



State of New Jersey

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ALLISON BLAKE
Commissioner
Department of Children and Families

April 1, 2013

Dear Early Childhood Professional;

We are pleased to present the *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards*. The release of this document marks the first time that our state has defined common developmental standards for children from birth to three years. The New Jersey Council for Young Children, established in 2010, created this exemplary document. The standards were developed under the Council's Early Learning and Development Standards Committee, a diverse group of public and private child care providers, university professors, early childhood specialists at the county, state, and national levels, state agency representatives, and early childhood professional organizations.

The *New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* provides a common framework for understanding and communicating developmentally appropriate expectations for infants and toddlers. Based on research about what infants and toddlers know and are able to do throughout the first three years of life, the standards provide child care providers, parents, early childhood teachers, higher education faculty and policy makers with the latest research-based information to support optimal learning and development.

We believe that the use of *The New Jersey Birth to Three Early Learning Standards* will result in higher quality early learning experiences for very young children. It is imperative that all of New Jersey's infants and toddlers have early learning experiences that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate. It is our recommendation that you will use these standards to inform your practices in order to make a difference for young children and families. We also hope that you share them with your colleagues.

Sincerely,

Allison Blake
Commissioner, Department of Children and Families

Mary E. O'Dowd
Commissioner, Department of Health

Christopher D. Cerf
Commissioner, Department of Education

Jennifer Velez
Commissioner, Department of Human Services