

# South Dakota AEYC Awards



Professional development and the recognition of excellence are of critical importance to the South Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children (SDAEYC). The SDAEYC awards celebrate those dedicated to

the field of early childhood education and acknowledge dedicated professionals whose work impacts the quality of care and early education for young children in inclusive settings and their families. The awards bring honor and attention not only to individual award recipients, but to the early childhood profession and SDAEYC as well. In order to identify professionals dedicated to the needs and well being of children and their families, the Awards Committee depends upon the membership and the community to document the qualifications of nominees.

**The Awards Committee is seeking nominations for four honorary awards to be given at the annual SDAEYC Conference.** Evidence of philosophy and activities should be presented in the description of outstanding service and in the letter of support from peers and/or students.

Persons nominated should embrace the following principles of excellence in the early childhood field:

- ★ A philosophy of developmentally appropriate practice
- ★ Evidence of outstanding work with children, families, and / or other professionals in the field
- ★ Advocates for quality programming which meets the needs of children, families and program personnel
- ★ SDAEYC membership is **only** required for the Professional Service Award.

## **1. Professional Service Award (SDAEYC membership required):**

The individuals who have provided outstanding service in the following types of professional roles are eligible for these awards:

- a. **Early Educators & Caregivers:** individuals who work directly with children in child care and early education programs. In an effort to recognize the diversity within the field of early childhood, SDAEYC encourages applications from full day child care centers, half day preschool or nursery school programs, school age child care, kindergarten and primary education, infant and toddler classrooms, and classrooms serving young children with special needs.
- b. **Early Childhood Leaders:** individuals who have made significant career contributions to the field which have had an impact on the needs, rights and well being of children throughout the state.
- c. **Higher Education Instructors and Early Childhood Trainers:** individuals who provide advanced education, training and mentoring in colleges & universities, resource & referral programs, and other individuals who provide continuing education for adults who work in the early childhood field.
- d. **Program Administrators:** individuals who are outstanding administrators of early childhood programs. SDAEYC encourages applications from full day child care centers, half day preschool or nursery school programs, school age child care, kindergarten and primary education, centers serving young children with special needs, and multi-site organizations.

## **2. Citizens Award (SDAEYC membership not required):**

- a. Members of the South Dakota news media for increasing public awareness of children's rights and needs during the past year.
- b. Public Officials on the local, state or national levels representing South Dakota who have been sensitive to children's issues during the past year.
- c. Community leaders who consistently act as child advocates.
- d. Authors from South Dakota who have excited the minds of young children or early childhood professionals.
- e. Artists (dancers, actor, etc.) who have creatively expressed issues of children or who have helped children discover a fresh way to learn.
- f. Inventors who have created toys or equipment from exceptionally safe, creative learning opportunities.

**3. 1<sup>st</sup> Year Early Education Teacher Award (SDAEYC membership not required):**

Individuals who are in their first year of teaching children birth through age 8 (2<sup>nd</sup> grade).

Has shown exceptional skills in teaching developmentally appropriate lessons, being an advocate for young children and/or a thoughtful and caring relationship with children, families, and other professionals in the field.

**4. Early Education Student Award (SDAEYC membership not required):**

A student studying early childhood education in a South Dakota university, CDA or continuing education program. Individuals who show exceptional skills in planning and teaching developmentally appropriate lessons and/or are a strong advocate for young children and family issues.

**Members of SDAEYC or members of the community may make nomination(s) by submitting a completed application form(s) and letter of support to:**

**South Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children**

PO Box 85426

Sioux Falls, SD 57118

Or email nominations to [sdaeyc@gmail.com](mailto:sdaeyc@gmail.com)

**All nominations must be postmarked or emailed by March 1st**