

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct & Statement of Commitment

Section II: Ethical responsibilities to families

Families* are of primary importance in children's development. Because the family and the early childhood practitioner have a common interest in the child's well-being, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about communication, cooperation and collaboration between the home and early childhood program in ways that enhance the child's development. (**The term family may include those adults, besides parents, with the responsibility of being involved in educating, nurturing and advocating for the child.*)

Ideals

- I-2.1---To be familiar with the knowledge base related to working effectively with families and to stay informed through continuing education and training
- I-2.2---To develop relationships of mutual trust and create partnerships with the families we serve.
- I-2.3---To welcome all family members and encourage them to participate in the program, including involvement in shared decision making.
- I-2.4---To listen to families, acknowledge and build upon their strengths and competencies, and learn from families as we support them in their task of nurturing children.
- I-2.5---To respect the dignity and preferences of each family and to make an effort to learn about its structure, culture, language, customs and beliefs to ensure a culturally consistent environment for all children and families.
- I-2.6---To acknowledge families' childrearing values and their right to make decisions for their children.
- I-2.7---To share information about each child's education and development with families and to help them understand and appreciate the current knowledge base of the early childhood profession.
- I-2.8---To help family members enhance their understanding of their children, as staff are enhancing their understanding of each child through communications with families, and support family members in the continuing development of their skills as parents.

Module 3: Celebrating Child Growth

I-2.9---To foster families' efforts to build support networks and, when needed, participate in building networks for families by providing them with opportunities to interact with program staff, other families, community resources, and professional services.

Principles

P-2.1---We shall not deny family members access to their child's classroom or program setting unless access is denied by court order or other legal restriction.

P-2.2---We shall inform families of program philosophy, policies, curriculum, assessment system, cultural practices, and personnel qualifications, and explain why we teach as we do—which should be in accordance with our ethical responsibilities to children (see Section 1).

P-2.3---We shall inform families of and, when appropriate, involve them in policy decisions.

P-2.4---We shall ensure that the family is involved in significant decisions affecting their child.

P-2.5---We shall make every effort to communicate effectively with all families in a language that they understand. We shall use community resources for translation and interpretation when we do not have sufficient resources in our own program.

P-2.6---As families share information with us about their children and families, we shall ensure that families' input is an important contribution to the planning and implementation of the program.

P-2.7---We shall inform families about the nature and purpose of the program's child assessments and how data about their child will be used.

P-2.8---We shall treat child assessment information confidentially and share this information only when there is a legitimate need for it.

P-2.9---We shall inform the family of injuries and incidents involving their child, of risks such as exposures to communicable diseases that might result in infection, and of occurrences that might result in emotional stress.

P-2.10---Families shall be fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and shall have the opportunity to give or withhold consent without penalty. We shall not permit or participate in research that could in any way hinder education, development, or well-being of children.

P-2.11---We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness working with their children.

P-2.12---We shall develop written policies for the protection of confidentiality and the disclosure of children's records. These policy documents shall be made available to all program personnel and families. Disclosure of children's records beyond family

Module 3: Celebrating Child Growth

members, program personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require familial consent (except in cases of abuse or neglect).

P-2.13---We shall maintain confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies, as well as with individuals who have legal responsibility for intervening in the child's interest.

P-2.14---In cases where family members are in conflict with one another, we shall work openly, sharing our observations of the child, to help all parties involved make informed decisions. We shall refrain from becoming an advocate for one party.

P-2.15---We shall be familiar with and appropriately refer families to community resources and professional support services. After a referral has been made we shall follow up to ensure that services have been appropriately provided.

Found at: <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05.pdf>

© NAEYC 2005