

Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children

**Fall
2023**

Upcoming Calendar

October 13-14, 2023

University of Nebraska-Kearney Early Childhood Education Conference
Kearney, NE

[Schedule](#)

[More Info](#)

[Register](#)

October 13-14, 2023

Western Nebraska Early Childhood Education Conference
Gering, NE

[Schedule](#)

[More Info](#)

[Register](#)

November 15-18, 2023

NAEYC Annual Conference
Nashville, TN

[Schedule](#)

[More Info](#)

[Register](#)

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New Team Member: Tommi

This summer we welcomed a new team member to our Nebraska AEYC office in Lincoln! **Tommi Baker**, a recent graduate from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, has joined as our new Administrative Assistant. They are responsible for updating our website and social media, day-to-day office duties, and contributing to various projects, including putting together this newsletter.



New Program: RESPECT

Nebraska AEYC is proud to partner with the University of Nebraska (NU), institutions of higher education (IHEs) and states/territories/tribal nations, to **implement innovative programs** to prepare early childhood educators, **break down systemic barriers to education for people of color**, and **increase financial assistance and compensation** for students studying to be early educators.

Alongside project partners, NU is working to **transform Nebraska's higher education system through a statewide strategic initiative** to develop a Responsive Equitable System for Preparing Early Childhood Teachers (RESPECT). The RESPECT project is designed to **catalyze systemic change and fundamentally shift the culture** of early childhood educator preparation in Nebraska to be more equitable and inclusive.

In conjunction with support from the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, funding from The Collaborative will support systems change in Nebraska early childhood education through **3 core innovations**:

- **Building a competency-based framework** that defines common expectations for educator preparation, credentialing, and licensing across all early childhood settings;
- **Developing accessible pathways and support mechanisms** to ensure all members of Nebraska's early childhood workforce have equitable opportunities to earn a bachelor's degree in early childhood education and teaching certification; and
- **Collaborating with local communities** to ensure the competency-based curriculum and accessible pathways are implemented in ways that are contextually grounded and culturally relevant.

Through this work, Nebraska AEYC is focused on **supporting potential early childhood educators** with T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood® scholarships and Child Care WAGE\$® salary supplements, working to identify student needs and supports, and supporting the creation of an early childhood apprenticeship model. **Stay tuned for more information as this exciting work progresses!**

Advocacy

Executive Director of Nebraska AEYC, Tracy Gordon, spoke at the Nebraska State Legislature twice in the spring of 2023, first for **LB 319**, a bill looking to strengthen early child care in Nebraska which called for new fund allocation:

- \$50 million to the Nebraska Early Learning Endowment Fund (Sixpence) to provide grants to communities to help build their birth-to-age 3 capacity, the **most difficult for parents to find and the most costly** to provide.
- \$40 million for capacity-building grants, expanding upon 2022 Legislature appropriated funds through an amendment to LB1014. Demand was there, but **only 16 grants could be awarded despite 82 applications**.
- \$10 million to the Department of Education to partner with a nonprofit organization to provide child care wage supplements, hoping to **keep early childhood educators in the field with more competitive wages**.



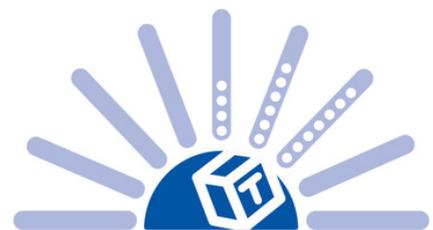
Gordon spoke again at the legislature in April, this time in support of **LB 499**. The proposal was for refundable tax credits against income taxes for **both child care providers and their programs**.

- Based on the quality of each program, **providers would earn a larger credit per child** depending on how high of a step number they were on.
- Step 3 would be the minimum level to receive a credit of \$250 per child, while Step 5 was \$750 per child.
- Similarly, child care providers individually would receive a refundable tax credit against their income taxes **dependent on their personal level of classification**.
- Level One would receive \$500 and the maximum was \$1,500 to Level Four providers.

Want to do your part in helping advocate for Early Childhood Education?

[Click here](#) to find ways to contribute!

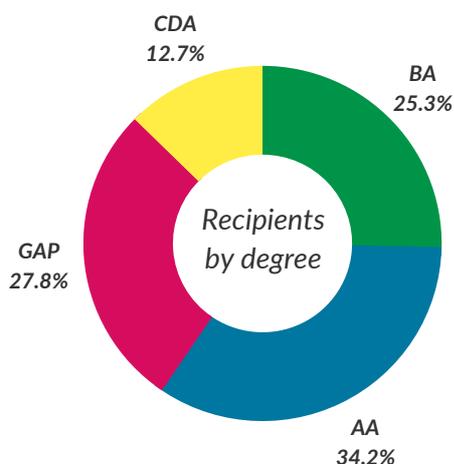
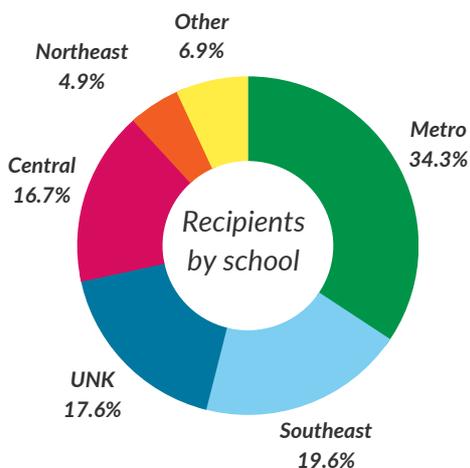
T.E.A.C.H. provides **scholarships to help early care and education professionals complete coursework** at a local college and work toward a degree in Early Childhood Education. Scholarships are available for both **Associate and Bachelor's Degree** programs, in addition to the newly added **CDA program, the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education.**



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®
Nebraska

A Program of Nebraska Association
for the Education of Young Children

102 Scholarship Recipients



Stay Connected!



Helpful Links

[Requirements](#)

[FAQs](#)

[CDA Application](#)

[Sponsors](#)

[AA/BA Application](#)

T.E.A.C.H. Student Spotlight



The T.E.A.C.H. scholarship has given me opportunities I would have never been able to imagine! It allowed me to finish my degree while working full time still. It also allowed me the freedom to go back to school for a fraction of the cost it would normally. **Honestly, this was the only way I was going to be able to afford to go back to school.** This also gave me the opportunity to evolve my career in the child care setting. I was a lead teacher when I started the T.E.A.C.H. program, and with the help of the program and my center, I am now being trained to become the Director of Small Miracle Child Care and Preschool! **This would not have been possible without the help of the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship!** I praise this program every chance I can get! It is the best decision I could have made for my future.



Britney Wurdeman



2023 Graduate

Metropolitan Community College (MCC) in Omaha



Associate Degree

in Early Childhood Education,
61.5 Credit Hours



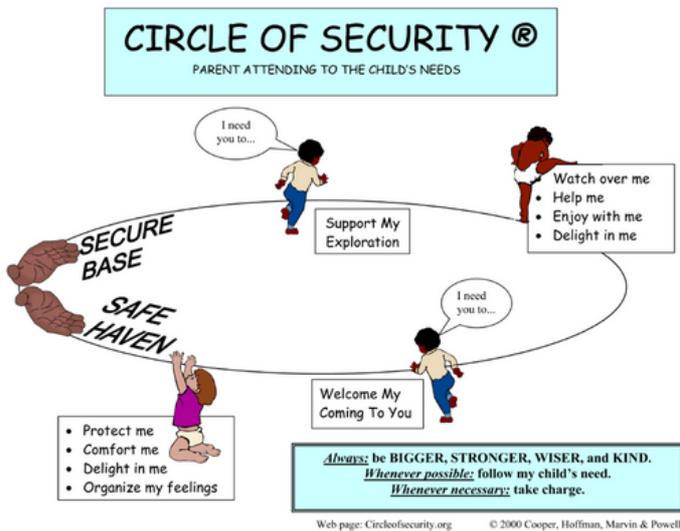
Completed degree while working full time as assistant director of an Elkhorn child care program

Circle of Security- Parenting



A parenting program based on years of research about how to build a strong relationship with children. It is designed to help parents learn how to **respond to their child's needs in a way that enhances their connection with them**, which often leads to changes in the child's behavior. It helps parents **give their children a feeling of security and confidence** so they can explore, learn, grow and build positive relationships; **all essential skills for life-long success.**

Quotes from Former Parent Participants



I am definitely glad I took the class. **I learned so many things I didn't even know existed.** I can now instantly see my children going out on the top of the circle and coming back on the bottom of the circle. I wish I had known a lot of things back then. **Knowing these things could have helped me change the way I allow my kids to play.**

I learned that **being with my kids in their emotions is really important.** Knowing this I can be more cognizant of needs. I also learned that my kids may be playing their needs off my needs and I need to make sure that I am not portraying something I do not want to portray and **I am actually fulfilling their needs** instead of them trying to meet my needs and miscuing me.



I've learned that **there is always a greater, much wiser, way to show recognition to your child's needs** and to able to tend to them without frustration or confusion.

Child Care WAGES[®]

This program provides **education-based salary supplements** (sometimes called stipends) to low-paid early care and education providers working with children ages birth-five in licensed family child care settings in Nebraska. Child Care WAGES[®] is designed to **increase retention, education, and compensation** of the early childhood workforce.

31

Supplement
Recipients
in 2023

\$1,082

Average
6-Month
Supplement

Rooted in Relationships

The Rooted in Relationships Pyramid Implementation project in Lancaster County wrapped up its calendar year in June 2023. Throughout the year, participants received **professional development, individual coaching, child assessment opportunities, and access to grants for additional social-emotional development materials**. This project also supported community based **social-emotional development activities** including two Parents Interacting With Infants (PIWI) classes and two **Circle of Security Parenting** classes.



nearly 300

Families Served



400+

Children Served

Child Care WAGES[®] NEBRASKA



Helpful Links

[WAGES[®] Application](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Supplement Scale](#)



Helpful Links

[Overview](#)

[Communities](#)

[Evaluation Report](#)

Leadership Academy

The Nebraska AEYC Leadership Academy wrapped up another successful year with **12 child care center directors graduating**. Overall, the most significant outcomes of 2022-2023 were the opportunities provided for directors that have been focused on the programs they lead to shift that focus for a few hours to **developing their leadership skills and abilities**. One primary success of the Leadership Academy was the opportunity for directors to network among colleagues, as they continue to feel the effects of Covid-19 in staffing and enrollment challenges. The Omaha cohort **shared strategies**, as two programs determined it was necessary to close specific days of the week. The Norfolk cohort decided to continue to meet informally after the conclusion of the Leadership Academy, as **they appreciated the benefits of collaboration**.

100%

of Participants surveyed agreed that...

- Activities **stimulated thinking and learning**
- They **increased their knowledge** of leadership
- They will be able to **apply info gained in their job and/or life**

Leadership Academy is looking for new participants!

- *Child Care Centers in Grand Island & Southwest Omaha*
- *In-home Family Child Care Centers in Lincoln*

Contact Jill Snyder by September 30 if interested!

JSnyder@NebraskaAEYC.org | (402) 858-1376

Infant/Toddler Quality Initiative

ITQI provides **coaching and professional development opportunities** to home-based and center-based partners in the Lancaster and Saunders counties to **improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers**. Providers receive observations to determine needs, then materials are purchased for use in their learning environments. Additional funds & training are offered, and participants experience continuous coaching through the process to **combat challenges and grow strengths**. ITQI is currently helping out **10** child care providers for its year ending November 30.

**Congratulations to our
2022-2023 Graduates!**

Lincoln (4)

- **Jocelyn Johnson**
Building Blocks/Krayon Campus
- **Janice Anderson**
KinderCare (West A)
- **Shelby Schelbitzki**
Primrose School of Lincoln
- **Callie Wilhite**
UNL Children's Center

Norfolk (5)

- **Liz Sudbeck**
Northern Hills Childcare
- **Cassie Hill**
King's Kids
- **Chad Bryant**
Christ Lutheran Church/Helping Hands
- **Leslie Baker**
Fits and Giggles
- **Shavon Bonner**
Fits and Giggles

Omaha (3)

- **Lara Kennedy**
St. Bernard's Church
- **Sonita Buddi**
Brighten Our Future Early Learning Center
- **Tagan Newbill**
Nebraska Children's Home Society



**[Click here for more info](#)
or contact:**

Jill Snyder

JSnyder@NebraskaAEYC.org
(402) 858-1376

Pam's Daycare	Alliance			
Granny's	Arcadia			
Penny Gerking	Auburn	\$		
The Playschool	Chadron	\$		
Little G Childcare	Chadron			
Little Sprouts Child Care Ob Denita Julius	Chadron	\$		
Breezy Hill Childcare	Falls City			
Young Men's Christian Association of Fremont	Fremont			
Karime Child Care LLC	Grand Island			
Stoney's Home Daycare	Hastings	\$		
Beginnings Early Development Center	Hastings			
Marisa's Playhouse	Imperial			
Natalie's Daycare	Kearney	\$		
Great Beginnings Child Care and Preschool	Kearney			
Angie's Daycare	Kearney			
Tammy's Tiny Tots	Kearney	\$		
Bright Futures Preschool	Kearney			
Bubbly Britches Daycare	Kearney			
Lighthouse Preschool	La Vista			
Educare Of Lincoln	Lincoln			
Fingerprints Child Development Center	Lincoln			
Just Like Mine Daycare	Lincoln			
Splash of Color Child Care	Lincoln			
University of Nebraska-Lincoln Children's Center	Lincoln			 
Westminster Child Care/Preschool	Lincoln			
Wild Child Daycare	Lincoln			
Fits & Giggles	Norfolk			
Fits & Giggles LLC	Norfolk			
Angela R Blaesi	North Platte			
Omaha Early Learning Center At Skinner	Omaha			
Kids Can Community Center	Omaha			
B.E.T. Daycare	Omaha			
Chase's Child Care Corner	Papillion	\$		
Abc,123 Childcare/Preschool	Pierce	\$		
Bertha Sayaloune	Scottsbluff			
St John Child Development Center	Seward			
Kid's Korner	Sidney			
Cubby Care Campus Preschool & Childcare, Inc	South Sioux City			
Apline Village Community Daycare	Verdigre			

Program Directors Key

 Current/Former WAGE\$. Recipient
  Current/Former T.E.A.C.H. Recipient
  Leadership Academy Graduate
  Infant/Toddler QI Past Participant



Want to add your program to this list?
Visit naeyc.org/accreditation

Lincoln (18)

- KinderCare Learning Center
- KinderCare West A
- Knowledge Beginnings
- LPS Early Childhood at Arnold
- LPS Early Childhood at Belmont/Fredstrom
- LPS Early Childhood at Bryan
SCLC/Northeast SCLC/Brownell
- LPS Early Childhood at Campbell/Kooser
- LPS Early Childhood at Cavett/Adams/Hill
- LPS Early Childhood at Elliott/Hartley/Clinton
- LPS Early Childhood at
Holmes/Huntington/Pyrtle
- LPS Early Childhood at
Maxey/Humann/Kloefkorn
- LPS Early Childhood at
Mcphee/Everett/Lincoln High
- LPS Early Childhood at Pershing/Meadow
Lane/Norwood Park
- LPS Early Childhood at
Prescott/Calvert/Rousseau
- LPS Early Childhood at Saratoga/Roper
- Northeast KinderCare
- Ruth Staples Child Development Lab School
- Southeast Community College Child
Development Center

Chadron (1)

- Chadron State College Child Development
Center

Omaha (17)

- Edward Zorinsky Child Development Center
Managed by Bright Horizons
- First National Bank Child Development Center
- KinderCare Learning Center
- KinderCare Learning Center
- Kindernook Preschool
- Millard KinderCare
- Oakdale Early Childhood Center
- Pennie Z. Davis Child Development Center
- Rockbrook Early Childhood Center
- Sunset Early Childhood Center
- Union Pacific Child Development Center
- University of Nebraska Omaha Child Care
Center
- West Dodge KinderCare Learning Center
- Westbrook Early Childhood Center
- Westgate Early Childhood
- Westside Early Childhood - Underwood Hills
ECC
- YMCA Early Learning Center at Creighton

Offutt AFB (2)

- Offutt Child Development Center 1
- Offutt Child Development Center II

Grand Island (1)

- Blessed Sacrament Catholic Preschool

Membership Benefits

- 20% discount on all products in the [NAEYC catalog](#) and [online store](#).
- [Discounted insurance offerings](#) through the Trust for Insuring Educators (TIE)
- Access to [HELLO](#), the home of NAEYC's interest forums
- Access to member-only sessions at NAEYC events, as well as member-only events, such as our Public Policy Forum in Washington, D.C.
- Discounted supplies through Office Depot and OfficeMax
- National, state and local events and activities, such as Week of the Young Child (April 6-12, 2024)
- Local conference support
- Advocacy events & activities
- Early childhood national, state and local leadership
- Chapter development and support
- Ability to post employment opportunities [online for free](#)
- Technical assistance with [accreditation](#) efforts
- Discounts on Nebraska conference fees



Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children



Quality Early Childhood Education
For All Nebraska Families

Have a job available that you want to promote?

As a member, you are eligible to post job/position openings on our website for your programs!

Requirements

- Submitted by current NAEYC member
- Include membership number and job description ready for posting
- PDF file format
- Completed with this [Job Posting Form](#) attached
- All items emailed to TGordon@nebraskaAEYC.org

Nebraska AEYC is proud to partner with **We Care for Kids**, contributing to a statewide effort to **build support for quality early childhood care and education**. We Care for Kids connects families & communities to resources, provides a community toolkit in English & Spanish to help raise awareness, and **uplifts early childhood educators and their stories**. The more we care about bringing quality early childhood education to families, the more we **ensure that children, families and communities thrive**.

Stay Connected With Us!



Nebraska AEYC is a proud member
of Give Nebraska

Contact Us

Mailing Address

Nebraska AEYC, Inc.
650 J St, Suite 23
Lincoln, NE 68508

Executive Director

Tracy Gordon
TGordon@NebraskaAEYC.org
(402) 476-2089

Want to help support our work?

[Click here to make a donation to NAEYC!](#)

Everything You Need for a Calming, Cozy Corner!

In partnership with Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation is thrilled to announce *Cozy Corner*—a free, 1-hour virtual training that explores the essential components needed to support a calming, cozy corner designed to help children unwind and rejuvenate.

After completing the training, you will receive one of the following resources to help you get started:

- ☐ ☐ Lakeshore Calming Corner Bundle for family child care programs (\$789.00 value)
- ☐ ☐ Calming Corner Instant Learning Space for center-based programs (\$1,499 value)



Scan to enroll or visit nebraskachildren.org/what-we-do/calming-corners/



*Calming Corner
Instant Learning Space*

NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Mission.
DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES


**nebraska
children**
AND FAMILIES FOUNDATION