



CITE
Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators



COALITION OF INFANT/TODDLER EDUCATORS PRESENTS:

38th Annual Conference

Less Panic, More Disco

Saturday, April 15, 2023 ~ 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. ~ Kennedy Center ~ Willingboro, NJ

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Children

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Dear Members, Sponsors, and Colleagues,

In my first year as President of the Coalition of Infant and Toddler Educators (CITE), I recognize it has never been more important for those working in infant and toddler education to have an opportunity for connectedness.

It is thrilling to be back in person for CITE's annual conference as we mark its 38th year. This year's theme, "Less Panic, More Disco," couldn't be more fitting as an end to the pandemic is in sight. Infant and toddler educators are often drawn to this field's responsive relationships, rapid development, and foundational nature. Research shows that the holding, hugging, and moments of closeness that infant and toddler educators do are critically important. CITE understands the decision to be an infant/toddler educator is a career choice, not a steppingstone to other positions, and we are here to support you on your career path.

Infant and toddler educators show up every single day. You are instrumental in the beautiful process of rapid development and are responsible for facilitating the development journey with each child in your care. You know the essential nature of the first three years of development and where an educator can make the most impact. You are setting children up for success for the rest of their lives, and being that safe person for them, building resilience.

CITE is committed to supporting your knowledge and growth, and we are here to "check in" with you. The conference is dedicated to advancing knowledge about infant and toddler development and providing a space for educators to continually learn from one another by bringing together individuals with different degrees, credentials, years of experience, and breadth of knowledge. We understand the importance of interacting with others connected to the field and strive to build connectedness within the discipline.

I hope to meet you on April 15th, connect over our shared passion, and spark the joy of being an infant and toddler educator.

Best Regards,

Rebekka Zydell

President



Conference Schedule

Registration, Breakfast, and Exhibits	9:00 am – 9:30 am
Welcome and Keynote	9:30 am – 11:00 am
Morning Sessions	11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Lunch and Exhibits	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Afternoon Sessions	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Conference Fees Include:

- 2023-2024 Annual Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators Membership (with access to free workshops)
- Keynote speaker, breakfast, lunch, workshops, exhibits
- Earn up to 5 hours of professional development (clock hours)

2023 Conference Terms and Fees:

- Please note that payment will be electronic and be transmitted via PayPal. Should you be registering a large group or need to make arrangements for another form of payment, please contact treasurer@njcite.org.
- Vouchers will not be accepted. Returned checks will be charged a \$35 fee. Conference Fees are final upon receipt, and refunds will not be issued.

Plan for Positive Outcomes

- Allow enough time for traffic or treat yourself and stay at one of the local accommodations, so you can sleep in and still be among the first to arrive.
- Arrive early to your workshop, but be thoughtful, save the back row in each room just in case late arrivals need to find a seat.
- Dress in layers, as room temperatures may fluctuate.
- Please turn off your cell phones! If work requires your access, please use "vibrate" mode and leave the presentation if you must return a text or call.
- Please be courteous to your presenters and fellow attendees; even whispered conversations impact and elevate noise levels, distracting others from their own learning.
- Workshop placement is made in the order received. Register early to access your first-choice workshop.
- Room capacities are limited due to fire safety regulations. Your name tag will reflect the room of your workshop choice and where we should expect to locate you in an emergency.

About Us

Who We Are

The Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE) is dedicated to protecting the neuro architecture that only occurs from birth to age three. Since 1984, our focus has been on social and emotional development. We are a membership driven 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Led by professionals from a variety of roles supporting infants, toddlers, and families across New Jersey, CITE is an all-volunteer organization.

What We Do

Share best practices supporting quality care measures through social media and by:

- Administering the *New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential* to support provider access to six college credit hours of infant/mental health study with worksite mentoring.
- Advocating with policy makers and stakeholders to drive higher quality infant/toddler care through provider and parent education.
- Building regional professional learning communities with membership meetings.
- Convening an annual statewide infant/toddler professional development conference.
- Sponsoring the June Handler Award for a provider using the *New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential* to support infants and toddlers in care and to honor our co-founder.

Our Goals

To elevate the professional role, educational profile, and compensation level for those caring for infants and toddlers outside their homes.

Inform parents, as infants' first educators, about infant development and share ways to support their healthy growth.

We seek and share quality measures in choosing child care providers.



Our History

This year, the Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE) is celebrating our 39th Anniversary and we will be celebrating babies and their caregivers who educate them as we have since 1984.

This year, as always, we take time to remember the late Dr. June Moss Handler, as much for her work shaping infancy education, as for co-founding CITE. Her demonstrated respect for diversity was legendary, and she demanded social justice in both small and mighty ways. In 1962 she convinced Crayola to let go of their inappropriately named “flesh” colored crayon, and they replaced it with various shades of “peach”.

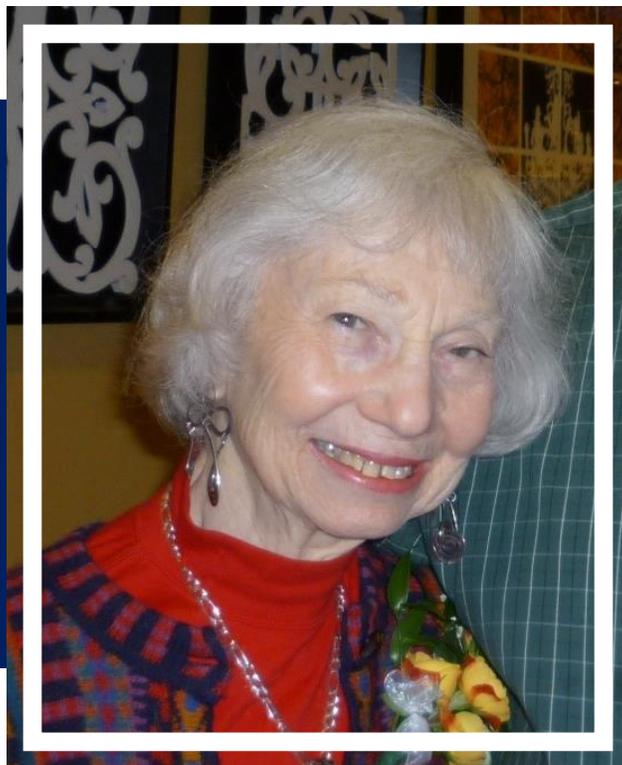
Under Dr. Handler’s leadership, CITE set the standards for the initial licensing of 466 infant/toddler care centers throughout NJ while spending four decades training hundreds of infant/toddler caregivers in responsive and developmentally appropriate best practices.

Since our own infancy in 1984, CITE has become the lead agency in advocating for and affecting public policy for the rights of our zero to three population. Thanks to our advocacy, and targeted public funding, we are no longer alone in our work or in the infancy field.

- We have, through collaboration with the New Jersey Council for Young Children, participated in the development of the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards*. At previous conferences, CITE delivered these to conference attendees and now they are available and accessible to all child care sites at <https://www.njcite.org/professional-resources/>
- New Jersey now has full time Infant/Toddler Specialists in each county measuring and improving the quality of care, in infant and toddler rooms at centers and in registered family child care homes, through training and coaching.
- We have quality improvement specialists fearlessly engaging and enrolling programs to become quality rated sites and we have teams to support them to a rating achievement of up to five quality stars through the Grow NJ Kids self-assessment process.
- We have full time and per diem teams with 90% or higher reliability using and sharing Environmental Rating Scales Institute (ERSI) tools.



It is not about
what you are
doing for
babies,



but why you
are doing
what you are
doing.

DR. JUNE MOSS HANDLER

What's Next

And, now 39 years after Dr. Handler began teaching about respectful and positive interactions at the first Babyland child care center, in a Newark public housing high rise, we have 4,010 licensed centers serving infants and toddlers statewide. A noble 706 of them have stepped forward to enroll in Grow NJ Kids, and among these, 294 have achieved a star rating by 2022 as a result of: self-assessment, reflection, training, and technical assistance. Family child care providers have grown to 1,230 statewide, and many of them have self-assessed and grown their quality practices to access three-star quality ratings and higher.

There's more to be done in 2023 as CITE continues to advocate to provide New Jersey's infancy workforce no cost or scholarship access to the necessary tiered learning from CDA and beyond. This includes, at minimum, earning the *New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential*, the evidence-based model of supporting infants and toddlers in care. By building accessible communities of learners focused on protecting the developing infant brain through emotional readiness and respectful environments, we can arrive at quality ratings. If we focus on growing the professional abilities of our infant/toddler Neuro Architects, just as Dr. Handler first showed us, everything else will follow.

In 2013, CITE introduced the June Handler Award which recognizes an individual who has earned the *New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential*, demonstrates continued advocacy for infants and toddlers, and supports the professional development of others. The Award is presented at our annual conference. CITE Board Members once again thank past CITE presidents Terri Buccarelli and Barbara Kiley (via the Ayco Charitable Foundation in memory of Billee R. Kiley) for their generous donations to fully fund the Award.

CITE has established the June Moss Handler Memorial Fund with contributions to the fund being designated to assist individuals to attain the *New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credentials*. You may access the fund online at www.njcite.org to make a tax-deductible donation.

We rely on your membership, this conference, and your donations to further our unpaid advocacy and the ability to express our honest reflections.

“

I always get to
where I'm
going by
walking away
from where I
have been.

WINNIE THE POOH





Selecting Your Workshops

In an effort to cover all the interests of our attendees, we have addressed the following *New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential* Quality Key Indicators:

- Infant Mental Health:
Social/Emotional Well Being
- Child Development
- Curriculum
- Environment
- Family & Community
- Health & Safety
- Nutrition
- Professionalism

The *New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential* Key Indicators or Quality for each workshop is listed in blue after the workshop title.

Further, for those seeking the Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH-E)[®], we

have collaborated with the New Jersey Association for Infant Mental Health (NJ-AIMH) to align our workshops with the Endorsement[®] Competencies. The credit, IMH-E[®], appears behind the name of each endorsed presenter. Each workshop offers two clock hours on one Competency, which is noted in green text. To find out more about NJ-AIMH please visit them at nj-aimh.org where you can also learn more about the Infant Mental Health Endorsement[®].

For those enrolled in the Grow NJ Kids Rating and Improvement System, the related GNJK Self-Assessment Tool category is listed for each workshop in orange.

We have also listed the competency level of each of the presentations.

Level I

Individuals at this level are at the first step in the commitment to a career in early care and education; they contribute and assure the maintenance of a safe and nurturing environment in which infants and toddlers learn and develop; they learn about infants, toddlers, and their families through participation in professional development activities; they receive ongoing supervision from someone at a higher level.

Level II

Individuals at this level consistently exhibit practices grounded in theories of growth, development, and learning; they work cooperatively with others, establish good mentoring relationships, and sometimes provide direct supervision; they have participated in formal study leading to a degree and/or certificate and have refined their knowledge through guided and reflective experiences with infants, toddlers, and families.

Level III

Individuals at this level have extensive academic preparation and experience in the field; they can be responsible for mentoring those at Levels I and II; they possess the ability to provide new resources in the development of theory and innovative practice; they demonstrate a mastery of developmentally appropriate practices which allow them to mentor peers as well as persons at other levels.

Keynote Address

Elizabeth Williams-Riley

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Elizabeth Williams-Riley is the President & CEO of D.A.S.H. Consulting LLC, whose primary focus is *Developing Assets for Successful Habits™* (D.A.S.H.). D.A.S.H. works with clients to develop comprehensive inclusion, diversity, and equity learning, critical analysis, strategy-building, strategy execution, coaching, and planning. Elizabeth is the former President and CEO of the American Conference on Diversity and the National Vice President of Programs for the National Conference for Community and Justice.

Elizabeth is an award-winning diversity and inclusion professional. Mrs. Williams-Riley is the 2016 NAACP *Corporate Community Service Award Winner* and received the South Asian Business Association Network (SABAN) *Chairman's Award*. Girl Scouts of America named her *2015 Woman of Distinction*. In 2013, she was Diversity Journal's *Woman Worth Watching*.

She is a connector and helps individuals navigate the complexities of living in an increasingly diverse society. She boldly takes the nation's unfinished business of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism as a practitioner. Her approach to dismantling systemic and institutional oppression is charismatic, engaging, and above all, thought-provoking. Since 1995, her work has transcended from playgrounds to boardrooms and now neon lights on Broadway. To read and learn more, visit www.dashriley.com.



Seeing The Promise, Not The Problem

Eliminating deficit thinking reveals the promise in us all. The question is – what are you willing to do to keep moving forward? Will you dance or stand and watch others? We can no longer sit on the sidelines and watch or wonder what's happening. We have to join in and make things happen.

There's promise in knowing the rhythms and harmonies of our journeys. To fully appreciate this, it calls all of us into leadership and requires us to value our vastly different lived and learned experiences.

Elizabeth Williams-Riley will focus on setting the conditions to thrive together. As we face the legacy of human relations across multiple identities, we must acknowledge that something much more important is at stake than fear. We all need brave spaces to thrive.



The question is not how to survive, but how to thrive with passion, compassion, humor & style.

MAYA ANGELOU

Morning Workshops

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

1. Tiempo Libre Cuerpos en Movimiento (Tummy Time for Busy Bodies)

Gloria Giraldo

Infant Toddler Specialist

(Level I, II)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Child Development](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Curriculum and Learning Environment](#)

Los niños aprenden a través de continua relación con las personas y la exploración de los materiales en su mundo inmediato; como sostiene y acciona lo objetos; y como se relaciona y se comunica con otros. Es durante el tiempo libre que los niños aprenden a moverse con propósito. Las experiencias durante la edad temprana son óptimas para el desarrollo del cerebro en la medida de que el “cuerpo construye el cerebro.” Los profesionales que trabajan con bebés y niños pequeños necesitan concientizarse acerca de la importancia del “tiempo libre” y “tiempo boca arriba” en particular. En esta presentación revisaremos técnicas apropiadas para fomentar el desarrollo físico. Los participantes podrán elaborar un plan de acción.

2. Lessons Born from the Pandemic

Jonelle Schnepfer

Lead Infant and Early Childhood

Consultation Specialist, Center for Autism

and Early Childhood Mental Health at

Montclair State University

(Level I, II, III)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Infant Mental Health: Social/Emotional Well-Being](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Curriculum and Learning Environments](#)

Professionals have weathered the two+ years of COVID. Currently, returning to the daily routines and schedules, with pre-pandemic approaches, may not meet the needs of students. To provide felt safety and security, we need to focus on increased self-care integrated into the daily program routines, sharing gratitude and intentional pause or breaks in the responsibilities of both professionals and students.

3. Empowering Parents & Caregivers as their Child's First Teacher

Deepa Srinivasavardan

Director of Early Childhood Initiatives, NJ

Inclusive Child Care Project, SPAN

(Level I, II)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Family and Community](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Family and Community Engagement](#)

Join this session to learn how you can support families and engage them in Early Relational Health – building activities with their children through everyday activities. A plethora of strategies and resources including those from the CDC's “Learn the Signs. Act Early” program and the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices will be shared.

4. **Self-Knowledge: An Exploration into the Heart of Teaching**

Janice Szarko

Shared Services Alliance Coordinator,
Community Coordinated Child Care of
Union County
(Level I, II)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Environment](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Curriculum and Learning Environment](#)

5. **Inclusion: Everyone Belongs Here**

Allyson Mathews

Project Coordinator, NJ Inclusive Child Care
Project, SPAN
(Level I, II, III)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Child Development](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Curriculum and Learning](#)

6. **Director's Track**

Arriving Together: Advancing Quality Care through Effective Workforce Formation

(Level III)

Cynthia Soete, IMH-E®

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Professionalism](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Workforce/Professional Development](#)

[IMH Endorsement® Competency – Professional/Personal Development](#)

It takes self-knowledge to become a teacher and to continue teaching year after year. This workshop takes a look at the reasons we have chosen this profession, the expectations we have, and the ways that we can continue with integrity and a sense of personal wholeness. It is based on the assumption that we need to bring our unique selves to teaching and that methods and curriculum are only part of the task of working with young children.

Join us for an interactive session to learn about the importance of and the need for inclusion in early childhood. Leave with strategies and resources to support young children with disabilities and/or special health care needs and their families. Participants will also engage in an activity to develop a SMART Action Plan to use in their work to support inclusion.

It starts with relationships! Please join us to meet current program leaders who have created a quality rated, dual language, award winning workforce* across multiple sites. Hear from the educators who paved this professional formation pathway for their staff and learn how these relationships shaped their success. Learn about the **New Jersey Infant Toddler Credential** and how to bring your staff across the bridge to this college level coursework through their CDA success and how it easily stacks toward an AA degree. Learn how enrollment in Grow NJ Kids provides funding for this growth.* *Credentialed educators from this site have become June Handler Award recipients which honors their leadership and relational based work as infancy educators.*

Afternoon Workshops

2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

9. Developing Learning Foundations Using Reflective Journaling

Michelle Burress

Family Child Care Business Consultant & Founder, The Childcare Entrepreneur Consultancy

(Level I, II)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality](#)

[Key Indicator – Infant Mental Health:](#)

[Social/Emotional Well-Being](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category](#)

[Safe, Healthy Learning Environments](#)

You are exhausted at the end of your day, aren't you? You wake up early and crash at the end of the day. You put out fires of challenging behavior, your curriculum is not "working", the one-year-old screams at the top of her lungs but can't communicate what she needs. The boys keep fighting over the same toy, and you are a whirlwind of emotions. You can fix this by using reflective journaling. Take that energy you use for these issues and take back control of your business, your littlest clients, and yourself.

10. Good Going! Successful Practices for Toilet Training

Angie DeFazio, IMH-E®

Quality Manager & Program Director of Professional Development

(Level I)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality](#)

[Key Indicator – Child Development](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category](#)

[Curriculum and Learning Environment](#)

[IMH Endorsement® Competency –](#)

[Infant/Very Young Child Development &](#)

[Behavior](#)

This workshop addresses the unique issues that arise when children are toilet learning in two different places by two different sets of people. We will discuss successful practices and how to develop policies for potty-use learning with large groups of children, as well as guidelines for developing productive partnerships with parents.

11. CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early. Developmental Milestones Checklists – An Overview of 2022 Revisions and Updates

Deepa Srinivasavaradan

Director of Early Childhood Initiatives, NJ Inclusive Child Care Project, SPAN

(Level I, II, III)

[New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality](#)

[Key Indicator – Child Development](#)

[Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category](#)

[Family and Community Engagement](#)

Join this session to learn about the Why? Who? What? And How? – of 2022 revisions and updates to the CDC's milestones. Information about key collaborations/activities that are in place or that are being planned in our state to support family-engaged developmental monitoring as well as some NJ-specific resources that were developed to support families will be shared.

12. Creación de Acuerdos: Trabajar Juntos Para Resolver Conflictos (Creating Agreement: Working Together to Resolve Conflict)

Jeannette Mejias
Project Director, Special Education Volunteer Associates, SPAN
(Level I, II, III)

New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Family and Community
Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Family and Community Engagement

Cada relación experimenta conflicto en algún momento. Nuestra respuesta puede marcar la diferencia entre resoluciones exitosas o desafíos continuos. Únase a nosotros para explorar las formas de evitar, minimizar y abordar los conflictos y desarrollar asociaciones sólidas entre familias y educadores.

13. In Our Hands and With Our Words

Rhonda Ciccone Hessler
Infant Toddler Specialist
Union County at Community Coordinated Child Care Union County
(Level I, II)

New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Curriculum
Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Curriculum and Learning Environment

Are your conversations with babies a 3 star or 7 star interactions? Come find out and build your capacity for ITERS 3 reliability with competencies in language, communication and even math! We will delve deep in Language and Math ITERS 3 items to support your best teaching practices. Come willing to explore this equation: What I Know + What I Do + The Way I Am with Babies = Relational Growth/Meaningful Conversations/Quality Care.

**14. Director's Track
Team Building Strategies for Infant/Toddler Professionals**

Alicia Jenks, IMH-E®
Quality Manager
Community Coordinated Child Care of Union County
(Level III)

New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential Quality Key Indicator – Professionalism
Grow NJ Kids Self-Assessment Tool Category Administration and Management
IMH Endorsement® Competency – Professional/Personal Development

This workshop will provide hands on activities that team leaders can bring back to their early childhood staff. Participants will be sensitized and explore personality insights, perception, and professional maturity. Connecting will be made between how the professional approach, team building, and communication enhances program quality.

Kennedy Center Information

Directions

From the NJ Turnpike:

Take the NJ Turnpike to Exit 5 West. Proceed west on Elbow Lane. Turn left onto Rancocas Rd./Springside Rancocas Rd. Turn right onto Woodlane Rd. Continue onto Levitt Pkwy. Turn right onto Harrison Dr. Destination will be on the right.

From North via the Garden State Parkway:

Take Exit 98 to merge onto NJ-34 N toward I-195 W/Trenton. Take the right lane to take the I-195 ramp to Trenton. Merge onto NJ-138 W and continue onto I-195 W. Take Exit 6 towards I-95 S. Continue onto NJ Turnpike South and follow above directions.

From South via the Garden State Parkway:

Take Exit 38B for Atlantic City Expressway toward Camden. Merge onto AC Expressway. Take Exit 1B for I-295 N. Follow I-295 N to Exit 45B onto Beverly Rd./Beverly Rancocas Rd. Continue and turn right onto John F. Kennedy Way. Turn left at Harrison Dr. Destination will be on the right.

From Public Transportation:

Connect to River Line from points between Camden, NJ and Trenton, NJ via bus and regional rail to reach Willingboro, NJ. A shuttle will be provided by CITE the morning and afternoon of the conference to help you connect with transportation with ease at the Willingboro River Line Platform!



Overnight Accommodations

Looking for a little get away?

Want to sleep in the morning of the conference?

Check out these local accommodation options!

Sleep Inn

208 Route 130 N.
Cinnaminson, NJ 08077
(856) 829-0717

Aloft Mount Laurel

558 Fellowship Road
Mt. Laurel Township, NJ 08054
(856) 234-1880

Hilton Garden Inn Mount Holly

111 Hancock Lane
Westampton, NJ 08060
(609) 702-1600

Are you ready to register for this year's conference?

Scan this QR code to be taken directly to the Conference Registration page,
or visit the CITE website at www.njcite.org!



Are you unable to attend the conference, but want to become a member?

Scan this QR code to be taken directly to the Conference Registration page,
or visit the CITE website at www.njcite.org!



Please consider donating to CITE!

It is individual donations such as yours that help us complete our mission to promote quality infant and toddler care and education by building collaborations, providing professional development opportunities, support and resources, and by influencing public policy. We are a tax-exempt organization, and your donation qualifies as a tax deduction. Thank you!

Scan this QR code to be taken to PayPal to make a donation.

If you wish to make a donation by another means, please contact Kimberly Bowe, Treasurer, at treasurer@njcite.org.



To Donate:

- 1.) Scan the CITE PayPal QR Code.
- 2.) Enter the dollar amount you are paying based on the above pricing.
- 3.) Click "Add Note" and type "Your Business Name – Vendor Payment".
- 4.) PayPal will send your receipt immediately.

Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators is a private, non-profit organization. Thank you for your support!

Diaper need is a critical issue, and together we can make a difference in our community.

CITE will be collecting unopened packages of diapers the day of the conference in a variety of brands and sizes. Please share this you're your communities and professional networks. Any and all donations area greatly appreciated!

