



Sheltering Arms

EARLY EDUCATION AND FAMILY CENTERS

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Ten Programs Earn National Recognition from NAEYC

Early childhood education programs earn special acknowledgment for their work in engaging diverse families

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has identified ten early childhood education programs as Engaging Diverse Families exemplary programs. They are:

- Children's Village Child Care Center in Philadelphia, PA
- CRT Locust Early Care & Education Program in Hartford, CT
- Iowa State University Child Development Laboratory School in Ames, IA
- Montgomery County Community College Children's Center in Blue Bell, PA
- Rainbow School in Stanford, CA
- School for Friends in Washington, DC
- Sheltering Arms Early Education & Family Center - International Village in Atlanta, GA
- Sunnyside Child Care Center at Smith in Northampton, MA
- The Family Schools, Inc. in Brewster, MA
- YWCA of Minneapolis Downtown Children's Center in Minneapolis, MN



Latonia Camp, Family Support Coordinator at Sheltering Arms International Village Center, was part of an Engaging Diverse Families panel presentation at the National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development where the 10 Engaging Diverse Families exemplary programs were recognized.

The goal of the Engaging Diverse Families project is to learn how excellent early childhood education programs are effectively engaging diverse families and to share what is learned with other programs struggling to start and sustain family engagement practices. Family engagement occurs when there is an ongoing, reciprocal, strengths-based partnership between families and their children's early childhood education programs. NAEYC looked for evidence of shared decision-making related to their children's education; consistent, two-way communication; integration of families' lives and communities into all aspects of the program; and program policies and professional development that support effective family engagement, such as ongoing training in communication skills and cultural competence.

"We're thrilled to bestow this designation on these ten programs, and to recognize them for their leadership and commitment to supporting and engaging diverse families," said Jerlean E. Daniel, executive director designate of NAEYC. "The Engaging Diverse Families project raises the bar for preschools, child care centers and other early childhood programs. It sends the message that programs must examine and improve strategies for engaging families in their children's early learning."

A growing body of research suggests that meaningful engagement of families in their children's early learning supports school readiness and later academic success. For many families, engagement in early learning is linked to their children's participation in early childhood education programs.

To be recognized as exemplary, programs participated in an extensive process examining its research-based family engagement practices. Programs submitted a written application and program materials,

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participated in a phone interview, provided parent and family testimony, and received an on-site visit by NAEYC staff to provide a body of evidence showing that it is effectively reaching out to and including the diverse families it serves.

All ten programs are NAEYC-accredited. In the 25 years since NAEYC Accreditation was established, it has become a widely recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education. The Engaging Diverse Families exemplary programs have shown evidence that they lead the early childhood education field in family engagement.

In the coming months, NAEYC will share what it learned about family engagement from these ten exemplary early childhood education programs. For more about Engaging Diverse Families, visit <http://www.naeyc.org/ecp/trainings/edf>.

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