

Terri Allison

Candidate Statement

Educational Background

I obtained my Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies from Chico State University and then a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from University of California, Santa Barbara. I have an Adult Education Instructor Certificate and most recently completed a post-graduate certificate program through the University of Massachusetts, Boston in Infant-Parent Mental Health. In April 2018, I will graduate from the Reflective Supervision, Consultation and Facilitation Academy through the Napa Infant Parent Mental Health Fellowship Program with a goal to be endorsed by The California Center for Infant Family and Early Education Mental Health in Reflective Proactive.

Professional Experiences

Currently, I am working as an Early Education Consultant. I have contracts with Santa Barbara School District, First 5 Santa Barbara, Transition House and Santa Barbara Community Action Commission. My work includes Reflective Practice with teachers and administrators, classroom support and project management.

Before starting my consultant business, I was the Executive Director of Storyteller Children’s Center, a childcare center for homeless and at-risk preschoolers’ ages 18 months to five years. During my tenure there, I oversaw the operation of two sites; supervised, trained and lead personnel who included teachers, development staff, program officers and administrative staff. I managed a \$1.7 million budget that included grant writing, management and fundraising. Beyond the provision of early care and education for the children, Storyteller is committed to providing the children and families it serves with the foundational tools for success through a relationship and strength based program, working collaboratively with community resources to comprehensively address child and family need in a culturally and linguistically appropriate environment.

Early Childhood Organization Participation and/or Involvement with AEYC (local, state, or national level)

| Organization | Dates served | Current Position |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Santa Barbara Planning Council | 2011-current | Past Chair |
| Pacific Coast AEYC | 2010-current | Vice President |
| Santa Barbara Education Foundation | 2016-current | President |
| Kindergarten Readiness | 2013-current | Past Chair |
| CAEYC | 2014-current | Region Representative/ Chapter Relations and Development Committee |

Leadership Experience

Although all of my work in ECE has influenced my growth as an educator, my experience working at Storyteller and my post-graduate work in Infant-Parent Mental Health has given me unique skills. Storyteller serves the community's most vulnerable children and families. Most have been homeless at some point, lived in shelters or with multiple families in one small apartment. Their parents often suffer from risk factors such as poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence and/or medical conditions. Due to the high rate of developmental delays and trauma experienced by the children and families, we developed a collaborative, comprehensive intervention program with the goal of improving the health, social-emotional and behavioral well-being of homeless, low-income children and children at-risk for child welfare and foster care involvement. This mental health consultation model, with a focus on reflective practice, was created to address the dire needs of the families for whom we served. My work in trauma informed care, in collaboration with community partners, allowed us to look holistically at each family and create a program in which parents, teachers, therapists and specialists worked together to understand, rather than manage, behavior and challenges.

Diversity and Inclusion Experience

The diversity of my experience has allowed me to work with many different families with cultural, economic, educational and linguistic differences. Through my work with families, I have come to understand and respect the unique cultural diversity of each family, in addition to their most apparent characteristics. A fundamental principle of my work is to acknowledge and examine underlying assumptions as a part of working together. My on-going work with reflective practice, allows me to explore and process my own biases to lessen their impact on my work. Sensitivity to others and their direct experience, a key in building open and honest relationships, is a priority and one that I continue to hone and improve.

Contributions to CAEYC

I am excited for this opportunity to be a part of leadership for CAEYC. I have spent more than 30 years working as an educator in many different settings. I have worked extensively with children of all ages, primarily with toddlers and preschoolers. I have had administrative and programmatic opportunities to work with family childcare, Head Start and State Preschool, bilingual and bicultural classrooms in varied settings. I am familiar with grant writing, fund raising and budgets. Most importantly, though, I have been focused on relationship building and collaboration to create programs that improve outcomes for children and families. I think that experience will help build innovative collaborations as CAEYC navigates the opportunities and challenges of new relationships with the national office, chapters and members.

Your vision for CAEYC

My vision for CAEYC is that the transition to the new structure is a smooth one, that members and chapters feel a sense of pride and belonging to CAEYC and by extension, NAEYC. It is my hope that they become involved and active advocates for early childhood education with CAEYC leading the way. During the next few years it will be important to look for opportunities to generate income to create a strong and sustainable affiliate that supports teachers, children and families and creates long lasting social change.