



A Statement from the Early Childhood Leadership Commission

The *Early Childhood Colorado Framework* is founded upon the pillars of access, quality and equity in serving all children and families in our state. These guiding principles speak to the commitment of the early childhood community to declare unequivocally that racism has no place in our communities.

Sadly, for many children in our State, their experience is inequitable from birth. This is evidenced by numerous indicators that show that children of color consistently face barriers that lead to lower educational attainment, poorer health outcomes, and other lifelong challenges. The importance of early care and education in challenging and breaking through these systemic inequities cannot be overstated. Three-month-old babies can visually categorize faces by race. Toddlers begin to connect racial features to a person's behavior. Preschoolers can identify and act out against racial injustice on their own. Children's experiences in their formative years have the power to change our world.

The recent events our state and country have experienced, in addition to the unprecedented times we are facing already in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, have challenged all of us to stand united and steadfast in our determination to stopping a pattern of injustice and inequality.

Today, more than ever, we must stand together and turn anger and frustration into advocacy and action. We will first listen and then reflect, in order for other voices to be heard. We will examine our own organizational practices and procedures. We commit to walking together on this journey and supporting one another along the way, and we urge you to join us.

We express our sincere gratitude to all of you who have dedicated your work and your lives to fighting for access, quality and equity within your communities. If you need someone to talk to during this time, contact Colorado Crisis Services at 1.844.493.8255. Taking care of your health and well-being ensures you are prepared physically and mentally to care for others.

We stand with you and know that we have much more work to do, together.

Find Equity, Racism and Policy Resources compiled by CDHS [here](#).