The "Trilemma" of Early Childhood Programs

The "trilemma" identifies the three goals of early childhood programs and how meeting any one of these goals creates conflicts for the other two. The result of the trilemma is a PROBLEM that everyone who cares about young children must help solve. Our future is in their hands!

QUALITY Care for Children

• Depends on knowledgeable, experienced child care teachers/providers who are justly compensated.
• Is expensive and NOT affordable for many families.

COMPENSATION for Child Care Teachers/Providers

• Continues to be inadequate in order to keep programs affordable to parents
• Results in low self-esteem and high turnover of child care teachers and providers, both of which have negative affects on program quality.

AFFORDABILITY for Parents

• Has resulted in child care teachers/providers contributing to the true cost of child care through their poor compensation.
• Threatens program **quality** because of the inability of programs to attract knowledgeable and experienced child care staff.