

CNMI BRAIN BUILDERS NEWSLETTER



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This month, Parent Cohort 4 continues with the Mind in the Making Training. This training was facilitated by Ms. Rayanna Fitial, Science of Early Learning Administrative Assistant.



From February 20 to 23, 2024, a group of community partners convened for the Mind in the Making Training of Trainers, led by Kim O'Connell-Master Facilitator. The participants hailed from various programs and organizations, including CHCC's Family to Family Program represented by Chrislaine Manibusan and Cristina Cabaltica, Population Health-MICAH represented by Ira Valle, and the Home Visiting Program represented by Sanivette Sablan and Viktoria Buniag. Additionally, Maria Olopai from the Division of Youth Services, Zarah Bermudes from the Council on Developmental Disabilities, Joy Maratita and Carla Sablan from NMC-UCEDD, Robin Romero from CNMI WIC Program, Elsie Rebueng from NMPASI, Kiara Borja and Marvin Ngeskebei from DICE Pacific Professional Solution, LLC, Donna Elena Ogo from CCDF (Rota), Arsene Borja from CCDF (Tinian), Bona Angeles and Elvie Pangilinan from Green Meadow School, Juefan Benson representing parents, and Karay Fitial as a SOEL Community Supporter. As certified MITM Trainers, they are now empowered to conduct their own training sessions within their respective programs and the community.

February



"All children in the CNMI will be safe, healthy, and thriving members of a culturally diverse community. Their families will have access to the high quality supports they need to achieve their potential."

Thank You!

THANK YOU KIM O'CONNELL, MITM MASTER FACILITATOR & ELLEN GALINSKY, AUTHOR OF MITM!

With grateful hearts and sincere gratitude, we extend a warm Hafa Adai, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, and a huge THANK YOU to Kim O'Connell, Mind in the Making Master Facilitator, for spending time last week with us, sharing her extensive and incredible knowledge on Mind in the Making.

On behalf of our children, parents/guardians, providers, partners, and our community, THANK YOU for flying all the way out here to facilitate a very impactful and powerful training. We appreciate you!

At the end of the week while in training, we were especially honored to have been joined by the author and champion of Mind in the Making, Dr. Ellen Galinsky. Your presence in the room and facilitating a conversation with all of us meant so much. It was such a very special treat and an honor to finally meet you - the author of MITM, which is the power in the work that we do for our children. We had to take that very monumental group photo! Thank you so much!

Congratulations to all our participants for completing the Mind in the Making Training of Trainers! You are all our children's champions!





CNMI BRAIN
BUILDERS

THE EVERYDAY PLAY

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Did you know that in every culture, all over the world, children play? The United Nations even considers play to be the right of every child. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published a report about how important play is and lists some of the benefits of play:

- Play supports healthy brain development
- Play is one way infants and toddlers engage in and interact with their environment
- Play allows children to safely explore their fears and practice adult roles
- Play is a way that children build relationships with their peers and caregivers

Play and Exploration

Exploration is where play begins. When infants and toddlers explore new objects they will often try to discover what each object is and what it does. For example, young infants might explore a rattle by mouthing, shaking, banging, pulling, and throwing it. Toddlers have more experience with exploring new objects. Toddlers, given an empty but closed container, might try to open, shake, turn over, look at the object, or even ask a caregiver for help.

Generally, exploration happens before play. Exploration is how we come to know an object. Once we have some understanding, then we can play with the object. Once the infant understands that shaking the rattle makes a noise, he can shake for the pure delight of shaking! The toddler who has discovered how to open and close the container can move on to playing with it by putting smaller toys inside the container and closing it up.

Often while children play, they discover something new about the object they are playing with. Maybe while shaking the rattle, the baby accidentally hits a mobile hanging over her head. Perhaps the toddler just discovered that while some toys fit into the container there are many that do not. When toddlers play, it brings them to a deeper understanding of the objects and to a place where there is more to learn.



“ Play is one way
infants and toddlers
engage in and
interact with their
environment. ”

OUTDOOR PLAY BENEFITS



Past Event Photos



TAKE IT OUTSIDE!

Many of us remember the phrase, “Go outside and play!” from childhood, but children today spend less time playing outdoors than any previous generation (Clements, 2004; Hofferth and Curtin, 2006). Free play and discretionary time has declined more than 9 hours a week over the last 25 years. A new Nielson Company Report indicates that children ages two-five years old now spend more than 32 hours a week on average in front of a TV screen. According to the Keiser Family Foundation (2010), the amount of screen time only increases with age, with school-aged children spending 7.5 hours a day on electronic media.

The percentage of preschool children who are overweight more than tripled between 1971 and 2009, exploding from 5.8% in 1971 to 18.4% in 2009 (Odgen et al, 2007; Anderson, 2009). Six out of ten of these preschoolers will continue to be overweight or obese at age 12 (NICHD, 2006). The situation is so severe that this generation of children’s life span is predicted to be shorter than that of their parents.

Tap into the benefits of outdoor play! Encouraging children to get outside, get moving, and connect with the natural world are all ways to reverse childhood obesity rates. But, the benefits don’t stop there. Kids who play outside are happier, healthier, and stronger!

According to research (Fjortoft 2004; Burdette and Whitaker 2005), children who play outdoors regularly:

- Become fitter and leaner
- Develop stronger immune systems
- Have more active imaginations
- Have lower stress levels
- Play more creatively
- Have greater respect for themselves and others

Time spent outdoors is also the best way to get vitamin D. According to the journal Pediatrics, 70% of American kids are not getting enough vitamin D, which can lead to a host of health issues. Time spent outdoors is also shown to reduce myopia (near sightedness) in children (Optometry and Vision Science, 2008).

Focus On Fun:

- Invite parents to outdoor playtime
- Host a healthy picnic
- Rake leaves, plant flowers, or roll down a hill
- Create a painted rock garden
- Hop like bunnies, jump like frogs & slither like snakes
- Plan a Nature Walk!

Outdoor play – it’s not just FUN, it’s good for you!



Featured Researcher:
Ellen Galinsky



President,
Families and
Work
Institute

**“A learning
relationship with
a child is a
lifetime in the
making.”**

Dance Party

Ages 0-1



Your child may not be walking or talking yet, but with your help they can definitely boogie. So turn on some music and hold them as you dance around. When you sit down together, shake your arms to the music and see if they can do the same!

See what your child is learning

Brainy Background

Paying attention to sounds and movements is an early step in listening for sounds—a reading skill.



For more activities like these, check out the free Vroom mobile app!

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**#vroomtip
of the
month**

BUMPER STICKER CHALLENGE



Place your CNMI Brain Builder Sticker on your car if you haven't already.



You get a prize when we spot you on the road/the parking lot.

JOIN US



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Congratulations

Congratulations to the contest winners!

Win It Wednesday Winners



Rhina Khan



Amaleene Ramos



Raffle Contest

Role Joyce
Fatima Sta Maria Celis

Jyay Masga
Vanessa Abella

Vevian Sablan
Elvie Baluyut Dungca



February Winners

Bumper Challenge

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