

How do I apply?

Additional information about the AICC can be found on the First Connections' Web site at:

<https://dhs.arkansas.gov/dds/firstconnectionsweb/#fc-aicc>

The application to apply for a governor-appointed position on the council can be found at:

https://www.ark.org/gov_bcaq/app/instructions.html

Information about the First Connections early intervention program can be found at the First Connections Web site at:

<https://dhs.arkansas.gov/dds/firstconnectionsweb/#fc-home>

For individuals who wish to participate but who cannot access the online application, please contact the program directly to obtain an application or for additional information:

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Lending Your Voice to the Arkansas Interagency Coordinating Council (AICC)



AICC Mission: To work in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services in an advisory capacity to design and oversee the implementation of a family-centered, community-based, comprehensive, interagency service delivery system for infants and toddlers (birth to three) who are eligible for Part C services and their families. The AICC advises and assists in the monitoring and evaluation of this system to ensure that families are supported and the potential of each child is maximized, that services are of high quality, efficient, timely, and maintain flexibility and manageability.

This brochure outlines basic information about the AICC and opportunities for parents of children with disabilities to take a leadership role in decision-making and improvement efforts.

Questions and Answers:

Q: *What “qualifications” does a parent member of the AICC need to have?*

A: Parent members must have a child with a disability and fall in one of the following categories outlined by IDEA:

- (a) parents, including minority parents, of a child with a disability aged twelve (12) or younger with knowledge of or experience with programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities
- (b) parents, including minority parents, of a child with a disability aged six (6) or younger with knowledge of or experience with programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities

Q: *“I can’t be an “expert” on all of the federal regulations, state guidelines, and best practices of a state-wide network providing early intervention, so how can I as a parent really contribute to this work?”*

A: Parents are experts in things that agency representatives often have little or no experience with -- navigating a complex system and inviting these professionals into your child’s and family’s life, and often into your home. Parents aren’t expected to be experts on the regulatory requirements or best practices for early intervention, there are staff members who keep up to date on these things. To reach our goal of early intervention helping families help their child learn and develop, we need ideas from people who have received EI services.

What is the AICC?

The Arkansas Interagency Coordinating Council (AICC) is a group of governor-appointed members serving as an advisory council to First Connections, Arkansas’ Early Intervention program under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The organization of the council is outlined in the IDEA. AICC members represent different groups, agencies, and individuals who have an interest in ensuring access to quality early intervention for families of infants and toddlers birth to three. According to the IDEA, a certain percentage of the seats on this council must be filled by parents of children with disabilities to incorporate their important perspective.

How much time would a parent commit?

The Arkansas Interagency Coordinating Council (AICC) meets in Little Rock on a quarterly basis on the third Wednesday of January, April, July, and October. Meetings generally last for two hours. Meeting minutes and other information is sent out to members to keep them informed. Some work is done in subcommittees but is often accomplished through email, Webinar, and/or conference call.

How do parent members participate?

The parent seats on the council are equal in rank to the other seats, so parents are full participants on the council and not just “attendees.” The lead agency provides support to help parent members participate fully such as reimbursement for the cost of a sitter so that the parent can attend and reimbursement for travel to AICC meetings, if the family does not reside in the Little Rock area. Parent members are provided an “Acronym Guide” to terms and abbreviations the parent may not be familiar with, and, if desired, a staff member to “debrief” with the parent after the quarterly council meetings.