Benefits of:
NAEYC EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATE DEGREE ACCREDITATION

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

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, thereby benefiting the early childhood profession, young children, families, and communities.

Since 2006, this accreditation system has provided a framework for self-study, external evaluation, and improvement in the quality of professional preparation programs. 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. ACCREDITATION COMMUNICATES A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Accreditation recognizes excellence in early childhood professional preparation at a critical time when public demand for early childhood professionals with specialized degrees and credentials is increasing.

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

2. ACCREDITATION STRENGTHENS THE FOCUS ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE DATA

Accredited programs design and implement assessment systems that provide evidence of students’ performance in relation to national professional standards and use these data to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Ninety-eight percent of faculty increased their knowledge of aligning student learning outcomes to course assessments by participating in the accreditation process.1

3. ACCREDITATION SUPPORTS INTENTIONAL, INNOVATIVE, AND REFLECTIVE PROGRAM DESIGN

Accredited programs demonstrate how teaching and learning are intentionally planned to align with their institutions’ and programs’ missions, goals, and conceptual frameworks as well as the national standards for early childhood professionals.

Accreditation is not one-size-fits-all.

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1 Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation (2013) survey of primary faculty contacts from accredited programs.
Successful accreditation requires engagement with internal and external stakeholders. This emphasis on partnerships helps to bolster the overall visibility of the program.

Two-thirds of faculty from accredited programs noted that the accreditation process has helped create additional partnerships with community stakeholders.

Recent federal and state efforts aimed at increasing early learning outcomes for young children emphasize the need for professionals with higher education credentials and degrees in early childhood education.

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.

Benefits of:
NAEYC EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATE DEGREE ACCREDITATION

FOR POLICYMAKERS

Associate degree programs are crucial to the development of more diverse and highly qualified early childhood professionals in child care, Head Start, preschool, Pre-K, and primary grade settings. 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, thereby benefiting the early childhood profession, young children, families, and communities.

Since 2006, this accreditation system has provided a framework for self-study, external evaluation, and improvement in the quality of professional preparation programs. 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. ACCREDITATION STRENGTHENS INVESTMENTS IN WORKFORCE EFFECTIVENESS INITIATIVES

All degree and certificate programs are not of the same quality. Accredited programs strengthen the return on investments by providing robust experiences for students to learn and apply their understanding of the national professional standards.

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.¹

2. ACCREDITATION COMMUNICATES A COMMITMENT TO 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.

The Census Bureau’s American Community Survey reveals that there were nearly 1.8 million early child care and education workers nationwide in 2009 in a range of positions.²

3. ACCREDITATION FOCUSES ON OUTCOMES – WHAT DO STUDENTS KNOW? WHAT CAN THEY DO?

Accredited programs provide evidence of their students’ performance in relation to the professional preparation standards and use these data to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Ninety-three percent of faculty agreed that students have more opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the national professional standards as a result of the accreditation process.³


³Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation (2013) survey of primary faculty contacts from accredited programs.
4. ACCREDITATION VALUES
INTENTIONAL, INNOVATIVE, AND RESPONSIVE PRACTICE

Accredited programs must demonstrate how teaching and learning are intentionally planned to respond to the needs of their students, faculty, community, and context as a whole.

Accreditation is not one-size-fits-all.

5. ACCREDITATION INCREASES
PARTNERSHIPS AND REMOVES SILOS

Successful accreditation requires engagement with internal and external stakeholders. This emphasis on partnerships supports Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), public Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start, Early Head Start, P-12 alignment, early learning standards, and other early learning priority areas.

Two-thirds of faculty from accredited programs noted that the accreditation process has helped create additional partnerships.

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NEED MORE INFORMATION?
800-424-2460 or 202-232-8777
assoc_accred@naeyc.org
www.naeyc.org/accreditation
Benefits of:
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FOR FACULTY

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, thereby benefiting the early childhood profession, young children, families, and communities.

Since 2006, this accreditation system has provided a framework for self-study, external evaluation, and improvement in the quality of professional preparation programs. 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. ACCREDITATION COMMUNICATES A COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Accreditation recognizes excellence in early childhood professional preparation at a critical time when public demand for early childhood professionals with specialized degrees and credentials is increasing.

Accredited programs implement assessment systems that provide evidence of students' performance in relation to national professional standards and use these data to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Ninety-eight percent of faculty increased their knowledge of aligning student learning outcomes to course assignments and assessments by participating in the accreditation process.¹

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Accredited programs demonstrate how teaching and learning are intentionally planned to align with their institutions' and programs' missions, goals, and conceptual frameworks as well as the national standards for early childhood professionals.

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4. ACCREDITATION INCREASES PROGRAM VISIBILITY

Accreditation provides a platform that helps to bolster the overall visibility of the program, showcasing the strengths of the program and gaining support for areas needing additional resources.

At least 85% of faculty noted an increased awareness of the early childhood program and its value to the college community from college administrators by participating in the accreditation process.²

5. ACCREDITATION HAS STRONG FACULTY VOICE

This accreditation system was developed and continues to be shaped by faculty. The majority of the Commission making all accreditation decisions and policies as well as the peer review team conducting the site visit are early childhood associate degree faculty.

The Associate Degree Early Childhood Teachers Educators (ACCESS) was one of the architects of this system and continues to provide organizational input.

Did you know?

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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.

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

¹Early 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.

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