Ms. Kathy Glazer, Executive Director, Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives

**9:45-10:00**

**BREAK**

**10:00-11:15**

**Keynote**

**Imagine the Possibilities**

Ms. Karen Gaffney

**11:15-11:30**

**BREAK**

**11:30-1:00**

**Session IV**

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(E&F)*

**Early Intervention and the Importance of Inclusion with Karen Gaffney**

Karen Gaffney

Keynote Speaker

This is your opportunity to talk with Karen in regard to early intervention in her life and the importance of inclusion! Karen will talk about inclusion, the importance of friendships and what she is doing in her community to promote inclusion. We will examine techniques of early intervention and share best practices. Come prepared to discuss with Karen!

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(G&H)*

**Local System Managers and Part C Staff Meeting**

*Shenandoah  
(A)*

**Attachment Issues and the Young Child**

Dawn Viers, Ph.D.

Prevention Supervisor

New River Valley Community Services

Susan Lindsey, B.S.

Family Resource Specialist, Early Intervention

New River Valley Community Services

Mary Talbert, B.S.

Family Resource Specialist, Early Intervention

New River Valley Community Services

This presentation will provide an overview of the definitions, etiology, and family dynamics for attachment issues and Reactive Attachment Disorder in young children. Considerations for assessing and treating attachment issues will also be given.

*Shenandoah  
(B)*

**Developing a Plan for Working with Young Children with Feeding Difficulties, Part 1**

Dianne Koontz Lowman, Ed.D.  
Early Childhood Coordinator  
Region 5 T/TAC, James Madison University

This is part one of a two part session that will explore the components critical to the development of a feeding plan for children with oral-motor or sensory-based feeding difficulties. Using lecture, video clips and case studies, each participant will leave with a plan of action specific to developing a holistic feeding plan for one child and the knowledge for conducting the same process for other children.

**1:00-2:30**

**Buffet Lunch/Awards Presentation-Roanoke Ballroom A and B**

**2:30-4:00**

**Session V**

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(E&F)*

**Ready, Set, Move-How to Encourage and Motive Infants and Toddlers**

Lisa Auwarter  
Education Coordinator and Teacher of the Vision Impaired  
Dept. for the Blind and Vision Impaired-Staunton Regional Office

Brigid Doherty  
Education Coordinator  
Dept. for the Blind and Vision Impaired-Fairfax Regional Office

Jennie Smith  
Mother, Early Intervention Specialist, Teacher of the Vision Impaired  
Fairfax County Schools

This session will review concept development and spatial awareness for infants and toddlers with special needs, including visual impairments. This will be an interactive session which will include a "Make-It, Take-It," demonstrations and resources to encourage movement and motivate infants and toddlers to explore their environment independently.

*Roanoke Ballroom  
(G&H)*

**The Home Information Specialist: Parent-Professional Partnership**

Judy Dunbar  
Information Specialist  
PEATC

Catherine Burzio  
Transition Coordinator  
PEATC

Professionals want and need the inside information parents have about their babies. But families may feel overwhelmed in this new early intervention world and feel reluctant to share what they know. As home information specialist, parents learn how to manage information, make observations, and work as a member of the team.

*Shenandoah  
(A)*

**Autism Spectrum Disorders: Strategies for Early Identification and Behavioral Indicators in Young Children**

Stacy Shumway, Ph.D., CCC-SLP  
Postdoctoral Research Fellow  
National Institute of Mental Health Pediatric & Developmental Neuropsychiatry Branch

Audrey Thurm, Ph.D.  
Staff Scientist  
National Institute of Mental Health Pediatric & Developmental Neuropsychiatry Branch

This seminar will report on early indicators of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in children under 3 years of age, illustrating core diagnostic features with video vignettes. Strategies for a comprehensive evaluation, including standardized measures of behavior and development will be discussed, along with research findings regarding early signs and behavioral profiles of young children with ASD.

*Shenandoah  
(B)*

**Developing a Plan for Working with Young Children with Feeding Difficulties,  
Part 2 (Part 1 required)**

Dianne Koontz Lowman, Ed.D.  
Early Childhood Coordinator  
Region 5 T/TAC, James Madison University

This is part two of a two part session.. You must have attended the first part to attend the second part. This continued session will explore the components critical to the development of a feeding plan for children with oral-motor or sensory-based feeding difficulties. Using lecture, video clips and case studies, each participant will leave with a plan of action specific to developing a holistic feeding plan for one child and the knowledge for conducting the same process for other children.

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**Please stop by and visit the vendors and thank them for their displays during the  
*Creating Connections* conference:**

- **Childcraft Education Company/ABC School Supply**
  - **Children’s Hospital of Richmond**
  - **Commonwealth Autism Service**
  - **Disability Determination/Social Security Administration**
  - **Discovery Toys**
  - **Gryphon House Publishers**
  - **Guide by Your Side and VA Hands and Voices**
  - **Partnership for People with Disabilities**
  - **Heritage Treasures, LLC**
  - **Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia**
  - **Kaplan Early Learning Center**
  - **Medical Home Plus, Inc.**
  - **Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC)**
  - **VA Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired**
  - **VA Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
  - **VA Early Hearing Detection & Intervention**
  - **Virginia Division for Early Childhood (DEC)**
- 

*On behalf of the Integrated Training Collaborative (ITC) and the ITC Conference Subcommittee, we would like to extend a sincere “thank you” to the following partners without whom this conference would not have been possible:*

*VA Department of Education Training & Technical Assistance Center at GMU*

*VA Department of Education Training & Technical Assistance Center at JMU*

*VA Department of Education Training & Technical Assistance Center at ODU*

*VA Department of Education Training & Technical Assistance Center at VCU*

*VA Department of Education Training & Technical Assistance Center at Virginia Tech*

*VA Department of Education, Office of Special Education, Instruction Services, 619 Grant*

*Virginia Division for Early Childhood (DEC)*

## Keynote Speakers



**Pam Schiller** is an early childhood curriculum specialist, freelance author and speaker. Dr. Schiller has worked as a childcare administrator and has also taught in the public schools as a kindergarten teacher. She served as Head of the Early Childhood Department at the University of Houston, where she also directed the Lab School. Dr. Schiller shares her extensive knowledge in workshops, radio and television interviews, and as a popular keynote speaker and author. She is the author of five early childhood curriculums, eleven children's books, more than thirty teacher and parent resource books and a number of other creative projects such as activity books, DVDs and CDs. Pam lives in Cypress, TX.

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From the moment she was born, **Karen Gaffney** began an incredible journey that continues today. She is the President of a non-profit organization dedicated to championing the journey to full inclusion in families, schools, the workplace and the community for people with developmental disabilities. She is doing this by creating awareness and calling attention to the tremendous capabilities of people with disabilities. Karen accomplishes this through presentations and workshops delivered all over the country. One of the workshops Karen presents is on the importance of physical fitness and how to set up a regular fitness plan. She has also started a program that she calls "The Friends First Network™" in schools around the Portland area. She hopes to take this program nationwide. Karen graduated from St. Mary's Academy in Portland, Oregon and earned a two-year Associates of Science degree from Portland Community College. She successfully swam the English Channel as part of a six-person relay team. And, just this year, she accomplished her biggest swimming challenge yet....she swam 9 miles across Lake Tahoe in 59-degree water to raise money for the National Down Syndrome Congress and to show the world that people with Down Syndrome are more alike, rather than different, from everyone else. Karen travels the country speaking with determination and commitment, knowing she has limits, but not allowing them to limit her drive to succeed. Oh, and by the way.... Karen Gaffney has Down syndrome.



# VCU

The Partnership for People with Disabilities is a university center for excellence in developmental disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University. VCU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation, or disability. If alternative formats of this document are needed, please contact the Partnership for People with Disabilities at 804/828-3876 or 800/828-1120

## Notes



## Agenda at a Glance

**April 30, 2008**

**8:45am-10:15am**

**What You Teach Me Birth to Three...**  
Dr. Pam Schiller-Keynote  
*Roanoke Ballroom C and D*

**10:30am-12:00pm**

**What You Teach Applications**  
Pam Schiller  
*Roanoke E&F*

**Playtime...Promote Peer Interactions**  
Corey Clemente  
*Roanoke G&H*

**Exploring Medicaid Waiver**  
Debra Holloway  
*Shenandoah A*

**Challenging Behaviors in Natural Settings**  
Kathryn Hoover  
*Shenandoah B*

**1:15pm-2:45pm**

**Promoting Language and Literacy**  
Jean Chase  
*Roanoke E&F*

**Autism Screening Guidelines**  
Colleen Kraft  
*Roanoke G&H*

**Helping Families with Children w/Special Needs Panel**  
*Shenandoah A*

**Updates, Uplinks, and Downloads**  
Peters, Rolader, Smyth  
*Shenandoah B*

**3:00pm-4:30pm**

**Benefits of Inclusive Community Playgroups**  
Eitemiller, Williams  
*Roanoke E&F*

**Collaborating to Address Challenging Behaviors**  
Spencer, Ortiz  
*Roanoke G&H*

**Transition from Part C: To Beyond and Part B Panel**  
*Shenandoah A*

**Cross-Cultural Communication...**  
Jarrett, Emma  
*Shenandoah B*

**May 1, 2008**

**8:30am-9:45am**

**Welcome and Remarks**

Ms. Mary Ann Discenza-Virginia Part C Coordinator  
Ms. Kathy Glazer-Executive Director, Governor's Working Group on Early Childhood Initiatives  
*Roanoke Ballroom C and D*

**10:00am-11:15am**

**Imagine the Possibilities**  
Ms. Karen Gaffney-Keynote  
*Roanoke Ballroom C and D*

**11:30am-1:00pm**

**EI and the Importance of Inclusion**  
Karen Gaffney  
*Roanoke E&F*

**LSM and Part C Staff Meeting**  
*Roanoke G&H*

**Attachment Issues and the Young Child**  
Viers, Lindsey, Talbert  
*Shenandoah A*

**Young Children w/Feeding Difficulties Part I**  
Koontz Lowman  
*Shenandoah B*

**2:30pm-4:00pm**

**Ready, Set, Move**  
Auwarter, Doherty, Smith  
*Roanoke E&F*

**Home Information Specialist**  
Dunbar, Burzio  
*Roanoke G&H*

**Autism Spectrum Disorders**  
Shumway, Thurm  
*Shenandoah A*

**Young Children w/Feeding Difficulties Part II**  
Koontz Lowman  
*Shenandoah B*

**The EI Paradigm: "Now" to Future**  
Maekey Andrews  
*Buck Mountain*