



Week of the Young Child Planning Toolkit

April 10-16, 2021

Step-by-step ideas and fill-in-the-blank tools
to make participation in WOYC simple!



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(334) 271-0304 or toll-free (866) 711-4025
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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*** (WOYC) 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. If you have received a hard copy of this toolkit, please visit <https://alabamapartnershipforchildren.org/get-involved/advocate/> to download an electronic copy to make using this toolkit much easier. Remember to delete all shading, document titles, page numbers and instructions before printing any of the documents. The toolkit includes the following:

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Feel free to contact Lauren Lewis 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 llewis@apcteam.org.

Overview

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 toolkit 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 60,000 members and a national 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*?

This year due to COVID-19, the Alabama Partnership for Children will NOT be coordinating the annual *Joining Hands for Week of the Young Child* or *Strolling Thunder* events. Instead we encourage you to pick one day during the week and conduct your own stroll with your children. Be sure to snap a picture or video and tag @Thriveby5 on Twitter and @AlabamaPartnershipforChildren on Facebook.

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*.

WOYC Daily Activities

NAEYC has selected a theme for each day of *Week of the Young Child* and provided suggestions for a daily activity. If you participate, please share pictures on Facebook or Twitter with the hashtag #WOYC20

Music Monday: April 12, 2021

Sing, dance, celebrate, and learn

Through music, children develop math, language, and literacy skills all while having fun and being active!

Try this: Find the beat to connect music, movement, and math. Practice clapping, drumming, or stomping to the beat of the music while counting.

Tasty Tuesday: April 13, 2021

Healthy eating and fitness at home and school

Cooking together connects math with literacy skills, science, and more! With the rise in childhood obesity, you can encourage healthy nutrition at home and in the classroom by creating your own healthy tacos.

Try this: Measure your ingredient while making your tacos! Ask children if they would like the same or different amounts of each ingredient.

Work Together Wednesday: April 14, 2021

Work together, build together, learn together

When children build together they explore math and science concepts and develop their social and early literacy skills. Children can use any building material from forming a fort of branches outside to building a city out of blocks in the classroom.

Try this: Practice organizing blocks by size! Try building a block tower with large blocks on the bottom and little blocks on top.

Artsy Thursday: April 15, 2021

Think, problem solve, create

Children develop creativity, social skills, and fine motor skills with open-ended art projects where they can make choices, use their imaginations, and create with their hands. Use any material (crayons, paint, or clay) to celebrate the joy and learning children experience when engaged in creative art making.

Try this: Bring art outdoors! Offer dark and light paper, chalk and pastels, and suggest children create their own versions of the day and night sky.

Family Friday: April 16, 2021

Sharing family stories

Engaging and celebrating families is at the heart of supporting our youngest learners.

Try this: Invite parents for a Family Friendly breakfast, where children can prepare and share breakfast treats with their family.

Social Media Guide

Social media is a powerful tool you can use to raise awareness about the *Week of the Young Child* (WOYC) by incorporating the hashtag #WOYC21 in your posts. Here are some ideas you can use for your organizational or personal social networking sites.

Facebook

- Create an event page on Facebook for your WOYC celebration
- Post updates and information about your WOYC celebration to your Facebook page in the weeks and months leading up to the event. Include links to pages where people can learn more about the event, including:
 - <https://www.naeyc.org/events/woyc>
 - <https://alabamapartnershipforchildren.org/get-involved/advocate/>
- Upload photos or videos from your event after the celebration to share with supporters. Be sure to obtain permission from individuals and families if you will be posting images of people, particularly children.
- Reach out to policy makers, members of the media, local businesses, allied organizations, and community leaders by writing on their Facebook wall or sending them a message.
- Like the Alabama Partnership for Children and NAEYC on Facebook. Both pages will be posting periodic messages in the coming months about WOYC that you can share with your fans and friends!

Twitter

- Post updates and information about your WOYC celebration regularly to your Twitter page in the weeks and months leading up to your celebration. Include links to pages where people can learn more about the event, including:
 - <https://www.naeyc.org/events/woyc>
 - <https://alabamapartnershipforchildren.org/get-involved/advocate/>
- Use the #WOYC21 hashtag in your tweets so that people can find your content. You can also search the #WOYC21 hashtag to find other individuals, groups, and organizations tweeting about the *Week of the Young Child* and retweet their content.
- Reach out to policy makers, members of the media, local businesses, allied organizations, and community leaders who are on Twitter by sending them an @ message or a direct message.
- Follow the Alabama Partnership for Children (@thriveby5) and NAEYC (@naeyc) on Twitter.

**YOUR GROUP/AGENCY NAME
JOINS NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD**

April 2021 – Your group/agency name along with the Alabama Partnership for Children and other state and national advocates and organizations, will celebrate *Week of the Young Child*, April 10-16, 2021. *Week of the Young Child* honors the 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 your name, title, and group/agency’s name. “*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*.

“All young children need and deserve high-quality early learning experiences that will prepare them for life, and Alabama has a great opportunity to do our part to help young children,” said Michele Smith Piggott, Smart Start Director, of the Alabama Partnership for Children. “Week of the Young Child is a time for Alabama to recognize that early years are learning years for all young children and 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.”

Your group/agency name advocates a comprehensive effort to improve the quality of early learning experiences for all children, including:

- Briefly list specific programs and activities.

###

Name of group/agency

Include a brief description of your group/agency.

The Alabama Partnership for Children

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 five 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 10-16, 2021** ***Early Years are Learning Years***

The years from birth through age eight 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 10th through 16th.

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

Celebrate *Week of the Young Child* April 10th through 16th

Week of the Young Child is being celebrated this year April 10th through 16th. 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 group/agency along with the Alabama Partnership for Children and 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 Lauren Lewis toll-free at (866) 711-4025 or by emailing llewis@apcteam.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
April 10-16, 2021
Early Years are Learning Years***

Local Contact: Your Name
 Name of your agency/organization
Phone: XXX/XXX-XXXX
Air Dates: April 1 – April 17, 2021
Length: :30 seconds

Celebrate *Week of the Young Child* April 10th through 16th.

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

There are nearly 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 10th through 16th 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
April 10 – 16, 2021
Early Years are Learning Years

April 10th through 16th 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 10th – 16th
*Early Years Are Learning Years***

WHAT: *Week of the Young Child* (April 10 – 16)

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 over 500,000 children from birth to age eight 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 10-16th, 2021, is *Week of the Young Child*, a time when the name of agency/organization, along with the Alabama Partnership for Children and other state and national advocates and organizations, 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 the Alabama Partnership for Children and other state and national advocates and organizations, will join together for *Week of the Young Child*, April 10th through 16th, 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 10th through 16th 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

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

Proclamation by Mayor

WHEREAS, the **name or your agency/organization** and 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 10 through April 16, 2021; 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, **name of mayor** of the **name of city**, do hereby proclaim, April 10 through April 16, 2021, as

Week of the Young Child

in the **name of city** and urge all citizens to recognize and support the needs of young children in our community 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 10th through 16th, to:

- honor children birth through age eight;
- 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 letterhead.

Date

Name

Title

Company name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear name of agency or business representative:

Celebrated for more than 40 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 10th through 16th, 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