



**Cherie Kennedy**



Cherie received the Children's Champion Award from Iowa AEYC this year for her significant contributions at the statewide level to improving the quality of care and education of young children

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#### **Champion Bio and Synopsis**

Cherie Kennedy began completion of an early childhood education degree at a junior college as a non-traditional student. She completed her degree in record time, with the highest honors, while working a full-time job, volunteering, and taking on additional responsibilities to cover the cost of her education. Cherie's commitment to early childhood education and passion for helping children was evident then and now. Her dedicated work in providing consultation services to area providers has greatly impacted public awareness of the need to invest in these services.

Cherie plays a vital role volunteering at many public events related to early childhood education. Her commitment to joining committees, providing trainings, and serving as a resource to anyone who needs her has been an asset statewide. Colleagues in the field regard her with high esteem as a mentor, educator, and champion of children.

Cherie has also been involved with many early childhood initiatives and served on many committees in the Dubuque area, including the governing board for Iowa AEYC. She has been part of the Dubuque Quality Care Alliance, Dubuque County Empowerment, Dubuque County Early Childhood, Quality Rating System, Iowa Preschool Quality Program Standards, and the

list goes on and on. If it involves Early Childhood Care Education, she is there to share her vast knowledge and experience as well as to add support.

Cherie facilitated the Iowa Preschool Quality Program Standards with the Dubuque Montessori schools and made the intense process thought provoking and fun. With her profound knowledge of early childhood development, schools were able to identify their strengths and challenges and implement changes. The result was better practices to more effectively meet the needs of the children entrusted to their care.

Cherie has a gift when it comes to teaching and mentoring adults who work with children. She is kind and respectful in every situation. She challenges you to do your best and always reflect. Her dedication to the field has impacted thousands of providers and her support of young children is unparalleled.

### **Cherie's Member Spotlight Q&A**

#### **Why did you become a member?**

- My supervisor encouraged me to join NAEYC and attend the local chapter meetings.
- At the local chapter meetings, the enthusiasm for quality childcare was contagious!
- I knew I wanted to be a part of making a difference and ensuring our voices were heard.
- Since that first meeting, many years ago, I have seen so many positive changes in the Early Childhood field.
- NAEYC and Iowa AEYC have always been at the forefront of those changes.

#### **Which NAEYC benefit to you most value?**

- I value the opportunity to work childcare providers daily.
- I look forward to reading my Teaching Young Children magazine too!

#### **My favorite NAEYC/Iowa AEYC memory?**

- I was able to attend the NAEYC conference in Chicago, IL years ago.
- What a phenomenal experience!
- I met Dr. Jean, and of course, purchased several of her resources! 😊
- I was motivated by the hundreds of childcare providers, advocates, and early childhood professionals in the room!
- My knowledge of the childcare profession increased as NAEYC had engaging, informative presenters.
- On the statewide level, I have attended the Fall Institute for several years and have always enjoyed the keynote speakers and the breakout sessions.
- I am able to take the information I learn at the institute and share it with my colleagues and the childcare providers I work with on a daily basis.