

National Association for the Education of Young Children

1313 L Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005-4101

202-232-8777 800-424-2460

Fax 202-328-1846

www.naeyc.org

The **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** is dedicated to excellence in all early childhood education programs serving all children from birth through age 8. Through its position statements, professional resources and conferences, advocacy, and its national voluntary accreditation systems for early childhood education programs in centers and schools, teacher preparation standards, NAEYC is the leader in promoting excellence in early childhood education.

NAEYC recognizes that those who work with young children face many daily decisions that have moral and ethical implications. The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving the principal ethical dilemmas encountered in early childhood care and education.

Defending Professional Integrity in the Public Interest

Early childhood professionals provide one of the most important services to society and they understand and cultivate their role as professionals doing critical work. Early childhood education professionals (teachers, administrators, and other roles in the field) use ethical, professional standards; demonstrate self motivated, ongoing learning; collaborate; think reflectively and critically; and advocate for children, families, and the profession.

Supporting the development and early learning of children outside of the home in child care, Head Start, and school settings should be a national priority as a critical public good. When children have access to high-quality early childhood programs from birth, particularly children from low-income families, society reaps the benefits of reduced remedial and special education and lower juvenile justice and school dropout rates.

Program standards set the conditions for development and learning for young children. When public policies set the bar low on health and safety, class size, teacher-child ratios, staff qualifications and other important elements of quality, children are shortchanged and professionals are faced with challenges in helping every child reach his or her potential. Early childhood education professionals also desire public policies that support the selection and use of developmentally appropriate curricula and instructional assessments, fair and meaningful accountability systems for improving programs and services, and professional development systems that promote their education, ongoing adult learning, and compensation parity. In addition to appropriate public policies, public funding is critical to ensuring that all children have access to high quality programs and that programs can meet high quality standards. Unfortunately, many policies and insufficient funding have not allowed these goals to be met, and can lead to jeopardizing professional judgments.

NAEYC is pleased to be working with other organizations in promoting professional integrity and professionals serving the public interest.

Contact information for the media:

Kristina Gawrgy; 202-350-8857; kgawrgy@naeyc.org