Keynote Speaker

David Sobel, Senior Faculty in the Education Department, Antioch University New England

David Sobel is Senior Faculty in the Education Department at Antioch University New England in Keene, NH and he consults and speaks widely on child development and place-based education. He has authored seven books and more than 60 articles focused on children and nature for educators, parents, environmentalists and school administrators in the last 30 years.

He has served on the editorial boards of Encounter, Community Works Journal and Orion and writes a regular column for Community Works Journal. His articles and essays have appeared in Orion, Encounter, Sierra, Sanctuary, Wondertime, Green Teacher, Play Rights, Educational Leadership and the Harvard Education Letter. He has written chapters included in Father Nature; Stories from Where We Live-The North Atlantic Coast; Place-based Education in a Global Age; and The Child: An Encyclopedic Companion. His most recent books are Place-based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities published by the Orion Society, Childhood and Nature: Design Principles for Educators published by Stenhouse and Wild Play, Parenting Adventures in the Great Outdoors published by Sierra Books. He was recognized as one of the Daring Dozen educational leaders in the United States in 2007 by Edutopia magazine.

Workshop Speakers

Amy Ashley, Lead Teacher at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center-Child Care Center

Amy has a BS in Early Childhood Education. She holds a NH Master Teacher Level 2 credential. She has worked with children and families for the past 15 years, and has presented at both VAEYC, and NHAEYC. Amy’s professional interests include working with children outside while exploring our natural environment. She enjoys working with and teaching adults to ensure high quality Early Care and Education. Amy has a passion for continuing education / professional development, and has just started the process of obtaining her master’s in ECE.

Margaret Hagen, Extension Educator, Agricultural Resources

Margaret Hagen has worked as an Agriculture Extension Educator since 1986 in Hillsborough County NH assisting the local ornamentals industry and providing ornamentals programs to commercial growers as part of a state team. During this time she founded the state Family, Home & Garden Education Center, designed to meet the needs of the general public by providing education and information over the breadth of Extension’s programs. She is also co-author of 2 books, The Best Plants for New Hampshire Gardens and Landscapes and Landscaping at the Water’s Edge: an Ecological Approach.

Lisa Pollaro, Toddler Teacher, Child Study and Development Center, UNH

Lisa Pollaro is a teacher in the Infant room at the UNH Child Study and Development Center. Lisa holds a Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood Education and Advocacy and has been working with young children for over 20 years. Lisa spent her entire childhood on a farm in Oregon surrounded by organic gardens, orchards and 20 acres of woods. Her favorite memories all involve family, exploring the woods, working in the gardens, preserving the harvest, and sharing with the community. She continues to enjoy this knowledge and passion by sharing it with the smallest members of the community at CSDC and involving them in every aspect of gardening from ‘seed to table’ and everything in between.
Beth Hallett, Growing a Green Generation, Project Coordinator and Kindergarten Teacher, CSDC, UNH
Beth Hallett (beth.hallett@unh.edu) holds a BS in Child Development and Family Relations from The University of Maine. In 2007 she received her Highly Qualified Teaching Status and completed the NH credentialing process: Trainer/Mentor/Faculty (Level II) and Lead Teacher (Level IV). She has taught in the preschool and kindergarten classrooms at the University of New Hampshire Child Study and Development Center since 2001.

Besides her interest in creating community, storytelling, and conflict resolution is her passion for involving children in the natural environment. She is a member of the Outdoor Learning Committee and worked as the Curriculum Liaison (2004) for the GGG project using the Learning Garden to support plant science curriculum in the classroom. Using her passion for photography she worked with all CSDC staff and students (144) to create watercolors and poems for C is for CSDC, a book that encompasses literacy, art and a sense of place. In 2007, Beth became Project Coordinator for the Growing a Green Generation project. As well as presenting at conferences, she co-authored the article Childhood in the Garden: A Place to Encounter Social and Natural Diversity, Young Children. 63(1):32-38, J.Nimmo & B. Hallett, (January, 2008).

Sandra ‘Sam’ Howe, Infant/Toddler Program Coordinator at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center–Child Care Center
Sam has a Bachelor of Science in Education and is a candidate for MBA in Leadership Public Policy. She is also Chairperson at the NH Association for the Education of Young Children.

Sam is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and the Public Policy Chairperson for the New Hampshire affiliate of NAEYC. With that work, she is also connected to the NH Children's Advocacy Network (NHCAN) which follows the NH legislative session, with a focus on issues that would effect children and families. NH Children in Nature Coalition (NHCINC) is another organization with which she has been active for the past two years, working on the annual conference committee, and presenting a workshop and a pecha kucha on Gardening with Children and Setting up a Community Garden at that conference.

Sam lives in Vermont and is actively involved in the Vermont AEYC annual conference and the annual Early Childhood Day at the Legislature in Montpelier. Her next steps are to continue working towards an “outdoor classroom” status at the DHMC CCC preschool with the Dimension Foundation/Nature Explore program in Nebraska, and to incorporate ‘Zero Waste’ goals into our composting and recycling programs at DHMC CCC.

Sarah Leonard, Interim Lead Teacher, Preschool 1, Child Study and Development Center, UNH
Sarah graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a B.S. in Family Studies with a Young Child concentration and certification to teach Nursery School and Kindergarten in May 2000. She holds credentials as a Lead Teacher (Level 4) and Trainer, Mentor, Faculty (Level 2) through New Hampshire’s Child Development Bureau.

She began her professional career at CSDC in the Toddler room in the summer of 2000 and now teaches in the Infant and Toddler Programs. She has also taught through the UNH’s Division of Continuing Education and presented at classes in the Family Studies Department and at workshops.

Sarah’s professional interests include supporting the exploration of diversity and family culture, incorporating sign language with infants and toddlers and its effect on language acquisition, the respect of infants and young toddlers through fostering independence and developing self help skills, examining how physical environments affect children’s learning, and exploring outdoor environments. Her interest in the outdoors and natural food sources began as a child helping her mother create their garden beds and composting unit.

Jesse Stabile Morrell, Lecturer, Nutrition program, University of New Hampshire
Jesse currently teaches undergraduate courses in nutrition, health, and wellness. She earned both her bachelor and master’s degrees in nutrition at UNH and is currently a PhD candidate studying the impact of a web-based intervention to promote healthy behaviors. Jesse is also the parent of two CSDC alumni, Alex and Joe.