

Good afternoon! Thank you for that warm welcome and for your invitation to be here. It is a pleasure to welcome you today to Voices for Mississippi's Children's 10th annual conference on Early Childhood Development.

Thank you for your commitment to the children of our state and to providing quality child care. You are providing an invaluable service to our state and to its children. You give of yourself to one of our most valuable resources – our children.

The theme of this year's conference is "Quality Child Care/Seeds of Success." You are truly planting seeds for success and growth in the care and love that you provide to our children. We are all aware of the needs of quality child care for the development of our children here in Mississippi. Research in the area of early childhood development has found that 90% of the brain's architectural structure is developed by age 3. The care and service that you offer to your children can dramatically impact their future.

Voices for Mississippi's Children and the Mississippi State Bost Extension Service are to be commended for their efforts in providing training to you, who, in return, are in a position of helping to mold the future of our children.

I hope that you will find this conference beneficial. Thank you again for your service and your commitment to the children of our state. Enjoy the conference!