

HOW TO TALK ABOUT THE NEED FOR A SIGNIFICANT, SUSTAINED INVESTMENT IN CHILD CARE AND PRESCHOOL



A practical guide to public-facing messaging on child care and early learning

American voters care about children and their future. As negotiations on President Biden's proposal for a significant, sustained investment in early learning and care move forward, it is critical that champions of child care and early learning effectively communicate on this issue.

EFFECTIVE MESSAGES

DESCRIBE THE BENEFIT: The first five years are when a child's brain develops fastest and when they learn key social, emotional, and academic skills they need to be ready for kindergarten so they don't fall behind later in school or develop behavioral problems. We need to ensure parents can access child care and preschool options that help kids build on the learning and development experiences they get at home with their families.

CREATE URGENCY: For too many families, lack of access to child care and pre-school force them to rely on inconsistent or unsafe care options, or even cut their work hours or leave the workforce altogether. Especially after the pandemic, millions of parents have left the workforce or cut their hours in order to care for and educate their children. These families need support to get back to working the way they need to, while knowing their children are receiving high quality education and care.

ASSUAGE CONCERNS: President Biden's proposals for early learning and care extends key tax cuts that benefit lower-and-middle income workers and families. The proposal does NOT raise taxes on anyone earning less than \$400,000 per year.

DO'S AND DON'TS

SAY THESE

- Define the benefit this will have for children's long-term development.
- Emphasize the urgency of giving families the support they need to get back to work the way they need to, while ensuring their children are cared for and educated.
- Assuage concerns about taxes, emphasizing that it will not raise taxes on people making less than \$400k.
- Highlight that increased federal funding will help providers earn higher wages and extend the Child Tax Credit to help families cover the cost of raising children.

AVOID THESE

- Litigate the stay-at-home-mom vs. working mom culture wars. These attacks are not salient and are a distraction.
- Take the bait that President Biden's proposal does not go far enough – voters across the demographic spectrum support proposals that increase federal funding for early learning and care.

Survey conducted by FFYF, in partnership with ALG, in July 2021 of battleground states that will be contested in 2022 races to gauge how voters respond to different messages.