Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Accreditation?
   A. Accreditation is a voluntary process that early childhood and school age after school programs can choose to go through. The process involves the program doing a self assessment which addresses every aspect of their operations. Then trained individuals observe or validate the program's self assessment. The observations of the trained individuals are used along with the program's self evaluation to make the decision to accredit the program.

2. Who do I get my accreditation from?
   A. In Missouri, early child hood programs can choose between state accreditation or national accreditation.

      MOA (Missouri Accreditation) is available to family child care programs, programs serving children 0-12 and school age programs.

      NAFCC Accreditation (National Association for Family Child Care) is a national accreditation for family child care programs and group home programs.

      NAEYC Accreditation (National Association for the Education of Young Children) is a national accreditation for center based programs serving children 0-5.

      Click here to see a complete list of accrediting organizations recognized by the Missouri Department of Social Services

3. Why should I get accredited?
   A. Accreditation says that your program is committed to quality for children. This level of commitment sets you apart from the average childcare program. Go to http://www.dss.mo.gov/cd/early/accorg.htm for more information on the signs of a quality early childhood program.

4. How do I know if my program is ready for accreditation?
    A. Each of the accreditation systems has information on their website about the criteria your program needs to meet to become accredited. You can also contact your regional Child Care Aware agency to request an accreditation readiness walk through. They will either assign a member of their staff to assist you or help you contact a local partner such as Educare or Project REACH.

5. Where can I find help with my self study process?
    A. Contact your regional Child Care Aware agency for phone technical assistance. They may also be able to refer you to a Technical Assistance Facilitation project in your area. Space in these projects is limited due to funding constraints.