



## Working Together to Support Early Childhood Mental Health

### *Panelists & Presenters*



**Brenda Jones Harden, Ph.D., University of Maryland and ZERO TO THREE**

Brenda Jones Harden, PhD, is a Professor in the Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology, University of Maryland College Park. Dr. Jones Harden is a Chair, Committee of the Board of ZERO TO THREE.

For more than 35 years, Dr. Jones Harden has focused on the developmental and mental health needs of young children at environmental risk, specifically children who have been maltreated, are in the foster care system, or have been exposed to multiple family risks such as maternal depression, parent substance use, and poverty. She is particularly interested in using this research to inform practice, with respect to preventive interventions to promote positive outcomes for children reared in high-risk circumstances, such as home visitation and Early Head Start.

Dr. Jones Harden is currently working on a major evaluation of an Early Head Start-child care partnership initiative and the implementation and evaluation of a group-based intervention to promote language development in infants and toddlers from low-income backgrounds. In addition, she is completing three studies: (1) an implementation and impact evaluation of an intervention to reduce the toxic stress experienced by children enrolled in Early Head Start, (2) an impact evaluation of a rural home visiting program focused on pre-literacy, and (3) and implementation evaluation of a local Educare program.



**Anne Gearity, Ph.D., University of Minnesota and Washburn Center**

Anne has a mental health practice in Minneapolis. She also teaches at the University of Minnesota (Social work, child psychiatry, IECMH/infant and early childhood mental health certificate program) and consults throughout the community about children. Her contribution to early childhood is *Developmental Repair*, an intervention approach for very at risk children using principles of infant and early development. Washburn Center for Children piloted this model and it is now being replicated in many settings throughout the state.



**Judy Ohm, Wilder Child Development Center**

Judy is currently the Manager of the Child Development Pre-School and Parent Education Center at the Wilder Foundation. Her vision and focus continues to be on parents and children, strengthening their relationships to support a lifetime of learning. Years of experience in working with parents of children who have received Wilder services through residential treatment, foster parents who care for children with Reactive Attachment Disorder. In the last 14 years, she has managed the pre-school the implementation and expansion of the Incredible Years curricula in pre-school classrooms and parenting sessions.

Judy is trained in all three components of the curriculum; Classroom, Parent Education, and Small Therapy Group for children. This curriculum is an interactive tool where teachers and facilitators create a collaborative process that is instructive and supportive in building skills and relationships. Judy has a Bachelor's of Science in Social Work, and now focused on a Master's in Organizational Leadership.



**Deidre Quinlan, Circle of Security International**

A certified Circle of Security® supervisor, Deidre provides international training, clinical supervision, and site based consultation with childcare centers, practitioners, clinicians, teachers, registered facilitators, and others interested in learning together at a deeper level the Circle of Security®. In addition, she provides COS-P fidelity coaching and videotape review to researchers and facilitators around the world. As a staff member at Circle of Security International, Deidre works as a Project

Developer to contribute to and support the ongoing development of Circle of Security® projects.

Deidre is particularly interested in resilience and the ability of the developing person to persevere and overcome childhood risks and adversities. For more than 20 years, Deidre has focused her clinical work on our most vulnerable population, adolescent parents and their children, using a relationship focus on developmental repair to inform her work. As the director of an integrated model of care for parenting students and their children, she supervised a licensed childcare center, school based health care and mental health clinic, and teen parent education classes.



Deidre completed her graduate studies at the University of Minnesota as well as her post-graduate training in the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Certificate Program. Over the years, she has worked in a variety of settings including residential treatment, community group homes, schools, day treatment, child care centers, after school programs, and in out-patient clinics. Deidre is endorsed by the Minnesota Association of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health as a Level III Infant Mental Health Specialist.



Deidre lives in Minnesota on a hobby farm on the North Shore of Lake Superior with her husband and three children, her father-in-law, many horses, some chickens, a few cats, a rabbit, and sometimes a dog.



**Julie Ellefson, Southside Family Nurturing Center**

Julie Ellefson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Wartburg College, Waverly, IA and a MPH in Community Health Education from the University of MN. Her heart has always been drawn to innovative not-for-profit organizations that support and advocate for at-risk children and families via individual, policy, and system focused strategies. In her social justice journey, Julie has been honored to hold leadership positions with several organizations and communities committed to ending violence, oppression and disparities across race and gender, including; Co-Director Legal Services, Family Violence Network, Lake Elmo MN; Forensic Services Program Director, CornerHouse Interagency Child Abuse Training and Evaluation Center, Minneapolis MN; Executive Director at the Committee Against Domestic Abuse, Inc., Mankato, MN; and currently serves as Executive Director

	<p>with Southside Family Nurturing Center, Phillips Neighborhood, Minneapolis, MN.</p>
	<p><b>Catherine Wright, Minnesota Department of Human Services</b>  Catherine has a doctorate in Counseling Psychology from the University of St. Thomas. Catherine has over 20 years of experience providing direct children’s mental health services and managing children’s mental health programs and systems. She is a licensed professional clinical counselor (LPCC) and the Early Childhood Mental Health System Coordinator within the Mental Health Division of the Department of Human Services for the State of Minnesota. At the State of Minnesota, Catherine is responsible for developing the early childhood mental health system of care, including arranging for and managing trainings in evidence based practices for early childhood mental health clinicians, supporting policy development around early childhood mental health, and integrating clinical services within family serving systems such as childcare, Head Start, schools, primary care clinics and the adult mental health system. She is interested in developing an evidenced based treatment for parents with serious mental illness who are parenting their young children.</p>
	<p><b>Dr. MayKao Hang, Amherst H. Wilder Foundation</b>  Dr. MayKao Hang is the President and CEO of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives in the greater St. Paul community and beyond through direct services, research, and community building. MayKao has extensive experience in the public and the non-profit sectors, serving low income and disadvantaged populations. She is committed to achieving an equitable society where everyone can prosper. She believes that harnessing and building social and civic capital can transform the world. MayKao has a BA in Psychology from Brown University, a MA in Social Policy and Distributive Justice from the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs, and a Doctorate in Public Administration from Hamline University. She is Chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Trustee and Chair of the Grants &amp; Community Initiatives Committee of Minnesota Philanthropy Partners, and an Advisory Committee Member for John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. She is a founding member of the Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL) in Minnesota and Hnub Tshiab: Hmong Women Achieving Together.</p>

	<p>Dr. Hang has been recognized with numerous awards including the Girl Scouts Women of Distinction Award, the Community Champion 40 &amp; Forward Award, the Humphrey Public Leadership Award, the Ann Bancroft Award, the Ultimate Hmong Woman Award, and the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans Leadership Award.</p>
	<p><b>Patrice Relerford, The Minneapolis Foundation</b></p> <p>Patrice Relerford joined the Minneapolis Foundation as a Policy Associate and MCF Ron McKinley Philanthropy Fellow in early 2015. She was promoted to her current role of Director of Impact Strategy for Education in June 2015.</p> <p>Patrice began her career as an education reporter at the <i>Star Tribune</i>. Recognizing her desire to help close opportunity gaps, Patrice left journalism against the advice of her father – an avid newspaper reader – to earn a master’s degree in public administration with a concentration in nonprofit management at the University of Illinois - Chicago. Prior to joining the Minneapolis Foundation, Patrice was the Institutional Support Coordinator on the development team at People Serving People, a family homeless shelter in Minneapolis.</p> <p>Patrice guides the Minneapolis Foundation’s competitive grantmaking and strategy in education, which focuses on closing opportunity gaps across pre-K to 12th grade to advance social, economic, and racial equity in Minneapolis. Patrice is a first-generation college graduate and proud University of Missouri alumna who credits her parents, brother, mentors, supervisors and St. Louis public high school for her accomplishments.</p>
	<p><b>Denise Mayotte, The Sheltering Arms Foundation</b></p> <p>Denise Mayotte is the Executive Director of the Sheltering Arms Foundation and the co-chair of the Start Early Funders Coalition. Previously, Denise worked as a program officer for the arts at the McKnight Foundation and as the executive director of the Neighborhood Resource Center. She serves on the board of In Progress, a youth media organization, as Policy Committee Chair of the Strategic Leadership Team for Youth Community Connections in addition to numerous other civic and community leadership roles.</p>



**Nancy Jost, West Central Initiative**

Nancy Jost is the early childhood coordinator for West Central Initiative. She oversees 10 early childhood community coalitions in the region, as well as the Early Childhood Dental Network, Early Childhood Mental Health Network, Pre-K to Grade 3 regional work, Home Visiting and Parent Aware regional work. Nancy works to increase communication and partnership between early childhood stakeholders, such as families, care providers, businesses, law enforcement, health care professionals, schools, public officials and more. She is a tireless advocate for quality early childhood care, education and policy development—locally, statewide and nationally.

Nancy is a graduate of the University of Minnesota—Morris, with a B.A. degree in sociology with an emphasis in Family/Child development, and a licensure in Early Childhood/Family Education. She has worked in the area of early childhood since 1972. Her background includes family and center child care, preschool, early childhood special education, Child Care Resource and Referral and Early Childhood Family Education.

She is active in the State Early Funders Coalition, the MinneMinds Coalition and Executive Team, the Minnesota Association of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, the Help Me Grow Leadership Team, Pre-K Grade 3 Design Team, Minnesota Targeted Home Visiting Coalition and the Minnesota Parent Aware Advisory Committee. She has served on several state child care advisory committees.