

Building a Brighter Future Together for our Youngest Children: **a Smart Start Communications Toolkit**





Introduction: **About This Toolkit**

As leaders at Local Partnerships, you advocate for North Carolina children and families every day. Through your work, you know our state's child care system and family support infrastructure are underfunded. In addition to our existing challenges, the economic boom means more businesses are moving more jobs into North Carolina – and with them, more families with young children. We don't yet have the right amount of early learning opportunities to help this influx of new families succeed. That's why we are sharing this toolkit.

We created this toolkit to help you reach North Carolina business leaders and policymakers to **advocate for more investment in our early childhood, child care and family support programs and infrastructure.**

Toolkit Goals and Target Audiences

Overarching goal: To advocate with policymakers and business leaders to increase awareness of the need for a comprehensive approach for supporting families with young children in the first five years and to actively invest in Smart Start priorities.

Target Audiences	Calls to Action
 North Carolina Policymakers	Invest in our state's child care, early education and family support infrastructure now for a stronger North Carolina today, tomorrow and beyond.
 North Carolina Business Leaders	Talk with your local policymakers about why investing in child care, early learning and family support infrastructure now is critical for your business's success today, tomorrow and beyond.



Toolkit Contents

To reach these two audiences, we've created a suite of tools that you can use as part of your advocacy. You know your local community best, so all of these resources are designed to be easily modified.

- **Two Sets of Talking Points.** We created these talking points based on in-depth research and data about what's important to our most important audiences for this campaign: North Carolina policymakers and business leaders. You are welcome to use these talking points during conversations, or in materials such as social media posts, designed collateral, presentations or any other way you communicate with this audience.
- **A Social Media Advocacy Resource.** This section includes everything from social media best practices to sample posts you can copy and customize.
- **Sample Landing Page Language.** We have included language that you can customize and use on your own website as you see fit.
- **Two One Pagers.** The first one pager speaks directly to policymakers. The second targets business leaders. These are great resources to use when meeting with, presenting to, or messaging to these target audiences. (The one pagers are in a separate document.)

We created this resource to help you in your advocacy. Which pieces you use and how you use the toolkit overall is completely up to you. We know that together, we can make real change happen in our state. Thank you so much for your support and collaboration. This toolkit was prepared by Forthright Advising LLC (www.forthrightadvising.com) on behalf of Smart Start Advocates.

If you have any questions about the toolkit or how to use it, please reach out to: NCPC's Communication Director, [Jessica Carter](#).



Talking Points to Help Reach North Carolina Policymakers and Business Leaders

The Marketing Rule of Seven tells us that audiences need to hear the same (or similar) message about seven times for it to resonate. That's one of the reasons it's important to be consistent in our advocacy. Talking points are a reference document that can help you be consistent and talk about early childhood education (ECE) in a way that connects with each audience. These touch on topics such as:

- The reason WHY North Carolina needs increased investment in ECE
- Who Smart Start Partners are
- What needs investment
- A vision for a brighter future

We conducted an in-depth research phase focused on what's most important to local policymakers and business leaders. We used this data to draft the messaging below. Although the messaging is similar for both audiences, you'll notice key differences that connect with their priorities (for example, a focus on employees for business leaders versus constituents for policymakers).

You are welcome to use this messaging during conversations, or in materials such as social media posts, designed collateral, presentations or any other way you communicate with each audience.



Talking Points for Policymakers

Call to Action

Invest in our state's child care and family support infrastructure *now* for a stronger North Carolina *today, tomorrow and beyond*.

Talking Points About the Opportunity + Need for Investment



North Carolina's economy is booming. To continue this positive growth, we must ensure our families and communities have the right resources, services and infrastructure to thrive.

- Our economic boom means more businesses, such as **[INSERT LOCAL EXAMPLE]** and **[INSERT LOCAL EXAMPLE]**, are moving more jobs into North Carolina – and with them, more families with young children.
 - **NOTE TO TOOLKIT USERS:** Just a few options to consider include Boom Supersonic, Apple, Toyota, Fidelity, Google, Fujifilm, Credit Karma, White River Marine Group and Robinhood.



North Carolina has made smart, critical investments in county-level support for children and families. However, **we don't yet have the right amount of early learning opportunities – such as safe places for our youngest kids to learn** – to help this influx of new families succeed.



Our state's child care system is in a crisis. And the pandemic made it worse.

- North Carolina loses millions in business and tax revenue because we don't have enough high-quality child care and early learning options to support our working parents.
- Data shows that before the pandemic, **North Carolina lost nearly \$2.4 billion each year because of our state's child care crisis.** That number continues growing.
 - According to Census Bureau data, nearly 200,000 parents are not currently working because they do not have access to high-quality child care.
 - In just one month in 2022, more than 237,000 North Carolina parents were forced to stay at home because of child care challenges.



The decisions we make *now* about how we invest in and support our youngest children and their families will impact North Carolina's stability *for decades to come*.

Talking Points That Introduce Policymakers to Smart Start Partners



North Carolina voters overwhelmingly support investing state funds in early childhood businesses. As a member of the Smart Start Network, we're here to help you make smart, data-backed choices as you do so.

- Smart Start is a network of 75 local partnerships across North Carolina. As part of this network, organizations like ours work together to ensure every child in our state receives the care and nurturing they need to thrive.
- Smart Start partners work in all 100 North Carolina counties – serving families across our state.



Since we work directly within our communities, we listen to and understand families, children and what they need to thrive.

- As a **[INSERT YOUR SPECIFIC TYPE OF ORGANIZATION]**, we work with **[INSERT THE PARTNERS YOU WORK WITH, SUCH AS NURSES, CHILD CARE SPECIALISTS, ETC.]** to help our state's littlest ones learn, grow and build a strong foundation for our future.

Talking Points to Share Investment Recommendations and Priorities



To build a strong North Carolina, we must invest in Smart Start priorities:

- improving access to quality early childhood education, and building a strong early childhood workforce, too;
- ensuring families have the right tools to support their children's healthy development from early literacy skills to physical health; and
- expanding funding to support overall healthy and resilient communities.

Investing in our youngest children and families now will save our state money in the future.

Community Priorities

In **[INSERT COUNTY/COMMUNITY]**, families need **[INSERT BIGGEST NEED]** to thrive.

- Examples could include:
 - Affordable, high-quality child care options
 - Access to family supports like home visiting and parenting education
 - More funding for literacy programs

By **[INSERT WHAT YOU WANT POLICYMAKERS TO DO]**, you can help children and families in our community **[INSERT THE RESULT OF THEIR ACTION]**.

Talking Points That Show Policymakers What Their Investments Will Lead To



When you invest in the Smart Start Network, you're building a strong, thriving North Carolina for all. When North Carolinians have the right amount of support in early childhood, our state thrives. This means:

- North Carolina children are supported during the most critical phase of brain development. This ensures they have the right tools to start kindergarten on track, graduate high school and succeed in their careers.
- Parents and caregivers are more likely to grow in their careers, contribute to their communities and raise healthy families.
- Businesses employ a more focused, motivated workforce – and tax revenues increase, too.
- Our economy gains \$414 million in tax revenue alone.

Talking Points for North Carolina Business Leaders

Call to Action

Talk with your local policymakers about why investing in child care, early learning, and family support infrastructure *now* is critical for your business's success *today, tomorrow and beyond*.

Talking Points About the Opportunity + Need for Investment



North Carolina's economy is booming. To continue this positive growth, and help businesses like yours to thrive, we must ensure families have the right infrastructures and services to succeed as employees.

- Our economic boom means North Carolina businesses like yours need a talented workforce – and those employees need high-quality child care options and family services.



North Carolina has made smart, critical investments in children and families. However, **we don't yet have the right amount of funding for child care or family supports** to help families succeed.



Our state's child care system is in a crisis. And the pandemic made it worse.

- Maybe it's the dinner rush at your restaurant – and you simply don't have enough waitstaff to serve your customers. Perhaps one of your top managers is forced to skip an important meeting. Or your construction firm missed a deadline because you didn't have enough crew. Business leaders like you deal with challenges like these every day. It doesn't have to be this way.
- When parents don't have child care or family support, they often miss work – or are less productive while working. This impacts YOUR business negatively – and it happens more often than it should.
 - Businesses like yours in North Carolina lose about \$507 million in business revenue each year when working parents and caregivers can't access high-quality child care, early learning options and family supports.
 - In just one month of 2022, more than 237,000 North Carolina parents were forced to stay at home because of child care challenges.



The decisions we make now about how we invest in and support our youngest children and their families will impact North Carolina's stability and businesses like yours for decades to come.

Talking Points That Introduce Business Leaders to Smart Start Partners



As a business leader, you are a critical advisor to North Carolina's policymakers, and our legislators care about creating an environment where your business can grow. As a member of the Smart Start Network, we're here to help you make smart, data-backed recommendations to help our families and local economy thrive.

- As an important leader in our community, YOUR input is critical in helping policy leaders make smart decisions for our economy and for your bottom line.



Since we work directly within our communities, we understand families, children and what they need to thrive.

- As a **[INSERT YOUR SPECIFIC TYPE OF ORGANIZATION]**, we work with **[INSERT THE PARTNERS YOU WORK WITH, SUCH AS NURSES, CHILD CARE SPECIALISTS, ETC.]** to help our state's littlest ones learn, grow and build a strong foundation for our future.

Talking Points to Share Investment Recommendations and Priorities



To build a strong North Carolina so your business can grow, we must invest in our shared priorities:

- improving access to quality child care and early childhood education so parents can get back to work and succeed as employees; and
- building a strong future workforce by ensuring families have the right tools to support their children's healthy development, from early literacy skills to physical health.

Community Priorities

By **[INSERT WHAT YOU WANT BUSINESS LEADERS TO ADVOCATE FOR]**, you can help children and families in our community **[INSERT THE RESULT OF THEIR ACTION AND HOW IT RELATES TO BUSINESSES THRIVING]**.

Talking Points That Show Business Leaders What Their Investments Will Lead To



When you advocate for Smart Start Network programs, you're building a North Carolina where your business will grow and succeed. Data shows that when policymakers invest in early learning:

- Employee absenteeism plummets.
- Your employees are more focused and motivated, leading to higher quality products, better customer service and increased productivity.
- Recruitment and retention both improve – helping you hire the right talent and keep your dream team, too.
- We're building a long-term, talented pipeline of well-educated leaders who can join your business.
 - Research shows that when North Carolina children have the right tools, they are more likely to graduate high school and succeed in their careers.

Social Media Advocacy

To reach business leaders and policymakers in all 100 North Carolina counties, this section will help you **use your social media channels to advocate for more investment in a comprehensive approach to supporting North Carolina families with young children in the first five years.**

Let's get started!

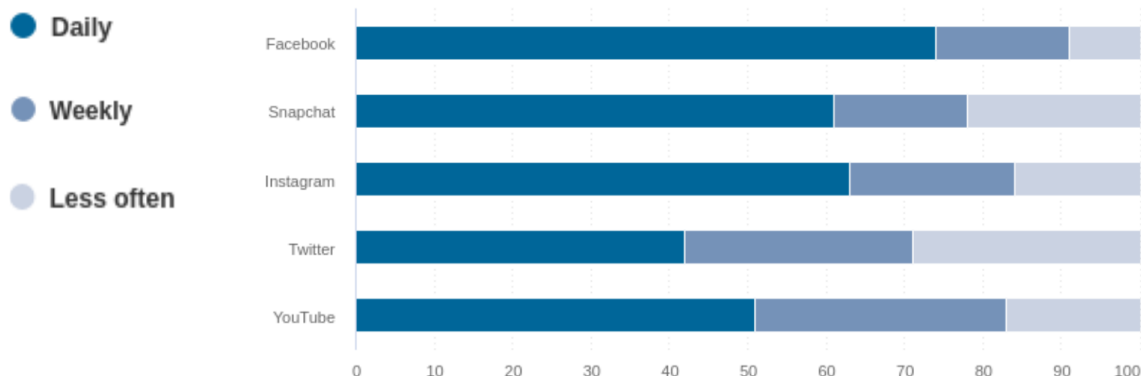
As early childhood education experts, you know how important a great foundation is. In this toolkit, we've put together a foundation for social media posting, including:

- best practices when it comes to social media posting,
- background on the recommended channels for your advocacy,
- suggested posts and graphics, using research-backed messaging and strategies, that you can use to reach policymakers and business leaders, and
- metrics you can use to monitor if your posts are helping achieve our shared goals!

[If you're already a social media expert, you can jump down to the suggested posts.](#)

Which channels should we use?

Social media has become integrated into our daily routines, with **many people checking into their favorite social media channels regularly.** [Pew Research Center](#) asked Americans how often they are on different social media platforms, and many answered “daily” — especially for Facebook and Instagram:



However, use differs by age, gender and background. In the table below, we've highlighted some notable statistics from [Pew Research Center](#) about who uses each social media platform:

- **Facebook** is a popular channel across all demographics. It is also the best channel for reaching the 50 to 64 age range.
- **Twitter** is a good complement to Facebook. On Twitter, audiences often discuss and share short snippets about topics they care about, such as ECE.
- **LinkedIn** is also a popular channel for folks 50 to 64. And, because it has a business focus, it is a good channel to highlight the workforce-related messaging about ECE.
- Although outlets such as **Instagram**, **Snapchat** and **TikTok** captivate a large portion of the younger crowd, they are photo and video sharing platforms, which means they aren't the best fit for your audiences and messages for this particular campaign.

	Total	Men	Women	18-29	30-49	50-64	Black	White	Hispanic
Facebook	69%	61%	77%	70%	77%	73%	74%	67%	72%
Instagram	40%	36%	44%	71%	48%	29%	49%	35%	19%
LinkedIn	28%	31%	26%	30%	36%	33%	27%	29%	19%
Snapchat	25%	22%	28%	65%	24%	12%	26%	23%	31%
Twitter	23%	25%	22%	42%	27%	18%	29%	22%	23%
TikTok	21%	17%	24%	48%	22%	14%	30%	18%	31%
NextDoor	13%	10%	16%	5%	17%	16%	10%	15%	8%

Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter channels are a good choice for this campaign!

How can I make the most out of each channel?

Each social media channel has its own quirks and strategy for what works best for it. We've summarized the best practices for each of our recommended platforms below!

Facebook

- Sunday is the best day to post, while Friday and Saturday are the worst.
- Post 2 - 3 times a week to keep up engagement levels.
- Use 2 - 5 hashtags with each post.

- Always include an image or photo.
- Videos are a great way to increase engagement.
- Engage with your audience – “like” and comment when they respond to your posts.
- Tag people and organizations to boost engagement.

Twitter

- Sunday, Monday and Tuesday are the best days to post on Twitter. However, day matters less on Twitter than it does on other platforms.
- Publish at least 1 tweet a day, but the more tweets the better.
- Use 2 - 5 hashtags with each post.
- Use a shortened URL of your link, using a free tool like bit.ly.
- Ensure your post is 280 characters or less (including your link).
- Tag people and organizations to boost engagement.

LinkedIn

- Tuesday and Wednesday are the best days to post. Monday, Saturday and Sunday are the worst.
- Share 2 - 5 posts per week.
- Use 2 - 5 hashtags with each post.
- Use a slightly more formal tone.

Hashtags

[Hashtags](#) help social media users easily follow and engage with topics that interest them. We recommend dropping in 2 - 5 relevant hashtags to your posts to help your target audiences see your content. The easiest way to add hashtags is at the end of your post. Here are a few relevant hashtags you can use:

#EarlyChildhood	#ChildCare
#NorthCarolina	#EarlyLearning
#ECE	#Families



How can I use these channels to advocate for more support for ECE with policymakers and business leaders?

The overall goal of this joint campaign is to advocate with policymakers and business leaders to increase awareness about the need for a comprehensive approach to supporting families with young children in the first five years — and to actively invest in Smart Start priorities.

Social media is useful for raising awareness and asking for a simple, online action, such as to reach out for more information, sign up for an event or follow your account. We've drafted optional post templates that will help your target audiences understand why investing in ECE is critical, and to take that first step of engagement, too. We drafted this content for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, as these are the best forms of social media to utilize with our chosen audiences.

These suggested templates use Smart Start-approved messaging tailored for each audience.

- Because of Twitter policies, we have created content that isn't meant to be copy and pasted word by word. Rather, the templates are for you to use as a framework for crafting your own posts!
- For Facebook and LinkedIn, the templates are more final, and you can copy and paste the posts if you'd like.
- Please note, any text that is **highlighted in red** is a place where you'll add in your own words, links or content!

To target our two main audiences' values directly, we've created example posts for each:

[Check out the inspiration posts for North Carolina policymakers.](#)

[Check out the inspiration posts for North Carolina business leaders.](#)

So we can amplify your message, you can tag Smart Start's social media in your posts:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/smartstart>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ncsmartstart>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-north-carolina-partnership-for-children/>

On Twitter, it would be appropriate to tag your local representative in the policy tweets as well.

We've also created one-pagers that provide background information personalized for each audience. You can include a link to these one pagers to help make a compelling case for ECE funding in the state.

[One pager for Policymakers](#)

[One pager for Business Leaders](#)

North Carolina Policymaker-Focused Posts

► 1. Share a statistic.

We have statewide data you can use to show the need for more early child care support.

Sample posts for Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn (they are all fewer than 280 characters and each of these sample posts can be used for any of these three platforms):

1. The decisions we make now about how we invest in our youngest children and their families will impact North Carolina's stability for decades to come. Learn about early childhood education solutions that will help both businesses and parents: **[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL]**.
2. Investing in our youngest children and families NOW will save North Carolina money in the future. Learn about smart early childhood education solutions: **[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL]**.
3. North Carolina voters overwhelmingly support investing state funds in early childhood businesses. Learn about smart early childhood education solutions that support working families: **[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL]**.
4. Data shows that before the pandemic, North Carolina lost nearly \$2.4 billion each year because of our state's child care crisis. When smart policymakers like you invest in our youngest children now, it saves our state money in the future: **[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL]**.
5. In just one month in 2022, more than 237,000 North Carolina parents were forced to stay at home because of child care challenges. As a result, our state loses millions. Learn more about the solution: **[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL]**.

Suggested graphics:

Choose your favorite statistic graphic from the social media PowerPoints.

► 2. Tell a story about the children and families you support.

What this tactic looks like in action depends on the channel:

- **Both LinkedIn and Facebook** support longer form content, so you can share the story right in the post.
- **For Twitter**, we recommend including a quote or excerpt in the post and sharing a link to the story on your website, blog or a PDF.
- How do you tell a great story? [We have four simple research-backed suggestions.](#)

Sample story post for **LinkedIn** and **Facebook**:

1. Martha Johnson always wanted to be a teacher. She loves working with high school students, helping them get to that next step to achieve their dreams. But after the child care center she sent her toddler to for two years closed, she couldn't find an option that had openings before the school year started – or that she could afford. Because her monthly salary was the same as her child care tuition, she decided to stay home with her daughter until she starts kindergarten.

Martha isn't the only parent who has had to make the tough choice between keeping a job or paying for child care. Learn about the early childhood education solutions that help working parents in our community: [**\[INSERT POLICY ONE
PAGER URL\]**](#).

Sample post for **Twitter**:

1. Martha Johnson had to quit her job as a teacher because her only child care options cost more than her monthly salary. Learn more about her story – and what policymakers can do: [**\[INSERT LINK TO LONGER-FORM STORY IF YOU HAVE
ONE AVAILABLE ON A BLOG, IN A NEWS ARTICLE, IN A VIDEO, ETC\]**](#).

Suggested graphics:

Share a photo of the family or child, with their permission.

► 3. Embrace a community priority.

Share a quote from someone from your organization or a community member that resonates with one of these values:

1. **Community support for investing state funds** in early childhood businesses.
2. **Helping working parents and caregivers grow in their careers**, contribute to their communities and raise healthy families.
3. **Ensuring families have the right tools to support their children's healthy development** from early literacy skills to physical health.

Sample quote:	Sample accompanying post for Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn (they are all fewer than 280 characters):
<p>1. "We snagged the last opening at CHILD CARE CENTER for our 2-year-old. Our son is thriving and learning so much. My family is lucky, but I want every family to have the same opportunities," says Local Parent.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>"My family was able to participate in a family support program offered by my local Smart Start Partnership," said Parent Name. I am so thankful for being able to receive needed support and hope other parents can get the help they need too!</p>	<p>North Carolina voters overwhelmingly support investing state funds in early childhood businesses. Learn more about how policymakers can create change: [INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL].</p>
<p>2. "From birth to five, children experience critical brain development. To ensure they are on track to start kindergarten and be successful as they grow up, families need support like home visits from highly trained nurses," says Smart Start Partnership Director Name.</p>	<p>Children who attend early childhood education programs build academic skills early, like literacy, and are healthier physically. Funding programs like ours ensures that families are happy, healthy and productive. Learn more: [INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL].</p>

Suggested graphics:

1. Add your quote, image and logo to the quote graphic from the social media PowerPoints.
2. Share a photo of the individual who gave the quote.

► 4. Tell shared history.

Reveal a fact about your relationship with Smart Start that your community may not know!

Sample posts for **Twitter, Facebook** or **LinkedIn** (they are all fewer than 280 characters):

1. **Smart Start Local Partnership** serves our community AND our state. Together with 75 other organizations like ours, we work to ensure every child in North Carolina receives the care and nurturing they need to thrive.
2. It's time for policymakers to make smart investments in organizations and programs like ours that support our families and youngest children. Investing in our youngest citizens NOW will save North Carolina money in the FUTURE. Here's how: **[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL]**.

Suggested graphics:

Add your logo to the "proud members of the Smart Start Network" graphic from the social media PowerPoints.

► 5. Give background about yourself.

Drop in a fact about your work to show your community knowledge and expertise.

Sample posts for **Twitter, Facebook** or **LinkedIn** (they are all fewer than 280 characters):

1. **Smart Start Local Partnership** has been helping our youngest kids learn and thrive for 30 years! We listen to our community and are a great source of information about what local parents and caregivers need to support their children during the most critical phase of development.

2. We have a long history in our community and know what our families need to support their young children. Now is the time for policymakers to make smart investments in organizations like us that help our youngest grow into successful adults: [\[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL\]](#).

Suggested graphics:

Include a group staff photo.

Include a photo of your Smart Start Local Partnership providing support within your community.

North Carolina Business Leader-Focused Posts

► 1. Share a statistic.

We have statewide data you can use to show the need for more early child care support!

Sample posts for **Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn** (they are all fewer than 280 characters):

1. When policymakers invest in early learning, employee absenteeism plummets, retention stabilizes & hiring improves. We need your help in connecting with policymakers! Learn more about early childhood ed solutions that help both businesses and families: [\[INSERT BIZ ONE PAGER URL\]](#).
2. Building a strong future workforce starts by ensuring families have the right tools to support their children's healthy development, from early literacy skills to physical health. [\[INSERT BIZ ONE PAGER URL\]](#).
3. When parents don't have child care or family support, they are often forced to miss work – or are less productive while working. This impacts YOUR business negatively – and it happens more often than it should. [\[INSERT BIZ ONE PAGER URL\]](#).
4. Businesses like yours in North Carolina lose about \$507 million in business revenue each year when working parents and caregivers can't access high-quality child care, education, and family supports. Learn more about the solution: [\[INSERT BIZ ONE PAGER URL\]](#).
5. In just one month of 2022, more than 237,000 North Carolina parents were forced to stay at home because of child care challenges, hurting businesses like yours. Learn more about what you can do: [\[INSERT BIZ ONE PAGER URL\]](#).

Suggested graphics:

Choose your favorite designed graphic from the social media PowerPoints.

► 2. Tell a story about the working parents and caregivers you support.

What it looks like in action depends on the channel:

- Both **LinkedIn** and **Facebook** support longer form content, so you can share the story right in the post.
- For **Twitter**, we recommend including a quote or excerpt in the post and sharing a link to the story on your website, blog or a PDF.
- How do you tell a great story? [We have four simple research-backed suggestions.](#)

Sample story post for **LinkedIn** and **Facebook**:

1. Local business CFO Michelle Green believes her junior accountant, Damien Jones, has the potential to be a great financial leader. But, he's often late to work in the morning. Damien has mentioned that he drops his 18-month-old son off at child care 20 miles away. Damien deserves more child care options so that he can grow in his role

Michelle isn't the only business leader in our community who has struggled with employee absenteeism. Learn about early childhood education solutions that will help working parents in our community: [**\[INSERT BUSINESS ONE PAGER URL\]**](#).

Sample post for **Twitter**:

1. Local business CFO Michelle Green struggles with employee absenteeism because her teammates don't have access to quality child care. Learn more about early childhood education solutions that will help working parents and employers: [**\[INSERT LINK TO LONGER-FORM STORY\]**](#)

Suggested graphics:

Share a photo of the person featured, with their permission.

► 3. Embrace a community priority.

Share a quote from someone at your organization or a community member that resonates with one of these values:

1. Improving access to quality child care and early childhood education so parents can get back to work and succeed as employees; and
2. Building a strong future workforce by ensuring families have the right tools to support their children's healthy development, from early literacy skills to physical health.

Sample quote:	Sample accompanying post for Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn (they are all fewer than 280 characters):
1. "I can't believe our 4-year-old son is learning the basics of coding! The STEM enrichment program we signed him up for through Smart Start Local Partnership is so wonderful. We're starting to save for college so he can have his pick of engineering schools!" says Local Parent .	We're building a long-term, talented pipeline of well-educated leaders who can join your business. Research shows that when North Carolina children have the right tools, they are more likely to graduate high school and succeed in their careers. [INSERT BUSINESS ONE-PAGER URL] .
2. "Our family is desperate for a child care option we can afford. I had to quit my job because I wasn't making enough to cover my 3 year old's tuition," says Local Parent .	Our legislators care about creating an environment where your business can grow. Talk with your local policymakers about why investing in early child education is critical for your business's success today, tomorrow, and beyond. [INSERT BUSINESS ONE-PAGER URL] .
Suggested graphics:	
1. Add your quote, image and logo to the quote graphic from the social media PowerPoints.	
2. Share a photo of the individual who gave the quote.	

► 4. Tell shared history.

Reveal a fact about your relationship with Smart Start that your business community may not know!

Sample posts for **Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn** (they are all fewer than 280 characters):

1. **Smart Start Local Partnership** serves our community AND our state. Together with 75 other organizations like ours, we work to ensure every child in North Carolina receives the care and nurturing they need to thrive.
2. It's time for policymakers to make smart investments in organizations and programs like ours that support our families and youngest children. Talk with your local policymakers about why investing in our youngest citizens NOW will save North Carolina money in the FUTURE. Here's how: **[INSERT POLICY ONE PAGER URL]**.

Suggested graphics:

Add your logo to the “proud members of the Smart Start Network” graphic from the social media PowerPoints.

► 5. Give background about yourself.

Drop in a fact about your work to show your community knowledge and expertise.

Sample posts for **Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn** (they are all fewer than 280 characters):

1. **Smart Start Local Partnership** has been helping our youngest kids learn and thrive for 30 years! We listen to our community and are a great source of information about what local parents and caregivers need to get back to work.

Suggested graphics:

Include a group staff photo.

How often should I post these?

You can do two posts a week over the course of a month, helping your audiences see this messaging, but allowing room for other planned posts, too!

How do I know if these posts are working?

There is an endless amount of data available through your social media accounts. For your advocacy posts, you can track reach and engagement for each, evaluating:

- Which post gets more engagement and reach than the other advocacy posts?
- Do they get as much (or maybe even more!) engagement than our regular posts?
- Who is engaging with your posts? Are they your target audience?

Here is what type of analytics are available for each platform and where to find them:

Where to Find Analytics About Post Performance	
Facebook	<p>When you are in your Page Manager, navigate to the “Page Insights” tab. On there, you can see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post reach • Post impressions <p>By looking at the individual post, you can see who liked, shared and commented on the post!</p>
Twitter	<p>Twitter engagement refers to the retweets, follows, replies, favorites and click-throughs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To get to the Twitter Analytics dashboard, head over to the main menu and click Analytics. 2. Find the "Tweets" tab. For each post, you can see its: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Impressions b. Engagements c. Engagement rate (engagements divided by Impressions)
LinkedIn	<p>To check out who is engaging and seeing your posts on LinkedIn:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click the icon at the top of your LinkedIn homepage. 2. Under Manage, click Posts & Activity. 3. Click Posts tab. 4. Click View Next to the Analytics icon below your post. 5. From the Post Analytics page you can see the following analytics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Engagements ◦ Discovery ◦ Impression demographics 6. From the Engagements section, you can find info about reactions, comments or shares for each post.

For Your Website: Landing Page Language

To Make Your Website a Hub for Communicating with Your Community

For partners interested in adding information specifically for policymakers and business leaders to your website, we have created sample website landing page language to make it easy!

This sample website landing page language focuses on supporting families with young children in the first five years of life and includes an ask to invest. The landing page was written with policymakers and business leaders in mind.

Goals of the landing page include:

1. Explaining the problem and introducing a solution, showing business leaders and policymakers why support matters;
2. Showing policymakers and business leaders the vision for a brighter future if they invest, including space for them to learn more via our one-pagers; and
3. Showing policymakers and business leaders why they should support Smart Start.

Please note that using this landing page language is optional – and you are free to customize this landing page language for what works best for YOU based on your needs and priorities.

Sample Landing Page Language

North Carolina's child care system is in a crisis – and it impacts kids, families, working parents, caregivers and businesses across the state.

Data shows that before the pandemic, North Carolina lost nearly \$2.4 billion each year **because of our state's child care crisis**. That number continues growing.

This means:

- North Carolina **loses millions in business and tax revenue** because we don't have enough high-quality child care and early learning options to support our working parents.
- Businesses in North Carolina **lose about \$507 million in business revenue**.

It doesn't have to be this way. When North Carolina leaders invest in the Smart Start Network, we can build a strong, thriving North Carolina for all.

Our littlest learners are our smartest investment.

When North Carolinians have child care and family support, our state thrives.

- North Carolina children are supported during the most critical phase of brain development. This ensures they have the right tools to start kindergarten on track, graduate high school and succeed in their careers.
- Parents and caregivers are more likely to grow in their careers, contribute to their communities and raise healthy families.
- Employee absenteeism plummets. Businesses employ a more focused, motivated workforce – and tax revenues increase, too.
- Our economy gains \$414 million in tax revenue alone.

Are you a local policymaker?

[Click here](#) to learn more about how you can help make smart, voter-supported investments to help our state thrive.

Do you lead a business in North

Carolina? [Click here](#) to learn more about how we can work together to help your business grow and succeed.

As a Smart Start Network Local Partnership, we're here to help you make smart, data-backed choices to help our state and businesses thrive.

Smart Start is in all 100 counties of our state. It is a network of 75 local partnerships across North Carolina. As part of this network, partnerships like ours work together to ensure every child in our state receives the care and nurturing they need. Here in **[COUNTY/COUNTIES YOU SERVE]** we work to support children and their families.

Since we work directly within our communities, we listen to and understand families, children and what they need to grow, learn, and succeed.

By supporting **[INSERT THE BIGGEST NEED IN YOUR COMMUNITY]**, you can help children and families in our community **[INSERT THE RESULT OF THEIR ACTION AND HOW IT RELATES TO BUSINESSES AND FAMILIES SUCCEEDING]**.

Interested in learning more? We'd love to talk!

Reach out to **NAME** at **EMAIL** or **PHONE NUMBER**.