Benefits of:
NAEYC EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATE DEGREE ACCREDITATION

FOR STUDENTS

The field needs students like you. The demand for early childhood professionals with specialized knowledge, skills, and dispositions continues to grow across child care, Head Start, preschool, Pre-K, and primary grade settings. Associate degree programs play a crucial role in developing and supporting a highly qualified and effective workforce.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation sets a standard of excellence for early childhood programs that prepare professionals at the associate degree level and accredits programs that have demonstrated they meet this standard.

Since the launch of this accreditation system in 2006, there are now more than 150 institutions with accredited programs in 30 states and over 110 institutions in 35 states with programs in self-study.

1. SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION MATTERS – KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

As a specialized accreditor, NAEYC accreditation examines programs preparing early childhood professionals to make sure they are meeting the standards for our field. Institutional/general accreditors review the college or university as a whole without the in-depth focus on the early childhood program.

85+

NAEYC has led the way toward excellence in high-quality early care and education for more than 85 years.

2. ACCREDITED PROGRAMS ARE COMMITTED TO QUALITY

All degree and certificate programs are not of the same quality. Accreditation recognizes excellence in early childhood professional preparation at a critical time when current and future professionals are seeking specialized early childhood degrees and credentials.

A range of course delivery methods is available. Accredited programs offer traditional face-to-face courses, hybrid courses, and/or fully online courses.

3. ACCREDITED PROGRAMS FOCUS ON WHAT PROFESSIONALS NEED TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO

Accredited programs provide rich experiences for students to learn and apply their understanding of the national professional standards. These experiences can give students a solid foundation, making them more marketable to employers.

Ninety-three percent of faculty agreed students have more opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the national professional standards as a result of the accreditation process.1

1 Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation (2013) survey of primary faculty contacts from accredited programs.
4. ACCREDITED PROGRAMS SUPPORT STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND RESPONSIVE PRACTICE

Accredited programs must demonstrate how their teaching and learning are intentionally planned to respond to the needs of their students and context as a whole. They find innovative ways to support and engage students.

Three out of four faculty members indicated that the accreditation process increased student engagement in collaborative and active learning.¹

5. GRADUATES WITH EARLY CHILDHOOD DEGREES AND CREDENTIALS ARE IN HIGH DEMAND

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), public Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start, and Early Head Start all emphasize the need for professionals with college or university credentials and degrees.

From 2007-2010, states spent at least $1.4 billion on activities like training and scholarships to improve early child care and education worker quality.²

$25.2 million: 2011-2012 funding to support T.E.A.C.H. scholarship projects in 22 states and the District of Columbia.³

Did you know?

NAEYC also works with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), formerly National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), to recognize early childhood education programs at the baccalaureate and graduate levels. Currently, there are over 400 NAEYC-recognized baccalaureate and graduate programs in 38 states.


NEED MORE INFORMATION?
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