

The Orange County Childcare Coalitions is a group of people who advocate for young children and their families. Many members of the coalition are childcare providers. We have been advocating for young children in Orange County over 40 years. As a candidate for county commissioner we would like to share with your constituents your views on young children and families.

Please consider responding to the following questions:

Questions for Orange County Commissioner Candidates from  
The Orange County Child Care Coalition

1. Please describe your vision for early childhood education for children from birth to five.
2. Research has demonstrated that investments made in high quality early care and education have significant returns...in less grade retention, less need for special education, less cost within juvenile justice system, better high school graduation, higher attained education, etc. Many believe such investments are the way to close the achievement gap. What role should Orange County government play in supporting high quality early care and education in policy and funding?
3. Recently, with tight budgets and harder economic times, some have raised the issue of funding quantity over quality. That is, shouldn't we support more children with child care assistance, but in less quality and cheaper types of programs. Where do you stand on this issue?

Thank you for your responses.

Kate Sanford, Member of the Orange County Childcare Coalition

Candidate Renee Price response:

1. Please describe your vision for early childhood education for children from birth to five.

Studies show that early childhood education significantly increases the development and advancement of the children. I therefore support this means of preparing our children for productive future. In addition, with so many parents needing to work, with less and less stay-at-home parenting, this type of nurture is important, perhaps crucial. My concern is whether all children will receive this opportunity.

Let me add that enrolling children in early childhood education programs should be a choice made by the parents. We still need to respect the values of others.

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Orange County government appropriates tax dollars to the schools and the School Board determines how the funds are to be spent. Yet, the BOCC, being aware of these studies, should emphasize the need to put funding into these programs, noting that such programs will help assure a sustainable future.

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Because of my stance on social equity and social justice, I believe that all children should have the opportunity to participate in programs, particularly when funded by the government. Quality can be achieved and/or maintained through parent participation and voluntary community involvement—in addition to dedicated staff. In difficult times, we must come together as a community.

Candidate Joe Phelps response:

Hi Kate and the Orange County Childcare Coalition

First I want to thank you personally for your interest in our youngest citizens. We have had 10 forums and I have answered 7 different set of questions to date. With the election only a week away my time is very limited. I'm not sure I will have time to answer your questions before the election. Again thanks for your interest in the young children and I to have interest in their growth as I have several young great nephews that I am very close to and want the best chance for them also. Again thanks for your interest.  
Joe Phelps