March 31, 2020

Dear Idaho early childhood educators and leaders,

This has been quite a week for all Idahoans, but especially for those in the early childhood community.

Like most small business owners, you're worried about your financial future. You've had to make decisions about what to do next that impact a lot more than just your own bottom line. We know you are having to juggle the needs of your staff, the children in your care, and the needs of the community at large because you may have been deemed an essential industry.

We've always known you were essential. Not just in the times of panic and crisis, but in good and steady times. You're helping to build the next generation and that is essential every day.

We know it's hard to social distance when a 3-year-old needs you or builds a block tower with his best friend. Working with small children was not built for quarantine. Still, we know that some of you have chosen to persist and continue to care for and educate children despite the very real challenges you face. We support you.

You may no longer be open for business. The decision to close may not have even been made by you, but by circumstances beyond your control. Some of you might have determined for your safety, the health of your staff and the children in your care, you will temporarily close your doors. We support you.

We know there are no easy decisions here. We know whatever decision you make is the best for you and right, at this time.

We are here for you now and we will be here for you when this is over. We’ll continue to advocate for the important work you do, because you inspire us now and always.

With our utmost gratitude,

Beth Oppeneheimer  
Executive Director and  
the Idaho AEYC Governing Board