

IN THIS ISSUE

FEATURE ARTICLE:

Understanding Gun Play:
A Teacher's Journey
page 1

CLASSROOM HINTS:

Supporting Children's
Pretend-Play Scenarios
page 8

TRAINER-TO-TRAINER:

Making a Commitment to
Supporting Children's
Pretend Play
page 10

ASK US:

page 12

NEWS BRIEFS:

page 13

Want to read previous issues of *Extensions*? Join the HighScope Membership Association and have access to the *Extensions* archives. We invite you to join us! Visit highscope.org/membership

Understanding Gun Play: A Teacher's Journey

BY KENNETH SHERMAN, HIGHSCOPE TRAINING SPECIALIST



Gun play and superhero play are likely to occur in any preschool classroom.

Walk into any preschool classroom, and you will typically see children (often boys) using all sorts of materials as guns and weapons. With most schools adopting a zero gun policy, it's hard for educators of young children to find a balance between school policy and developmentally appropriate pretend play. In a time of hot topics in early education, young children and imaginary gun play ranks at the top. In a culture already filled with violent video games, television programs, and images of real war, it can be unnerving to see a child pretending to kill someone. However, no study has yet linked pretend gun play to future violent behavior, and most child experts agree that by forbidding gun play entirely, adults give it far more power and most likely drive it "underground." For example, if a group of boys are playing pretend guns and then the teacher walks up, they may say it is a laser or secretly shoot when the teacher is not looking.

“As we ask ourselves why guns are so appealing to young children, we must first understand how children make sense of the world around them.”

PUBLISHER CREDITS

HighScope Extensions is a practical resource for early childhood teachers, trainers, administrators, and child care providers. It contains useful information on the HighScope Curriculum and on HighScope's training network.

Jennifer Burd
Adam Robson
Joanne Tangorra
Maria Taylor
Marcella Fecteau Weiner
Editors

Adam Robson, Joanne Tangorra
Codirectors of Publications

ISSN 2155-3548

©2016 HighScope Foundation
The HighScope Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization founded by David Weikart in Ypsilanti, MI, in 1970. HighScope's mission is big, but it is clear: to change the trajectory of the world, one child at a time.

It was this type of underground play that made me question my own approach, which was to try to stop young children from pretending to use guns. As you can imagine, this approach was not successful for the children or for me. It actually gave more power to the gun play because children wanted to know what was wrong about playing pretend guns. Even today, I question how to support young children who engage in gun play and help them see that violence is not the answer to conflicts. My journey is an ongoing one with no easy answers. However, I have learned many things along the way, which I share with you here.

Understanding Character Play

Teachers tend to forget that children don't have a lot of control over their day but want to feel in control. One way children try to feel a sense of control is through pretend play. During pretend play, children can initiate their own activities, which, in turn, helps them feel in control. This is why activities and routines that embed active learning, shared control, and intrinsic motivation (learning motivated by internal factors rather than by external factors) work so well with young children.

To understand why gun play is a part of children's pretend play, we must understand a child's developmental needs. As we ask ourselves why guns are so appealing to young children, we must first understand how children make sense of the world around them. Children understand the world in terms of clear, concrete actions and physical characteristics (Evans, 1995). They also imitate what they see and hear on television and other media sources. Powerful characters appeal to children's need to feel both strong and in control of their lives.



First and foremost, children imitate and shape pretend play around their role models and what they see in their lives. Their parents are a source of strength and, thus, children will replicate what they see their parents do. For example, if a child's parent is a hunter, they may want to represent that through gun play. Such pretend play may also touch on a need to help others or show power over others, particularly if children's parent models are

in a position of authority, such as a police officer or firefighter, an emergency medical technician, or any other such community figure. For example, when we see a police officer, we typically think of someone who has power and who will protect us if we

“Both strength and control are factors in children’s pretend play because parents are in control of the home and children’s behavior.”

are in danger. Police officers carry guns that they use to protect us if needed. Children see this as a source of power and strength and, thus, will imitate such a role. From my perspective, both strength and control are factors in children’s pretend play because parents are in control of the home and children’s behavior.

In some instances of pretend play, some children are trying to understand violence at home, which is very confusing to them. They act out these scenarios as well, trying to make sense of the confusion. Children also use pretend play as a way of making sense of their families’ experiences with other people who are in positions of authority. I remember the first time that I was placed in “jail” by the children in my classroom. The children told me that I was breaking the law for going too fast on the bike that I was riding at that time. For them, this play gave them the authority to place me in jail for breaking the law. For some of the children, this play was based on prior knowledge that they had of a police officer — and not all children see police as protectors. For some, police are the “bad guys” who take their parents away.

Other models of strength and control — besides real-life people — are the characters and superheros from television, videos, comics, and so on. What is nice about these characters is that they give children an avenue for expressing their inner strength and need for control through a pretend character that is not as scary as a real person would be if shown in the wrong way. Like many other preschool teachers, I can look back at my career and can name every superhero that was invented. It seems that, each year, a new group of children brings a different superhero to school but the interest in gun and power-oriented play remains the same.

Reflecting on My Classroom Experiences

Over the years, I tried various ways of dealing with gun play. First, I simply tried to ban it by telling children that we don’t play guns at school and that guns hurt and kill.



Throughout preschool, children’s pretend play becomes more imaginative and more complex, involving more props and scenarios with multiple roles.

However, this method wasn’t helpful for the children or for me; it only added to my frustration level as children continued to engage in this type of power-oriented play. I felt like I was turning into the classroom police officer, always on the lookout for anyone making a gun out of the materials in the classroom. Rather than comply with my rule, the children came up with different ways to hide their

“In the HighScope approach, both children and adults contribute to the verbal and nonverbal dialogue that is created when adults play and communicate with the children.”

FREE Early Childhood Teaching Resources

Activities and strategies for educating young children

In-depth articles about early childhood education research

Numerous videos demonstrating the HighScope approach



SIGN UP NOW!

highscope.org/membership

pretend play, quickly changing roles and props if I was close by so that it would seem as if they were not really playing guns. I was often told by the children, “It’s not a gun — it’s a water shooter.” Or children would hide the objects they were shooting with behind their backs in an effort to conceal them. At the same time, I noticed that some children became really upset when other children called them “bad guys” or pretended to shoot them. This made me want to ban this type of play all the more because I didn’t want children to be upset.

The next strategy I tried was to ignore the classroom gun play, allowing children to engage in play scenarios with toys they pretended were guns but not doing much to support this type of play. But, in the grand scheme of things, this didn’t work either; I still wasn’t comfortable with their actions and play scenarios around gun play because I saw that as a form of violence.

It was around this time that I attended a HighScope workshop on adult-child interactions. This gave me the information I needed to reexamine my teaching practices and beliefs so I could look at them through a fresh lens. In the HighScope approach, both children and adults contribute to the verbal and nonverbal dialogue that is created when adults play and communicate with the children. Achieving this balance may require adults to make changes in their own styles of working with children. In their interactions with children, adults are often used to being “in control,” and it may be difficult for them to learn to share control. Having learned that it is important for adults to share control with children, I recognized that my previous attempt at banning gun play was my way of trying to be in control of the children’s play so I would feel more comfortable. I also recognized that when I was ignoring the gun play, it seemed as if I were a bystander in their play and only getting involved to restore order, which also wasn’t helping children extend their pretend-play scenarios.

So I decided that I would momentarily set aside my issues with gun and superhero play and, instead, look at what it means to children to be involved in this type of play. Since this type of play is really just a form of pretend play, I realized I had to do some research about how pretend play develops.

Reflecting on Gun and Superhero Play

HighScope is a strong proponent of the idea that play is a child’s work. Children play because it is pleasurable; play is an activity in which they are free to make choices and discover new things. Pretend play involves imitation and imagination. The youngest children watch and then imitate the actions and sounds of people, animals, and objects in their environment. In early preschool, they begin to take on the roles of characters. Children progress from playing alongside others to playing with others. Their pretend play becomes more imaginative and involves props and increasingly complex

“Learning how children’s pretend play develops over time gave me a new perspective on what was happening with the children in my classroom and helped me work through my own difficulties with superhero and gun play.”

scenarios with multiple roles. They dramatize familiar stories and invent their own. I realized that by trying to change the children’s play, I was not providing a supportive climate in which adults and children share control of the learning process. Learning how children’s pretend play develops over time gave me a new perspective on what was happening with the children in my classroom and helped me work through my difficulties with superhero and gun play.



To support children’s play, adults use the materials in the same way as the children are using them.

To help me better understand children’s play, I began to take anecdotal notes on what children were doing during work time and outside time. I found that the play scenarios almost always involved a superhero who needed to save someone or a villain who needed to be defeated. I also noticed

some children “hunting” for food by lining up the plastic animals, using the blocks as guns, and then taking the animals to the house area and putting them in the stove for dinner. I made this observation after one child went on a hunting trip with his father. The focus wasn’t on the use of the pretend gun to hurt someone but more about using the pretend gun to carry out the child’s story line.

I also observed that children who were involved in superhero play were not moving into more complex play or highly developed scenarios. This made me wonder whether children were “stuck” in their play and couldn’t move on because they didn’t have real-life experiences to draw from. The only experiences they had were watching television or playing video games, and these experiences were not enough to help them progress to more complex play. Now that I had more information about what the children were doing, I was able to think about how I would support their play and story lines.

Developing a Plan to Support Children’s Play

My anecdotal notes, along with an understanding as to how teachers support children and share control in children’s play, gave my coteacher and me the necessary information we needed to make a plan. Our first plan of action was to add extra materials into the classroom to support superhero and other types of action play. We went to our local fabric store and bought several yards of fabric from which

“My anecdotal notes, along with an understanding as to how teachers support children and share control in children's play, gave my coteacher and me the necessary information we needed to make a plan.”

children could make capes. This gave children a way to act out stories and scenarios of superheroes with capes.

Next, my coteacher and I wanted to strengthen our adult-child interactions, so we also got involved in the play — forming authentic partnerships with children and supporting their intentional play. After making this commitment to support children's play, my coteacher and I used the materials the same way as the children were using them, and we allowed the children to direct the play; that is, they were the ones in control. As the children moved from imitating the actions of others, their play became increasingly more complex. As the children defined who and what they were, they began to add many details to the play. They took the chairs and lined them up for their “batmobile,” used colored gloves as shields to help defeat the bad guys, and covered the table with the fabric and hid underneath while “spying” on the bad guys. We continued to support the children's new play ideas by adding extra materials such as foam, foil, paper towel tubes, and tape to the woodworking area, and the children transformed these materials into swords, spy binoculars, and reflective wrist bands. While making these play accessories, the children had opportunities to solve problems related to materials and social situations.



Adults support children's intentional play by allowing children to direct the play.

The next part of our plan had to do with problem solving. When children expressed that they didn't want to be shot at or be the “bad guy,” we took a problem-solving approach to resolve these conflicts. For example, during one particular work time in the block area, a child (Mark) picked up the block, pointed it at another child, and said, “Bang, bang, you're dead, bad guy.” The

other child (Raymond) immediately started crying and said, “I don't like you shooting me!” I approached the situation calmly and said, “It looks like we have a problem — I wonder what the problem is?” After gathering the information, I said, “Mark, it sounds like Raymond doesn't like you pretending to shoot him. What can we do to solve this problem?” Mark then said, “I know — I can make a target in the art area to shoot at like I did yesterday!” This gave Mark a chance to continue his gun play in a nonthreatening way. I encouraged the children to go to the art area and make a target that they could



Kenneth Sherman is a HighScope Training Specialist and a former HighScope Demonstration Preschool teacher. With more than 24 years of experience teaching young children in a preschool setting, Kenneth has served as a program director, center director, mentor, teacher, coach, and trainer. In addition, he has facilitated workshops at local, state, national, and international conferences as well as online courses and developed customized trainings for teachers. Kenneth has a bachelor's degree in sociology and an associate's degree in early childhood development.

tape on the wall to shoot at. Through this process, the children learned to understand their own feelings and interests, as well as the needs of others. They learned the real power of expressing their own needs and having others respond.

• • •

Powerful characters appeal both to children's need to feel strong and in control of their lives. A major concern for educators is the observed increase of purely imitative, aggressive play as opposed to rich, imaginative play; that is, children may merely reenact scenes that have been embedded in their minds, rather than elaborating on these scenarios to add details and interactions relevant to their own interests and concerns about power. This issue's "Classroom Hints" article provides preschool educators with strategies to help children feel empowered and in control and extend their pretend-play scenarios.

Reference:

Evans, B. (1995). From superheroes to problem solving. *HighScope Extensions*, 9(5), 47–52.

CLASSROOM HINTS

Supporting Children's Pretend-Play Scenarios

BY KENNETH SHERMAN



Children must act out and play with concepts and ideas in order to make sense of their world. Children also seek ways to feel powerful. Power and control are important themes in children's play, and engaging in gun and superhero play is just one way children act out these themes. Adults can use the following strategies to support, extend, encourage, and work with children to feel successful, safe, and powerful during these playful investigations.

Support Strategies

- Observe children's play over time and document your observations of gun and superhero play so you can evaluate what is happening in the play as it unfolds. Watch for particular actions and details that seem important to young children. Observe how the play changes or develops over time. What variations occur with the characters, the story, or the materials? For example, my coteacher noticed that one child's plan was to be a Transformer® every day, which often resulted in him running from the house area to the stairs but with no real story line. During planning time, my coteacher asked him what materials he would need to become a Transformer and he said, "The tinker toys." This helped support his play and helped him think of a new way to incorporate materials into the play.
 - To encourage more complex play, add a variety of related materials. Be flexible in how and where these materials can be used. During work time, my coteacher and I noticed that children were making superhero capes out of the baby blankets. We decided to go to our local fabric store and buy a yard of material to have in the classroom to see what children would do with it. Over time, we ended up with eight one-yard pieces of fabric that supported the children's superhero play. Next we included sequined gloves in various colors. The white ones turned into "ice" power, and the red ones turned into "fire" power. We also included recycled materials in the art area, such as paper towel tubes and toilet paper rolls, old pop bottles, and scraps of materials. What we noticed is that the children started to use these items to support their play. The paper towel tubes became swords that could be used to defeat the aliens. The pop bottles were used as oxygen tanks that the children taped together and placed on their backs. And the scrap materials became superhero capes and table coverings for their "spy" hideouts.
 - Participate as a respectful partner in pretend play, taking cues from the children. When coplaying with children, remember these guidelines:
 - Follow the theme and content set by the players.
 - Offer suggestions within the pretend situation.
 - Respect children's responses to your ideas.
- To give an example, as a way of entering children's play, I got a block and imitated children's actions of shooting at the targets on the wall. I watched and listened and made the same sounds the children were making. This allowed me to enter into their play without being intrusive.
- Add to the complexity of play by offering ideas for extensions. If you find that children's gun play is becoming "stuck," you may want to try extending it. Staying within your role as a player, try posing a problem to extend children's thinking. When making suggestions for play extensions, remember to respect children's responses to your ideas. For example,

when one child was running from one end of the classroom to the other and pretending to shoot things, we asked him who he was shooting at. He replied, “The bad guy.” I asked him where the bad guy’s hideout was so I could track him down. This posed a new question and extended the child’s thinking beyond shooting as we started to investigate where the “bad guy’s hideout” would be.

- When children are making plans for superhero or gun play, encourage them to think about what they will need, whom they will play with, how the story will work, and other details that will extend their thought process. Accept their play themes, even if you would prefer they choose other ones.
- Look for natural openings in the play and join children in their play. As you do so, be sure to join in on children’s physical and developmental levels and respond to children’s conversational leads. For example, when Sarah was sitting in the block area playing on the floor with the blocks, I sat down beside her, started playing with blocks that I had brought over, and began imitating what she was doing. She then asked me if I would like to build with her. This allowed me to join her play in a way that was not disruptive.
- Relate suggestions and questions directly to what the child is doing or saying (for example, “You’re spinning the stick around — I wonder what happens when you do that?”).
- Be honest and direct about roles you are not comfortable with and actions that you feel are harmful (for example, “I know you want me to shoot the bad guy, but I don’t like to shoot things or people, even in pretend. What else can I do to help you save the good guy?”).
- Whenever possible, link feelings to actions (for example, “So, you are trying to get the bad guys. They must have done something that made you feel upset or angry”).
- When children recall what they did in their play, listen and encourage them to elaborate on details of the play and to talk about their emotions by commenting and asking questions, as described in the previous strategy.
- Use the six steps in conflict resolution consistently:
 1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.
 2. Acknowledge children’s feelings.
 3. Gather information.
 4. Restate the problem.
 5. Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together.
 6. Be prepared to give follow-up support.

Through this process, children learn to express their own feelings, ideas, and needs. They also start becoming sensitive to the feelings, interests, and needs of others. They learn the real power of expressing their needs and having others respond. They also experience the feelings of control and competence that come from contributing to the resolution of a problem.

- Interact with children as they become involved in aggressive superhero or weapon play, and help children transform imitative play into imaginative play; that is, find ways to help them build on their play, such as pointing out materials they might use.
- As children play with the concepts of power, danger, rescue, strength, and overcoming various obstacles, acknowledge their power within the play. You can do this by commenting on children’s pretend-play scenarios. For example, you might say, “Steven, I heard you say that you saved the day — you must be very strong to save all the people from the bad guy.”
- In addition to providing stimulating materials, adults can encourage the development of play by taking part themselves in the pretend-play scenarios children create. When entering a play situation, be mindful of the need to allow children to retain control of their play.

Using these tips and support strategies will help children learn valuable social skills and also meet their needs for power and control — the same needs they are expressing through gun and superhero play.



TRAINER-TO-TRAINER

Making a Commitment to Supporting Children's Pretend Play

BY KENNETH SHERMAN



In supportive adult-child interactions, adults make a commitment to supporting children's play, because it is through play that children engage with their world. In active learning settings, adults observe and understand the complexity of children's play and are themselves playful with children. This 60-minute workshop will help participants understand superhero and gun play and children's developmental need to be in control of their play to make sense of the world around them.

What you will need:

- Chart paper
- HighScope Web Clip "Using materials together" (in the Preschool Adult-Child Interactions category at HighScope's Web Clips)
- Scenario cards made ahead of time from typical gun play concerns teachers encounter or from this issue's feature article and "Classroom Hints" scenarios
- Paper and pens for each table group

Objectives

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to

- Identify ways in which children feel a sense of control during their day and why this sense of control is important for their social and emotional development
- Identify strategies for supporting children's pretend play

Opening Activity

(15–20 minutes)

1. Have participants think about a time in their life when they were not in control of what was going on around them and ask them to share it with others at their table. Ask them to discuss the following questions:
 - a. What feelings did not being in control create for you?
 - b. Could you do anything about the situation? If so, what did you do about it?
2. After about 10 minutes, facilitate a group discussion. What will most likely emerge from the discussion is that we all need to feel in control of our situations and our lives. Children also need to feel in control, and one way they do this is through pretend play. During pretend play, children can initiate their own activities, which, in turn, helps them feel in control. Emphasize to participants that play is what children do best and that superhero play and gun play are common themes that children engage in during pretend play. When children are the ones making choices about their time and activities, they tend to be more engaged and focused and want to repeat the play. This is why activities and routines that embed active learning, shared control, and intrinsic motivation work so well with young children.

Central Ideas and Practice

(20–30 minutes)

3. Ask participants the following questions:
 - a. What behaviors do children exhibit when they don't have any control over their day?
 - b. When do children have control in their daily lives?
 - c. When do children have control in the classroom?

Talk with participants about how adults are often accustomed to being in control in their interactions with children and how it may be difficult for adults to learn to share control.

Trainer-to-Trainer, continued

4. Have participants think about their hobbies or things they enjoy doing and the reasons why.
 - a. In table groups, ask participants to share their hobbies/interests. What will most likely emerge from the discussion is that the things that we love to do the most are those that we choose to do, feel confident about doing, enjoy, have a sense of control over, give us a sense of competence, and are intrinsically motivated to do.
 - b. After a few minutes, write on chart paper the five factors of intrinsic motivation: *enjoyment, interest, sense of control, probability of success, and feelings of competence and self-confidence*. Ask participants to think about a child in their classroom who might be repeating superhero and gun play and how that play relates to the five factors of intrinsic motivation.
5. Discuss the guidelines presented in the “Classroom Hints” section on participating as a respectful partner in pretend play. When coplaying with children, remember these support strategies:
 - Join children’s play on the children’s level.
 - Participate as a partner in children’s pretend play, and play in parallel with them.
 - Look for natural play openings.
 - Suggest new ideas within ongoing play situations.
 - Refer one play to another.
6. Show the Web Clip “Using materials together.” Have participants refer to the support strategies in the “Classroom Hints” section before viewing the clip, and ask them to look for how the teacher follows the child’s lead and is a partner in the child’s play. Discuss responses as a whole group.
7. Pass out the scenario cards to each table group. Have participants read through the scenarios and underline the strategies used while referring back to the “Classroom Hints” section.

Application

(10 minutes)

8. Ask participants to think about a difficult play theme they see in their classroom that they’d like to learn how to handle. Have participants write out one of the difficult play situations they’ve experienced in the classroom,

and identify a strategy they could use to help them with that situation. (Participants should refer back to the strategies in the “Classroom Hints” section.)

Implementation Plan

(5 minutes)

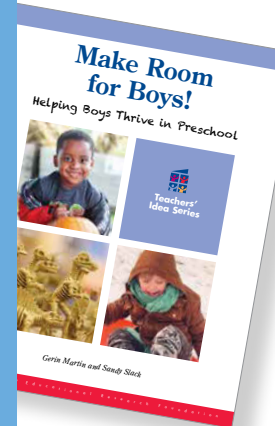
9. Have participants think about which of the interaction support strategies is the most challenging for them. Ask them to write down one thing they could do to practice this strategy.



A Goodness of Fit Challenge
 Make your classroom joyful, not frustrating!

Only \$30

- Place your order online at highscope.org
- Get a FREE excerpt when you email info@highscope.org with the subject line: **Boys**


P1427

ASK US

BY KENNETH SHERMAN

I see children turning any object at all in the classroom into a gun. How can I get children to think more creatively about materials in their pretend play?

— A Preschool Teacher

This is a great question, and one I hear a lot. The first thing to do is to really understand what young children are doing so that we can be a partner in their play and not just a spectator. In the HighScope Curriculum, we have come to adopt the acronym SOUL, which stands for silence, observing, understanding, and listening:

- **Silence** — Remain silent until you know what children are doing.
- **Observing** — Observe as children work, to understand their actions.
- **Understanding** — Think about what you see children doing to fully understand what is happening.
- **Listening** — Listen to what children are saying, so that you know what is important to them.

Relate suggestions and questions directly to what the child is doing or saying (for example, “You are waving that block around really fast — I wonder what happens when you do that?”).

Work side by side with children, using the same materials in similar fashion. Become a “partner” by taking turns with them during play, matching the level of complexity of their play, and generally following their lead.

Using these strategies has really helped me to understand young children’s play and to be more supportive to children.



Visit us online at highscope.org

NEWS BRIEFS

Final Issue of *Extensions*

This is the final issue of HighScope *Extensions*. You can continue to read curriculum-based articles from HighScope (like the ones you have been reading in *Extensions*) in *ReSource*, HighScope's biannual magazine. *ReSource* will be published in both online and print formats. You can also access an archive of previous *Extensions* issues at highscope.org/membership.

HighScope Expands Leadership With Chief Operating Officer Armen Hratchian



HighScope has named Armen Hratchian Chief Operating Officer. In this new role, Armen will work across the organization to advance the foundation's goals of expanding access to high-quality early childhood education for children locally and globally.

"We are happy to welcome Armen Hratchian to the HighScope leadership team. I'm confident he will make an immediate, positive impact on our organization's operations," said HighScope President Cheryl Polk, PhD. "Armen's achievements in successfully leading high-impact initiatives and teams have prepared him to strategically support the foundation and our work of advancing the early childhood field."

Read more at highscope.org.

HighScope Event Raises Awareness on Impact of Childhood Adversity and Trauma

HighScope's commitment to providing high-quality education for young children expands to understanding the root cause of learning behaviors. In November, HighScope hosted a luncheon at the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, featuring Dr. Nadine Burke Harris. In this thought-provoking presentation, Dr. Harris shared research on how experiencing adversity and trauma in childhood impacts children's health and behaviors.



As CEO of the Center for Youth Wellness, Dr. Harris is an expert on how trauma affects children's developing bodies and brains. Instead of treating only symptoms, Dr. Harris seeks to address the stressful experiences that can make children sick. Research shows that facing adversity in childhood is prevalent among all races and social classes and

that repeated exposure to toxic levels of stress in childhood can increase health and learning behavior problems such as asthma, drug and alcohol abuse, cardiac disease, and ADHD.

Understanding the effects of early adversity is critical to educators and caregivers working with children. This luncheon brought together individuals from significant organizations in the Detroit area including Enroll Detroit, Excellent Schools Detroit, Impact Detroit, Learning Care Group, Oakland County School District, Oakland University, The Skillman Foundation, UniDetroit, United Way, and Wayne Regional Educational Service Agency (WRESA) to raise awareness for the need to develop trauma-informed communities. This increased awareness brings to light the importance of screening young children for trauma, which can lead to early detection and intervention and, eventually, healing.

To learn more about the important work that Dr. Harris has accomplished since opening the Center for Youth Wellness in 2011, visit centerforyouthwellness.org.

HighScope Begins Training Providers in Detroit Neighborhood

HighScope received a \$367,000 grant over three years from the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation. A part of this grant will be used for training and coaching child care providers. The kickoff training was held November 5 at Development Centers, Inc., in Detroit. Thirty-two providers from child care centers and family child care homes attended this first training, which focused on planning and recall. HighScope thanks Discount School Supply® for donating raffle prizes for the kickoff.

HighScope Curriculum and Assessment Approved in Ohio

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has recently approved HighScope as a provider of curriculum, online training, and child assessment for any provider seeking to serve families eligible to receive publicly funded child care (PFCC). HighScope's curriculum products and assessment tools are aligned to early learning standards and can be used with any developmentally appropriate curriculum. HighScope is ready to support educators in Ohio in providing research-based and child-focused early childhood education. For more information about HighScope's curriculum and assessments approved for the Ohio Step Up to Quality Program, contact us today at 800.587.5639 or visit highscope.org/ohio.

News Briefs, continued

HighScope China Hold Its First Annual Conference in Beijing

The first annual HighScope China Conference and the inauguration ceremony of the HighScope China National Institute were held successfully in Beijing from October 27–28, 2016. More than 300 early childhood educators participated in the event, including the honorary chairman of the Chinese Society of Education, Professor Minyuan Gu, and the former superintendent of the Shanghai Municipal Education Department, Houqin Yin. Liyuan Huo of Beijing Normal University, a well-known researcher in China on the HighScope Curriculum, was named president of the HighScope China National Institute. Professor Sean Zhang, the President of Ambright Education Group, was named as the president of the board of the institute, while HighScope president Cheryl Polk and board members Sue Bredekamp and Deborah Stipek were appointed to the board as well.

HighScope Indonesia Celebrates Its 20th Anniversary

On October 6–7, 2016, HighScope Indonesia celebrated its 20th anniversary as the culmination of HighScope Indonesia’s sixth annual conference. “Redesigning the World — The Journey” was the topic for the annual conference; “Blueprint of Our Lives — Before, Now, Future — Our Journey” was the theme of the anniversary celebration, which was attended by 500 teachers and 200 staff from 11 HighScope Indonesia schools at the BlackBox Theater in Jakarta. “HighScope Indonesia started in 1996, in a rented house, with eight students and six teachers. Parents then asked us to open the elementary, then middle, and, finally, high school programs. Here we are now, continuing the programs with confidence and doing the work for the best of Indonesian children. I believe that we must have the optimism to continue the existence and growth of HighScope,” said the HighScope Indonesia founder and CEO, Antarina SF Amir.

HighScope Announces Keynote Speakers for Its 2017 International Conference

The annual HighScope International Conference is a gathering of early childhood educators, administrators, and researchers at the Renaissance Center in downtown Detroit. The 2017 conference will be held April 19–21.

HighScope is excited to announce this year's keynote speakers. Paul Tough will speak about “Helping Children Succeed.” Paul Tough is the *New York Times* best-selling author of *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the*

Hidden Power of Character and, most recently, *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why*. He is also a contributing writer to the *New York Times Magazine*, where he has written extensively about education, parenting, poverty, and politics.



Ruby Bridges is an esteemed Civil Rights icon and author of *Through My Eyes*, a memoir account of her childhood experience as the first African-American student to desegregate a formerly all-white school in New Orleans. In 1999, she established the Ruby

Bridges Foundation to promote the values of tolerance, respect, and appreciation of all differences. Through education and inspiration, the foundation seeks to end racism and prejudice.

With more than 100 sessions to choose from, participants at the HighScope International Conference come from around the country and around the world to engage in active learning, which is the heart of the HighScope Curriculum, and to gain new knowledge to improve their programs. Registration for the 2017 conference opens in February. Get all the details at highscope.org/2017conference.

Enroll Now for Online Courses Starting in January

Visit highscope.org/training for start dates and full details. Most courses are eligible for clock hours, and Michigan residents can earn SCECHs.