
Beyond School Bells Newsletter-May 2024

From Beyond School Bells <bsbinfo@nebraskachildren.org>

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May 2024

Upcoming Events

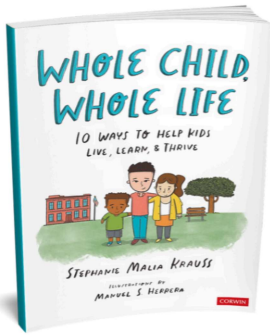
Registration is OPEN and We've Got a Keynote Speaker!
GetConnected 2024 Conference
September 27 | Kearney, NE



GetConnected

Nebraska Afterschool Conference

Building on insights from her best seller [Whole Child. Whole Life.](#) acclaimed educator and speaker Stephanie Malia Kraus will be headlining GetConnected 2024, Nebraska's Statewide Afterschool and Summer Learning Conference at the Younes Conference Center South in Kearney on September 27th 2024.



While a national talent, Dr. Kraus is no stranger to Nebraska – she is currently working closely with Nebraska 4H Extension leading a statewide professional development learning community helping equip Extension Educators with the tools they need to better serve the needs of today's youth. Building on this momentum, we will be distributing copies of Dr. Kraus' Whole Child Whole Life throughout the summer and will plan activities, including webinars and discussion groups, focused on this important topic as a lead up to GetConnected. We are excited to welcome Stephanie and her important message to Nebraska!

The GetConnected conference is a longstanding partnership between the Nebraska Department of Education's 21st Century CLC program, Nebraska 4H Extension and Beyond School Bells, with annual gatherings rotating between Kearney and Omaha. Information on the conference and a link to the registration page can be found [here](#).

Resources and Opportunities

Summer Entrepreneurship Opportunity!

Young Entrepreneur Institute (YEI) created the **Young Entrepreneur Pitch Challenge OST** to empower young people in afterschool and summer programs to flex their entrepreneurial mindsets by creating business ideas and pitching them. Problem-solving, empathy, communication, and creativity are just a few of the skills they practice by participating. Programs: Register by June 15, 2024!



- Students think of an idea for a service, product or community initiative (they don't need to start their business/idea).
- Students create a 30-to-90-second video of themselves presenting their pitch.
- Students can work alone or in groups of up to four.
- Enter videos via an online platform by July 15th, 2024.
- Entries will be judged on Creativity, Clarity, Persuasiveness and Overall Quality.

Program incentives include:

- A free [Pitch Challenge Toolkit](#) for facilitating five 1-hour lessons
- Free staff training and student workshops
- Registered programs with six or more students receive \$50 to celebrate with a pizza, donut, ice cream, or other party.
- Programs with a winning video will receive a \$50 gift card
- Every program will have a finalist for each age category with six or more students entering. Finalist entries receive \$60.

Visit the [YEI Pitch Challenge website](#) for more information, sample pitches and registration links.

Free STEM and TMC Training Available!



Are you interested in leading STEM activities but aren't sure where to start? Do you have a TMC Lab but are unsure how to use it in your program? Then this is the training for you! Whether you have a TMC Lab or not, this hands-on training will guide program staff through best practices in STEM education like asking purposeful questions and keeping kids engaged. Participants will learn about STEM concepts, how plan activities to lead with students, and innovative ways to use a TMC Lab.

Complete the Interest Form Today!

Applications are Open for the Summer 2024 BSB Youth Leadership Council (YLC)!

The summer 2024 YLC cohort will convene **throughout the month of July** and will give **high school students** the opportunity to participate in PD, dream up ways they can personally contribute to the success of the afterschool programs they work for, and get paid by BSB in the process.

If you know any outstanding high school students who currently work in afterschool or summer program, please encourage them to apply using this link or the button below: <https://forms.gle/xCoZKpzVGSZSc8s38>. Applications are due **May 31st**.

Student Application



Visit Our Website to Meet Past Cohorts!

Nebraska's Very Own Caitlynn A. and Fellow MGM Flight Crew Members in Washington, D.C.!



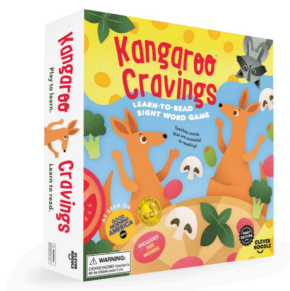
Last month, the Million Girls Moonshot Flight Crew - Olive, Isabella, Jamora, Aika, Caitlynn, and Neha (not pictured) - acted as media correspondents and youth advisory council members during the [National STEM Challenge](#) in Washington, DC.

The Flight Crew interviewed STEM leaders and students from across the country. They also explored and offered perspectives on the event's key themes: Environmental Stewardship, Aerospace, Future Foods, Powering the Planet, Tech for Good, and Health and Medicine. [Catch highlights and stay tuned for more content.](#)

Other Offerings

Bring Literacy Games into Your Program with Clever Noodle!

Are you interested in injecting some fun, evidence-based literacy activities into your afterschool or summer program? If so, Clever Noodle just might be for you.



Clever Noodle creates award-winning, highly effective literacy games based on cutting-edge reading science. Most importantly, they are fun. In fact, these games are so much fun that children don't even realize they are learning their fundamental reading skills while playing. All games are co-designed with national literacy experts, and have strong reviews from Superintendents, parents, teachers, and afterschool teams. Most importantly, 97% of children ask to play again and again.

Clever Noodle currently has 2 games targeted for 4-9 year olds, covering essential reading skills: Kangaroo Cravings (with expansion pack) and Popped! The Reading Game Starring Balloon Dog.

- Kangaroo Cravings teaches children the 300 most common high-frequency “sight” words in a multi-sensory, fast-to-learn and fun-to-play board game. There is also an expansion pack with 100 noun additional words. The game can be played collaboratively or competitively, and has 3 levels of difficulty.
- Popped is a fast-paced, high-stakes game of risk and reward that teaches 250 Consonant (C) - Vowel (V) pattern words across 3 levels of difficulty (CVC, CCVC, CVCC), and introduces a cutting-edge method of blending to accelerate reading and especially support struggling readers.

Let us know if you are interested in partnering with BSB to do a trial run of these games in your communities – we’d love to support a pilot group and learning community associated with this game. If you want to skip right into use, Nebraska afterschool programs are being offered games for \$22.50 (a 25% discount off retail price of \$29.95). The Kangaroo Cravings expansion pack is \$9 (a 30% discount off retail price of \$12.95). Email lgraziano@clevernoodle.com to place a discounted order.

YaizY – Fun, Online Computer Science Summer Programming

BSB is also excited to be partnering with YaizY, (<https://yaizy.io/>) an international educational initiative working to prepare students for the future – via computer science instruction. We recently connected with YaizY as Nebraska is looking to implement comprehensive K-12 Computer Science learning experiences. YaizY offers accessible and highly engaging virtual courses that cultivate curiosity, keep students energized about learning and equip them to turn their passions into impactful future careers.

YaizY empowers learners to become innovators, thought leaders and architects of tomorrow by preparing students with the hard and soft skills they need to pursue digital careers in fast growing fields. YaizY serves middle and high school students via an edu-gaming platform providing custom programs led by digital-careers-focused teachers who deliver hands-on, engaging courses that are rigorously aligned with U.S. K-12 and digital-industry standards.

Because of the growing interest in CS in Nebraska, we want to pilot two of YaizY’s products, Coding with Scratch and Animation DreamLab, in select summer programs in Nebraska, with week long, on line camps starting in mid-June. They will be offering these courses throughout June and July so sign up now for a slot that meets your needs.

Please see the attached flier for more information and contact us if you would like to participate in this pilot opportunity. BSB can cover these costs if you are interested in participating in this innovative project.



Our Contact Information

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