

## #WeareECE Community Toolkit

### Background

The early childhood workforce is made up of smart, passionate, and professional individuals. However, they are often overlooked and undervalued. This campaign aims to create conversations that highlight personal stories of how professionals entered the field, explore pathways to becoming an early childhood educator, and share reasons for choosing this vital profession.

For more information and resources, visit the campaign landing page:

<https://www.mainspringalliance.org/weareece>

For a link to downloadable assets for the campaign, visit the Google Drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/12VJlyVBSEonlQC5pOyENLLPu2o3gdzok>

**Suggested Hashtags** Use these hashtags throughout the campaign to connect and amplify messages:

- #WeAreECE
- #WeAreEarlyChildhoodEducators
- #ChildCare
- #EarlyCareIsEssential
- #ECE
- #EarlyChildhoodEducators

### Objectives

- Raise public awareness and support for early childhood educators and professionals.
- Advocate for fair pay and recognition of early childhood professionals.
- Raise awareness about the benefits of pursuing a career in early childhood education and clarify the pathways to enter the profession.

### Target Audiences

1. Early childhood professionals
2. Parents
3. Employers
4. Early Childhood Partners
5. Elected Officials
6. General Public

### Tips and Tricks

- Tag elected officials and news outlets to help amplify your posts
- Mention or tag @firststepskent in your posts so we can reshare your content.
- Use one of the sample posts provided or share your personal story.
- Post across multiple social media platforms such as LinkedIn, X, Facebook, and Instagram for broader reach.

## WeAreECE Communications Plan

The #WeAreECE campaign focuses on elevating early childhood professions. This toolkit is organized into four key sections:

1. Terminology
2. What is an Early Childhood Educator
3. Why Pursue a Career in Early Childhood
4. Pathways

### 1. TERMINOLOGY

This section clarifies the language we use to describe the early childhood workforce, explaining key terms such as "early childhood educator" and why accurate terminology is important in shaping public perception and support. We cannot elevate the profession until people understand the profession.

### SAMPLE MESSAGING AND GRAPHICS

Below are images to use during the terminology portion of the campaign. Right click on the graphic and hit "Save As Picture." There is also a google drive full of all the graphics you need.

<b>Image/Graphic</b>	<b>Suggested Content (feel free to mix and match or write your own)</b>
<p>This article covers a lot of terminology.</p> <p><a href="https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/the-power-of-recognizing-and-using-accurate-early-childhood-education-and-care-terminology">https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/the-power-of-recognizing-and-using-accurate-early-childhood-education-and-care-terminology</a></p>	<p>In the world of early childhood education and care, accurate terminology matters. Using the correct terms not only reflects the professionalism and dedication of early childhood professionals but also helps the public understand the importance of the sector.</p>



**Licensed Child Care Settings**

Both licensed child care homes and child care centers adhere to strict licensing regulations.

There are many types of settings for early childhood education. Licensed Child Care Homes, Child Care Centers, Faith-Based Centers, Head Start, State-Funded preschool programs, Community-Based Organizations. They all **share a common goal: to provide a safe, nurturing, and educational environment for young children.**



The term "day care" has some limitations, most importantly, the focus doesn't mention the central part of the care arrangement—the child.

Did you know? While the term "day care" is still widely used, there's a more fitting term that highlights the important work early childhood educators do: **child care**.

The focus isn't just on the "day" - it's about the care, support, and growth of each child. These dedicated teachers prioritize the well-being and development of the children they serve, every single day. 🌟



Early childhood education and care comes in many forms - from **Licensed Child Care Homes** and **Child Care Centers** to **Faith-Based Centers**, **Head Start**, and **State-Funded Preschools**. No matter the setting, they all share the same goal: providing a **safe, nurturing, and educational environment** for young children to learn and grow. 🌞👶

## 2. WHAT IS AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR - SAMPLE MESSAGING AND GRAPHICS

Here, we spotlight the critical role of early childhood educators in child development, providing a clear definition of the profession and sharing real-life stories from professionals about their experiences and contributions.

### SAMPLE MESSAGING AND GRAPHICS

Below are images to use during the “What is an Early Childhood Professional” portion of the campaign. Right click on the graphic and hit “Save As Picture.” There is also a google drive full of all the graphics you need.

Image/Graphic	Suggested Content (feel free to mix and match or write your own)
<p>VIDEO LINK: <a href="https://vimeo.com/761024989">https://vimeo.com/761024989</a></p>	<p>Watch how early childhood educators affect all areas of the community - childhood growth, workforce development, allowing parents to work, let's work to get early childhood educators get the respect they deserve. Parents cannot go to work without them.</p>
	<p>Fill in the blank.</p> <p>As an Early Childhood Educator, my work is important because -----</p> <p>OR</p> <p>As a parent “My favorite Early Childhood Educator, @TAG IF YOU CAN, has improved my life by -----”</p>



 I am an Early Childhood Educator.

*The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines an Early Childhood Educator as someone responsible for caring for and facilitating the learning of children during their early years.* 

By investing in early educator's education and training, they can become better equipped to support children's learning and development and promote positive outcomes for children.



 I am an Early Childhood Educator.

*The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines an Early Childhood Educator as someone responsible for caring for and facilitating the learning of children during their early years.* 

Early childhood educators who are well-respected and well-compensated are more likely to become strong advocates for the field. They can help to promote policies and initiatives that support high-quality care and advocate for greater investment.

OR

As a community, we can increase recognition of the important role in caring for and educating young children. This can help to shift societal attitudes toward child care and early education, and promote greater investment in the field.



*Early childhood educators and child care providers are the workforce behind the workforce. They need to be compensated and appreciated for the professionals they clearly are.*

☀️🎓 Early childhood educators are the unsung heroes of our children's lives! They create a foundation for lifelong learning and nurture their development. Let's celebrate their dedication and advocate for the recognition they deserve. 🙌📚💖



### 3. WHY PURSUE A CAREER IN EARLY CHILDHOOD?

This section focuses on the many benefits and rewards of a career in early childhood education, including personal fulfillment, the impact on children's futures, and the growing demand for skilled professionals in this field.

#### SAMPLE MESSAGING AND GRAPHICS

Below are images to use during the "Why Pursue a Career in Early Childhood" portion of the campaign. You can click on each post to download the graphics.

Image/Graphic	Suggested Content (feel free to mix and match or write your own)
Rebecca. This is a carousel post. Download <a href="#">all 5 graphics here.</a>	Rebecca Keller shares how and why she is an Early Childhood Educator. Share your WHY. <a href="https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9">https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9</a>
Chandra. This is a carousel post. Download <a href="#">all 5 graphics here.</a>	Chandra shares how and why she is an Early Childhood Educator. Share your WHY. <a href="https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9">https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9</a>
Claudia. This is a carousel post. Download <a href="#">all 5 graphics here.</a>	Claudia shares how and why she is an Early Childhood Educator. Share your WHY. <a href="https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9">https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9</a>

<p>Latashia. This is a carousel post. Download <a href="#">all 5 graphics here.</a></p>	<p>Latashia shares how and why she is an Early Childhood Educator. Share your WHY.  <a href="https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9">https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9</a></p>
<p>Jessica. This is a carousel post. Download <a href="#">all 5 graphics here.</a></p>	<p>Jessica shares how and why she is an Early Childhood Educator. Share your WHY.  <a href="https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9">https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9</a></p>
	<p> Early childhood educators have the passion and expertise to lay the groundwork for a brighter future. Let's support and empower these incredible professionals! </p> <p><a href="https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9">https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9</a></p>
	<p>The impact of early childhood educators goes beyond the classroom—they shape the trajectory of a child's life! Let's appreciate and uplift their vital role in nurturing our youngest learners.  <a href="https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9">https://forms.gle/onYPoGVY4yygPbVS9</a></p>



#### 4. PATHWAYS TO THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSION

We outline the various pathways to becoming an early childhood educator, covering different educational options, certifications, and support systems available for individuals considering entering the field or advancing their careers.

#### SAMPLE MESSAGING AND GRAPHICS

Below are images to use during the “Pathways to the Profession” portion of the campaign. Right click on the graphic and hit “Save As Picture.” There is also a google drive full of all the graphics you need.

#### 5 Careers as an ECE:

Image/Graphic	Suggested Content (feel free to mix and match or write your own)
Link to Awilda’s Article: Article is here: <a href="https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/awilda">https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/awilda</a>	Mainspring’s Bilingual Project Coordinator, Awilda Diaz, shares her pathway to the field of early care and education.
This is a video post. <a href="#">Download the mp4 here.</a>	Watch to see how you can make a big difference in little lives.  Learn more about the world of early childhood educator opportunities: <a href="https://www.mainspringalliance.org/articles/a-wide-world-of-opportunity-in-early-childhood-education">https://www.mainspringalliance.org/articles/a-wide-world-of-opportunity-in-early-childhood-education</a>
This is a video post. <a href="#">Download the mp4 here.</a>	Swipe through to see how you can shape the future in 5 inspiring early childhood careers. Let's go! 🧑‍🎓☀️ #ChildCare  Learn more about the world of early childhood educator opportunities: <a href="https://www.mainspringalliance.org/articles/a-wide-world-of-opportunity-in-early-childhood-education">https://www.mainspringalliance.org/articles/a-wide-world-of-opportunity-in-early-childhood-education</a>
	When early childhood educators are valued and respected for their contributions, it can help to attract more skilled and qualified individuals to the field.

	Thinking of becoming an early childhood educator? There are so many pathways to get started! Learn about certifications and educational programs that can help you begin your journey.
	Passionate about helping kids? Early childhood education needs dedicated professionals like you! Start your journey and help shape the future. 