

Child Tax Credit (CTC) Campaign Toolkit



About the Child Tax Credit

As Educare Learning Network members serving young children and families in 15 states, the District of Columbia and on tribal land on the Winnebago Indian Reservation, we know firsthand that raising children is hard, important work – and it’s even harder when families are challenged to meet basic needs.

To help support families and increase opportunity for children throughout the country, the Child Tax Credit (CTC) was recently expanded as part of the American Rescue Plan. This year, families can receive up to \$3,000 for each child ages 6 to 17 and up to \$3,600 for each child under age 6. That’s non-taxable income to help pay for basics like food, housing, health care and other essential supports, which doesn’t change families’ eligibility for public programs like Medicaid, SNAP and child care subsidies.

The CTC expansion provides a historic opportunity to reduce child poverty in the United States by more than 40 percent. Advance payments for eligible filers began July 15. Families who’ve already filed 2019 or 2020 taxes or who signed up for stimulus payments automatically receive advance payments. But families with low incomes who did not file a tax return in 2019 or 2020 must apply for their CTC funds through the IRS Non-filer Sign-Up Tool. Many parents will need help to understand their eligibility and to use the IRS Non-filer portal, which means direct outreach efforts to help eligible parents get CTC payments are essential.

Additionally, the expanded CTC is only for 2021. President Biden has proposed extending the CTC improvements as part of his American Families Plan, but Congress must act to make the improvements permanent in recovery legislation this year. It is more critical than ever to push for policies and investments designed to increase the financial stability, safety and wellness of families of young children, particularly families of color who have been historically and disproportionately affected.

That’s why the Educare Learning Network is joining with national, state and local partners to launch a Child Tax Credit Campaign: to help bolster families’ finances and ensure a more equitable future for all young children. **Our goal is to ensure eligible families know about and can access the CTC, especially families who may not automatically receive these monthly benefits, and to ensure continued funding of the CTC beyond 2021.**

Our Network’s outreach efforts around the CTC and other benefits are meant to extend to Educare schools and beyond, to activate families in EHS-CCP and other programs managed by Educare operating organizations, along with families in our broader communities.

About this Toolkit

The purpose of this Child Tax Credit (CTC) Campaign toolkit is to provide tools and resources to help you:

- Raise awareness and conduct direct outreach to ensure eligible families know about and can access the CTC, especially families who will not automatically receive CTC monthly benefits
- Conduct advocacy and outreach to members of Congress, especially from mid-August to mid-September, to ensure continued funding of the CTC beyond 2021.

This is meant to be a guide, not a prescribing document; we encourage you to join with state and local partners and tailor ideas and resources to best fit your families, staff, school and community.



Direct Engagement Activities for Families & Staff

Gather Voices

Send your families and staff to our [Gather Voices platform](#) to record a video about the impact and importance of the CTC. It's quick and easy to submit a video via cell phone or handheld device.

Family & Staff Survey

Share [this Family & Staff survey](#) with families and staff in your Educare school and any local partnering programs using your preferred outreach and communication strategies (e.g., verbal conversation, email, text, social media, school signage). Our goal is to gauge CTC receipt across the Network, to help ensure all interested, eligible families and staff receive their CTC payments, and to support advocacy efforts for continuation of the CTC.

Investing with Families Chat-a-thons

As part of the Office of Head Start's [Investing with Families initiative](#), the National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement (NCPFCE) is hosting a monthly chat-a-thon series. These chat-a-thons are extended interactive conversations via chat to help support Head Start staff and families in accessing, planning and using available American Rescue Plan benefits for individual family economic mobility goals. The next chat-a-thon about the CTC and other tax credits available to families will take place on Thursday, August 26 at 2 PM CT. [Register here!](#)



Policy & Advocacy Activities

We encourage you to integrate direct CTC outreach and advocacy activities into your existing operations. This could include sharing information and disseminating flyers at all-staff meetings, professional development sessions, Policy Council/parent meetings, Early/Head Start program outreach and enrollment events, in your reception areas, through parent newsletters and on your Educare school website.

Here are some additional ways to take action on the CTC:

Outreach to Members of Congress

- Reach out to Congressional press offices to partner on organizing press conferences calling attention to the CTC; offer a site, a teacher and a parent to address why we need the CTC and discuss challenges/barriers. Sample calling scripts and other resources to help with outreach are available [on EducareShare](#).
- Hold [virtual or outdoor meetings](#) with your members of Congress during August recess (August 9-September 9) to help hold Congress accountable to make long-term, sustainable investments in families with young children, child care and preschool providers, and the early childhood workforce.
- Engage your Educare school board members, Policy Council members and Parent Ambassadors to write letters to their members of Congress using [this template](#).

Webinars

- Partner with organizations like your state child advocacy organizations or state Head Start Association to host a joint webinar showcasing peer to peer examples of how Head Start providers are conducting outreach and advocacy to help families access CTC benefits and educate policymakers about the importance of continued funding.
- Participate in outreach activities with faith and community leaders to get the word out about the CTC.

Additional Resources

EducareShare

Check out [the Child Tax Credit Hub on EducareShare](#) for a collection of resources (many available in both English and Spanish), as well as discussions, blog posts and other content relating to the CTC. Resources are currently organized by general information, direct outreach, and advocacy, messaging and media. You can also leverage the expertise and knowledge of other Educare schools! As part of this CTC Hub, Network members can share materials they've used or created, pose questions and connect with peers.

Start Early's Action Center

Join the Educare Learning Network and our partners at Start Early in making your voice heard. [Share your story or contact legislators](#) to help make an impact on local, state and federal policies - like asking Congress to pass the American Families Plan to make the CTC permanent.

CTC & The Educare Five: Supporting Stable Families

This year, [the Educare Five Policy Agenda](#) was launched to elevate policy recommendations in five priority areas to move toward a more equitable future for young children. One of these five priority areas is supporting stable families - and the CTC is one example of how we can do this work. Expanding investments such as the CTC helps ensure families have adequate finances to access the basics - housing, food, health care and other supports needed to thrive.

Contact Us

For thought partnership and additional support on CTC outreach, please contact us:

- Direct Outreach - [Michelle Lee](#)
- Gather Voices - [Megan Rodawold](#)
- Qualtrics Survey - [Amanda Stein](#)
- Policy & Advocacy - [Margie Wallen](#)
- EducareShare - [Amy Rood](#)