

MAY 28 1997

EXECUTIVE ORDER

97-07

Rebecca McDowell Cook
SECRETARY OF STATE

WHEREAS, the Outstanding Schools Act and related initiatives have ensured that schools are better prepared to serve children who enter the public school system; and

WHEREAS, recent neurological research demonstrates that children begin learning at birth and confirms that infants realize significant emotional and educational benefits from positive and stimulating experiences; and

WHEREAS, the role of parents as caregivers and teachers is critical to the development of infants; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to the health of families and the future of the state that children start school ready to learn; and

WHEREAS, previous and ongoing endeavors, including the work of The Family Investment Trust and the Children's Services Commission, have demonstrated the benefits of collaborative and coordinated service delivery that involves families and communities; and

WHEREAS, despite state, local, and private efforts, there is still an unmet need for early childhood services.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mel Carnahan, Governor of the State of Missouri, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Missouri, do hereby establish the Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education.

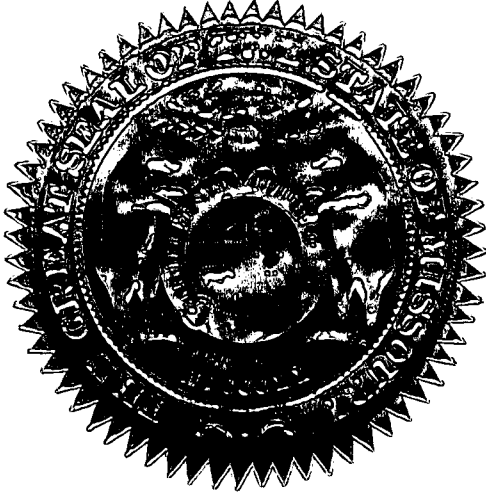
The Commission shall review early childhood services currently available to Missouri families and recommend any measures needed to ensure that services are delivered through a comprehensive, coordinated, locally focused, and cost-effective system that advances the goal of preparing all Missouri children to enter school ready to learn. The recommendations of the Commission shall include methods of:

- a) coordinated budgeting of current funding streams that support children's services;
- b) identifying and encouraging best practices and standards of quality child care;
- c) raising public awareness about the importance of early childhood care and education and the relationship between early positive experiences and neurological development;
- d) connecting families with young children with needed information and services;
- e) promoting citizen and community involvement in early childhood care and education;
- f) connecting local schools and child care providers;
- g) encouraging local schools to consider either providing or supporting quality child care;
- h) encouraging public/private partnerships as a way to increase access to affordable, quality child care; and
- i) innovative and practical ways to finance needed improvements in early childhood care and education.

The Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education shall consist of representatives from state government, the business community, parent organizations, philanthropic organizations, leaders from the fields of education and child care, and other members as appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall designate one of the members to serve as chairperson. The

chairperson may designate advisory committees composed of both commission members and nonmembers to develop information and ideas for consideration. The Commission shall deliver its recommendations to the Governor no later than December 31, 1997, and shall thereafter disband.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Missouri, in the City of Jefferson, on this 28th day of May, 1997.



Neil R. Cameron

GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

Rebecca M. Dorell Cook

SECRETARY OF STATE