



**Association for the Education of Young Children - Missouri
Public Policy Program and Annual Agenda**
Specific areas of concentration for 2010-2011 are in italics

**A. Early Education Programs and Services
(Quality, Availability, Accessibility, and Affordability)**

AEYC-MO supports:

1. A developmentally appropriate approach to screening, assessment, and curriculum that address the whole child in the context of the family and the knowledge of children, birth through age eight, as outlined by NAEYC.
 - *The developmental value and importance of children's play.*
2. Competent, educated, early childhood teachers *as defined in NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice.*
3. Increasing availability of licensed early childhood services to families through government funding.
 - *Monitor the changes being debated in the Missouri State Budget.*
4. Increasing the limits of income eligibility for children of the working poor, crisis care, and for families with children with special needs.
 - Monitor SB625 (Justus) which modifies income eligibility criteria.
5. The inclusion of children with special needs in integrated settings, with appropriate training, support, and resources available to staff.
 - *Monitor HB 1296 (Lampe) Autism Spectrum Disorder*
6. Continuing/increasing funding for licensed early childhood programs to obtain necessary equipment, facility, renovation, and staff development.
 - *Maintain current programming, services, and funding for children.*
 - *Monitor HB 1893 (Kelly) which would change laws regarding the distribution of gaming funds for early childhood education and veterans programs.*
7. Services for helping parents understand the necessity and importance of child development and developmentally appropriate programs as defined by NAEYC.
8. Use of a variety of facilities (including school buildings) for early childhood services including before and after school care.
9. Infant, toddler, and parent education programs implemented by qualified educators.
10. *Strengthening leadership and advocacy skills related to implementing and enriching play within the early childhood curriculum.*
11. *Expand membership communication with state lawmakers.*
12. *The awareness and acceptance of the diversity of each child and family.*

B. Health, Safety, and Nutrition (Prevention, Protection, Preservation of Children)

AEYC-MO supports:

1. Increasing federal funding for continuation/expansion of nutrition programs for women, infants, and children (WIC) and USDA Child Nutrition programs for children of all ages.
2. Maternal and Child Health services readily accessible and financially supported for all mothers and children; proper prenatal and postnatal care essential to the healthy development of children.
3. The availability and financial assistance for families to access health and dental services.
 - *HB 1467 (Nance) Low income families – SCHIP*
4. Strengthening laws, policies, and programs to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect to assure victims have access to adequate care, protection, and treatment; and a permanent nurturing family in which to grow.
5. *A commitment to preserving the joy, awe, and wonder of childhood, respecting the child's right to discover through play.*

C. Regulations and Support Systems (Licensing Requirements, Assistive Services)

AEYC-MO supports:

1. Improving licensing standards that address group size, teacher/child ratio, education /training, and program criteria such as developmentally appropriate materials and curricula.
 - *Monitor licensing rule revisions*
2. Mandatory licensing for all early childhood and school age programs.
3. Creating manageable case load assignments for licensing representatives.
4. Early education programs that obtain accreditation.
5. Provisions and financial support for parent education and support programs to assist parents in their responsibility as nurturing adults.

D. Staff Recruitment and Retention (Incentives for Recruiting and Retaining Personnel)

AEYC-MO supports:

1. The advancement of early childhood as a profession that is committed to the improvement of wage, benefits, and working conditions for early childhood educators.
2. The provision of economic incentives such as grants, low interest student loans, forgiveness of loans, increased compensation, and personnel benefits for professionals working in early childhood settings.

E. Staff Higher Education

AEYC-MO supports:

1. The coordination of early childhood higher education initiatives throughout Missouri.
2. The formulation of articulation agreements between institutions of higher education.