Through the summer and fall of 2021, The Institute was actively working and thoughtfully shifting in response to changes in learning and working environments. We are energized and excited about new and deepening partnerships, opportunities for sharing and gaining professional knowledge, and our growing network. The Gear Up is a snapshot of our ongoing work and collaborations.

Learn more about The Institute on our website.

Fondly,
Dr. Amy Szarkowski (Director) & Dr. Sarah Brandt (Associate)
FOSTERING JOY
The Fostering Joy movement seeks to celebrate the joy of raising and supporting children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) and DHH with disabilities. As the home of Fostering Joy - Professionals, The Institute is proud to connect those across the globe who wish to advance both what we know about the impact of joy on our lives, and how we can spread joy to those in our professional care. This growing group had a fruitful season, with many exciting outputs and activities.

PROFESSIONAL WORKING GROUP
This group strives to identify strategies that foster joy across a diverse set of professionals in their work supporting DHH children. With participation growing to an international level, we are thrilled to welcome professionals ready to “roll up our sleeves” in service of this work.

JOY CLUBS
The Joy Journal Club brings together those who wish to understand and push forward the science of joy. What does research tell us about joy? How do we foster joy in ourselves and others? They recently discussed a literature review and will explore other resources on a regular basis. The Joy Book Club explores how individuals can recognize, experience, and foster joy. In January, they will be discussing Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life by Héctor García & Francesc Miralles.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS
December saw members from both arms of Fostering Joy (Families and Professionals) - including Dr. Szarkowski - presenting for the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM), the National Association of Australian Teachers of the Deaf, Family-Centered Early Intervention (FCEI), and the National Pediatric Audiology Group. Upcoming presentations are scheduled for the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD) and the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EDHI) conferences.
Supporting Deaf Students with Disabilities

The Institute is engaged in a collaboration to more deeply understand the needs of deaf students with disabilities. In addition to the researchers from The Institute, the team brings together curriculum developers from Boston University and educators from the Beverly School for the Deaf and Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf. The team is exploring how to maximize students’ access to and engagement in learning, particularly within curricula that may not be designed for their unique needs. Additionally, these collaborators are examining how research-practice partnerships can drive authentic change, improve teacher preparation, and address educators’ professional learning needs. With a virtual conference presentation in January and recent submission of a grant application, we are excited about the momentum of this project and look forward to reporting more outcomes!

BSD teacher and Reading Specialist Maddy Rynne - a member of this collaboration - supports a student during reading instruction.
DEAF AWARENESS WEEK

During Deaf Awareness Week in September, daily events celebrated, highlighted, and educated the CCCBSD community on issues related to Deafness, Deaf culture, and American Sign Language (ASL). These included a Deaf and CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) faculty panel, film discussion, presentation about ASL/English interpreting at CCCBSD, and silent lunch. Students also enjoyed events in their classrooms, the library, and the STEAM Lab.

THE ESSENTIALS SERIES

Throughout the fall, CCCBSD faculty came together for a new professional learning opportunity aimed at orienting staff to critical information necessary for supporting students. We appreciate the leadership and expertise of faculty in deaf and special education, literacy, transition, communication, occupational and physical therapy, clinical, interpreting, and specials (music, art, adapted physical education, and STEAM).

CONNECTING THROUGH FILM

In September, faculty attended a screening of the movie CODA - referring to a Child of Deaf Adults - filmed in Gloucester, MA. Superfest: A Disability Film Festival was celebrated virtually in October, with a number of short films highlighting deaf and disabled actors and directors, as well as featuring ASL. In December, faculty explored the experiences of non-speaking autistic people around the world after viewing The Reason I Jump. These films provided CCCBSD faculty with opportunities to discuss and reflect on issues related to deafness and disability.
LEND FELLOWS

The Institute is pleased to welcome two fellows from the LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) Program at Boston Children’s Hospital. This program provides advanced interdisciplinary training to professionals, families, and self advocates. With a background in social work and special education, Rachel Drucker, MSW, MEd, is engaged with a committee of CCCBSD faculty exploring neurodiversity in education. Katie Campbell, BSc, is examining how science can be a vehicle to teach children and adolescents with disabilities about social connections.

FCEI International

Dr. Szarkowski is a member of the Writing Team for the revision of the Family-Centered Early Intervention (FCEI) principles. Over the last two years, this group has gathered input from international leaders (deaf, hard-of-hearing, family, and professional). The new guidelines, aimed at informing the provision of early intervention on a global level for children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) or DHH with disabilities and their families, are intended to be published in 2022.

In October, the Writing Team shared an update on their work to a global audience. This presentation was simultaneously interpreted into American Sign Language, British Sign Language, and Auslan (Australian Signed Language)!

Please reach out to TheInstitute@cccbsd.org to connect with us!