
VICKY FLESSNER

423-208-1622

vickyflessner@gmail.com

Chattanooga, TN 37415

Profile

- I have over thirty-five years of experience in early childhood education.
- I'm passionate about providing children with daily nature-based opportunities.
- My philosophy of education stands on the research that validates engaging children by following their interests. Once curiosity ignites the learner, all manner of means can be employed to scaffold their construction of knowledge and facilitate their learning. Hands-on, discovery and inquiry-based approaches yield strong results. Learning how to learn is more important and effective than rote methods that teach discreet skills and sets of facts.
- "Museum learning" and "place-based education" are my current areas of interest and personal study.

Business

- **PLAYceMaker, LLC, established 2016 - playcemaker.com**
Owner, consultant, designer, maker

Experience

Interim Director Hixson United Methodist Child Development Center

June 20, 2016 - September 9, 2016.

Contract Designer, C.O.R.E. Associates - Children Outdoors Ready to Explore, Dayton, TN, 2012-2016

Consultant, designer, project researcher and facilitator

C.O.R.E. Associates Playscape and Playable Landscape Projects

- St. Paul's Episcopal Early Education Center, Mobile, AL, USA
 - Little Miss Mag Early Learning Center, Chattanooga, TN, USA
 - Kapok-themed children's indoor play area, Knoxville Zoo, TN, USA
 - Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center, Columbus, GA, USA
 - Mill Creek Country Day School, Ooltewah, TN, USA
 - UT Knoxville Early Learning Center, Knoxville, TN, USA
 - Calvary Young Children's School, Nashville, TN, USA
 - Sequatchie Valley Head Start Association, Dayton, TN, USA
 - Martha O'Bryan Early Learning Center, Nashville, TN, USA
 - Boyd-Buchanan School, Chattanooga, TN, USA
 - Discovery Center at Murfree Spring, Murfreesboro, TN, USA
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**Preschool Director, Highland Plaza United Methodist Preschool, Hixson, TN
— 1991-2015**

Complete management of program operation including service to 120+ families, projection and management of \$290,000 annual budget, payroll, quarterly tax reports, interviewing, conducting staff meetings, reporting to Board, supervising twelve employees and several parent volunteers, purchasing equipment, maintaining licensing standards.

While at HPUMP I transformed the traditional educational approach into a progressive model of early education based on discovery and inquiry practices.

I re-envisioned the playground into an award-winning nature playscape and outdoor classroom. HPUMP won the 2013 Southern Early Childhood Association's Exemplary Outdoor Classroom award, overall. HPUMP was the first school in Tennessee to become a certified Nature Explore Classroom (certification by the Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions in Educational Research Foundation)

Instructor, Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, Chattanooga State Community College, Chattanooga, TN — 2007-2011

Facilitate the 30-clock hour "Administrator Orientation" course for early childhood program administrators.

Director, First Cumberland Presbyterian Child Development Center, Chattanooga, TN — 1986-1990

Overall responsibility for operation of Center. Enrollment of 120 children. Supervision of 12 full time and 10 part time employees.

Assistant Director, First Cumberland Presbyterian Child Development Center, Chattanooga, TN — 1984-1986

Preschool Teacher, First Cumberland Presbyterian Child Development Center, Chattanooga, TN — 1981-1984

**Program Coordinator, Association for Child Development, Lansing, MI
— 1979-1980**

Education

- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI — BA Psychology with Distinction, 1979
 - Chattanooga State Community College - course in Child Care Administration
 - East Tennessee State University - graduate certificate course in Emergent Inquiry Practices
 - Hundreds of hours of in service professional development attained over the past 36 years.
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Skills

- Consultant and speaker on a variety of topics related to early education, program administration, and nature- and place-based education. I have presented at local, state, and regional early childhood conferences.
- Designs and constructs interactive, playable landscapes to immerse participants in natural, contextual, cultural, and authentic experiences
- Understands administrative, maintenance, safety, and financial challenges
- Exceptional organizational skills and attention to detail

Honors

- Designed the Highland Plaza United Methodist Preschool Playscape, which won the 2013 Southern Early Childhood Association's Exemplary Outdoor Classroom contest overall (14 states in the Association)
- 2013 Hilda Avant Service to Young Children award recipient
- 2006 Marguerite Hullander Training and Professional Development award

Memberships

- Chattanooga Area Association for the Education of Young Children (CAAAYC)
 - Tennessee Association for Children's Early Education (TACEE)
 - Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA)
 - Tennessee Reggio Study Group (TNRSG)
 - Board member, Wauhatchie School
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