



Background

In 1999, a number of the largest national and regional early care and education operators came together to form The Early Care and Education Consortium (ECEC), an alliance to influence public policy on behalf of quality care and education for children and families. ECEC members represent over 7,500 programs serving nearly 800,000 children in 49 states and the District of Columbia.

Investing in Children and Families

ECEC supports the critical investments in early childhood necessary to America's future. Our efforts are based on the following positions:

Ready for School – All children birth through age five should have access to quality early education

Ready for Life – All early care and education policy and programs should recognize that school readiness is only one aspect of optimum child development

Ready for Work – All families should have access to affordable quality child care

Ready for Families – All early care and education policy and programs should respect the diversity of needs and values of families and recognize the importance of allowing parents to choose the program that best meets their needs

Our public policy agenda supports policy and legislation that:

- Recognizes the **interdependence of the early care and education infrastructure, including** the wide variety of programs supporting young children and families in the need for care and education.
- Complements and sustains existing programs** offering quality services that both supports working families *and* prepares children for school.
- Increases commitment to recruiting, training, and supporting early care and education professionals** in order to establish and sustain high quality
- Reflects a commitment to a **beneficial childhood for all children**

Collaboration

The Early Care and Education Consortium is committed to working with national, regional, and local organizations and advocates with similar concerns and goals.