



Nebraska Women in Agriculture

FEBRUARY 24, 2023

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AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions
- Importance of Early Childhood Education
- We Care for Kids Overview
- How to Get Involved
- Group Breakout Sessions
- Report Back to Group on Breakout Sessions
- Conclude & Next Steps



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Quality Child Care and Early Learning is Critically Important

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Why are the early years important?

- 90% of brain development takes place during a child's first five years of life.
- Healthy, trusting, and consistent relationships through the first eight years of life have a profound impact on children's long-term success.
- Children who receive quality childhood education are better prepared to learn, more likely to read by the fourth grade, graduate school, and go on to further their education.

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What does quality care look like?

- Relationships
- Health and Safety
- Curriculum and Approaches to Learning
- Learning Environment
- Policies and Administration

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Reality of child care in Nebraska

- In Nebraska, 72% of children under age 6 live in homes where all adults work.
- 91% of counties in Nebraska, with licensed child care programs, do not have enough places to meet demand. Eleven counties have no licensed child care.
- Nearly half of licensed child care providers in Nebraska who employ staff, report that staff have left the profession entirely, in part, due to low compensation.

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Personal Stories

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Campaign Overview

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Campaign Goal:

Build support for quality early childhood education in Nebraska.

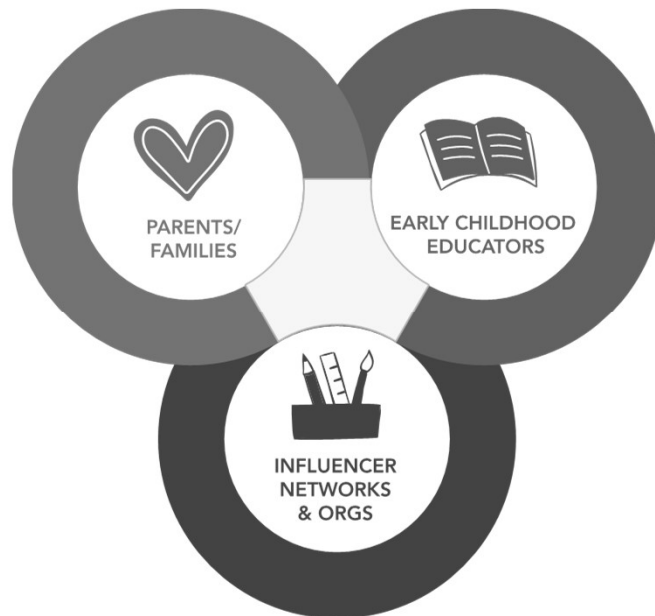
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**We're
speaking to:**



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We need your help to make early childhood care and education available to families across Nebraska.

Together we can:

- Build a unified understanding of quality early childhood education.
- Bring early childhood educators to the center of both quality and the system by sharing their stories.
- Help connect families to resources.
- Communicate that all families should have access to quality early childhood education.
- Add value to Nebraska's existing network and efforts that support early childhood education.

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How to Get Involved

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**We can
accomplish
more when
we work
together!**

- Raise up the stories and experiences of early childhood educators to clearly lay out the case for quality early childhood education in Nebraska.
- Direct families to resources and empower them to advocate for quality early childhood education for the children in their community.
- Collaborate, provide resources, and strengthen existing early childhood education groups and networks that are already on the ground.

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Quality Early Childhood Education
For All Nebraska Families

NebraskaCaresForKids.org




Educación y cuidado infantil de calidad
para las familias de Nebraska

PorTodosLosNinos.org


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A resource for:


- Families
- Communities
- Educators




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**Families:
Find Resources**



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Educators: Share Your Stories



For Educators

Early childhood educators are essential to helping Nebraska thrive, bringing out the best in children, preparing them for school and life. We Care for Kids is listening to and lifting up the stories of early childhood educators so Nebraskans can appreciate your essential work and hear what you have to say.


What goes into helping children and families thrive, what are your challenges as a professional, what do you need to stay in the profession—and what do you want people to know about the power of your work?

Hear stories from educators in your community and use the form below to share yours.


Educator Highlight

"As an early childhood educator, I work to understand the goals of each family and meet them where they are. There is a time to care and a time to educate, but you can't have one without the other. If people truly care about Nebraska's kids and our future, they should care to support early childhood educators."


- CHELSEA LARKINS, EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATOR, RAYMOND, NE



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Communities: Spread the Word!











Community Tools


All children and families in Nebraska should have access to quality early childhood education. Unfortunately, too many don't. Together, we can solve this problem to ensure that children, families, communities, and Nebraska thrive. You can make a difference by talking to your family, friends, and community leaders about the need to care for kids by caring about quality early childhood education.

Campaign Toolkit


Download the Campaign Toolkit

 Campaign flyer - communities	 Campaign flyer - families	 Social media share graphics	 Sign-up sheet
 Campaign talking points	 Press release template	 Letter to the editor template	 Outreach email template

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS:
Tell your story.
It's time for Nebraska to hear how you help children, families, and communities thrive.




Primary Campaign Talking Points
Use these key messages to share the importance of quality early childhood education with your communities and networks, speak to the value for special care for kids.

- The more we care about bringing quality early childhood education, the more we ensure that Nebraska thrives.
- Quality early childhood education supports Nebraska's future.
- Families can work knowing that their infants, toddlers, and young children are in a safe, loving, and stimulating environment to learn and grow with an early childhood educator.
- Early childhood educators know how to nurture children's potential and help them thrive for a lifetime.
- In fact, children who receive quality early childhood education are more likely to read by the fourth grade, graduate high school, and go on to college.
- That's why all working families should have access to quality early childhood education in their communities—however, many don't because there aren't enough early childhood educators.



We care to support quality early childhood education.
NebraskaCaresForKids.org



Quality early childhood education supports Nebraska's kids—and our future.
Quality early childhood educators bring out the best in our children through discovery, play, and working with others, preparing them for school and life. Families can work knowing their children are in the safe, loving, and supportive care of a quality educator. And that helps everyone in Nebraska thrive.
Learn more and join us at NebraskaCaresForKids.org.

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Busy? Take We Care for Kids with you!

The best way to support We Care for Kids is to include it in what you are already doing!

- Host a table at your place of worship, school, or community event.
- Download the community toolkit and start spreading the word in your community.
- Ask educators you know to share their story!
- Host a brownbag lunch at work or with a local parent's group.
- Follow We Care for Kids on Facebook **@nebraskacaresforkids** and Twitter **@wecareforkidsne** and share posts or tag **#nebraskacaresforkids** on your posts!

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Recruit We Care for Kids Partners


We welcome the partnership of anyone who cares to help children, families, and communities thrive with access to quality early childhood education.

Organizations that have been involved to date include:

- Nebraska Extension
- Communities for Kids
- First Five Nebraska
- Gothenburg Early Childhood Learning Coalition
- Latino Center of the Midlands
- Nebraska Children and Families Foundation
- Nebraska Community Foundation
- Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative
- Nebraska Economic Developers Association
- Northeast Nebraska Growing Together
- Nebraska Department of Education
- And more!**

For more information reach out to kara@nebraskacaresforkids.org

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Upcoming Events

We Care for Kids Days: Ongoing Monthly Celebrations – Statewide

- Each month has a slightly different focus to emphasize that all members of our communities can support early childhood education. Visit the event page at NebraskaCaresforKids.org/Events for more information and ideas for how to participate.

We Care For Kids Telephone Town Hall: March 21 – Statewide

- Join us on March 21 from 12-1 p.m. CT for an exciting discussion about quality early childhood care and education and the impacts on business and community development with experts from across Nebraska. Hosted in partnership with First Five Nebraska and the Nebraska Economic Developers Association.

Week of the Young Child: April 1-7 – Statewide

- A fun-filled week celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers, families, and communities.

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Group Breakouts

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Group Breakouts

- What challenges are you facing right now in your community related to child care?
- How can We Care for Kids support solutions in your community?
- What are your ideas for using the toolkit materials?
- Are there events already planned where you can incorporate We Care for Kids materials?

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Share Takeaways from Breakouts

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Conclusion & Next Steps

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Remember, your story matters.

When starting conversations to advocate for quality early childhood education, it's important to remember:

- Lead with your personal story and why early childhood education is important to your community and/or family.
- You are supporters, you do not need to memorize every fact and statistic.
- You will not win everyone over and that is okay.
- Direct people to the website for more information.

Example: Well, I am not sure about that, but as a mom, I know that families like mine can go to work knowing their young children are being prepared for success by a caring and skilled early childhood teacher. You can go to NebraskaCaresForKids.org for more information.

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Grab an index card before you go!

What is one action step you would like to take in your community?

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Thank You

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