

**Week of the
Young Child**

April 11-17, 2010

WOYC

Early Years Are Learning Years®

WOYC
2010
Planning
Toolkit



www.SmartStartAlabama.org

(334) 271-0304 or toll-free (866) 711-4025 (For Zero to Five)

Email: mpiggott@SmartStartAlabama.org

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“Every Alabama Child Will Have the Opportunity to Succeed in Life”

The ***Week of the Young Child Planning Toolkit*** has been developed by the Alabama Partnership for Children to provide step-by-step ideas and fill-in-the-blank tools to make participation in ***Week of the Young Child*** simple. Take advantage of the sample documents in this toolkit by filling in the shaded areas of each document with your localized information and distributing in your community. Remember to delete all shading, document titles, page numbers and instructions before printing on your letterhead. The toolkit includes the following:

- General Information about *Week of the Young Child*
- Joining Hands for *Week of the Young Child* Memo
- Joining Hands for *Week of the Young Child* Attendance Confirmation Form
- Joining Hands for *Week of the Young Child* Flyer
- Press Release
- Backgrounder
- Newsletter Article
- 30 Second Public Service Announcement
- Community Calendar Listing
- Media Alert
- Letter to the Editor
- Proclamation Request Letter
- Proclamation
- Tip Sheet
- Donor Request Letter

Feel free to contact Michele Smith Piggott with any questions or comments regarding the toolkit or for more information about ***Week of the Young Child*** by calling toll-free (866) 711-4025 (For Zero to Five) or by emailing mpiggott@SmartStartAlabama.org

Your agency's participation in *Week of the Young Child* is critical in helping individuals throughout Alabama recognize the needs of young children, and helping thank the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children. Federal, state, and local government, communities, parents and businesses all have a role in building better futures for all children and *Week of the Young Child* is the time to help recognize this. This tool kit provides step-by-step ideas and fill-in-the-blank tools to make your participation SIMPLE.

What is *Week of the Young Child*?

Week of the Young Child is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world's largest early childhood education association, with nearly 90,000 members and a network of over 300 local, state, and regional Affiliates.

The purpose of *Week of the Young Child* is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

NAEYC first established *Week of the Young Child* in 1971, recognizing that the early childhood years (birth through age 8) lay the foundation for children's success in school and later life. The *Week of the Young Child* is a time to plan how we – as citizens of a community, of a state, and of a nation – will better meet the needs of all young children and their families.

What is Being Done in Alabama to Celebrate *Week of the Young Child*?

The Alabama Partnership for Children, along with other state advocates, will be coordinating the 6th annual *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child* event. This event, scheduled for April 15, 2010 in Montgomery, is designed to bring attention to the needs of young children birth to five to local and state decision makers (*see pages 5 - 7 for more information*). Also, early care and education programs as well as local community organizations will be celebrating in a variety of ways, including community fairs, open houses, proclamation readings, etc. The Alabama Partnership for Children will be tracking all of these events and publicizing them on our website www.SmartStartAlabama.org. We hope to hear from you regarding the plans in your community (*see form on page 4*).

Why Focus on Young Children and Early Childhood Programs?

We know today more than ever that children's earliest years are crucial learning years, and those years lay the foundation for children's success in school and beyond. The *Week of the Young Child* is a time to recognize the needs of young children, and to recommit ourselves to ensuring that each and every child experiences the type of early learning environment – at home, at child care, and in the community – that will build better futures for all children.

Who Can Participate?

Week of the Young Child participation is open to anyone with an interest in recognizing the needs of young children, and/or thanking the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children. Anyone can lead a celebration and it is a wonderful opportunity to partner with other groups in conducting community-wide celebrations and to rally more people to speak out about the issues. By joining together, you can make the *Week of the Young Child* a huge success – in your community and around Alabama!

Remember – Collaboration Works!

Your leadership in support of Alabama's *Week of the Young Child* celebration is extremely important, but keep in mind that there are others in your community who can help. Board members, agency staff, partnering organizations, and others should be invited and encouraged to provide assistance, particularly in the areas of media relations and advocacy on behalf of young children. Collaboration helps when it comes to building a strong team and achieving the best results for *Week of the Young Child*.

How Do We Connect to Other Events?

If you call the Alabama Partnership for Children toll-free at (866) 711-4025, we can link you to others who are planning *Week of the Young Child* events in your area. Also, be sure to check our website www.SmartStartAlabama.org for event postings in your area.



In order to help us keep track of everyone participating in *Week of the Young Child* and to promote all activities across the state, we ask that you complete the form below and return it to the Alabama Partnership for Children by **April 1, 2010**.

Agency/Organization _____

Contact Person _____

Agency Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Counties Served by Agency/Organization _____

Phone Number _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Please describe any activities/events currently planned for *Week of the Young Child* including date, time, location, and a brief description (use the back of this page if you need more room).

Is your agency/organization **planning to attend** the statewide *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child* event scheduled for April 15, 2010 in Montgomery, AL? YES NO

Thank you for taking the time to complete and return this form.

Please return no later than April 1st by mail or fax to:

Alabama Partnership for Children
Attention: Michele Smith Piggott
P.O. Box 230219
Montgomery, AL 36123-0219
Fax: (334) 271-0315

For more information about *Week of the Young Child*, please contact Michele Smith Piggott at the Alabama Partnership for Children toll-free at (866) 711-4025 (For Zero to Five).



“Every Alabama Child Will Have the Opportunity to Succeed in Life”

TO: Advocates of Young Children
FROM: Michele Smith Piggott, Smart Start Director
RE: *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child*

The Alabama Partnership for Children is coordinating the sixth annual *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child* event, designed to bring attention to the needs of young children, ages birth to five, to local and state decision makers. In keeping with previous years, we ask that child advocates across the state coordinate with anyone that works with young children to collect handprints that children have traced and decorated. **These handprints will be delivered to the State House in Montgomery, AL and posted in Alabama Legislative offices on Thursday, April 15th.**

We are asking everyone that has collected handprints to bring them to Montgomery on **April 15th** and join us in delivering them and the *Week of the Young Child* message, early years are learning years, to State Legislators. Please let us know you plan to attend by completing and returning the attendance confirmation form (on page 6) by April 5th. Logistics for the day are as follows:

Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child

Date: Thursday, April 15, 2010
Time: 10:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Location: State House – Room 617 (6th Floor)

Agenda

10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. General information and prepare information to deliver to legislators
11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Deliver handprints
12:00 p.m. – 12:15 p.m. Reconvene in Room 617 of the State House (6th Floor) for wrap up

If you have collected handprints and are unable to bring them to Montgomery on April 15th, they may be mailed to the Alabama Partnership for Children, and we will deliver them on your behalf. Simply mail handprints, no later than April 5th, to:

Alabama Partnership for Children
Attention: Michele Smith Piggott
P.O. Box 230219
Montgomery, AL 36123-0219

Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments regarding *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child* by calling toll-free (866) 711-4025 or emailing mpiggott@SmartStartAlabama.org.



“Every Alabama child will have the opportunity to succeed in life”

Attendance Confirmation Form

Please confirm your attendance at the April 15th *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child* event no later than April 5th by faxing this form to the Alabama Partnership for Children at (334) 271-0315 or by e-mailing Michele S. Piggott at mpiggott@SmartStartAlabama.org.

_____ **I will be attending the April 15th *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child* event to help distribute handprints.**

Name: _____

Agency/Organizaiton _____

Counties Served by Agency/Organization: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Please list the names and email addresses of other individuals that plan to attend with you:

Name	Email Address

Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child

April 15, 2010 - Montgomery

Please fill in your agency information in the shaded areas, delete this text box, and distribute this flyer to programs with which you partner or serve. Once you receive handprints, please bring them with you on April 15th or mail them to the APC by April 5th.



Your group/agency name along with the Alabama Partnership for Children and other agencies around the state are joining hands again this April to celebrate Week of the Young Child, April 11 - 17. The Week of the Young Child is a time to recognize the needs of young children and thank the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children, and we need your help!

HOW YOU CAN HELP!

In order to celebrate *Week of the Young Child* in Alabama we are asking that you make individual children's handprints that will be delivered to local elected officials and then sent to the State House in Montgomery, AL to be posted in Alabama Legislative offices on April 15th during *Week of the Young Child*.

Children's Handprint Instructions:

1. Help all children in your care, age 5 or under, trace and cut out their handprint.
2. Handprints may be decorated (**please do not use glitter**) and should include the child's first name, age, and county.
4. Once all individual handprints have been cut out and decorated, please mail or deliver to:

Your group/agency name
Attention: name of contact person
Mailing Address
City, State, Zip
Phone: number of contact person

Handprints must be received by (date your group decides on).

For more information about celebrating *Week of the Young Child* and/or celebrations occurring in your community, please contact the Alabama Partnership for Children toll-free at (866) 711-4025 (For Zero to Five).



SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

ALABAMA PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN JOINS NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF *WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD*

April 2010 – The Alabama Partnership for Children, along with other state advocates and hundreds of local organizations around the country, will celebrate *Week of the Young Child*, April 11- 17, 2010. *Week of the Young Child* honors the more than 35 million children ages birth through eight in America, and the families, teachers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children.

“Research shows that early learning experiences are vital to the development of young children,” said Michele Smith Piggott, Smart Start Director, of the Alabama Partnership for Children. “*Week of the Young Child* provides opportunities for us to recognize the importance of the early years, and to work together to build better futures for all children.”

Week of the Young Child celebrations around Alabama will promote high-quality early learning experiences for all children and recognize the families, teachers and other adults who care for children during these critical formative years. Across the state, families and others who care for young children will join in fun and educational activities centered around children from birth to eight to celebrate *Week of the Young Child*.

“Quality early childhood programs are an essential part of the education of young children, and a crucial service involved in building better futures for all children, yet the 2008 Alabama Childcare Workforce Study indicates that we still pay early childhood teachers less than hairstylists and garbage collectors,” said Piggott. “*Week of the Young Child* is a time to remember that we need to support the teachers and programs that provide our children with quality early learning experiences and the opportunity to succeed in life.”

The Alabama Partnership for Children advocates a comprehensive effort to improve the quality of early learning experiences for all children birth to five, including:

- Offering professional development opportunities through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood@ALABAMA, a comprehensive scholarship program that links education and compensation;
- Providing parents of newborns Smart Start Parenting Kits that offer immediate access to information and resources regarding child growth and development;
- Coordinating a statewide early care and education public awareness campaign, *Zero to Five Matters*, in partnership with other early care and education leaders throughout the state; and
- Encouraging coordination that will result in a well-developed comprehensive system at the local level to promote Birth to Five issues.

The Alabama Partnership for Children is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization committed to enhancing the quality of life for Alabama’s children from birth to 5 years of age. This public-private partnership focuses on finding ways to use the state’s limited resources most efficiently to ensure that every Alabama child will have an opportunity to succeed in life.

SAMPLE BACKGROUNDER

Week of the Young Child
April 11 – 17, 2010
Early Years Are Learning years

The years from birth through age five are a crucial stage for learning, and lay the foundation for children's success-in school and beyond. That is the message **your group/agency name** is sending during *Week of the Young Child*, April 11th through 17th.

Local activities will include **(briefly list specific activities, ceremonies, and events in your area.)**

Whether you're a parent, business owner, community leader, or elected official, take the time during *Week of the Young Child* to acknowledge the needs of young children and honor the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children.

Additional Ways to celebrate *Week of the Young Child*:

- Host a day at the mall, with activities for children and information for parents from family service organizations.
- Have a children's parade through town.
- Provide lunch for the individuals that care for the special children in your life.
- Have a proclamation signed by a city government official.
- Post art done by children in local restaurants and businesses.
- Host a breakfast at your child's child care center to honor the providers.
- Decorate community store windows to promote the celebration.
- Have an art project set up at a child care center for parents and children to do together.
- Have local newspapers cover activities during the week.
- Host literacy trainings for parents.
- Have an award where parents can nominate someone they think is an exceptional friend of young children.

Week of the Young Child is being coordinated in **name of city/town/county** by **your group's name** and **list partners**. Statewide it is being coordinated by the Alabama Partnership for Children. *Week of the Young Child* is made possible at a national level through the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Call **local phone number** to learn more about *Week of the Young Child* and to find out about local events and celebrations.

For immediate assistance or to arrange interviews, call:

Your name
Phone number
E-mail address

SAMPLE NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

Celebrate *Week of the Young Child* April 11th through 17th

Week of the Young Child is being celebrated this year April 11th through 17th. This celebration provides opportunities to recognize the needs of young children and to recognize the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children.

Week of the Young Child is an annual celebration sponsored by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world's largest organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of early education programs for children birth through age eight.

This year **name of agency/organization** along with other state advocates will celebrate *Week of the Young Child*, and we hope that you will too!

The following are easy ways to celebrate *Week of the Young Child*:

- Host a day at the mall, with activities for children and information for parents from family service organizations.
- Have a children's parade through town.
- Provide lunch for the individuals that care for the special children in your life.
- Have a proclamation signed by a city government official.
- Post art done by children in local restaurants and businesses.
- Host a breakfast at your child's child care center to honor the providers.
- Decorate community store windows to promote the celebration.
- Have an art project set up at a child care center for parents and children to do together.
- Support programs that provide quality early childhood education by volunteering at a local school, community center, Head Start or child care program.
- Have local newspapers cover activities during the week.
- Host literacy trainings for parents.
- Have an award where parents can nominate someone they think is an exceptional friend of young children.
- Educate yourself and others about the importance of quality early childhood education in preparing young children for school

For more information on how to celebrate *Week of the Young Child* or to have a local listing posted by the Alabama Partnership for Children (APC), please contact Michele Smith Piggott toll-free at (866) 711-4025 or by emailing mpiggott@smartstartalabama.org.

**SAMPLE 30-SECOND
PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

Add your local information to this public service announcement and print on your letterhead. Then, send it to radio and TV stations in your area with a letter asking them to help build awareness of the important learning opportunities in children's early years.

“Week of the Young Child”

Local Contact: Your Name
Name of your agency/organization
Phone: XXX/XXX-XXXX
Air Dates: March 17 – April 17, 2010
Length: :30 seconds

Celebrate *Week of the Young Child* April 11th through 17th.

The years from birth through age five are a crucial stage for learning, and lay the foundation for children's success – in school and beyond.

There are over 60,000 children born each year in Alabama. Some get positive early learning experiences from families, teachers and caregivers. Too many others do not.

April 11th through 17th is the *Week of the Young Child*. A time to help all children make the most of their early learning years and to recognize the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children.

For more information, call name of your agency/organization at local phone number.

SAMPLE COMMUNITY CALENDAR LISTING

Print on your letterhead and send with Backgrounder

Week of the Young Child Early Years Are Learning Years

April 11th through 17th **your city/town** will join hundreds of other cities and towns across the country to celebrate *Week of the Young Child*.

Organized by **your agency/organization**, in partnership with the Alabama Partnership for Children, *Week of the Young Child* in Alabama will recognize the needs of young children and honor the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children. Local activities will include **insert a short description of your plans, including dates, times, and locations. Try to limit each description to one brief sentence.**

For additional information, including tips on getting involved and up-to-date information, call **your name** at **your agency/organization** at **XXX/XXX-XXXX**.

SAMPLE MEDIA ALERT

Celebrate Week of the Young Child **April 11th – 17th** ***Early Years Are Learning Years***

WHAT: *Week of the Young Child* (April 11 - 17)

WHO: Everyone in **your city/town** is encouraged to recognize the needs of young children and thank the caregivers and other adults involved in building better futures for all children.

In **your city/town**, *Week of the Young Child* is being coordinated by **your agency/organization** and partners. *Week of the Young Child* is an annual celebration sponsored by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

WHERE: **Time, date**
Location or All across the **your city/town** area

HOW: **Provide a summary of the activities planned for your community or**
Here are some ways to celebrate *Week of the Young Child*:

- Spend the evening reading stories with young children in your life.
- Provide lunch for the individuals that care for the special children in your life.
- Post art done by children in local restaurants and businesses.
- Send a note of thanks to the person that cares for the children in your life.
- Decorate community store windows to promote the celebration.
- Have an art project set up at a child care center for parents and children to do together.

WHY: We know today more than ever before that children's earliest years are crucial learning years, and those years lay the foundation for children's success in school and beyond. The *Week of the Young Child* is a time to recognize that children's opportunities are our responsibilities, and to recommit ourselves to ensuring that each and every child experiences the type of early learning environment – at home, at child care, and in the community – that will build better futures for all children.

For more information contact **contact name** at **phone number**.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Print on your letterhead

Date

Name

Newspaper

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Editor,

There are approximately 250,000 children from birth to age five in Alabama (or change to represent your community). These early years are a crucial stage for development – a time when young children should receive high quality early learning experiences which lay the foundation for success in school and beyond.

April 11 – 17, 2010 is *Week of the Young Child*, a time when the name of agency/ organization, along with other state advocates and hundreds of local organizations around the country, will join together to recognize the needs of young children, and thank the caregivers and other adults involved in their quality early learning experiences. Parents, caregivers, teachers, and other adults play very important roles in the lives of young children, and we will celebrate their efforts during *Week of the Young Child*.

For many young children, an important part of the early learning years are spent in child care, preschool and other early education programs. These programs are a crucial step in the education and development of our young children, yet the 2008 Alabama Childcare Workforce Study indicates that we still pay the early childhood teachers in these programs less than hairstylists and garbage collectors.

Week of the Young Child is a good time to recognize something we should remember all year: If we want our children to have the opportunity to succeed in school and life, we need to support the families, teachers and programs that give them a great start on learning.

Sincerely,

[Your Name,
Address, and
Phone Number]

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION REQUEST LETTER

Print on letterhead and send with sample proclamation
And any other background information

Date

The Honorable name of mayor or elected official
Title - mayor/city manager
c/o contact name
City of name of city
Address
City, State Zip

Dear contact person or mayor/elected official:

We cordially invite you to support *Week of the Young Child* and ask you to please consider issuing a proclamation. It is a wonderful opportunity to promote high-quality early learning experiences for all children, and as research and experience clearly show – children’s earliest years are crucial learning years.

Name of your agency/organization, along with other state advocates and hundreds of local organizations around the country, will join together for *Week of the Young Child*, April 11th through 17th, to recognize the needs of young children, and thank the caregivers and other adults involved in their quality early learning experiences.

To enhance public awareness, we would like to ask you to declare the week of April 11th through 17th the *Week of the Young Child*. Make sure to mention if your city or mayor has issued a proclamation in previous years. A proclamation would serve as an effective endorsement, greatly enhancing the potential for others to participate. We have enclosed a sample proclamation and would be happy to complete any required paperwork.

Week of the Young Child is an annual celebration sponsored by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world’s largest organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of early education programs for children birth through age eight. *Week of the Young Child* is being coordinated in Alabama by the Alabama Partnership for Children and in your city/town by your agency/ organization.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and for taking the time to learn about this important celebration. We hope that you will join us in making this year’s *Week of the Young Child* celebration a major success in name of city/town. I will call you in a few days to talk about this opportunity and to respond to any questions you might have.

Respectfully yours,

Enclosure

PROCLAMATION
By the Governor of Alabama

WHEREAS, the Alabama Partnership for Children in partnership with other state and local organizations, in conjunction with the National Association for the Education of Young Children, are celebrating the *Week of the Young Child*, April 11 through April 17, 2010; and

WHEREAS, by calling attention to the need for high-quality early learning experiences for all children and families within our state, these groups hope to improve the quality and availability of such services; and

WHEREAS, the future of our state depends on the quality of the early childhood experiences provided to young children today, preparing them for school success and brighter outcomes; and

WHEREAS, high-quality early childhood services represent a worthy commitment to our children's future:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Riley, Governor of the State of Alabama, do hereby proclaim, April 11 through April 17, 2010, as

Week of the Young Child

in the State of Alabama and urge all citizens to recognize and support the needs of young children in our state in order to build a brighter future for Alabama by giving every child an opportunity to succeed in life.

SAMPLE TIP SHEET

Use as background material for any outreach efforts you deem appropriate

Tips for Celebrating *Week of the Young Child* *Early Years Are Learning Years*

Participate in *Week of the Young Child* April 11th through 17th, to

- honor children birth through age five;
- acknowledge the needs of young children;
- promote the high-quality early learning experiences all children deserve; and
- honor those who help children make the most of their high-quality early learning experiences.

Tips to Help You Join in the Celebration

Celebrate young children. The following are easy ways to celebrate young children that are special to you:

- Visit the park together.
- Look through family pictures together and share special stories.
- Spend the day playing games together.
- Read favorite books together and visit the library.

Thank those who care for young children. Write a thank you note to someone who cares for and helps young children make the most of the opportunities in their early learning years.

Be a volunteer. Volunteer your time with an organization in your area concentrating on young children and families.

Connect with the community. Select an issue in your community important to young children and contact local officials to ask how to get involved.

Encourage others. Encourage neighbors, co-workers, local officials, friends and family members to consider getting involved in local *Week of the Young Child* celebrations.

Support local celebrations. Lend support to local *Week of the Young Child* celebrations.

For more information, additional resources, or a list of activities taking place in your community, call **contact person** at **contact person phone number**.

SAMPLE DONOR REQUEST LETTER

Customize and send with a news release and fact sheet on your agency

Date

Name

Title

Company name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear name of agency or business representative:

Celebrated for more than 30 years, *Week of the Young Child* provides opportunities to promote high-quality early learning experiences for all children and recognize the families, teachers and other adults who help children make the most of the opportunities in their early years.

The theme for *Week of the Young Child* is *Early Years Are Learning Years* and we'd like to invite name of agency or business to help demonstrate the importance of our children's earliest years and to honor those who help children make the most of their early learning experiences.

During *Week of the Young Child*, April 11th through 17th, name of **your** agency/organization will be promoting high-quality early learning experiences for all children, by hosting a title of event on date. Name of business or agency can play a vital role in our endeavor by briefly describe what you are seeking in terms of volunteers, or material or monetary support.

The *Week of the Young Child* is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world's largest organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of early education programs for children birth through age eight. Locally, individuals will be participating in *Week of the Young Child* by attending our provide further information on your event.

In order to make name of your event a memorable occasion for all who will participate, name of **your** agency/organization needs here provide a list of materials, areas in which volunteers are being sought, or uses to which monetary contributions would be put. Be as specific as deemed necessary in order to encourage assistance from the particular agency or business.

Enclosed you will find background information on *Week of the Young Child*. Thank you in advance for your consideration and for taking the time to learn about this very important celebration. I will call you in a few days to talk about this opportunity and to respond to any questions you might have.

We hope that name of organization or business will join us in making this year's *Week of the Young Child* celebration a major success in name of city/town.

Sincerely,

Your name

Name of your agency/organization

Enclosure