



Division for Early Childhood
of the Council for Exceptional Children



For Immediate Release

Groundbreaking Position/Definition Released

National organizations collaborate on essentials of quality early childhood inclusion

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MISSOULA, MT and WASHINGTON, DC: *June 1, 2009* – The Division for Early Childhood and the National Association for the Education of Young Children have recently approved a joint position statement that underscores their commitment to quality early childhood inclusion. *Early Childhood Inclusion: A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)* takes a historic step by providing a shared national definition of inclusion as “*the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society.*” The document, which was developed through a collaborative national process that was coordinated by the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion at the FPG Child Development Institute, represents the first time these two leading national organizations have collaborated on a joint product that is expected to have a widespread impact on the early childhood field.

The position statement describes the desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families and specifies the features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality programs and services. It also includes recommendations for how to use the position statement to improve early childhood services for all children.

Family members, teachers, administrators, and leaders will find the position statement an essential resource and support for professional development, policy development, and advocacy efforts. The position statement may be downloaded at

http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/Early_Childhood_Inclusion/

A summary and full statement may also be found on the [Division for Early Childhood](#) Web site and on the [NAEYC](#) Web site.