



THE INSTITUTE

at The Children's Center for Communication
BEVERLY SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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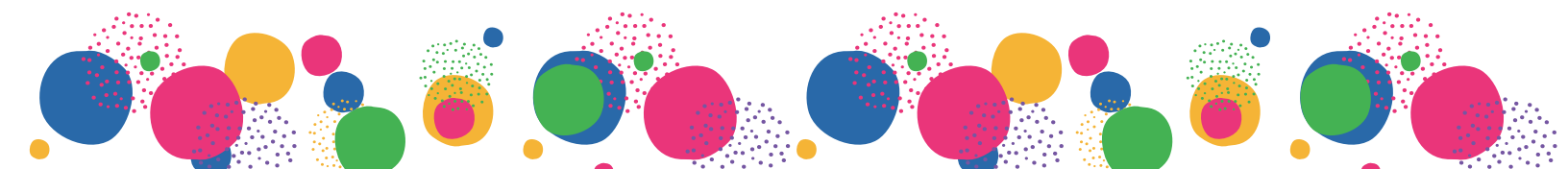


While the 2020-2021 academic year has been both challenging and joyful, the mission of The Institute has not wavered: **to generate and disseminate transformational ideas and practices**. Having established the foundation of this new and exciting organization, we are eagerly pursuing projects and partnerships that will raise the bar for deaf and hearing children with communication challenges.

Please visit our recently updated [website](#) to learn more about The Institute!

Fondly,

Dr. Amy Szarkowski (Director) & Dr. Sarah Brandt (Associate)



Current Projects

COMPLEX COMMUNICATORS

Our research team on complex communicators has been exploring best practices to increase learners' generativity, or the ability to share thoughts, ideas, and experiences flexibly and spontaneously. CCCBSD speech-language pathologist Adrienne Koenig and classroom teacher Dana Peterson presented at a regional conference and guided an in-depth exploration of this topic for CCCBSD faculty. This team is actively collaborating with leaders in this field and working on resource development.



Adrienne Koenig works with a student.

PRAGMATICS

In the fall of 2020, Dr. Szarkowski led a team of international scholars in the publication of a supplement on pragmatics - or the social use of language - in deaf children, published in *Pediatrics*. From presentations at multiple national conferences to requests for publication in international journals, the critical work in pragmatics continues! Check out our Spotlight on Pragmatics to learn more.

BILINGUAL LEARNING

This spring, we formalized a research collaboration among bilingual learning experts Dr. Todd Czubek and Dr. Kristin DiPerri of Boston University, Maddy Rynne (BSD Teacher and Reading Specialist), Marian McDonald (CCCBSD Curriculum & Instruction Specialist), and Dr. Szarkowski of The Institute. This collaboration is being spearheaded by Dr. Brandt. Watch for more news as we continue this exciting work.



DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Engaging with and learning the stories of adults with disabilities is critical to being an intentional and effective educational professional. In April, The Institute welcomed Adriana Mallozzi, who shared her experiences as a woman and entrepreneur with cerebral palsy who uses a variety of assistive technologies. In May, Jordy Lome shared personal and professional knowledge regarding autism acceptance and neurodiversity. These presentations were highly regarded by CCCBSD faculty and we look forward to extending this work in the coming year.

Adriana Mallozzi is the co-founder of Quirk LAABS, which seeks to increase diversity and inclusivity in co-working communities for people with disabilities.

Professional Learning at CCCBSD



Dr. Blanchard and Dr. Newton, in bitmoji.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Institute supports CCCBSD's commitment to promoting a safe, diverse, open, and inclusive school community that values all individuals and their unique backgrounds and cultures. In March, we welcomed Dr. Sheresa Blanchard and Dr. Jen Newton, co-chairs of the [Inclusion, Equity, and Social Justice Committee](#) for the Division of Early Childhood. They jointly presented to CCCBSD faculty on diversity and equity in education.

WELLNESS

Throughout the spring, The Institute addressed several self-care and wellness-based topics. In January, Drs. Szarkowski and Brandt shared information about applying a post-traumatic growth lens in personal and professional contexts. In March, Deaf yogi and wellness expert Beatrice Bachleda taught staff about yoga, breathing, and mindfulness techniques to reduce anxiety. Personal trainer, business owner, and CODBA (child of a deafblind adult) Michelle Densmore joined us in May to share tips and strategies to promote wellness, exercise and nutrition. We look forward to more opportunities to address educator wellness through the work of the New Beginnings committee.



Beatrice Bachleda, owner of [Yoga with Beatrice](#).



Community Opportunities

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

Our Distinguished Speaker Series returned virtually in February with a Family Connections conversation with the Davis family - Rashaun, Tyheshia, and 8-year-old Maddie, who wears hearing aids. In May, Emily Laubscher of Pennsylvania State University presented on early vocabulary development in complex communicators. Stephanie Olson of Children's Hospital Colorado joined us in June to explore strategies to promote fun, learning, and communication in the summer months. Many thanks to our fantastic Distinguished Speakers and supportive participants!



Maddie - a published author - and her family find joy in their journey.

FOSTERING JOY

The Institute is proud to serve as the home for the Fostering Joy - Professionals movement, celebrating the JOY of supporting children who are deaf or hard of hearing. This collaborative team provides resources to support child growth and development, and connects professionals seeking to share the joy of their work.



We will be busy in 2021-2022 with publications, presentations, and collaborations in support of our mission. Please reach out to TheInstitute@cccbsd.org to connect with us!