



Dr. Junlei Li

Trustee, Turrell Fund

Junlei Li is the Saul Zaentz senior lecturer in early childhood education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. His research and practice focuses on understanding and supporting the work of helpers—those who serve children and families on the frontlines of education and social services.

Li studied and learned from a wide range of developmental settings with low resources but high-quality practices, including orphanages, childcare, classrooms, and community youth programs.

He developed the "[Simple Interactions](#)" approach to help identify what ordinary people do extraordinarily well with children in everyday moments and made that the basis for promoting positive system change.

Li frequently delivers keynote presentations and workshops for national, state, and international conferences focused on improving practices, programs, and policies for children, families, and professionals, with a particular emphasis on early childhood development. He teaches about improving human interactions and supporting adult helpers at HGSE and the Zaentz Professional Learning Academy.

Li's work is significantly influenced and inspired by the pioneering work of Fred Rogers (creator of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*). He previously served as the Co-Director and Rita M. McGinley Professor for Early Learning and Children's Media at the Fred Rogers Center at Saint Vincent College.