

# Finding Support during Self-Study

Programs in Step 1 of the NAEYC Accreditation process conduct self-study to lay the foundation for continuous program improvement. Self-study is a collaborative process of learning and reflection. Successful programs do the following

## Form a Self-Study Team

Partnering with families and including staff members in efforts to improve a program are cornerstones of the NAEYC self-study and accreditation processes.

When selecting the self-study team, choose program staff and families who are:

- Willing to participate in the additional tasks necessary to successfully complete the self-study and accreditation processes
- Committed to maintaining a positive attitude toward learning
- Open to constructive criticism and dialogue

The self-study team takes responsibility for the following tasks:

- Meeting with family members, staff, and others to discuss the process, what is involved, and the status of the program improvement efforts
- Determining priorities and timelines for program improvement
- Determining roles and responsibilities for accomplishing specific self-study tasks
- Finding and using resources that can support the self-study effort

## Explore Resources

Self-study encourages staff to expand their vision and knowledge of early childhood practices beyond their own program. It involves both program improvement and professional development.

The following are suggested resources and strategies for programs to consider when help and support are needed:

- Sign up for NAEYC telephone consultations for support through the initial and renewal Early Learning Program Accreditation processes.
- Find an accreditation facilitation project (AFP) in your area. AFPs support the quality improvement efforts of early childhood programs.
- Meet or speak with local experts on health, nutrition, sanitation, and hazards to gather suggestions for improvements.
- Ask others who work with the program, such as volunteers, board members, and community specialists, for input and ideas.
- Contact a local child care resource and referral agency (CCR&R) that provides trainings and technical assistance to early childhood programs and teaching staff.

