OUR MISSION
Arizona AEYC promotes quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate and work on behalf of young children.
A Year of Progress: Reflecting on 2022

Early care and education is essential to creating vibrant, thriving communities. Early childhood educators — including infant and toddler teachers, preschool teachers, and family child care providers — are the workforce that supports all of Arizona's workforce. Because of their essential work, Arizona's children have meaningful places to learn and grow, and families can get to work or school to contribute to the economy.

At Arizona AEYC, we envision an Arizona where every child and family has equitable access to quality early learning and every educator is well-supported and well-compensated for their important, complex work. In our 2022 Annual Report, we share our progress towards that vision.

Becoming a member of Arizona AEYC means receiving the wealth of benefits of NAEYC membership and also being an active contributor to the collective movement to advocate for the early care and education profession. We are proud to be an organization that is made for, of, and by our early childhood membership.

On behalf of our Governing Board and staff, we thank our members, collaborators, and funders who have made this year's progress possible. Arizona AEYC looks forward to continuing to build a better, more equitable Arizona for our young learners, their families, and educators.

With gratitude,

Mona Qafisheh, M.Ed., C.P.M.
Governing Board President
Arizona AEYC

Dr. Eric Bucher
Chief Executive Officer
Arizona AEYC
The Arizona AEYC Annual Report highlights our organizational impact and accomplishments for the early childhood profession between January-December 2022. AzAEYC is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit membership association and State Affiliate of NAEYC.

**2022 Fast Facts: Our Equity Values in Action**

During 2022, Arizona AEYC secured a total of $1,087,500 in grant funding in collaboration with community partners to support projects between 2022-2024 including professional development, early childhood advocacy, and resources to help child care providers save time and money and improve quality.

Nearly 40% (or 2/5) of our 2022 budget went directly to early childhood professionals through training stipends, scholarships, professional development resources, technology access, support for conference expenses, and early learning supplies.
2022 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Cultivate leadership and innovation through projects that advance equity for the workforce, profession, and systems of early learning.
- Reflect excellence in all aspects of organizational health and vitality.
- Ensure equitable access to quality early learning for children birth through age 8.
- Advocate for the early childhood profession and secure public funding to ensure worthy wages and benefits.
- Be a highly-valued, credible, visible membership organization and systems partner.

AREAS WE SERVE

Arizona AEYC serves the counties of Apache, Coconino, Gila, La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Navajo, Pinal, Yavapai, and Yuma in collaboration with our local Northern, Valley of the Sun, and Yuma chapters.

Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, and Santa Cruz are served by our sister affiliate, Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children (SAZAECY).
This year, we supported a membership of over 500 early childhood educators and champions across the state.

We work to advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and elevate the voices and stories of early childhood educators.

Wherever you are in your early childhood career and educational journey, there's an Arizona AEYC membership for YOU.

**Entry Level - $30/year**
Designed for students and new professionals. Access to online content, digital resources, insurance, and member-only event discounts.

**Standard Level - $69/year**
Subscription to award-winning periodicals, complimentary e-book, event/conference discounts, cost savings, digital content + more.

**Family Level - $35/year**
Designed for members outside of the early learning profession such as parents and community advocates. Access to online content and digital resources.

**Premium Level - $150/year**
Unparalleled access to NAEYC’s robust suite of member benefits including periodicals, complimentary print books + e-book, online learning, digital content, and VIP events.

azaeyc.org/join
**OPERATIONS & FINANCIALS**

**Transparency in Our Operations:** Our 2022 operating budget was $544,897. About 1/2 of the expenses were pass-through funds for collaborative partnerships and funds to directly support early childhood professionals.

**Compensation:** We commit to paying our staff a worthy wage of at least $25 per hour, compensate staff for all hours worked including paid professional development time, and do not allow unpaid labor. We also continue to seek public investments that will ensure that all early childhood professionals earn competitive salaries and benefits commensurate with the complex, important work they do.

*Arizona AEYC earned the 2022 Gold Seal of Transparency through Candid/GuideStar, a non-profit reporting database.*

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**OUR STAFF**

Dr. Eric Bucher  
Chief Executive Officer

Julie Capistran  
Administrative Assistant

Jo Chavez, M.B.A.  
Communications & Media Specialist

Linda Pauley, M.Ed.  
Business Administrator
Our signature "Stories from the Field" initiative lifts up the experiences and voices of early childhood educators and showcases the importance and impact of early care and education in local communities.

In 2022, we published 8 interviews and video clips featuring Arizona early childhood educators. The majority of these stories elevated the voices of Black, Latine, and Indigenous educators and those who have been marginalized.

Meet Kara Begaye: Diné Early Childhood Educator

Kara Begaye comes from a family of educators and works as a preschool educator at Dilcon Community School on the Navajo Nation – the same school she and her siblings attended. In our Stories from the Field interview, Kara shares her family’s history in education, describes her experience as an early childhood education student, and gives advice for other early care and education providers.

azaeyc.org/stories
Each year during the annual NAEYC Week of the Young Child® (WOYC), Arizona AEYC amplifies the essential work of the early childhood workforce. This year, we highlighted stories that represented children's rights to joy, quality early learning, and equity and teachers' rights to worthy wages for the complex work they do — among many other rights. We collaborated again this year with First Things First, SAZAECYC, and other community partners to celebrate.

In 2022, we featured an interview with a Head Start parent, the learning journey of a first time mom, an early childhood student's goals for advancing research on evidence-based practices for Indigenous children with disabilities, and our first ever Spanish publication with a family child care provider.

azaeyc.org/woyc
AzAEYC's WOYC Facebook posts reached 8,000 people in just a week! On Twitter, there were 3,324 impressions.

More than 25 proclamations were signed by local, state, and tribal elected officials including the Governor.

The proclamations highlighted WOYC and the rights of children, families, and educators to equitable early childhood education and urged public investments to improve access to quality child care.

(Above photo by City of Tolleson Public Affairs)
Mayor Juan F. Rodriguez proclaimed April 2-8, 2022 as WOYC in the City of Tolleson.
Annually, we award the "Honor the Past & Reimagine the Future" Early Childhood Scholarship to Arizona college students studying early childhood education with an interest in equitable early learning experiences, public policy, and advocacy efforts on behalf of young children and families. In Fall of 2022, Arizona AEYC awarded two $1,250 scholarships.

Meet our 2022 Scholarship Recipients

**Erin Butler (left photo)**, candidate for a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood & Early Childhood Special Education interested in creating inclusive, culturally responsive environments for children with disabilities

"I used the scholarship to help me with necessities. I paid rent. I bought groceries. And then, I bought materials, that I can incorporate into my student teaching assignments." - Erin Butler

**Xue Xia (right photo)**, candidate for a Doctorate of Education in Curriculum whose research focuses on children's play, educational equity, and teacher professional development

Help make a difference by contributing to the annual Arizona AEYC scholarship. Your donation of any size will help early childhood students meet their personal and educational goals.

[donate.azaeyc.org](http://donate.azaeyc.org)
Child care providers deserve support and bandwidth for their business and administrative tasks — in order to be able to spend more time providing quality experiences for children, families, and their staff.

AZToolkit is a one-stop web platform that helps child care providers meet the daily demands of the business side of child care through resources needed to successfully save time, maximize funding, and share resources. AZToolkit includes more than 1,800 tools and resources for finances, human resources, recruitment and retention, staff training, and more — all in one place.

AZToolkit had nearly 2,900 subscribers in 2022 such as child care directors, early childhood teachers, and early childhood coaches who access AZToolkit’s resources to help them save time, save money, and improve quality.

AZToolkit webpages were viewed 15,000 times in 2022 with the most popular pages being "Grants & Funding", "AZToolkit Job Bank", and "Forms, Policies &Templates".

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Arizona AEYC is the leading advocacy voice for children, families, and the early childhood profession in Arizona. We provide training and technical assistance to develop the advocacy skills of educators and parents and strengthen their voices as champions for children. We also facilitate meetings with state and federal elected officials to secure public investments in child care.

Held 13 meetings with U.S. Congressional Representatives and state legislators in 2022 to advocate for emergency support for child care and significant, sustained public investments in ECE.

Provided advocacy training and support for more than 150 participants in 2022. Sessions focused on how to connect with lawmakers and strategies for increasing public awareness around the importance of child care.

Activated champions through grassroots engagement to advocate with elected officials. This resulted in an $8 billion federal investment in the Child Care & Development Block Grant (30% more than 2022) plus increased awareness around the challenges child care faced during the pandemic.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We provide professional development for educators, administrators, parents, and community champions. Topics include early childhood leadership, building stronger business practices through AZToolkit, and diversity and inclusion.

In 2022, Arizona AEYC was awarded a grant from state federal relief funds to facilitate 5 communities of practice on the new NAEYC *Developmentally Appropriate Practices* book using the Project ECHO® virtual model which is designed to increase equitable access to quality professional development and build knowledge by leveraging the strengths of local communities. Participating child care sites receive 18.5 hours of professional development, NAEYC memberships for all staff, educator books, classroom materials, and stipends for paid professional learning time.

[azaeyc.org/dap-echo](https://azaeyc.org/dap-echo)

175+ participants

Reached more than 175 participants through our professional development sessions in 2022.

25+ hours

Provided more than 25 hours of professional development content. Webinars this year included "Becoming an HR Expert: Tools & Templates on AZToolkit" and "Arizona Child Care Stabilization Grant - Your Questions Answered about the Grant Report & Innovative Ways to Invest in the Child Care Workforce".
Arizona AEYC has three chapters in our service region that engage educators and the community through local, grassroots activities.

Valley of the Sun Chapter of Arizona AEYC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that was incorporated in 1974 with the mission of serving children, families, and educators in Maricopa County. In 2017, Valley of the Sun became a chapter of Arizona AEYC and supports the early childhood profession through two signature projects:

- **Light That Fire** professional development sessions for new early childhood educators and Career & Technical Education (CTE) students focused on building leadership skills and professional connections.
- **Flip This Playground** which installs outdoor libraries, unique gardens, music centers, and outdoor learning spaces at Title I preschools and within communities for families in low-income households.

1,000+ children

Installed 3 new outdoor gardens in 2021-2022 which reached more than 1,000 children (preschool-3rd grade)

60 participants

Supported 60 educators and students through 2 Light That Fire sessions in 2022
Our Chapters

The Northern Chapter of Arizona AEYC serves Apache, Coconino, Mohave, Navajo, and Yavapai Counties.

In 2022, the Northern Chapter provided NAEYC memberships to students in early childhood degree programs, supported child care providers through NAEYC early learning accreditation, and met with federal Congressional representatives to advocate for public funding for child care during the pandemic.

The Yuma Chapter of Arizona AEYC serves La Paz and Yuma counties.

In 2022, the Yuma Chapter planned and delivered early learning activities for children and their families during the Week of the Young Child celebration and met with elected officials in the region to increase awareness of the importance of quality child care.

325+ hours

Arizona AEYC board members contributed more than 325 volunteer service hours in 2022 participating in community events, leading professional development, and connecting with local educators and parents. This is equal to $9,734 worth of in-kind donations.
Arizona AEYC collaborates with other agencies to leverage our collective strengths and knowledge, maximize resources and funding, and sustain our initiatives. The majority of our funded projects are implemented in collaboration with partner organizations to boost the impact for the early childhood profession. Here are just a few of our accomplishments in 2022 thanks to these strong community partnerships.

100+ hours

Provided more than 100 hours of technical assistance with 200 child care providers to apply for and successfully use Arizona Department of Economic Security child care stabilization grants.

2x increase

Doubled the number of collaborating partners on our signature annual Arizona Early Childhood Public Policy Forum — helping extend our reach, develop the voices of educators and parents, and foster grassroots engagement.

(Left photo) Arizona AEYC partnered with the Arizona Early Childhood Alliance again in 2022 to deliver children’s artwork of the desert to state legislators as part of the 2022 Early Childhood Day at the State Capitol event. (Right photo) Arizona AEYC board members presented on equitable early learning environments at the Arizona Head Start Association annual professional development conference.
Our Governing Board is comprised of early childhood professionals that represent the diversity and strengths of the Arizona early care and education field. Governing Board members are community volunteers who are elected into two year terms by our membership.