

Proclamation

The future prosperity of our state is dependent upon the healthy development of our youngest citizens. Current research emphasizes that the early years are crucial to a child's overall learning and social progress. Smooth and supportive transitions from early education programs into the public school system are particularly important for children with special needs.

Parents and caregivers with children who are facing this important milestone greatly benefit from the assistance of professionals, government agencies and school and community organizations. Project STEPS (Sequenced Transition to Education into the Public Schools) is a national outreach program designed to help public school educators assist students facing various academic challenges. Project STEPS partners with state agencies and communities to develop a transition system that enables children with special needs, 5 years old and younger, to successfully enter the public school system.

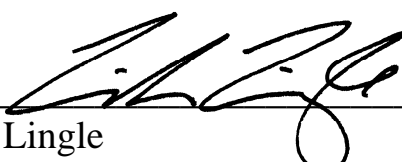
Each April, Hawai'i's STEPS team joins organizations and groups, including the Hawai'i state Department of Education, in observing *Month of the Young Child* to raise public awareness of the needs of young children and their families, as well as the importance of quality early childhood education programs. On April 4, STEPS members are sponsoring the annual Parent & Child Fair at the Kukui Grove Shopping Center on Kaua'i, which will feature children's games, hands-on activities and helpful information about community programs for young children.

THEREFORE, I, LINDA LINGLE, Governor, and I, JAMES R. "DUKE" AIONA, JR., Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim **April 2009**, as

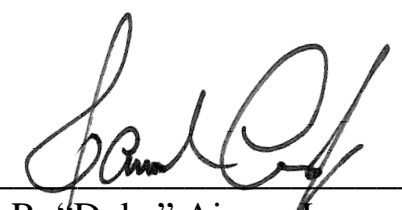
MONTH OF THE YOUNG CHILD

in Hawai'i, and encourage our citizens to support programs that aid our young children during the important developmental years of their lives.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, this third day of April 2009.



Linda Lingle
Governor, State of Hawai'i



James R. "Duke" Aiona, Jr.
Lieutenant Governor, State of Hawai'i