



Family Support Awareness Month

February 2025

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT



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BACKGROUND

Former North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper declared February 2021 as Parenting Education Awareness Month. In 2022, the name changed to Family Support Awareness Month to be more inclusive of the broad range of family support programs in North Carolina. A proclamation has been submitted for February 2025 to be the fourth official Family Support Awareness Month (FSAM), highlighting the critical work of home visitors and parenting educators across the state.

GENERAL MESSAGING

Early childhood home visiting and parenting education (HVPE) programs strengthen the relationship between parents and children, increase parenting skills and build confidence. These programs – which can be offered either in the home or at a community center, Family Resource Center or Smart Start – build a system of support for families and ensure children are ready to learn, improve child health and keep children safe. HVPE programs are delivered by experienced child-health professionals and nurses and are intended to support parents and caregivers and promote healthy development and strengthen family relationships. Providing access to home visiting and parenting education to all North Carolina families would extend these benefits across the state. That’s why we need #FamilySupportNC.

- According to the National Home Visiting Resource Center’s [2023 data](#), there are 699,100 children in NC who could benefit from home visiting, but current programs serve less than 2% of children who could benefit.
- There is an acute shortage of home visiting programs in North Carolina. According to a [landscape analysis](#) by the Jordan Institute for Families, many communities have no programs at all, and 72% of existing programs have a waiting list for services.
- [As much as \\$5.70](#) is saved for every \$1 invested in home visiting. These programs would save NC money on expensive social problems such as child abuse, poor academic performance, unemployment, poverty and crime.
- Home visiting improves prenatal health and birth outcomes and improves child health outcomes by increasing immunization rates, decreasing emergency room visits, and decreasing rates of abuse and neglect.

PROCLAMATION

Stay tuned as we await the Governor's Proclamation of February 2025 as Family Support Awareness Month!

SAMPLE PROCLAMATION



State of North Carolina

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

FAMILY SUPPORT AWARENESS MONTH

2024

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the early childhood years are the most active period for the developing brain and a stable, secure relationship with a nurturing, caring adult is a key factor in the development of young children; and

WHEREAS, many parents and caregivers begin the difficult lifetime job of raising a child feeling unprepared for the challenges ahead and children have a better, healthier start when parents and caregivers have the support and skills needed to raise them; and

WHEREAS, family support can include a variety of different programs and models, including early childhood home visiting programs and parenting education programs; and

WHEREAS, family support programs help parents and caregivers meet the unique needs of their children, promote healthy development, strengthen family relationships, reduce the risk of abuse and neglect, and promote equity by providing resources to families who are furthest from opportunity; and

WHEREAS, well-trained professionals implement early childhood home visitation and parenting education so that all families have the opportunity to access information in ways that respect their unique beliefs, traditions, and customs; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina urges individuals and organizations across our state to utilize family support resources as needed to support the health and well-being of our children and families;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim February, 2024, as "**FAMILY SUPPORT AWARENESS MONTH**" in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.




Roy Cooper
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-ninth day of January in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-four and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-eighth.



MATERNAL, INFANT, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING (MIECHV) RESOURCES

North Carolina needs and expanded MIECHV program: Learn about the benefits of expanding the MIECHV program in North Carolina, including financial benefits, maternal and infant health benefits, and more.

The facts about MIECHV: Learn about the history of MIECHV, its expansion, funding, and opportunities to improve the lives of North Carolinians through home visiting and parent-ing education programs.

Smart Start and Home Visiting: Newborn home visiting and parent education is just one strategy for supporting children and families, and is one that is strongly and collectively supported across the Smart Start Network. Learn more about Smart Start's position on Home Visiting.

Taking Action: A summary of the implications from Positive Childhood Alliance NC's "Forward with Hope" report. See page 4 for MIECHV information.

NC FAMILY RESOURCE NETWORK

Family Resource Centers are community or school-based hubs designed to support families and increase the [protective factors](#). FRCs may offer many services like home visiting, evidence-based parenting education, play groups, health screenings, fatherhood programs, food banks, or family counseling.

Launched in March 2023, the [North Carolina Family Resource Center Network](#) is a statewide chapter of the National Family Support Network that seeks to connect Family Resource Centers from across North Carolina to both increase investments and promote best practice in family support services through advocacy and collaboration. The NC FRC Network is committed to improving child and family well-being in communities across the state. To date, the network has 59 self-described Family Resource Centers and 18 supportive partner organizations. [Check out our member map.](#)

Members of the NC FRC Network support the vision that all North Carolina families have equitable access to strengths-based resources through a network of community-based FRCs and, as a result, communities are stronger, healthier and more nurturing environments where children and their families thrive. [Learn more and join the NC FRC Network.](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

Think Babies HVPE toolkit with images:

<https://ncearlyeducationcoalition.org/think-babies-nc/think-babies-nc-support-ed-families-social-media-toolkit/>

CONTACTING LEGISLATORS

Email or call your local legislators or those on the key committees listed below to let them know the importance of home visiting and parenting education. You can also find your legislators on social media and tag them in your posts.

A draft email template is included below, but you should personalize with your own experiences. The more personal, the better!

Find your legislators:

<https://www.ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators>

House Appropriations - Health and Human Services:

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/HouseStanding/10>

House Health:

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/HouseStanding/26>

Senate Appropriations - Health and Human Services:

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/SenateStanding/143>

Senate Health Care:

<https://www.ncleg.gov/Committees/CommitteeInfo/SenateStanding/139>

CONTACTING LEGISLATORS CON'T

Draft Legislator Email:

Dear Rep./Sen. XXX,

My name is FirstName LastName, and I work at XXX/live in your district. Early childhood home visiting and parenting education programs strengthen the relationship between parents and children, increasing parenting skills and building confidence. These programs ensure children are ready to learn, improve child health and keep children safe. In fact, as much as \$5.70 is saved for every \$1 invested in home visiting. That's why we need home visiting and parenting education for all in North Carolina!

Please support funding for home visiting and parenting education programs to support families across North Carolina. For more information, visit PositiveChildhoodAllianceNC.org.

Thank you for your support of children and families.

Signature

PRESS TIPS

When the media publishes a story, five factors must be considered: timing, significance, proximity, prominence, and human interest. When pitching a story to a reporter, incorporate stories that address at least one of these factors. Successful pitching is less about having a fancy press release and more about having a good story. Find your local newspaper at <https://www.ncpress.com/directory/>.

Timing:

Stories need to be timely, especially when posting to social media. If it happened two weeks ago, it's old news!

When pitching a story about home visiting, connect current events and data to the need for universal home visiting. For example, connect home visiting and its benefits to the current infant mortality crisis affecting North Carolina. The need for a solution will make the story timely.

Significance:

Home visiting can support families. With North Carolina having one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country, it's essential that children and families are supported.

Proximity:

Stories that are close to us have more of an impact. When pitching a story in North Carolina, mention North Carolina home visiting and parent education statistics specifically. When connecting with local media, reference the local home visiting and parenting education stories, challenges, and statistics. Connect the story to the location!

Prominence:

People, places, and organizations already newsworthy and prominent in the media will impact a story. Reference well-known organizations and home visiting studies if possible.

If a larger news outlet has reported on the home visiting sector or if there is a related topic that has been reported on, share the story and connect it to your message.

Human Interest:

Share stories that appeal to emotion to spread awareness towards your organization and message. Human interest stories don't have to be as timely or affect many people.

Additional tips are available at:

<https://training.npr.org/2017/01/24/what-makes-a-good-pitch-npr-editors-weigh-in/>

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Another great way to increase visibility of HVPE, especially among thought letters, is through letters to the editor. Most newspapers have online forms or email addresses where you can send letters. Find your local paper here. Typically, there will be a word limit, and letters must usually be signed. Be sure to follow these rules to get your letter in the paper!

Draft Letter

Dear Editor,

All families need support – especially those who have been left behind. The data is clear. When families have access to the support and services they need when they need them, their emotional and physical well-being improves. This lowers the risk that children will experience abuse or neglect. But families can't do it alone. Neither can a single program, nonprofit, government agency, or foundation. It takes all of us to support and strengthen families and make sure children can reach their untapped potential.

Early childhood home visiting and parenting education programs provide critical supports to help address these challenges. Research shows that these programs keep children safe, ensure children are ready to learn and improve child health. In fact, as much as \$5.70 is saved for every \$1 invested in home visiting. That's why we need home visiting and parenting education for all in North Carolina!

For more information and to help support children and families in our community, please visit PositiveChildhoodAllianceNC.org or contact info@positivechildhoodalliancenc.org.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS & TEMPLATES

Below are suggested social media posts you can use throughout February to help spread the word on your social media platforms.

Platforms: Feel free to publish these posts across any platform(s) you are active on (i.e., X, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube). Consider utilizing the features on these platforms (i.e., “stories” on Facebook/Instagram, “LIVE” videos, etc.) to reach even more people.

Graphics: Graphics and videos increase reach and engagement. Download graphics from the images section at end of this toolkit to use along with the suggested post-copy provided below.

Personalize: Personalize these suggested social media posts by adding copy or graphics that show an example of home visiting and parenting education efforts in your community!

Hashtags: Use the official FSAM 2025 hashtag: **#FamilySupportNC** on all social media posts to connect our efforts and boost the message. Additional hashtags to consider include:

- #ncpol
- #ncga
- #ThinkBabiesNC
- #ECE
- #earlychildhood
- #StrongFamilies
- #HomeVisitingWorks
- #ParentingEdWorks
- #NCFRCNetwork
- #NurturingPositiveChildhoods

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS & TEMPLATES CON'T

X (formerly Twitter)

X handles for NC HV/PE programs (follow, tag, and retweet as appropriate):

- @pcanc
- @FC_DurhamNC
- @Family_Connects
- @NFP_nursefamily
- @NatIPAT
- @NatIHeadStart
- @childfirstinc
- @bookharvestnc
- @HFAatPCA
- @ncsmartstart
- @NationalHVRC

Suggested Post Copy [shortened for X (formerly Twitter)]

TOPIC: Home Visiting & Parenting Education

1. #HomeVisiting & #ParentingEd programs help to build protective factors that
 - ✓ reduce the risk of abuse and neglect
 - ✓ strengthen family relationships
 - ✓ promote children's healthy development.That's why we need #FamilySupportNC! #ThinkBabiesNC
2. There are 699,100 children in NC who could benefit from #HomeVisiting, but programs currently serve less than 2% of all children in the state. Many communities have no access to programs at all. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC

Use these two additional posts to make that large number (699,100) more relatable, digestible and tangible:

The number of children who could benefit from #HomeVisiting could fill the city of Greensboro more than 2x. But programs are currently serving less than 2% of children in the state. Many communities have no access to programs at all. #FamilySupportNC

The # of NC children who could benefit from #homevisiting is equivalent to about 80% of Charlotte's total population! But programs currently serve less than 2% of NC's children. Many communities have no access to programs at all. #FamilySupportNC

3. Home visiting offers a huge return on investment. Every \$1 saves NC nearly \$6 by preventing expensive problems like child maltreatment, unemployment, poverty, and crime. It's a win for babies, families, communities and our state's economy! #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC
4. #HomeVisiting is proven to impact prenatal health & birth outcomes. This is critical in NC, where infant & maternal mortality rates are 2-3x higher for Black babies/moms. Early services can help families thrive & give all babies a healthy start. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC
5. Home visitors are providing a bridge for families with concrete and emotional supports during the pandemic. Under 2% of NC children who could be served are, and in rural counties there are even fewer supports available. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC <https://bit.ly/2TNI5PS>
6. BIPOC families often face systemic barriers in accessing health care, affordable housing, stable employment, & other needs. #HomeVisiting & #ParentingEd can help eliminate racial disparities in the health & wellbeing of children and families. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC
7. Parents and caregivers play the lead role in their children's healthy development and can get overloaded with stress in the early years of their child's life. #ParentingEd programs can help parents learn skills to mitigate stress and support their babies' growth & learning. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC

TOPIC: FSAM Proclamation

1. Thank you NC Governor Stein for proclaiming February 2025 Family Support Awareness Month! Expanding access to #HomeVisiting & #ParentingEd programs supports the health and well-being of North Carolina's children & families. (link to proclamation) #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC
2. February 2025 has been proclaimed Family Support Awareness Month! Thanks NC Governor Stein for recognizing the importance of supporting our state's children and their families. (link to proclamation) #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS & TEMPLATES CON'T

Facebook, Instagram & LinkedIn Content

Suggested Post Copy

TOPIC: Home Visiting & Parenting Education

1. A stable, secure relationship with a nurturing, caring adult is a key factor in young children's development. Children have a better, healthier start when parents and caregivers have the support and skills needed to raise them. Home visiting and parenting education programs help to build protective factors that
 - ✓ reduce the risk of abuse and neglect
 - ✓ strengthen family relationships
 - ✓ promote children's healthy development.That's why we need home visiting and parenting education for all in North Carolina! #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC
2. There are 699,100 children in North Carolina who could benefit from home visiting, but programs currently serve less than 2% of all children who could benefit in the state. There are many communities in our state that don't have access to a single program. It's time to expand access to these critical programs that support the health and well-being of children and families. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC

Use these two additional posts to make that large number (699,100) more relatable, digestible and tangible:

The number of children who could benefit from #HomeVisiting could fill the city of Greensboro more than 2x. But programs are currently serving less than 2% of children in the state. Many communities have no access to programs at all. #FamilySupportNC

The # of NC children who could benefit from #homevisiting is equivalent to about 80% of Charlotte's total population! But programs currently serve less than 2% of NC's children. Many communities have no access to programs at all. #FamilySupportNC

3. Home visiting has a proven positive impact on prenatal health and birth outcomes. This is especially critical for families of color in North Carolina, where infant and maternal mortality rates are 2-3 times higher for Black babies and moms. Home visiting provides early services that can help all families thrive and give all babies a healthy start. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC
4. Parents and caregivers play the lead role in their children's healthy development and can get overloaded with stress in the earliest months and years of their children's lives. Parenting education programs can help parents learn skills to mitigate stress, offer supports and social connections, and increase knowledge of child development - all of which helps to prevent child abuse and neglect. #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC

TOPIC: FSAM Proclamation

1. Thank you @NCGovernor for proclaiming February Family Support Awareness Month! Expanding access to home visiting and parenting education programs is a critical way to support the health and well-being of children and families across NC. (link to proclamation) #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC
2. February has been proclaimed as Family Support Awareness Month! Thank you @NCGovernor for recognizing the importance of supporting our state's youngest children and their families. "Resources and programs that support parents and caregivers promote healthy development and strengthen family relationships, reducing the risk of abuse and neglect." (link to proclamation) #FamilySupportNC #ThinkBabiesNC

For social media images, see [images section](#) at the end of this document and download the image zip files [here](#).

OTHER IDEAS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

TOPIC: Parenting Education

1. Parents and caregivers play the lead role in their children's healthy development and may find themselves overloaded with stress in the earliest months and years of their children's lives. #ParentingEd programs can help parents learn skills and strategies to mitigate stress and enjoy their children. #FamilySupportNC #ParentingEdWorks
2. Parenting education programs promote skills to foster social-emotional development and help to prevent, reduce, and manage challenging behaviors. #FamilySupportNC
3. Parenting education programs are a key strategy for child abuse prevention. Evidenced-based programs build parents' resilience, offer support and social connections, and increase knowledge of child development, all of which benefits both children and families. #FamilySupportNC

Personalize Your Posts

- Don't forget to personalize a few posts to show examples of home visiting and parenting education efforts in your community! See below for examples:
- In the Blue Ridge mountains, #HomeVisiting providers purchased 30+ tablets and data/internet service for families to connect virtually for virtual home visits. #FamilySupportNC
- In Buncombe County, home visitors worked creatively to establish a short-term plan for families to access better Internet access. #FamilySupportNC
- Wake County Smart Start's Nurse-Family Partnership supported a teen mother to ensure she had the academic support needed to be successful. She's now pursuing her own nursing degree. #FamilySupportNC #HomeVisitingWork
- [NAME] Family Resource Center is a hub for families in [COUNTY/CITY] to access formal and informal supports, including [home visiting or parenting education program offered] to promote their health and well-being.

SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE IMAGES

Download the image zip files [here](#).

Twitter Images - General HVPE



Twitter Images - Family Support Awareness Month 2025



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE IMAGES

Facebook, Instagram & LinkedIn Images - General HVPE



Facebook, Instagram & LinkedIn Images - Family Support Awareness Month 2025



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE IMAGES

Email Signature:



LinkedIn Cover Photo:



Twitter Cover Photo:



SOCIAL MEDIA & WEBSITE IMAGES

Facebook Cover Photo:



Website/Email Hero Image:

