



FHSA 2026 Annual Conference & Expo

Tuesday, October 27- Thursday, October 29

(Agenda/Schedule subject to change www.FLHeadStart.org for the most up to date information)

Tuesday, October 27 Affiliate Group Meetings 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Session	Location
Affiliate Group Meeting: Directors	Space Coast I
Affiliate Group Meeting: Staff	Space Coast II/III
Affiliate Group Meeting: Parents	Gold Coast I/II
Affiliate Group Meeting: Friends	Gold Coast III/IV

Tuesday, October 27 Exhibitor 1:1 Meetings 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., *Universal A,C,D*

Pre-booked 1:1 meetings between exhibitors and attendees, scheduled through the conference app based on selected preferences.

Tuesday, October 27 Emerging Topics & Dialogue 11:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

An opportunity to connect with your Head Start colleagues from around the state to discuss emerging topics & changes in the Head Start community.

Tuesday, October 27 Exhibitor 1:1 Meetings 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., *Universal A,C,D*

Pre-booked 1:1 meetings between exhibitors and attendees, scheduled through the conference app based on selected preferences.

Tuesday, October 27 FHSA Board Meeting 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m., *Mangrove*

Tuesday, October 27, Conference Opening Session and Keynote Speaker 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., *Universal B*

Dr. El Brown—internationally recognized educator, consultant, and former Head Start student will share her signature message, **From Acorn to Mighty Mighty Oak Tree™**, which is a powerful testament to the generational impact of early childhood professionals.

Through her celebrated “Acorn Story,” Dr. El shares how the seeds planted in early childhood programs grow into generational change. Her journey—from a Head Start classroom to global education leader—beautifully affirms the truth at the heart of our work: you are growing the future, one child at a time.

Attendees will leave feeling:

- Reenergized in their purpose
- Seen and valued for their essential role
- Connected to the long-term impact of their daily work

Tuesday, October 27, Welcome Reception in Expo Hall 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m., *Universal A,C,D*

Light bites and refreshments as you connect with peers from across Florida and kick off the 2026 FHSA Annual Conference.

END DAY 1



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Wednesday, October 28, Breakfast 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Universal A,C,D

Wednesday, October 28, Breakout Sessions Block I 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Track	Room	Session Title & Speaker(s)	Description	Target Audience/Session Level
Disabilities	Gold Coast III/IV	Inclusion in Action Kendra Wolford, <i>Head Start Instructional Coach, Brevard Public Schools</i>	<p>Inclusion in Action: Strategies for Head Start Classrooms is an engaging, hands-on session that helps early childhood professionals turn inclusion from theory into daily practice. Grounded in Head Start's mission, it focuses on practical, evidence-based strategies that support full participation for every child.</p> <p>Through real-world scenarios, collaboration, and interactive tools, participants will strengthen skills in individualized instruction and inclusive classroom design. You'll leave with ready-to-use strategies to support diverse learners, enhance classroom quality, and create truly inclusive environments where all children can thrive.</p>	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Directors, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Challenging Behaviors	Space Coast III	Turning Conflict Into Connection Nichole Frenette, <i>Mental Health Coordinator, Pasco County Schools Early Head Start and Head Start</i>	<p>Challenging behaviors in early childhood classrooms are often a child's way of communicating unmet needs, stress, or difficulty with emotional regulation. This engaging session helps educators move beyond simply reacting to behaviors and instead turn difficult moments into meaningful opportunities for growth and connection.</p> <p>Through a trauma-informed, relationship-based lens, participants will explore the connection between behavior, brain development, emotional regulation, and relationships. Learn practical strategies—including co-regulation techniques, proactive classroom supports, visual structures, safe spaces, and connection rituals—that can be implemented immediately in Head Start and early childhood settings.</p> <p>Attendees will leave with concrete tools to reduce power struggles, strengthen relationships, support emotional regulation, and create safe, connected learning environments where both children and adults can thrive.</p>	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced, Home Visitors Session Content Level: Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Monitoring & Focus Review	Universal F	TBA: Stay Tuned!	TBA: Stay Tuned!	TBA: Stay Tuned!
Leadership	Universal E	Strong Teams Change Everything: Building a Workplace People Don't Want to Leave Sonya Hill, <i>Head Start Director, Orange County Head Start</i>	<p>Strong leadership builds strong teams—and strong teams create life-changing outcomes for children, families, and staff. In this engaging and motivational workshop, a seasoned Head Start Director shares real-world leadership strategies that have helped build high-performing teams and a workplace culture rooted in trust, communication, accountability, appreciation, and growth.</p> <p>Through storytelling, interactive discussion, and practical activities, participants will explore strategies to strengthen communication, improve morale, reduce burnout, increase retention, and foster a positive organizational culture. This session is especially valuable for new and emerging leaders navigating workplace stress, team dynamics, and the daily demands of serving children and families.</p> <p>Attendees will leave inspired and equipped with practical tools to lead with confidence, compassion, authenticity, and purpose.</p>	Target Audience: Directors, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)
Fiscal	Space Coast III	Financial Foundations for the Future Steve Martin, <i>Work Business Development Leader, VyStar Credit Union</i>	<p>This session provides a practical introduction to financial literacy, focusing on the core skills needed to manage money with confidence. Participants will learn how to create and maintain a budget, build effective saving habits, understand credit and debt, and make informed financial decisions. The presentation also highlights common financial pitfalls and offers simple strategies to avoid them, helping individuals build a strong foundation for long-term financial stability.</p>	Target Audience: Applicable to all! Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)
Mental Health/Wellness	Gold Coast III	Every Bite Counts: Navigating Special Diets & CACFP Compliance in Head Start Maves V. Ranola, <i>Director of Nutrition, Lutheran Services Florida</i>	<p>Serving children with special dietary needs while staying CACFP compliant doesn't have to be overwhelming. This session breaks down medical diet statements, accommodating disabilities under USDA rules, and practical menu modifications that keep your program audit-ready. Walk away with tools and confidence to ensure every child in your Head Start program is nourished, included, and served with care.</p>	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Family Support, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)



FHSA 2026 Annual Conference & Expo

Tuesday, October 27- Thursday, October 29

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Wednesday, October 28, Breakout Sessions Block II 10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Track	Room	Session Title & Speaker(s)	Description	Target Audience/Session Level
Disabilities	Gold Coast III/IV	Rock your Classroom: Classroom Spaces Anna Milbert, <i>Regional Facilitator, Prekindergarten Exceptional Student Education Technical Assistance & Training System (PESE)</i>	Create a classroom environment where every child can thrive. This session explores the Classroom Spaces component of the Rock Your Classroom Observation Guide, an evidence-based tool designed to strengthen instruction and support preschool children, including those with disabilities. Participants will gain practical strategies for designing organized, inclusive learning spaces through effective room arrangement, visuals, schedules, materials, and classroom expectations. Walk away with actionable ideas and resources to support engagement, independence, and success for all learners.	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)
Challenging Behaviors	Space Coast III	Prevent Teach Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC): A Framework for Early Childhood Prevention & Family Strengthening Michael Fussner, <i>Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), Licensed Behavior Analyst (LBA), University of South Florida - College of Education</i>	This session provides a high-level overview of Prevent-Teach-Reinforce for Young Children (PTR-YC), an evidence-based, team-driven framework for addressing persistent challenging behaviors in early childhood settings. Learn how educators, early learning professionals, afterschool staff, mental health practitioners, and families can use this collaborative model to promote positive behavior and improve child outcomes. Grounded in applied behavior analysis, PTR-YC emphasizes functional assessment, collaborative planning, and individualized intervention. Participants will explore how this powerful framework can serve as both an effective intervention and proactive prevention strategy across classrooms, community programs, and home environments.	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Directors, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Monitoring & Focus Review	Universal F	Audits and Monitoring are your "Partners" for Focus Reviews. Brenda E. Williams, <i>Special Projects Administrator 2, Miami-Dade County</i>	This is a News Bulletin that Audits and Monitoring are your "Partners" for Focus Reviews. This session explores what that partnership looks like through strong internal controls, best-practice monitoring guidance, and Focus Area 2 (FA2) review preparation activities for Head Start programs. Participants will gain practical strategies for strengthening fiscal management, protecting assets and grant funds, and maintaining compliance with key federal regulations, including Head Start Performance Standards and 2 CFR Part 200. Walk away with best practices to support clean audits, compliant reviews, and stronger grant management outcomes.	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Directors, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Leadership	Universal E	Top-Notch Villages™ Integration Workshop Dr. El Brown, <i>Speaker, Trainer, and Engagement Strategist, KinderJam</i>	Building on the keynote experience and the Top-Notch Villages™ framework, this interactive workshop helps participants explore how mission alignment shows up in everyday roles and interactions within a child's village. Participants will shift their thinking from job titles to mission-driven purpose, recognizing how each role shapes children's daily experiences and long-term outcomes. Through reflection and discussion, attendees will discover how intentional, mission-aligned collaboration creates environments where children feel safe, seen, and supported, and where families experience dignity, trust, and consistency. Walk away with a deeper understanding of how every role contributes to building a unified village where children can thrive and reach their full potential.	Applicable to all!
Fiscal	Space Coast III	Navigating Change: Federal Fiscal Updates, Uniform Guidance, and Determining Allowable Costs Cynthia Yao, <i>Founder / CEO, RISE Partners LLC & Matthew Louie, Principal Consultant, Portsmouth Square Consulting LLC</i>	Federal fiscal requirements continue to evolve, requiring Head Start leaders and fiscal staff to stay informed and responsive. This interactive session will provide participants with the latest fiscal policy and regulatory updates impacting Head Start programs, including developments related to Uniform Guidance, federal grants management, monitoring trends, and emerging compliance considerations. Participants will strengthen their understanding of the decision-making process to determine whether costs are allocable, reasonable, and necessary under federal awards. Through practical examples, real-world scenarios, and guided discussion, attendees will learn how to apply fiscal requirements consistently and confidently in everyday decision-making.	Target Audience: Executive Directors, Head Start Directors, Fiscal Officers, CFOs, Finance Managers, Grants Managers, Program Managers, Governing Board Members, and Policy Council leaders. Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Mental Health/Wellness	Gold Coast III	From Play to Purpose: How Early Experiences Shape Lifelong Attitudes Toward Work Mary Muhs, <i>Dean, School of Education, Ramussen University</i>	This interactive session explores play as the foundation for children's lifelong attitudes toward learning, challenge, and fulfillment. Grounded in NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practice and the wisdom of Fred Rogers (Mister Rogers Neighborhood), participants examine how play shapes resilience, motivation, and meaning. Through reflective and collaborative activities, educators will connect research to practice and consider how adult choices, language, and environments shape children's experiences of work—now and in the future.	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Family Support, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)



FHSA 2026 Annual Conference & Expo

Tuesday, October 27- Thursday, October 29

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Wednesday, October 28, Breakout Sessions Block III 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Track	Room	Session Title & Speaker(s)	Description	Target Audience/Session Level
Disabilities	Gold Coast III/IV	Rethinking Inclusion: Autism-Affirming Practices That Actually Work in Classrooms, Community, & Sports Amanda Torin, <i>Autism & Inclusion Specialist, Inclusion Made Simple</i>	Inclusion is more than a compliance goal—it's an intentional shift in how we design environments and build relationships. This session explores what autism-affirming inclusion looks like in real classrooms and how small, thoughtful changes can create safer, more regulated, and more engaged learners. Drawing from current research, lived experience, and practical coaching with families and schools, participants will gain realistic strategies to support regulation, communication, and belonging—without adding more to already full plates.	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Directors, Family Support, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced, Training & Technical Staff, Home Visitors Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Challenging Behaviors	Space Coast I/II	Working with Families to Navigate Challenging Behaviors FAIMH	This session will explore ways to strengthen family partnerships and support participants in navigating challenging conversations with parents. It will also examine how our way of being with families is just as important as the strategies and information we share. Practical approaches for building trusting, respectful relationships with families will be highlighted. Throughout the session, participants will be invited to reflect on and discuss relevant experiences as part of an ongoing dialogue focused on family partnership strategies for addressing behavior concerns.	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Directors, Family Support, Home Visitors, Teachers, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)
Monitoring & Focus Review	Universal F	Data to Decisions: Designing a CQI Operating Loop That Meets Head Start Performance Standards Marie Mason, <i>Vice President of Operations & LaShonda Watson, Pinellas Head Start Director, Lutheran Services Florida</i>	This session explores how to build a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) framework for Head Start programs that transforms compliance activities into a meaningful, data-driven decision-making system aligned with the Head Start Performance Standards and key monitoring areas including PSRFA1, CSRFA2, and CLASS. Participants will learn how to strengthen CQI systems through ongoing monitoring, data analysis, and action planning using indicators such as attendance, enrollment, child outcomes, and family engagement. The session will also highlight strategies for improving program performance and school readiness, while building sustainable accountability structures that support continuous improvement across all service areas.	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Directors Session Content Level: Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Leadership	Universal E	From Firefighting to Forward-Thinking: Cultivating Reflective Leadership in Head Start Michelle Toral, <i>Head Start Manager</i> , & DeArdra Rolle, <i>Special Projects Administrator, Miami-Dade County Community Services Department-Head Start/Early Head Start</i>	In the fast-paced environment of Head Start, leadership often feels like a series of rapid-fire reactions to immediate crises. This training is designed to shift the internal needle from instinctive reaction to intentional reflection. By exploring the core tenets of reflective practice, staff leaders will learn to pause, process, and pivot. We will move beyond "fixing problems" to understanding the "why" behind our decisions, fostering a culture where emotional intelligence and critical thinking drive program excellence.	Target Audience: Administrators, Directors Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)
Fiscal	Space Coast III	Beyond Compliance: Strengthening Internal Controls and Building Strong Program-Fiscal Partnerships Cynthia Yao, <i>Founder / CEO, RISE Partners LLC</i> & Matthew Louie, <i>Principal Consultant, Portsmouth Square Consulting LLC</i>	Strong internal controls are not simply fiscal systems—they are organizational systems. This session helps participants strengthen internal controls while building meaningful collaboration between program and fiscal leaders. Participants will explore common monitoring and audit vulnerabilities, strategies to reduce risk, and approaches for creating a culture of shared accountability. Through interactive activities and real-world examples, leaders will learn how strong partnerships between fiscal and program teams improve compliance, decision-making, and overall program performance.	Target Audience: Executive Directors, Head Start Directors, Fiscal Officers, Finance Managers, Program Managers, Governing Board Members, and leadership teams. Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Mental Health/Wellness	Gold Coast I/II	Building and Sustaining Wellness: Practical Strategies for Supporting Staff, Families, and Children Cynthia Krosky, <i>President, Achieving Corporate Excellence, Inc.</i>	Brighter futures are built when we invest in the wellness, resilience, and sustainability of the staff, families, and communities who support children every day. This interactive session explores practical, research informed strategies for building and sustaining wellness across Head Start communities. Participants will examine workforce stressors, family engagement, and everyday approaches that strengthen emotional wellness, resilience, healthy boundaries, and sustainable practices.	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Family Support Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)



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Wednesday, October 28, FHSA Annual Awards Luncheon 12:45 p.m. – 2:45 p.m., *Universal B*

A celebratory luncheon honoring outstanding individuals, companies, and programs whose dedication and impact are shaping brighter outcomes for children and families across Florida.

Wednesday, October 28, Breakout Sessions Block IV 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Track	Room	Session Title & Speaker(s)	Description	Target Audience/Session Level
Disabilities	Gold Coast III/IV	Rock Your Classroom: Differentiating Instruction Anna Milbert, <i>Regional Facilitator, Prekindergarten Exceptional Student Education Technical Assistance & Training System (PESE)</i>	The Rock Your Classroom Differentiating Instruction presentation will provide participants information on how to identify supports and accommodations to support preschool students with disabilities and align instruction to Individual Educational Plan (IEP) goals. Methods for addressing sensory, social and instructional needs for varying groups of students will be discussed, as well as strategies and resources associated with Universal Design for Learning.	Target Audience: Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Challenging Behaviors	Space Coast III	Let's Take It Outside: An Overview of Learning Through Nature and Outdoor Play Chesnee Layne, <i>VPK Regional Facilitator, Northwest & Lexi Langieri, VPK Regional Facilitator, Northeast, Division of Early Learning</i>	This interactive workshop explores how meaningful outdoor play experiences can reduce challenging behaviors by increasing engagement, promoting positive social interactions, and supporting children's overall development. Participants will gain easy and engaging ideas for turning everyday outdoor activities into instructional opportunities, discover practical ways to extend indoor learning centers into enriching outdoor environments, and understand the importance of actively engaging with children during outdoor play while maintaining effective supervision. Through discussion and hands-on examples, educators will learn how intentional outdoor experiences can foster learning, cooperation, self-regulation, and positive behavior.	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Directors, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Monitoring & Focus Review	Universal F	SAUCE Up Your Systems™: Strengthening Systems for Health & Safety Excellence During FA1, FA2 & Unannounced Reviews Every Center, Every Classroom, Every Day Sylvia Hubbard, <i>Lead Performance Strategist Consultant, ICU Educational Enterprise</i>	Get ready to turn up the heat! SAUCE Up Your Systems™ is a high-impact, interactive session designed to take you "through there" — straight into what federal reviewers are really looking for during FA1, FA2, and unannounced visits, and what we are consistently seeing in the field. From active supervision to daily health and safety checks, this session breaks down how to tighten your systems, strengthen your documentation, and elevate your daily practices so your program doesn't just get ready... it STAYS ready. We'll walk through real field examples, common pitfalls, and the powerful SAUCE framework to help you build classrooms and centers that are safe, compliant, and consistently review-ready. Bring your leadership, your questions, and your energy — because this session will give you the tools to elevate your entire program to excellence on purpose	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Directors, Family Support, Teachers: New, Training & Technical Staff, Home Visitors Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Leadership	Universal E	Stronger Together: How Family Services and Educational Teams Collaborate to Increase the Outcomes for Children and Families Cindy Kaier, <i>Education Consultant/Trainer</i> & Michelle Dale, <i>Family Services Manager, Brevard Public Schools Head Start</i>	When Family Services and Education leaders collaborate intentionally, the impact is felt across the entire program—strengthening family advocates, teachers, paraprofessionals, and ultimately improving outcomes for children and families. This session explores how structured collaboration creates alignment, shared purpose, and stronger service delivery across a Head Start grantee. Participants will learn practical strategies for building effective cross-role partnerships, including the use of targeted needs assessments, shared planning structures, and collaborative tools such as agendas and communication forms. Attendees will leave with concrete examples and approaches for bridging roles, improving coordination, and strengthening key systems that support CLASS, screening tools like ASQ, attendance planning, and family engagement efforts.	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Family Support Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Fiscal	Space Coast III	Braiding Funding Streams: Cost Allocation Strategies for Mixed Delivery Systems Cynthia Yao, <i>Founder / CEO, RISE Partners LLC</i> & Matthew Louie, <i>Principal Consultant, Portsmouth Square Consulting LLC</i>	As programs increasingly leverage multiple funding sources to meet community needs, effective cost allocation becomes critical. This session explores practical approaches for managing mixed delivery systems that blend Head Start, Early Head Start, state and local funding streams. Participants will review allocation methodologies, documentation requirements, staffing considerations, and compliance expectations while examining real-world examples of successful mixed-delivery models.	Target Audience: Fiscal staff, Head Start and Early Head Start leaders, program managers, grants managers, and leaders involved in blended funding models. Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Mental Health/Wellness	Gold Coast III	Healthy Relationships Protect Babies and Young Children FAIMH	Participants will learn how positive childhood experiences and secure attachments act as powerful protective factors in early development. We will explore attachment styles and how secure attachment is built through consistent, responsive caregiving. Within these secure relationships, children are better able to manage emotions with the help of supportive adult interactions. Throughout the session, participants will be invited to reflect on and discuss relevant experiences as part of an ongoing dialogue focused on supporting infant and early childhood mental health through healthy caregiving relationships.	Target Audience: • Direct Service Providers, Directors, Family Support, Home Visitors, Teachers, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)



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Wednesday, October 28, Breakout Sessions Block V 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Track	Room	Session Title & Speaker(s)	Description	Target Audience/Session Level
Disabilities	Gold Coast III/IV	Disabilities Roundtable with Head Start	Join fellow Head Start and Early Head Start professionals for an interactive roundtable focused on supporting children with disabilities and their families. This collaborative session offers a space to share challenges, promising practices, and innovative strategies. Participants will engage in meaningful dialogue with peers and leave with practical ideas and resources to strengthen disability services across programs.	Applicable to all
Challenging Behaviors	Space Coast III	Autism in Head Start: Practical ABA Strategies That Work For Teachers and Families Holly Lanier Enfinger, <i>Owner, Live Free Consulting, LLC</i>	As autism rates continue to rise, many Head Start teachers and families are seeking practical tools to better support children with autism in everyday routines and classroom settings. This engaging session explores key principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and provides simple, realistic, and easy-to-implement strategies that teachers and parents can begin using immediately. Participants will learn practical approaches to improving communication, behavior, engagement, transitions, social interactions, and participation in daily routines while creating more supportive and inclusive learning environments for young children with autism. The session is designed to provide meaningful tools, increased confidence, and practical strategies that can easily be adapted for both school and home settings.	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Directors, Family Support, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced, Training & Technical Staff, Home Visitors Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Monitoring & Focus Review	Universal F	Thinking Like a Reviewer: Preparing Your Program for Federal Focus Area Reviews Autumn Tomas, <i>CEO/Lead Consultant, A Tomas Consulting, LLC.</i>	What does a federal reviewer actually look at — and how do they decide what they find? This session gives Head Start and Early Head Start program leaders a rare inside view of the federal monitoring process, drawing on current reviewer training and real-world consulting experience. Participants will explore how Focus Area 1 and Focus Area 2 reviews are structured, what documentation and practices reviewers examine, and how programs can use their own data and ongoing monitoring systems to demonstrate compliance and quality. With HSPPS updates on the horizon, this session also addresses how programs can proactively align their systems now. Participants leave with a practical readiness framework they can put to work the moment they return to their program.	Target Audience: Administrators, Direct Service Providers, Directors, Family Support, Teachers: Experienced, Training & Technical Staff, Home Visitors Session Content Level: Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Leadership	Universal E	The Ripple Effect: How intentional leadership builds high-performing teams that influence beyond the program. Tanya Stone, <i>Director, You Thrive Florida</i>	Strong leadership creates a ripple effect that extends far beyond any one individual. This session explores how intentional leadership practices build high-performing teams grounded in confidence, accountability, and shared ownership across Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Through reflection and practical application, participants will examine strategies that strengthen leadership capacity, improve team culture, and enhance organizational impact. Attendees will leave with actionable approaches for building systems that support shared growth, stronger performance, and sustained leadership development across teams.	Target Audience: Administrators, Directors Session Content Level: Advanced (4+ years' of experience)
Fiscal	Space Coast III	Blueprint for Impact: Head Start Grant Success Sandra Ruff, <i>Program Manager & Sonya Hill, Head Start Director, Orange County Head Start</i>	This session provides an overview of the Head Start Non-Competitive Grant Application process, including requirements, submission steps, and key components such as program design, service delivery, governance, and budget justification within Head Start programs. Participants will gain a clear understanding of application structure and compliance expectations while exploring best practices for developing strong program narratives, aligning services with community needs, and preparing a complete, compliant application package that supports high-quality services for children and families.	Target Audience: Administrators, Directors, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience)
Mental Health/Wellness	Gold Coast III	Reigniting Joy Through Playful Interactions: Strategies That Support Staff Wellness and Positive Child Outcomes Juleanne Perry Schwartz, <i>Keynote Speaker, Trainer, Humorist, Inspire to Impact Early Education Training and Consulting</i>	Reignite joy in your program through playful, relationship-based interactions that strengthen staff wellness and support positive child outcomes. This session offers practical strategies for social-emotional growth, communication, and positive behavior during daily routines, along with wellness tools, culturally responsive family engagement ideas, and play-based approaches that build resilience and meaningful connections. And yes—we'll have fun doing it.	Target Audience: Direct Service Providers, Directors, Family Support, Teachers: New, Teachers: Experienced, Training & Technical Staff Session Content Level: Introductory (0-3 years' experience), Advanced (4+ years' of experience)

Wednesday October 28, Sunshine Soiree Reception, 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Universal A,C,D

Celebrate the bright spirit of Head Start across Florida with an evening of connection, light refreshments, and networking as we continue building brighter futures for Florida's families together.

END DAY 2



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Thursday, October 29, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Breakfast, Policy Panel and Conference Wrap-Up, Universal B

Join our panel of leading voices to unpack the forces shaping policy and moving the needle in early care and education in Florida and beyond.

END OF CONFERENCE