



Since 2013, Listening to Babies, a partnership with COQEBS and Baby Talk Week, has invited agency and service providers and infant-toddler caregivers to come together so our community can build a shared understanding of evolving new perspectives designed to help support children birth to age 3. Its focus has been on healthy social and emotional development, nurturing a strong foundation for later school-readiness, and helping close the achievement gap.

The Family Study Center is in service to its community, stands ready to support collective impact initiatives on behalf of infants, toddlers, and their families, and episodically offers relevant professional trainings and development opportunities. Visit [stpetersburg.usf.edu/fsc](http://stpetersburg.usf.edu/fsc) to find out more — including information about advanced study through our one-year, fully online Infant-Family Mental Health Graduate Certificate Program.



# BABY TALK WEEK'S LISTENING TO BABIES 2022 PROGRAM

FEBRUARY 25-26, 2022

Listening to Babies and the COQEBS School Readiness Committee thank the community colleagues who have given their time as facilitators for this year's breakout workgroups, and those who have given of their time as virtual hosts and breakout group recorders:

**Facilitators:**

Dr. Keesha Benson  
Ulas Butler  
Dr. Valerie Brimm  
Russia Collins  
Florence Guillet  
Dr. Bilan Joseph  
Jackie Lang

Jessica Lassiter  
Nicole Lewin  
Ebony Miller  
Twanna Monroe  
Kori Monroe  
Dr. LaSonya Moore  
Kayla Nembhard  
Toshiko Pinckney

**Hosts and Recorders:**

Richard Prince  
Delquanda Turner Smith  
Dr. Dana Thompson Dorsey  
**Hosts and Recorders:**  
Caprice Edmond  
Brett English  
Sue Girling  
Dr. Anne Hogan

Jennifer Hughes  
Jackie Malone  
Leah McCrae  
Gail Ramsdell  
Kaeteka Riggins  
Dana Roberts  
Dr. Yana Sirotkin  
Susan Weber

*Smoking, including electronic cigarettes, is prohibited anywhere on the School Board property.*

[stpetersburg.usf.edu/fsc](http://stpetersburg.usf.edu/fsc)

USF St. Petersburg Family Study Center  
100 5th Avenue South, Building One, Suite 100  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701



USF St. Petersburg campus and the Concerned Organization for Quality Education of Black and Brown Students (COQEBS), Inc. are proud to present Listening to Babies 2022, a culmination of our community's 10th Annual Baby Talk week!



**SANKOFA:  
Reflecting Back, Visioning Ahead**  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2022

- 8:30 – **Registration and Continental Breakfast**  
8:50 am
- 8:50 – **Welcome: Embracing the Spirit of Sankofa**  
8:55 am *Russia Collins, LMHC, Clinical and Training Director of the Infant Family Center, USF St. Petersburg campus*
- 8:55 – **Invocation** – *Rev. Watson Haynes, Pinellas County Urban League, Former COQEBS President, and Founding Member of COQEBS School Readiness Committee*  
9:00 am
- 9:00 – **Opening remarks** – *Kenneth P. Welch, Mayor, City of St. Petersburg*  
9:10 am
- 9:10 – **A 10-Year Retrospect: The Origins of Baby Talk and the Symbolism of “Listening to Babies”** – *James McHale, Ph.D., Director, USF Family Study Center*  
10:00 am
- 10:00 – **Coffee Break**  
10:15 am
- 10:15 – **Plenary Session: Listening to Babies in St. Petersburg Early Learning Centers: Children, Families and Community** – *Jacqueline Lang, B.S., Twanna Monroe, B.S.*  
11:15 am
- 11:15 am – **Invisible Challenges to Transformation and Change** – *Maureen Joseph, LMSW, Lead Facilitator/President of TransSpire LLC and Adjunct Professor at Tulane University School of Social Work, New Orleans, LA*  
12:00 pm
- 12:00 – **Lunch Served**  
12:30 pm
- 12:30 – **Lunchtime Presentation: Ready while Respecting Children in the Kindergarten Year: Voices of Parents.**  
1:00 pm *Panel Presentation Moderated by Russia Collins, LMHC*
- 1:00 – **Introduction to the Afternoon: Community Voices and Collaborative Change**  
1:05 pm *Dr. Ricardo Davis, President, COQEBS*
- 1:05 – **Outline and Principles for Afternoon Workgroups** – *Maureen Joseph, LMSW:*  
1:30 pm (a) Listening to Children Birth-3  
(b) Pre-K Readiness: Children Aged 3-4  
(c) The Kindergarten Year
- 1:30 – **Facilitated Table Discussions** – *Participant Breakout Groups and Input*  
2:30 pm
- 2:30 – **Wrap-Up, Review, Next Steps in Collaborative Planning** – *All presenters for the day*  
3:00 pm

\*Free CEUs (0.45) donated in-kind by ELC for early educators

\*\*Free CE's (4.0) offered by JWB for mental health clinicians (CE Provider #50-1125, Expires: 03/31/2023, for FL LCSW, LMHC, LMFT)

**COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE:  
You Are Not Alone**  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2022

- 8:30 – **Check-in and Continental Breakfast**  
9:00 am
- 9:00 – **Welcome: Embracing the Spirit of Sankofa** – *Russia Collins, LMHC, Clinical and Training Director of the Infant Family Center, USF St. Petersburg campus*  
9:15 am
- 9:15 – **A Look Back, A Look Ahead** - *James McHale, Ph.D., Director, USF Family Study Center*  
9:30 am
- 9:30 – **Impact - A Celebration of you!** - *Twanna Monroe B.S., Jacqueline Lang B.S., and Maureen Joseph, LMSW*  
10:30 am
- 10:30 – **Outline and Principles for Morning Workgroups** – *Maureen Joseph, LMSW:*  
10:45 am (a) Listening to Children Birth-3  
(b) Pre-K Readiness: Children Aged 3-4  
(c) The Kindergarten Year
- 10:45 – **Facilitated Table Discussions** – *Participant Breakout Groups and Input*  
11:45 am
- 11:45 am – **Wrap-Up and Reflection** – *All presenters for the day*  
12:00 pm

\*PCLB hours available and CEUs (0.25) donated in-kind by ELC

USF's Family Study Center and the Listening to Babies 2022 Planning Committee express gratitude to our sponsor and collaborative partner, Concerned Organization for the Quality Education of Black and Brown Students, Inc. We thank the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County for its joint sponsorship of the 10th Anniversary of Listening to Babies, and provision of CEs for mental health professionals. Thank you to Early Learning Coalition and Pinellas County Licensing Board for the in-kind donation of CEUs and recognition of training hours. Thanks to the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching for provision of gift cards to recognize parents and childcare providers who contributed to this year's events. A deep debt of gratitude to our colleagues on the COQEBS School Readiness Committee and to the many other community partners who generously donated time, resources, and support for Baby Talk Week 2022!



**The 10th Anniversary of Listening to Babies (LTB)**

For the 10th anniversary of Listening to Babies, we celebrate the spirit of Sankofa. An African word from the Akan tribe in Ghana, Sankofa is a particularly relevant theme for the 10th and final episode of the decade-long series. Meaning “it is not taboo to fetch what is at risk of being left behind”, Sankofa signifies the Akan people’s quest for knowledge - derived from critical examination, intelligent and patient investigation. Knowledge gained in learning from the past can guide and ensure a better future, so long as all new movement and learning never fail to evoke the past’s wisdom. The spirit of Sankofa is at work on multiple fronts in our St. Petersburg community. The Sankofa Project, one component of the City’s Deuces Rising vision to revitalize the historic 22nd Street corridor (“the Deuces”), was similarly designed to be community-centered and equity-focused in every facet. By reflecting on Listening to Babies’ past, and systematically gathering input from parents, professionals, and childcare providers in 2022 so that future school readiness efforts can be guided by the voices and perspectives of the community, this year’s event honors the grassroots origins of COQEBS’ Baby Talk initiative.

**PLENARY SPEAKERS**

JACQUELINE LANG, B.S.  
(Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, FL)



Jackie Lang is a proud native of south St. Petersburg. She is a graduate of Florida A&M University with a B.S. degree in Early Childhood/Elementary Education. She has taught in Orange and Pinellas County Schools.

Jackie has been the owner and director of Imagination Station Preschool since 2002. For many years, she has also provided service to COQEBS as Co-chair of its School Readiness Committee. Her passion and commitment to education leads her to be involved with governing bodies that work to create quality experiences for the early childhood population. She believes that learners today, will be our leaders tomorrow.

TWANNA MONROE, B.S.  
(University of South Florida, Tampa, FL)



Twanna Monroe is a St. Petersburg native and a community champion of early childhood education. She has made it her mission to change the future through education and opportunity one child at a time. Her dedication to improving the lives of young children is modeled by

her community involvement and activism. As the owner of Infinite Potential Learning Center, Twanna equips over 100 young scholars with the social, emotional, and educational skills they will need to succeed. Moreover, she partners with other community organizations such as the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg College, and Concerned Organization for the Quality Education of Black and Brown Students (COQEBS) to support and affirm their early education initiatives. Twanna also believes in the power of family and its importance in the lives of young students. She encourages family centered environments through a myriad of programs, including: Reading Early Along with Dad (R.E.A.D), proms, open house, graduations, holiday performances, and informational events. Twanna works tirelessly at improving the outcomes and environments of St. Petersburg’s students and her uplifting legacy is evident in the lives she has touched and the minds she continues to mold.

**The Listening to Babies Series**

Through the years, Listening to Babies has invited leading experts from throughout the United States\* to bring best and breaking practices to Pinellas County. As a professional training event gathering local agency professionals and leaders from a variety of disciplines, Listening to Babies has sought to inspire fresh ideas and initiate dialogue that would advance our city’s, county’s and region’s support and advocacy for children birth to age 3 and their families. The series has focused on practices that strengthen social, emotional, and pre-academic development and has endeavored to contribute to COQEBS and its School Readiness Committee’s efforts to ensure proper attention to and equity in supporting the early childhood experiences of African American infants, toddlers, and young children.

- 2013 **Educaring™ Principles: Listening to Babies** – *Polly Elam, Gail Nadal, Alex Boyer, Resources for Infant Educators (RIE), Pasadena, CA*
- 2014 **A Developmental Approach to Discipline** – *Deborah Greenwald, Senta Greene, WestEd, Center for Child and Family Studies, California Department of Education*
- 2015 **Supporting Stressed Young Children through Relationship-Based Interactions: A Coparenting Approach** – *Dr. Benjamin Richeda, San Francisco, CA, Dr. Bob Moore, Certified Trauma Specialist (ATSS), Clearwater, FL*
- 2016 **Overcoming Agency Roadblocks: Supporting Father Engagement and Participation** – *Dr. Jennifer Bellamy, University of Denver and Sandra Mirque-Morales, University of Chicago*
- 2017 **Applying the Science of Development to Innovative Practices for Babies and Families: Is Your Agency Ready?** – *Dr. Neal Horen, Georgetown University*
- 2018 **Reflective Supervision Across Disciplines Serving Babies and Young Children** – *Dr. Christopher Watson, University of Minnesota and Dr. Dorinda Williams, Georgetown University*
- 2019 **A Promising Time – Cultural Considerations in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health** – *Maureen Joseph, LMSW, New Orleans, LA*
- 2020 **Elevating Consciousness and Influencing Practice** – *Maureen Joseph, LMSW, New Orleans, LA, and Hali Shearer, LSW, Boston, MA*
- 2021 **Are You Listening?** *Dr. Barbara Stroud, California Association of Infant Mental Health (CAAIMH)*
- 2022 **Sankofa: Looking Back, Visioning Ahead** – *Maureen Joseph, LMSW, Twanna Monroe, B.S. and Jackie Lang, B.S.*

\*Listening to Babies events have also featured presenters from USF’s Family Study Center, including LaDonna Butler, Ph.D., Russia Collins, LMHC, Anne Hogan, Ph.D., Lisa Negrini, LCSW, Ph.D., Kayla Nembhard, LMHC and James McHale, Ph.D.