Dear families, friends, neighbors, and members of our community,

**Happy Week of the Young Child!**

April 12th - 18th, 2015, is the Week of the Young Child, an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and NCaeyc, our state’s largest and oldest professional membership association for early childhood professional. According to NAEYC, “The purpose of the Week of the Young Child is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.”

Every day, early childhood professionals who work with or on behalf of children birth through age eight honor young children by creating warm, safe, and inviting environments, with developmentally appropriate curriculum, where children can learn and thrive. In a high-quality early childhood environment, every day is the Day of the Young Child!

When we celebrate the national Week of the Young Child, our purpose is to advocate for those young children, families, and teachers - to remind the world of how high quality early education affects us all, each day, and how it affects our future. When you join us in advocacy, we can promote the policies, practices, and resources necessary to ensure young children across our state have access to safe, affordable, high quality care.

We celebrate the WOYC to recognize that our neighbors, business leaders, and policymakers are important in supporting families and educators in their work with young children.

Here’s what you can do to honor and advocate for children during the Week of the Young Child:

* **Celebrate young children.** Take a walk to a park or around your neighborhood. Look through family photo albums and share stories. Read your favorite books together and visit the library. Involve your child in a project for the family, like cooking a meal, planting flowers, or making a family photo collage.
* **Thank those who care for young children.** Write a thank you note to someone who cares for and helps young children make the most of the opportunities in their early learning years.
* **Help make sure your child’s teacher is a member of NCaeyc,** providingaccess to resources, support, and professional development to enhance their classroom practice. Learn more at http://ow.ly/Kg9l9.
* **Support local WOYC celebrations**. Get engaged in Week of the Young Child events by attending or volunteering in your community.
* **Learn more about early childhood development & tips for families.** Check out NAEYC for Families at [families.naeyc.org](http://families.naeyc.org/)
* **Spread the word.** Tell your friends and co-workers about the Week of the Young Child - share this letter! Encourage neighbors, co-workers, local officials, friends and family members to consider getting involved in local *Week of the Young Child* celebrations.

Thank you for celebrating with us and offering your support!