

This Issue and Why it Matters

For many of those who have long inhabited the early childhood professional world, with its systems and standards, terms like “program quality” and “professional competence” may have an impersonal, administrative flavor. When the jargon is stripped away, however, what is left is the need and desire to become *better*... better at serving, supporting, and advocating for young children and their families and better at working together as professionals.

As we at ZERO TO THREE are fond of saying, relationships matter. The articles in this issue highlight that a critical key to becoming better—whether as an individual, a team, or an entire field—is relationships. Rarely, if ever, do humans learn and change in a vacuum. The insights, provocations, and encouragements of a caring other provide rich soil for growth.

Each article looks at a different facet of improvement and growth in the early childhood field of practice, from the micro-level of one-on-one reflective supervision to the program level, as family service agencies strive to fill gaps in serving vulnerable populations, to the macro-level of early childhood systems and policies. Within all, however, readers will find the “secret sauce” of relationships as professionals work with families and one another—reflecting, discussing, exploring, wondering, negotiating, and even arguing at times—in order to do better together.

As we begin this new year together, we at ZERO TO THREE renew our commitment to strengthen relationships with you as we work together to do better for young children, families, and our professional community.

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America's Future Depends on Quality Child Care

Learn more about the state of quality child care for babies in America and the critical components needed to ensure progress and success for young children now and well into their futures.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1220-america-s-future-depends-on-quality-child-care>

Child Care Advocacy Toolkit

Emotionally nourishing relationships lay the foundation for lifelong health and well-being. When 6 million American infants and toddlers spend some part of their day with caregivers other than their parents, it is critical that all children and families who need it have access to high-quality early childhood education with knowledgeable and experienced educators. The toolkit offers several ways to contribute to improving early childhood education for infants, toddlers, and their families.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/series/child-care-advocacy-toolkit>

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