

The background of the cover is a photograph of several young children, likely in a classroom or playroom. They are sitting on the floor, looking towards the left. The children are of diverse backgrounds. One girl in the foreground is wearing a blue dress with colorful butterfly patterns and has her hair in two braids with green ties. Other children are wearing blue shirts. The setting appears to be a bright, indoor space with wooden paneling and colorful artwork on the wall.

neaeyc

2019-2020
Annual Report

Nebraska Association
for the Education
of Young Children

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WELCOME!

On behalf of the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc. (Nebraska AEYC) staff and Board of Directors, we would like to welcome you to the 2019-2020 Nebraska AEYC Annual Report.



Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children

This year has certainly been like no other! Who could have anticipated the challenges 2020 would bring? In May, Brandee Lengel, Co-Executive Director, left Nebraska AEYC to pursue a new role in the early childhood field. While this was a great opportunity for her, we miss her! Additionally, as the COVID-19 pandemic began **its spread in March 2020, our nation's priorities, goals, and way of conducting business was redefined.**

At Nebraska AEYC, our staff quickly rose to the challenge and adapted the delivery methods of our projects & services, the participants in our projects worked tirelessly to protect and support the children and families in their care, our funding partners remained committed to our mission-driven work, and our partners across the state worked in collaboration and coordination to ensure vital services, supports, and resources were made available to early childhood education programs and the workforce. We are truly thankful to so many of you for your hard work and dedication to the field of early childhood education, now and into the future!

We recognize that our mission-driven work could not be accomplished, or as successful, without the commitment of our many partners, members, and passionate advocates. Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to working with all of you for years to come!

Carol Houser, Board President

Tracy Gordon, Executive Director

Vision Statement

Nebraska AEYC envisions a state where all of Nebraska's children, families, and educators have access to high quality opportunities that support positive, lasting outcomes.

Mission Statement

Nebraska AEYC provides opportunities that promote excellence in early childhood for Nebraska's educators, children, and families, through education, advocacy, and leadership.

Join Us!

Please join us in membership and work toward a better tomorrow for all children. More information about Nebraska AEYC and how to become a member can be found at www.NebraskaAEYC.org.



Nebraska AEYC Staff

(in order from left to right)

Tracy Gordon, Executive Director

Jennifer Durow, Finance Manager

Jill Snyder, Project Coordinator

Sarah Lowe, Circle of Security Project Coordinator

Melanie Cordry, Senior Administrative Assistant

Julie Warford, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and

Child Care WAGE\$® NEBRASKA Counselor/
Program Coordinator

NAEYC

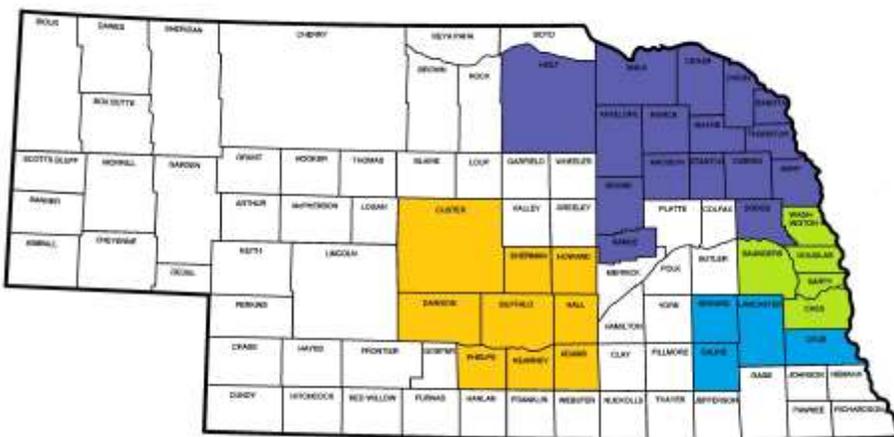
Nebraska AEYC is an affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The NAEYC Affiliate Network is a vibrant community of nonprofit organizations dedicated to providing local member engagement opportunities, resources, conferences, professional development, and advocacy efforts for our shared members.



This past year, NAEYC engaged the early childhood community in exciting initiatives and provided valuable resources, including a new Power to the Profession website (<http://powertotheprofession.org/>), the release of the Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession (<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/initiatives/profession>), and the release of the Advancing Equity Position Statement (<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/initiatives/equity>).

Membership

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, Nebraska AEYC had an average of 361 members between our four chapters and at-large counties with a peak in December 2019 with 379 members. Throughout the year, we welcomed 90 new members and had an average retention rate of 48.05%.



Lincoln Omaha Northeast Kearney

2019-2020 NEBRASKA AEYC CHAPTERS

Omaha Chapter of Nebraska AEYC
Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders, Washington

Lincoln Chapter of Nebraska AEYC
Lancaster, Otoe, Saline, Seward

Kearney Chapter of Nebraska AEYC
Adams, Buffalo, Custer, Dawson, Hall, Howard, Kearney, Phelps, Sherman

Northeast Chapter of Nebraska AEYC
Antelope, Boone, Burt, Cedar, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Dodge, Holt, Knox, Madison, Nance, Pierce, Stanton, Thurston, Wayne

Nebraska AEYC Board of Directors

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Amy Schmidtke | Chantel Tonkinson |
| Jairo Gamboa | Betsy Tonniges |
| Carol Houser | E. Andreea Shnyder |
| Robin Kolumban | Patricia Pagel |
| Crystal Kozak | Janeen Ward |
| Jennifer Miller | Vickie Young |
| Dawn Mollenkopf | Jennifer Haggart |
| Colleen Schmidt | |

2019-2020 funding for Nebraska AEYC programs supported by:

- Community Action Partnership of Lancaster & Saunders Counties
- Nebraska Children & Families Foundation
- Nebraska Department of Education—Office of Early Childhood
- Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services
- Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative
- United Way of Lincoln/Lancaster County
- Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Fund
- Community Health Endowment



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA is a statewide scholarship program designed to help early care and education providers including: early childhood teachers, family child care providers, and directors meet their professional development goals through formal higher education, while continuing their current employment in their early childhood settings. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® is a nationally licensed program from the T.E.A.C.H. National Center in North Carolina. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA began in 2001.

136*

Scholarship Recipients
 Completed 1,694 Credits

Associate Degree Students
Bachelor's Degree Students

2019-2020 Outcomes

Education		
Total recipients	76	51
Graduates	12	4
Avg. GPA	3.47	3.68
Avg. credits per contract	19.5	20.8
Retention		
Completed commitment	94%	100%
Compensation		
Avg. increase in salary	7.8%	12%

*Nine recipients were EarlyEdU and weren't considered AA or BA.

2019-2020 funding for
 T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA
 provided by:

Nebraska Department of Education
 Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services
 Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative

"Overall, the T.E.A.C.H. program is an amazing opportunity for up and coming teachers."

~Program Director

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA Advisory Committee

Lori Altmaier	Cheryl Roche
Lisa Brestel	Heather Schmidt
Tammy Classen	Cathy Stockwell
Adam Feser	Paula Thompson
Jane Franklin	Shelley Wallace
Diane Lewis	Nicole Vint
Brandy Price	

8 Community Colleges

Central
 Metropolitan
 Southeast
 Mid-Plains
 Western NE
 Little Priest Tribal
 NE Indian
 Northeast



5 Universities

University of Nebraska - Kearney
 University of Nebraska - Lincoln
 Chadron State College
 Peru State College
 Wayne State College



Student/Program Demographics

- > Average recipient is 34 years old
- > 19% of recipients began their scholarship with a high school diploma (or less)
- > 47% of recipients have no other college graduates in their family
- > 29% are people of color
- > Positions:
 - > 10 directors
 - > 102 teachers
 - > 24 family child care providers
- > 91 different sponsoring programs
- > 13,415 Nebraska children benefited from an educator increasing their knowledge and skills through formal higher education.

“This scholarship has provided me with the support and tools I needed to further my education and better myself as an educator and caregiver. Without this scholarship, I would be nowhere near as far as I am in my school career. I am so thankful for all the support, help, and benefits this scholarship has provided.”

~T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Recipient

Looking Forward

We continue to add new T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients and have additional funding available. If you, or an early childhood professional you know, is interested in attending college debt-free, please contact T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA to see if you qualify.

teach@NebraskaAEYC.org • 402-858-5143 (Lincoln) • www.NebraskaAEYC.org

100%

*...of scholarship recipients would recommend
T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA to others in the early childhood field.*

EarlyEdU

Nebraska AEYC, Nebraska Department of Education–Office of Early Childhood, University of NE at Kearney, and Buffet Early Childhood Institute partnered together to deliver a set of three EarlyEdU courses to early childhood educators in Nebraska at a very low cost. During the Fall 2020 semester, a cohort of early childhood educators completed the final class in this set of competency-based online coursework. Even though these EarlyEdU courses will no longer be offered, four of the nine EarlyEdU participants have continued on with their education using an associate degree or bachelor degree scholarship with the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA scholarship program.



All credits converted to semester credit hours. Data taken from 2019-2020 Annual Report to the T.E.A.C.H. National Center. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA is a licensed program of Child Care Services Association.



Child Care WAGES® NEBRASKA Family Child Care Pilot
Child Care WAGES® NEBRASKA is a program that 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.

WAGES impacts early childhood education programs and educators by...

- ① Recognizing and rewarding dedicated professionals
- ② Stabilizing the early childhood workforce
- ③ Encouraging continued education

- ◇ 18 child care professionals earned salary supplements.
- ◇ 145 Nebraska children benefited from consistent care provided by a WAGES participant.

Education

- ◇ 67% of participants had an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education or higher OR submitted education documentation to show progress in college.

Compensation

- ◇ 50% of WAGES participants earned less than \$12 per hour
- ◇ Recipients earned an average six-month supplement of \$1,088

Retention

- ◇ 100% of WAGES participants stayed in their early education programs.

Demographics

- ◇ 6% of participants were people of color
- ◇ 100% of participants were women

2019-2020 funding for
Child Care WAGES Nebraska Pilot Project
provided by:

Nebraska Department of Education
Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative

“As a family child-care provider in a typically low-paying profession, the leadership of Nebraska AEYC to offer WAGES means a lot to me. It affirms what I do to know that others recognize how important early childhood is. We know that quality is expensive and often **outside many parents’ ability to afford.** WAGES has helped me build my program while still being able to keep my child care tuition affordable for the clients I **serve.**”

~Papillion Family Child Care
Provider

During our pilot year, we served family child care providers.
In the future, we plan to expand our WAGES program to include other early childhood professionals.

For more information about Child Care WAGES® NEBRASKA:

wages@NebraskaAEYC.org • 402-858-5143 (Lincoln) • www.NebraskaAEYC.org

Rooted in Relationships

The Lancaster County Rooted in Relationships initiative included 23 providers, 12 center directors, and directly impacted 231 children in Lincoln.

The Rooted in Relationships project offers the following activities to support the implementation of the Pyramid Model:

- On-going professional development,
- Individualized coaching for providers and center directors,
- Individual child assessments,
- Opportunities for community collaboration activities, and
- Access to grants for additional materials.



Circle of Security-Parenting (COS-P)

COS-P is an **8-week parenting program, designed to help parents learn how to respond to their children's needs in a way that enhances the parent/child connection, which often leads to changes in the child's behavior.**

Nebraska AEYC has multiple grants to facilitate COS-P classes across the state including:

NDHHS Referred Families: 155 referred parents completed a class

Community Healthy Endowment: 5 classes

Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Fund: 15 classes

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation: 2 classes



“Bigger, stronger, and wiser. Being able to know when to follow the lead and when to take charge has been very helpful. I can see how my attachment with my daughters is growing.” ~A COS-P Parent

Parents Interacting With Infants (PIWI)

PIWI is an evidenced-based set of practices based on beliefs (a “philosophy”) about families, children, and helping relationships. The objectives of PIWI are to increase confidence, competence, and positive relationships for parents and children ages 0-2. It does so by keeping the parent-child relationship at the center and by supporting responsive, respectful parent-child interactions. Nebraska AEYC received a grant from the Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Fund to support the delivery of PIWI in Lincoln. Two newly trained PIWI facilitators began their first class in the spring of 2020, but due to COVID, had to postpone the completion of the class until fall of 2020.

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT)

PCIT is a treatment model for children ages 2 to 7 that places emphasis on improving the quality of the parent-child relationship and changing parent-child interaction patterns. In PCIT, parents are taught specific skills to **establish a nurturing and secure relationship with their child while increasing their child's pro-social behavior and decreasing negative behavior.**

Nebraska AEYC received a grant from the Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Fund to support the delivery of PCIT in Lincoln. A therapist was selected to attend PCIT training in the spring of 2020, but due to COVID, that training was completed in the fall of 2020. Funds from the grant will also support the purchase of materials and supplies that will allow PCIT-trained therapists to carry our PCIT to fidelity.



Infant/Toddler Quality Initiative

The Infant/Toddler Quality Initiative (ITQI) works in collaboration with the Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. This project offers an opportunity for child care providers, serving infants and toddlers, to increase the quality of care and early education offered to these youngest learners.

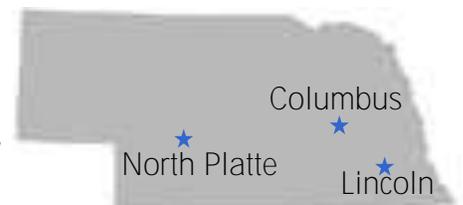
The Infant/Toddler Quality Initiative (ITQI) completed its most unique year yet. Despite the challenges of closures, furloughs, and as a result of utilizing lots of flexibility, eight classroom teachers and one family child care provider finished strong. Coaching throughout the Initiative looked different for each provider based on the individual circumstance, but all participated through emails, texts, and Zoom. The outcomes shifted to a focus on relationships with teachers prioritizing the social and emotional needs of children. Teachers were then able to enhance materials in the classroom with the benefit of the resources provided through the ITQI. Recognizing the additional need for children to experience consistency, observations demonstrated an average increase of over one point in the category of Program Structure. Also trending significantly in the positive was the category of Activities, a result of a lot of intentionality and resourcefulness by the providers. By utilizing the benefits of this project as well as coaching, providers were able to overcome the limitations set forth by COVID regarding the use of several types of classroom materials. By modifying the outlook and expectations, ITQI was able to have a successful year.



Nebraska AEYC Leadership Academy

Fourteen early childhood professionals across Nebraska, including center directors in Lincoln and Columbus, as well as family child care providers in **North Platte, completed the Leadership Academy's 2019-2020 session.** Each cohort met monthly and discussed topics such as: Authentic Leadership, Core Values, Emotional Intelligence, Active Listening, Strengths Based Leadership, and Leadership in Early Childhood.

2019-2020 Cohorts



Each month, participants completed several self-assessments and discussed results together. It certainly was a unique year, as participants were unable to meet in person the last half of the year, instead meeting virtually. Participants took the changes in stride and smoothly transitioned to the new format.

In 2019-2020, the Leadership Academy was supported by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. This allowed the service of five center directors in Lincoln, five in Columbus, and four family child care providers in North Platte.

"I really enjoyed the small group we had. It really made it easier to open up and be more vulnerable about a variety of things."

~A 2019-2020 Leadership Academy Graduate

For more information about our programs and services, visit our website at:

www.NebraskaAEYC.org

United Way Quality Enhancement Project (QEP)

In partnership with the United Way, Nebraska AEYC is working with one child care center in Lincoln to improve the quality of care in two preschool classrooms. This project uses a combination of activities and resources to produce a measurable increase in the quality of care being provided to children including pre- and post-ECERS assessments, regular coaching, purchasing additional classroom materials, and professional development activities. Specifically, through the coaching partnership model, we work with both the teachers in the classrooms and the director of the program. The coach, teacher, and director use the results of the pre-assessment as a foundation for classroom improvements. As we continue through this project, a post-classroom observation will be completed and shared with the teachers and director. The results of the classroom observation provide a detailed account of where improvements were made, and where future goals may be determined.



Recognition

This year, Gina Sandoz and Penny Gildea received the 2020 Nebraska AEYC Distinguished Service to Children Award. This award was developed in 1983 to recognize a Nebraska AEYC member who has contributed outstanding service to the organization, its program of work, development, and membership; or a Nebraskan who has done exemplary work to promote the rights, services, status, and programs for/of children.



Gina Sandoz (right)



Penny Gildea (second row, middle column)

Donations

Thank you to following individuals that donated to the organization during this fiscal year through the Community Services Fund of Nebraska and Give to Lincoln Day 2020:

Michael Baumgartner
Janet M. Colton
Melanie Cordry
Pat Enevoldsen
Kathleen Gallagher
Tracy Gordon
Carol Houser

James Ralph Johnson
Marjorie Kostelnik
Sarah Ann Kotchian
Brandee Lengel
Erin Omar
Robert Robert
Adam Rosendahl

Jill Snyder
Holly K. Southwick
Bradley Stauffer
Janeen Ward
Julie Warford
Sandra K. Wallick

Nebraska AEYC is a proud member of Community Services Fund of Nebraska.





Nebraska AEYC
650 J Street, Suite 23
Lincoln, NE 68508
www.NebraskaAEYC.org