

In North Carolina, our high-quality early care and education system was created by hard work, passion for early education, and legislation that required safe, developmentally appropriate, and accessible childcare.

To preserve and enhance the high quality early education system that we have, Early Education professionals and families need to stay informed, advocate for positive legislation, and encourage their communities to support early education as well.

Here are eight ways to make an impact and spread the message about WHAT young children need for positive development, WHY early education matters in the world at large, and HOW members of our communities can get involved to ensure a bright present and future for all of us.

1. Advocate and Educate where you live and work.

Share your advocacy message with the people most impacted by Early Education policies—the teachers and families who take part in childcare each day. Encourage each other to get educated on current Early Education policies, speak up, and pay attention to state and federal Early Education legislation.

2. Stay Informed.

The North Carolina General Assembly has a major impact on Early Education funding and policy. Know who your representatives are, and urge them to support funding and high quality standards for Early Education in North Carolina. You can find your representative's contact information [here](#).

[Click here](#) to sign up for the NC Early Education Coalition's Action Network and receive alerts on Early Education legislation issues and action campaigns that you can join.

3. Share the resources of NAEYC with co-workers and families.

Check out www.naeyc.org/positionstatements to learn NAEYC's take on issues in Early Education.

Share resources from naeyc.org to help families understand the importance of high-quality early education.

4. Recommit to Professionalism.

Print and post NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct Statement of Commitment in your center or classroom. Download a PDF at bit.ly/2sgHKIT.

Take time to remind yourself and others that as Early Educators, we take our profession seriously, have shared ideals and principles, and strive towards the highest standards.

5. Share Resources

Share resources from your local Child Care Resource and Referral agency. Find the CCR&R agency in your community at childcarerrnc.org/directory.php. Share resources from your local Smart Start. Find Smart Start in your community at bit.ly/1RBTIUu.

6. Share the First 2000 Days resources with your community.

NC Early Learning Foundation created The First 2000 Days presentation, an excellent tool explaining why high quality, accessible care is crucial to families, and the positive impact it has in communities. It speaks to those outside the world of early childhood, and is ideal for civic, religious, non-profit, and community groups. Become a First 2000 Days Champion by sharing this video bit.ly/1RSULwj and leading a conversation at your group event

7. Invite community leaders to tour your high-quality program.

Give a tour of your program in action. Invite local business leaders, community leaders, public school teachers and administrators, City Council members, the Mayor and mayoral staff to view your program on a typical day, and explain how each aspect of your program (classroom, teachers, outdoor environments, and curriculum) are designed to best engage and teach young children.

8. Take care of yourself so you can take care of others!

Pat yourself on the back! The work you do matters. *Your* health and well-being is an important factor in early care and education. Reflect upon your own professionalism, enthusiasm, and commitment. Celebrate those qualities in yourself, and in the early educators in your life and your community. **NCAEYC thanks you for all you do to serve and support children, families, and your communities!**