

Masks are highly recommended

EDUCATE2ACT



TOGETHER WE
STAND

Mental Health & Healing

Eastburn Education Center

April 8, 2022

History of Educate2Act

Students involved in a student organization For the Love of Thought (FTLOT) wanted to create spaces to deepen the conversations around social justice, make ourselves as teachers more vulnerable, and find ways to create change. FTLOT members organized the first Educate2Act conference in 2014 to incentivize undergraduate research and create a space to raise individuals' awareness and consciousness around issues of justice, culture, and transformation with the hopes of creating new abilities to enact change.

Overview of the Theme

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the lives of so many, disrupted our education, and made the wounds and traumas we face as individuals and communities more visible. Living through the pandemic has transformed how we think about ourselves and our relationships. While mental health has become more prominent in conversation and less stigmatized, the pandemic has taken a toll on our students, our teachers, and our communities. We hope that by creating a space to talk about these ideas freely, we can heal and work to enhance the educational opportunities by deeply listening, developing empathy, identifying resources, and collectively standing together. As Ladson-Billings (2021) suggests, we cannot go back to normal because the pandemic has shown us the vast inequities that exist. Let's do a hard reset and imagine the world anew in ways that are more equitable, more compassionate, and more visionary.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the College of Education for its ongoing support for undergraduate research. Thank you to Dean Mellott, Selita Mitchell, Laura Bohland, Janet Savery, Garrett Ellsworth, and all the other folks who have worked behind the scenes to make this conference possible. Additionally, thank you to Annie Watson, Ashley Vaughn, Brian Stone, James Ingram, Gretchen McAllister, and all the faculty who have encouraged and inspired students to submit proposals and present at Educate2Act.

Steering Committee Members

Elliana Panzarella, Chair
Emily Godin, Co-Chair
Angelyka Chaviano-Montes
Anna Kruecken
Danielle Marinelli
Selena Scarnato

Faculty Mentors

Christine Lemley
Robert Macias
Gerald Wood

Eastburn 190

11:40pm - 12:00pm

Nacho Bar and Drinks available

Please help yourself to food and get ready for the keynote!

12:00pm - 12:45pm

Welcome by Elliana Marie Panzarella

Greeting by Dean Ramona Mellott

Keynote Address

One Day at a Time: Removing Stigma, Setting Boundaries, and Taking Care of Self

Danielle Marinelli



As a person who has struggled with anxiety for most of my life, unhealthy coping mechanisms became my go-to when I first got to NAU. My perceptions of substance abuse and mental health gave me the illusion of protection because I viewed myself as “above” these issues. My personal journey through anxiety, substance abuse, and healing has taught me that I am not immune to falling victim to mental health crises, but I have the resources to prioritize my mental and emotional well-being. Through challenging experiences, I have learned how to manage my anxiety in a healthy way and take care of myself.

As a former behavioral health professional, mental health and substance abuse have played a significant role in my desire to become a teacher. Whether we acknowledge these issues, they are still out there, so how do we remove the stigma and create safe spaces for ourselves and others? Part of challenging the stigma surrounding substance abuse and mental health is to shift the way we think and talk about it as a society. As teachers, leaders, and friends, these are concerns we will encounter, but we must address our own needs to avoid burnout if we are to help meet the needs of others.

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 893 4410 3203

Password: 916868

****Note: all presentations using zoom can be accessed with the same Meeting ID and Password as above**

Presentation Schedule

12:50pm - 1:30pm

Megamind: Empower Your Mind

Eastburn 200

Kierstin Smothers & Jazmyn Gardner

Our focus will be on mindfulness that can be applied to everyday life. We will conduct three activities on mindfulness techniques that attendees can take away with them. This knowledge will empower participants to be present in the moment, which will allow for healing and the betterment of mental health.

Why the COVID Catch-Up Mindset in K-12 Education is Problematic and Can Lead to Increased Mental Health Issues in Students

Eastburn 201

Giona Strati, Alexis Bates, Kasey Cameron, Andrew Oxley

The presenters of this topic will explore the breadth of problematic issues facing K-12 students as they are expected to catch up to pre-COVID academic expectations in schools. These issues include increased mental health concerns as students are pressured to catch up despite living through a global pandemic.

Your Words My Story: The Effects of Cyberbullying in our Schools

Eastburn 203

Brandy Short

I will share the personal story of my son, who has been hate-crime harassed throughout his entire eighth-grade year of school for his sexuality through Instagram. I will share how this affected our family and him personally. I will also share what has been done to prevent it from happening again, and the response and solution from the school.

Power of Language in the Elementary School Classroom: The Impact of Language

Eastburn 204

Mikaela Monical

Throughout this program, I will identify ways in which the exclusion of a child's home language in the classroom affects their mental health and academic achievement as well as inspire the audience to take action in including the student's home language in the classroom.

Saying NO for Mental Health

Eastburn 205

Rebecca Beck & Annabel Garcia

A slam poetry style group spoken work piece highlighting the importance of saying no to protect your own best interests and mental health.

The Silence of History: Lessons from Teaching Holocaust Remembrance in Germany

Zoom/Eastburn 212

Anna Kruecken

The program aims to give an overview of German Holocaust Remembrance in schools and the ways in which Germany deals with its national trauma. Also, students should learn how the Holocaust and other genocides can be sensitively taught in US-American classrooms.

1:35pm - 1:50pm

Validating the Complexity of Students' Lives

Eastburn 200

Lexi Artusa-Sirota

In this seminar, I will follow the pathway of mental health problems in schools, pre- and post-pandemic. In the hustle and bustle of a modern classroom, children are all too frequently placed in the majority and assumed to be perfectly fine. These problems are introduced and outlined through personal anecdotes and research-based solutions.

Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Adolescents in Foster Care

Eastburn 201

Teona Brown

The presentation will examine the relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic and the declining mental health among youth in the United States foster care system through specific research with an emphasis on related organizations that use research-based strategies to address the issue.

Ending the Zoom Call: The Effect of the Pandemic on Children's (Unhealthy) Attachment to Their Parents

Eastburn 203

Ellie "Sasha" Ravnitzky

During and after the Coronavirus pandemic, a lot of help and focus was given to high schoolers and working people without much thought of young children (K-3). It was easy to keep them at home and sit them in front of a computer all day, right? Wrong. This presentation will focus on how keeping kids inside and disconnected leads to an unhealthy attachment to parents, and how that may look as they grow up and are pushed back into a running world.

Covid Monster

Eastburn 204

Katelyn Shook

A mixed media painting done on a sheet hanging from a dowel rod and twine, approx. 4 ft by 4 ft. I also have a short artist's statement about the time during which it was created and the inspiration.

***Art installation located outside Rm 204*

Is Everyone Thinking About Sex? Direct Care Staff's Perceptions About Sexual Development in Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities Eastburn 205

Ashley Root

Sexuality is a significant aspect of human identity. Society often views sexuality as off-limits for people with intellectual disabilities. There seems to be a lack of formal sexual education and post-secondary services may be in place to support this population. This poster describes research that examines the direct care staff perceptions of sexual development for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Reconnecting and Incorporating Indigenous Ways for Mental Health Eastburn 212

Brooke Saganitso

The program will incorporate Dine' methodologies and practices that can be beneficial and informational towards their people on coping with their mental health by participating in traditional arts and crafts.

***This will be in the 2nd floor lobby, and you will have an opportunity to learn Navajo weaving until 4 p.m.*

1:55pm - 2:35pm

Romanticizing Culture: The Art of Being Latina

Eastburn 200

Daniela Estrada

You must start romanticizing the idea of yourself. Have you ever stopped to disassemble your own culture? To find charm in your own history? Allow me to refocus your attention on the details within Latina culture that I hope will invoke a spirit of love for culture itself.

How Teachers' Mental Health Affects Their Students

Eastburn 201

Noelle Fallis, Corissa Burgoyne, Kelsey Nowotney, Kenya Woodruff, Natalie Flynn, and Trenton Barteau

Our presentation shares teachers' perceptions of mental health in their classrooms. We also provide various mental health resources and programs for teachers and students. Scientific studies support the effectiveness of these programs and how improving teachers' mental health can positively affect their students.

Communicating Climate Change to Middle School Students: Overcoming Psychological Barriers

Eastburn 203

Emily Godin

Climate change is an unprecedented phenomenon that will affect our future students' lives and mental health. In using data from my current research in local middle school classrooms and analyzing psychological barriers that make cognition of climate change difficult, we can better understand how to communicate climate change to middle school students in the most effective and beneficial way.

Depression In Young Children: How Can We Help Them?

Eastburn 204

Emma Stone & Grace Santos

As depression and anxiety become more and more common in young children, we must find ways in which we can be more understanding and helpful. Our group intends to shed some light on anxiety and depression in young children and how we can give them 'RELIEF.'

All Kids Deserve a Safe Space

Eastburn 205

Selena Scarnato

I want to educate people on the issues that are surrounding our LGBTQ+ students in school. Especially now with such laws as HB2161 and others that are going to be affecting the way we teach and support our trans youth. It is important as educators to create a safe space for all kids, not just the cis, heterosexual, white children.

Activism in the Early Childhood Classroom: The ABCs of Social Justice to Preschoolers

Zoom/Eastburn 212

Peyton Sawyers

This presentation will be discussing the importance of teaching activism and including social justice in early childhood settings and will present a framework to inspire and teach educators how to approach social justice topics with young students. There is a prominent misconception that early childhood students are "too young" to be exploring social justice and other topics considered "sensitive" such as race, gender, activism, etc. This presentation is aimed to deconstruct preconceived ideas educators may harbor towards exploring social justice for early childhood students and to encourage more educators to teach social justice topics by presenting a developed early childhood social justice curriculum.

2:40pm - 3:10pm

Last Two Years in One Word

Eastburn 200

Sofia Velasquez, Ella Kattelman, Jenna Dynes, Idaly Monarrez, Leo Sturin

Our digital story exemplifies college students at NAU and their experiences of living through the pandemic with the focus on how this has affected their mental health with school life. We collected small clips of students using one word and why that word describes their past two years connecting to their mental health.

No Safe Haven Here

Eastburn 201

Jonathan Otero

I will discuss ICE detention centers across the US. Mental health seems to be the very least of concern in these cages as kids continue to struggle with trauma.

The Impacts of the Ukrainian-Russian War on Future Educators, Schools, and Students

Eastburn 203

Juan Salgado-Cruz

The goal of this presentation is to look at the impacts that the current war may cause on educators here in the United States.

Educate, Don't Incarcerate

Eastburn 204

Angelyka Chaviano Montes

I will use this presentation to show future educators (and others) that education is a road to freedom in the United States, and a tool we can all use to establish our country's basic principle of freedom in our reality. To do this, the school to prison pipeline must be addressed as well as a call to action of finding our collective mean.

Navigating Grief Inside the Classroom

Eastburn 205

Kendra Bandy, Morgan Hirst, Adrianna Sloma, Megan Runnels, Issac Granados, Elli Doronzio

This presentation provides students with research-based strategies to navigate through their grief. This grief might include death, divorce, isolation, adjusting to instability and change, and socioeconomic changes and its effects.

Relaxation Vacation

Zoom/Eastburn 212

Alyssa Scanlon, Maisy Mulligan, Josey Gilley, Emma, Hayden Williams, Brittany Pierce

This project aims to bring teacher awareness to how stretching at the beginning and end of the school day for 10 minutes each will, as research suggests, benefit their students' resilience, mood, and self-regulation skills.

3:15pm - 3:45pm

Best Practices for Increasing Perceived Teacher Support

Eastburn 200

Vanessa Vera, Madeline Snyder, Jordan Phillips, Sarah Mason, Bram Evers, and Madison Rushton

This highlights the importance of perceived teacher support and its effects on college students' well-being in academic settings. We explore how COVID-19 has increased social isolation and how transitioning between online and face-to-face learning has affected student-teacher relationships. This program recommends research-based practices to increase perceived teacher support among students.

Preparing for the Attack on Queer Youth

Eastburn 201

Sara Holsen

The queer youth of America is currently under attack by their local state governments. Arizona has introduced new legislation concentrating on students who identify within the LGBTQ+ community. These bills include prohibiting sexual content that includes "homosexuality," the requirement of educators to "out" their students and excluding trans girls and women from participating in school sports. As queer youth already experience adverse mental health outcomes, these bills will escalate the depression, anxiety, and other struggles that they currently experience. With our students being under attack, it is time for action. Learn how to create a safe and inclusive environment, educate students on their rights, and what you as an educator can do to advocate for your LGBTQ+ students.

Feeling in Color

Eastburn 203

Franchesca Carranza, Holli Wrybkowski, Heidi Eldred, Madi Major, Hannah Nunez, Khlo Wynne

To promote mental health in early childhood, we have created two activities to support student communication and teach young children to label and sort their feelings. This activity will give students a creative outlet to connect existing ideas to better understand their emotions.

Mental Health of POC Students

Eastburn 205

Ashley Noll

I would like to do a spoken word/poem about the mental health of POC students because of the stereotypes pushed on them and their lack of representation in the curriculum.

3:50pm - 4:20pm

Relationships Between Students and Teachers' Mental Health Throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic

Eastburn 200

Marissa Ritches, Charlotte Sander, Giovanna Boitano

This creative presentation will share images and stories from Arizona teachers and their students to illustrate changes and challenges related to mental health throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing primarily on the relationship between the mental health of students and their teachers.

Your Adventure Quest: Mental Health Adventure Book Eastburn 201
Riley Hardt, Annelie Anders, Anthony Hernandez, Kaylee Cozart, Matthew Riley, Christian Clever

We will create a “Choose Your Own Adventure” book that will help young people recognize the emotions they are experiencing, associate these emotions with mental health, and then learn how to live with or overcome their mental health issues. The book also offers an exploratory approach to mental wellbeing that makes learning engaging and impactful.

Something Needs to Change: Gifted Students and Burnout Eastburn 203
Emily Nairin & Lauren Coniglio

The initiation of this presentation was based on the presenters’ personal experiences as elementary school students. This includes information about gifted education, the pros, and cons of being in gifted programs, and the effects it has on students. We will present strategies students and teachers can use to support struggling students.

Social Media Effects on Students’ Mental Health During the Pandemic Eastburn 212
Victoria Pena, Bailee Scottlyn Ramsey, Peyton Skye Sidwell, Madison Elizabeth Honesto, Angeline Evette Lozoya, Callen Drake

We will be having a round table discussion with a group of people to discuss our findings of ways that social media can be utilized in the classroom in a positive way.

4:25pm - 5:00pm

Closing Reflection: Debrief and Planning for Next Steps Eastburn 200
Please join to evaluate the conference and think about how we can take action on what we have heard. If you are interested in joining the Educate2Act Steering Committee, this is a great opportunity to learn more.