***Early Years Forum-Kenya***

The Early Years Forum-Kenya explores the critical issues affecting children’s growth and development during the formative years. The forum seeks to help children make the best start in life through quality care and early stimulation experiences which support holistic development of young children in the Kenyan context.

The early years form the most critical phase of human development. The period begins before birth when a baby’s body and brain are being formed, continues through early infancy when key relationships are established and developmental milestones reached, and includes pre-school years and transition into the early grades of schooling.

It is during these formative years that children undergo rapid physical and mental growth. They also learn to communicate and interact with the world and develop a sense of personal and cultural identity. This is also the best time to mould the character of children by inculcating norms, values and habits as well as regulation and control of emotions. This period therefore, offers the greatest opportunities for positive human development. Negative experiences and influences during these early years can be irreversible.

The early years form the foundation upon which families and societies are built. A strong foundation helps to shape healthier, more prosperous, stable and participatory families and societies. Unfortunately, research indicates that majority of children in the society do not realize their full developmental potential due to errors of commission or omission during the early years.

Under this background, the ***Early Years Forum-Kenya*** aims to empower and hold accountable parents and childcare service providers to fulfil their roles to facilitate every child to develop to their full potential.