

Every year, thanks to the great work of NAEYC Affiliates, partners, and friends, Week of the Young Child™ proclamations and resolutions are signed by Governors, Mayors, City Councils, and more, all across America!

This year we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Week of the Young Child™ and we want to make sure that we continue to advance the early childhood education profession as part of the WOYC™ for another 50 years!

Follow these **FIVE** steps to make your proclamation a success as part of #WOYC21!

### Why Do a Proclamation?

A proclamation is an official designation of an event, like Week of the Young Child™. Proclamations are a great way to educate the public and bring attention to the cause of high-quality early childhood education. A proclamation is effective for gaining public recognition—and serving as an advocacy tool for the future—because it carries the full support of a key government official in your state or community.

### Step 1: Coordinate With Your States' Affiliates & Partners

Every elected official should receive just one request for a WOYC proclamation! Make sure you're connecting and coordinating with [your states' NAEYC Affiliates](#) and partners to figure out who is responsible for getting the right requests to the right people! And speaking of those right people, here are some options for who you might consider reaching out to:

- City Proclamation: For city proclamations, a mayor, city manager, or city marshal may be the person to sign.
- County Proclamation: For county proclamation, it will be the county commissioners who will sign.
- State Proclamation: For state proclamation, it will be the governor who will sign.

### Step 2: Make Contact With Your Elected Officials

Once you've figured out which offices you're reaching out to, check their websites for forms and guidelines on how to submit a proclamation. You can also call their office directly, and be ready to share the following information:

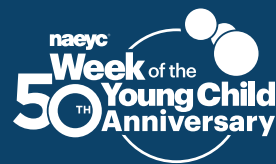
- The purpose of the proclamation (e.g. Expressing Support for Early Childhood Educators during the Week of the Young Child)
- The date when the proclamation is needed (if there is an event that you are trying to work around, be specific; otherwise, be flexible about the day during the WOYC)
- A brief history of your organization
- The name and contact information of the point of contact

Find out how they would like you to share the proclamation language that you will draft.

**There is just one big charge for this year's #WOYC21 proclamation effort:  
to go beyond "thanks and recognition" for early childhood educators!**

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## Step 3: Write the Proclamation Language (Using the Template Options)

On the following pages, we've provided you with some options to review and select for your proclamations.

A few things to remember:

- You may need to fill in data to fit with your community and state. NAEYC has gathered links to state-specific fact sheets created by national organizations in one, easy-to-find and easy-to-access location. We encourage you to start with [this compilation](#) and check out [NAEYC.org/pandemic-surveys](https://naeyc.org/pandemic-surveys) for extensive national and state data you can use as well.
- You should not select all of the options in each category. Please pick and choose the messages and data points that will work best for your community and the person you've identified to sign the proclamation!
- You should feel free to adapt the language to fit your community's context.

## Step 4: Make It a Big Deal!

COVID-19 has upended many of our traditions, yet celebrating a WOYC proclamation should not be one of them! Choose one of the options below to celebrate your WOYC proclamation.

### Option 1: Host a Virtual Signing Event

Choose your favorite meeting platform, invite members of your community, and join your elected official as they sign and read the proclamation. Remember to record the celebration and take pictures of your screen.

### Option 2: Participate in a Socially Distant In-Person Proclamation Meeting or Signing Event

If your elected official is hosting in-person events, make sure to follow the guidelines that are given as to whom, and how many individuals, you can bring to the proclamations meeting or signing event. Remember to take pictures!

Once you have your celebration pictures, make sure to promote your new proclamation through social media by posting on Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram, using the hashtags #WOYC2021 and #ECEwins, and tagging @NAEYC, as well as your own elected officials. You can also promote the proclamation through traditional media by sending a copy of the proclamation to your local newspapers and offering to talk about the critical and essential role early childhood educators play in providing high-quality child care and early learning to support children and families in your community.

## Step 5: Tell Us About It!

Let's see how many proclamations we can get signed across the country to advance the early childhood education profession during the Week of the Young Child!

## FILL OUT THE FORM TO PUT YOUR PROCLAMATION ON THE MAP

And don't forget to thank the signers and anyone who helped you get through the process. You can follow up by inviting them to participate in any upcoming special events, or by setting up a time for them to visit—virtually or in-person—a high-quality early childhood education setting in your shared community.

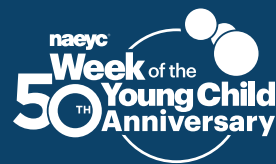
## Happy Proclaiming!

### Ask Your Elected Officials to Step It Up!

In addition to signing a proclamation, ask your elected officials to submit a 1 minute (or shorter) video with a "Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary" message in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of WOYC. This video can be uploaded directly to our event [Dropbox](#).

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Remember, you should pick and choose the messages and data points that will work best for your community and the person you've identified to sign the proclamation. Take this as an invitation to adapt the language to fit your community's context!

## WHEREAS

### Start With Children

- The first years of a child's life are the period of the most rapid brain development and lay the foundation for all future learning.
- Children's cognitive, physical, social and emotional, and language and literacy development are built on a foundation of children's positive interactions with adults, peers, and their environment.
- There are XX number of children birth through age 8 in our state / community, XX% of whom live in low-income families.

### Working Families

- XX% of children in our state have all available parents in the workforce.
- High percentage of mothers return work in the first six weeks after the birth of a child.
- XX% of eligible families do not receive child care assistance due to lack of funding.
- XX% of parents have had to leave or change jobs due to challenges with child care.
- One in every four women who reported becoming unemployed during the pandemic said it was because of a lack of child care.

### Benefits of High-Quality Early Childhood Education

- High-quality early childhood programs provide important benefits to children, families and our state and national economies.
- High quality early care and education can help ameliorate the effects of poverty, detect and remediate delays, identify and help prevent child neglect, and lead to positive outcomes for individual children, helping them be better prepared for school and more likely to succeed in life.
- Paying the costs of high-quality early childhood education is a revenue-generating investment over time, resulting in a broad range of benefits that accrue to individuals and society at large.
- Participation in high-quality early childhood education saves taxpayer dollars, makes working families more economically secure, and prepares children to succeed in school, earn higher wages, and live healthier lives.

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## WHEREAS

### Role of Early Childhood Educators

- High-quality early childhood education depends on high-quality early childhood educators who ensure that children, supported by families, have the early experiences they need for a strong foundation.
- Many early childhood educators do not have equitable, affordable access to needed early childhood education credentials and degrees. XX% of early childhood educators in STATE / NATIONALLY have earned degrees.
- Many early childhood educators earn poverty-level wages and do not have basic workplace benefits, such as health insurance and paid sick leave. XX% of child care workers in STATE / NATIONALLY make so little that they live in families accessing public benefits.
- Many early childhood educators will leave their positions each year, because they cannot afford to earn such low wages, often while supporting their own families. XX% of early childhood centers in STATE / NATIONALLY experience turnover each year.
- One in six child care workers has lost their job during the pandemic, threatening child care supply, impacting healthy child development, and compromising the ability of this sector to support economic recovery.
- The average wage for child care providers, who are skilled and valuable front-line professionals who have risked their health to provide education and care during a global pandemic, is less than \$12 per hour, with Black and Latina child care workers making even less.
- Many child care providers have, at great personal and professional cost, managed to keep their doors open during the pandemic in order to support children and families in their communities.

### Cost of High-Quality Early Childhood Education

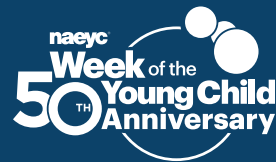
- At the same time, the cost of one year of child care for an infant in STATE averages \$XX,XXX and \$XX,XXX for a four-year old.
- The majority of these costs, which often exceed the cost of a year of college tuition, are borne by parents, who often can't afford it.
- Tuition from fee-paying parents and subsidy rates for families with low incomes are typically insufficient to afford highly-qualified, consistent early childhood educators and pay for low child-to-early educator ratios that ensure the health and safety of children.
- Payment rates provided to early childhood educators to provide high-quality early care and education services to low-income children do not cover the costs of quality.

### Impact of the Pandemic

- The lack of sufficient public investment in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced child care programs, educators, and families into a series of impossible choices with devastating consequences.
- The essential yet chronically undervalued child care sector has sacrificed and struggled to serve children and families since the start of the COVID pandemic.

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## AND WHEREAS YOUNG CHILDREN NEED

- Skilled, educated, competent, consistent, and compensated early childhood educators.
- Developmentally appropriate, accessible, and available early care and education settings.
- Access to an early childhood education workforce that reflects a rich diversity of linguistic, racial, and cultural identities.
- Early childhood educators who are incentivized and supported to provide high-quality care to those with high and special needs.

## AND WHEREAS WORKING FAMILIES NEED

- Paid family leave.
- Mixed-delivery early childhood education system that allows them to choose between “quality” and “quality” when selecting the setting that best meets their needs.
- A strong regulatory structure to give them peace of mind that their children are safe and in high quality early care and education settings.
- Sufficient high-quality child care spaces beginning at birth to be available in the community.
- Robust subsidies, scholarships, and tax credits for families at all income levels that support the true cost of quality early childhood education.

## AND WHEREAS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS NEED

- Opportunities to acquire critical skills, knowledge, and competencies through pathways to credentials and higher education degrees, without incurring college debt.
- Ability to have basic workplace benefits such as health insurance, retirement, paid sick leave, paid vacation and professional development leave.
- Ability to earn a family-sustaining wage that is commensurate with the required education and skills they bring to the complex and valuable work they do.

## AND WHEREAS WE CELEBRATE

- The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WOYC so that we can continue to recognize and advance the early childhood education profession.

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Therefore, be it resolved that the state / city / county of XXX does hereby proclaim April 10<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> as the Week of the Young Child, and:

- does hereby recognize that high quality early childhood education, provided in a mixed-delivery system, is a public good, and should be financed as such.
- does hereby recognize the complex, valuable, essential, and demanding work of early childhood educators.
- does hereby recognize that when our society invests in educators, we also invest in children and families.
- declare that early childhood educators should be valued, respected, and compensated for the important roles they play.
- commit to the convening of a Task Force to study pathways to compensation parity for early childhood educators.
- calls on the Governor / legislative body to advance a bill streamlining articulation between two -and four -year colleges and universities.
- urge all members of our community to support efforts that increase children and families' access to high-quality early childhood education.
- commit to investments that stabilize, sustain, and support child care and early learning so this essential workforce can continue to support children, families, and our economy through the pandemic crisis, recovery, and beyond.