

New Leaders, New Directions

Tools for Advancing an Early Childhood
Agenda for the Latino Community



**New Leaders, New Directions:
Tools for Advancing an Early
Childhood Agenda for the
Latino Community**

By Erika Beltran and Sarah Dolan

Acknowledgments

This tool kit was funded by the J.B. & M.K. Pritzker Family Foundation. The findings and conclusions presented here are those of the authors and NCLR alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the funder. Permission to copy, disseminate, or otherwise use information from this paper is granted, provided that appropriate credit is given to NCLR. Erika Beltran is a Policy Analyst for the Education and Children's Policy Project of the Office of Research, Advocacy, and Legislation (ORAL) at NCLR. Sarah Dolan is Project Coordinator for the Education and Children's Policy Project. The authors thank the Latino Policy Forum and the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, including Elba Montalvo, Vanessa Ramos, Sylvia Puente, Reyna Hernandez, and Berenice Alejo, who provided substantive editorial assistance. The authors also thank other NCLR staff who contributed to this document, including Kety Esquivel, New Media Manager, and the Office of Media Relations, who provided detailed information and material for part of this tool kit. Finally, the authors thank Jennifer Kadis, Director of Quality Control, Karen Nava, Director of Graphics and Publication, and Gregory Wersching, Assistant Editor, for editorial assistance and graphic design.

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR)—the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States—works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of nearly 300 affiliated community-based organizations (CBOs), NCLR reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. To achieve its mission, NCLR conducts applied research, policy analysis, and advocacy, providing a Latino perspective in five key areas—assets/investments, civil rights/immigration, education, employment and economic status, and health. In addition, it provides capacity-building assistance to its Affiliates who work at the state and local level to advance opportunities for individuals and families.

Founded in 1968, NCLR is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization headquartered in Washington, DC. NCLR serves all Hispanic subgroups in all regions of the country and has operations in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix, Sacramento, San Antonio, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Copyright ©2009 by the National Council of La Raza
Raul Yzaguirre Building, 1126 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036 | (202) 785-1670

www.nclr.org

Printed in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

Table of Contents



Introduction:	Giving a Voice to Young Latino Children	6
	How to Use This Tool Kit	8
Background:	Latinos and Early Care and Education	9
Part I:	Framing the Issue	12
	Identifying and Framing the Problem	13
	Identifying and Framing the Solution	15
	Crafting Your Message	17
	Resources and Tools to Advance Your ECE Advocacy Agenda	18
Part II:	Identifying Your Partners and Targets	25
	Building a Coalition	25
	Conducting a Power Analysis	28
	Resources and Tools to Advance Coalition Work	29
Part III:	Taking Action	32
	Mapping Out Your Resources and Needs	32
	Developing an Action Plan	33
	Resources and Tools for Action	34
Part IV:	Media Tools and Resources	39
	Ethnic Media	41
	New Media	41
	Television and Radio	42
	Traditional Media	43
Appendix I:	National and State Data Sources	49
Appendix II:	After Your Visit: Following Up and Maintaining a Relationship	52
Appendix III:	Effective TV Interviewing	53
Appendix IV:	Federal Legislative Process	55

Introduction:

Giving a Voice to Young Latino Children

The face of the American student body is changing drastically. These demographic changes are due in large part to the growing Latino* population. In fact, one in every five, or about two million, children under the age of five in the United States is Latino.¹ Moreover, trends indicate that this population is outpacing the growth of all other groups of children. As Latino children enter the American school system in increasing numbers, it is all the more imperative that they enter ready to learn and be successful. Unfortunately, this is not currently the case. Young Latino children face many challenges in accessing high-quality early care and education (ECE) programs. At the moment, Latino children ages three to five are the least likely to be enrolled in a formal early learning program.

Because of the limited access to high-quality ECE programs for children under the age of five, Latino children start kindergarten well behind their peers. They have trouble identifying letters and lag behind their classmates in pre-math skills. This achievement gap persists throughout elementary and secondary school, making it increasingly difficult for Latino students to catch up.

Fortunately, the country is primed to make a change—not only have state-level investments in early care and education been on the rise throughout the country, but federal policymakers have also expressed a commitment to increasing investments. Indeed, President Obama made ECE a focal point of his education reform plan, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act[†] (P.L. 111-5) included a number of provisions designed to bolster ECE programs. While there is a strong network of national and state-level ECE advocates in place, the needs of young Latino children and their families have not yet been addressed.

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) believes that early care and education is an essential component of school success and has been advocating at the federal level to address the educational crisis facing the Latino community. This tool kit was designed to help other ECE champions build stronger, more effective strategies to ensure educational success for Latino and English language learner (ELL) children

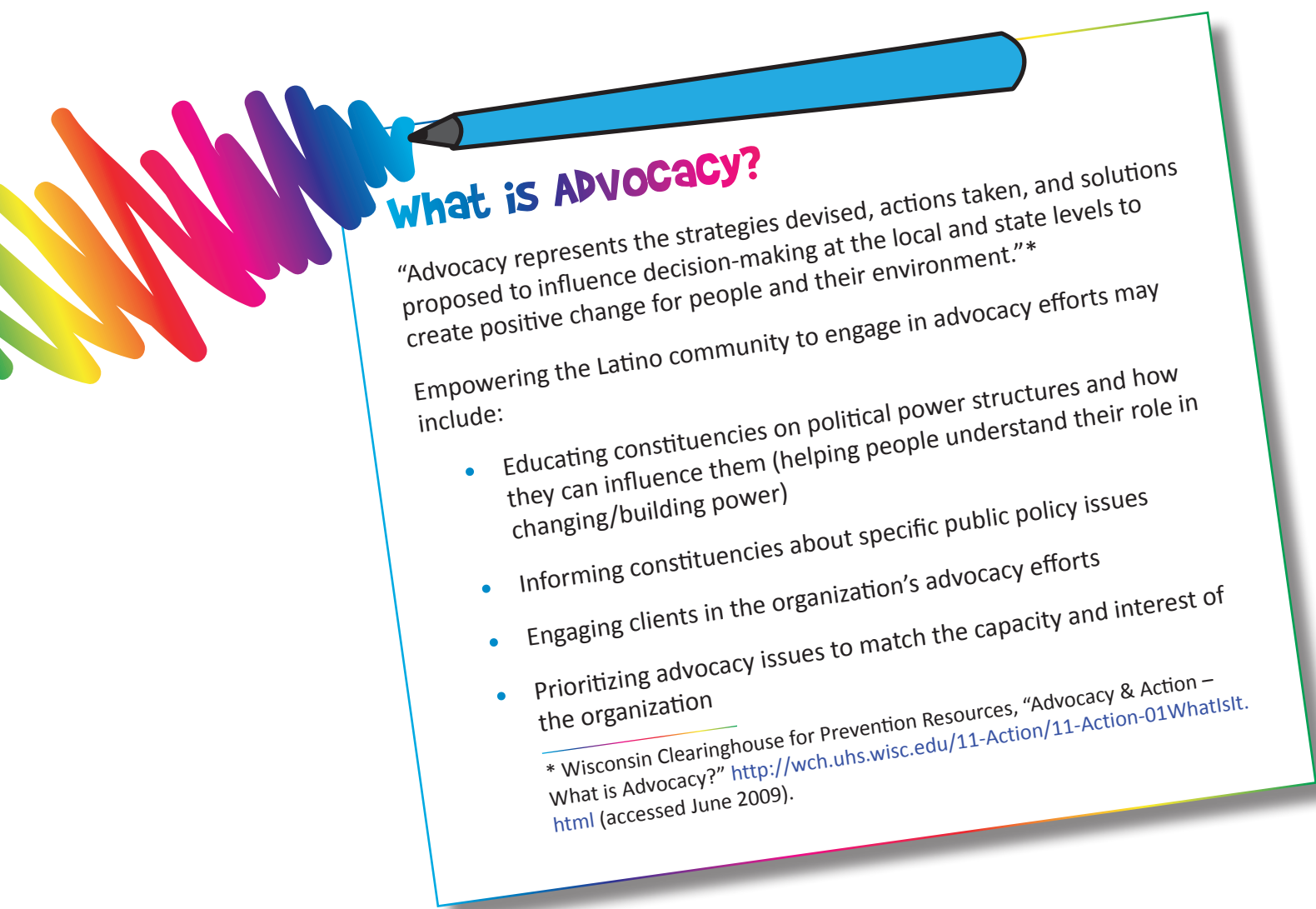
* The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish, and other Hispanic descent; they may be of any race.

† The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 was signed in to law by President Obama on February 17, 2009. According to the White House, the legislation is designed to save or create 3.5 million jobs and provides \$5 billion for early care and education.

and families. It contains resources that are designed to guide organizations through the steps of becoming effective advocates on these issues. It also includes a number of templates and examples which can be adapted to reflect specific priorities and interests.

You will also find information on how to frame your specific issue, how to identify your partners and advocacy audience, ideas for taking action, and an entire section on media tools and resources. This tool kit includes many sample documents, tips, and pointers for developing an ECE advocacy agenda.

Only by engaging the grassroots will we be able to effect policy change that is reflective of the needs of the Latino community. Your voice is essential to guaranteeing the success of not only Hispanic children in your community, but children and families throughout the country. We hope you find this tool kit to be a useful resource, whether you are continuing an existing effort or embarking on a new journey!



What is ADVOCACY?

“Advocacy represents the strategies devised, actions taken, and solutions proposed to influence decision-making at the local and state levels to create positive change for people and their environment.”*

Empowering the Latino community to engage in advocacy efforts may include:

- Educating constituencies on political power structures and how they can influence them (helping people understand their role in changing/building power)
- Informing constituencies about specific public policy issues
- Engaging clients in the organization’s advocacy efforts
- Prioritizing advocacy issues to match the capacity and interest of the organization

* Wisconsin Clearinghouse for Prevention Resources, “Advocacy & Action – What is Advocacy?” <http://wch.uhs.wisc.edu/11-Action/11-Action-01WhatIsIt.html> (accessed June 2009).



How to Use this Tool Kit

This tool kit is designed to help ECE providers develop an advocacy plan from start to finish. It presents concepts and ideas that have been used in successful advocacy strategies and provides several tools and references to help support your efforts. Although the structure of the tool kit follows a particular order, you should feel free to dive into any section. We recognize that every organization is unique and that some parts of this tool kit may be more relevant to your work than others.

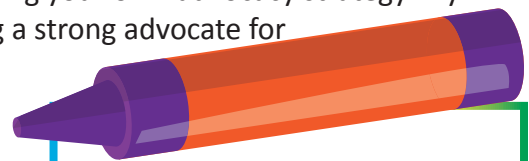
How Do You Advocate?*

Ultimately, the purpose of engaging in advocacy is to improve people's lives, empower communities, and effect change. Advocacy is an activity that anyone can be engaged in and an activity that has a lasting impact. This tool kit follows seven basic steps for designing your own advocacy strategy. By following these steps, you will be well on your way to becoming a strong advocate for young Latino children and their families!

- Step 1:** Define the problem.
- Step 2:** Define your desired outcome.
- Step 3:** Identify your partners and targets.
- Step 4:** Develop an action plan.
- Step 5:** Map out your resources and needs.
- Step 6:** Take action!
- Step 7:** Evaluate.

You will find elements of each of these steps throughout this tool kit. Part I reviews how to identify and frame your problem and solution and presents key questions to consider in developing each. Part II coincides with Step 3, providing steps to build a strong coalition and unified voice. Moreover, it walks you through how to identify your advocacy target. Part III covers how to take action and plan an effective strategy. Lastly, Part IV presents a number of different ways to engage the media in your action plan.

Although we do not cover it here, Step 7, Evaluate, is an indispensable part of any advocacy strategy. Talking to legislators and lobbying for more ECE funds is important, but how do you know your action plan worked? Did you reach the right targets? How will you advocate even more effectively next time? These are critical questions to answer as you continue revising and refining your strategy. For further information on how to structure your evaluation process, you can consult *Build Your Advocacy Grantmaking* by the Alliance for Justice and *A Guide to Measuring Advocacy and Policy* by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.



A great, free, online tool to help with your entire strategy is the Advocacy Progress Planner, which can be found at www.planning.continuousprogress.org. Use it in conjunction with this guide to develop a really stellar strategy!

* Adapted from Sylvia Puente, "Nonprofit Business Excellence: Leadership through Learning" (advocacy training, Chicago, IL, March 2009).

Background:

Latinos and Early Care and Education*

Federal and state policymakers throughout the country have made significant investments in expanding access to and improving the quality of ECE programs. This enthusiasm has stemmed from a growing body of research which shows that a positive early learning experience can narrow school readiness gaps and afford lasting educational benefits for children, particularly those from low-income families. Latinos, who represent the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. child population, are key stakeholders in this policy discussion.

Profile of Latino Children Ages Zero to Five

Data consistently show that Latino children enter school less prepared for success than their White peers. Although many Latino children are provided with safe, nurturing, and loving homes, many simply do not have access to the resources and tools they need to enter school ready for success. The data below provide a snapshot of how Latino children ages zero to five fare according to several key indicators.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics: Young Latino children share many characteristics that put them at risk for school failure. Data indicate that:

- ▶ 63% of Latino children ages zero to five come from low-income families (families with income that is 200% below the federal poverty line).²
- ▶ 66% of Latino children's mothers have only a high school education or less.³
- ▶ 57% of Latino children come from mixed status households in which at least one parent is foreign-born.⁴

School Readiness Indicators: Latino children enter kindergarten already well behind their White peers. Several studies documenting this important finding reveal that:

- ▶ Latino children are less likely to be read to on a daily basis than their non-Latino peers.⁵
- ▶ Hispanic children have, on average, about 33 books in their homes, compared to 83 in similar White households.⁶

* Please see www.nclr.org for a reproducible copy of this section that you can take with you as you meet with community leaders, policymakers, and other advocates!



- ▶ In 2003–04, 54% of two-year-old Hispanic children demonstrated expressive vocabulary skills, compared to 71% of their White peers.⁷

Given these statistics, it is no surprise that many young Latino children enter kindergarten with low literacy skills and at the bottom of the school readiness gap. Unfortunately, this gap persists throughout elementary and secondary school. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a mere 14% of Latinos reach proficient or advanced levels in reading, while 57% are reading at below basic levels by the fourth grade, making it all the more difficult for them to catch up to their White peers. These trends will not be reversed unless Hispanic children have greater access to early care and education programs that address their needs and prepare them to be successful in school.

The Promises of Early Care and Education Programs for Latino Children

Rigorously evaluated ECE programs have revealed educational benefits including higher academic achievement in school, less grade retention, lower special education referral rates, higher rates of high school graduation, and higher rates of college attendance. By providing families and children with resources and tools to develop pre-literacy skills, ECE programs can change the trajectory of achievement for many young Latino children. Moreover, ECE programs provide language and literacy-rich environments that develop children’s vocabularies and pre-reading skills. Each of these features ensures that young children enter school with a greater likelihood of success.

Challenges and Barriers for Latino Children and Families

Despite the promises of ECE programs, young Latino children have a long way to go before reaping the benefits. Only about half of Latino children ages three to five are enrolled in center-based ECE programs, and the vast majority of Latino infants and toddlers (ages zero to three) are in informal child care settings.⁸ Although there are many factors contributing to low levels of enrollment in ECE programs, some of the challenges Latino children and families face in accessing ECE programs are:

- ▶ A severe lack of facilities in Latino neighborhoods and communities
- ▶ Lack of awareness about programs and eligibility requirements
- ▶ Ineffective outreach to the Latino community
- ▶ Affordability
- ▶ Linguistic barriers
- ▶ Limited supports in the native language
- ▶ Inadequate funding for programs that effectively serve Latino children and families



Addressing the Needs of Latino Children

As momentum builds around ECE at both the federal and state levels, the timing is ripe for policymakers and advocates to address the challenges faced by Latino children and families. Many new ECE proposals have been introduced in recent years, but in order to truly turn the tides on Hispanic student achievement, policymakers must address both quality and access issues as they relate to the Latino community, which include:

Quality:

- ➡ Professional development, training, and technical assistance for ECE providers to meet the needs of Latino and ELL children
- ➡ A commitment to increasing the pool of highly qualified bilingual teachers and personnel with expertise in working with Latinos and ELLs
- ➡ Meaningful parental involvement and family literacy opportunities
- ➡ Early learning programs that enhance parents' capacity to advocate for their children's education and development

Access:

- ➡ Targeted services to low-income children, including Latinos and English language learners
- ➡ Effective outreach strategies for Latino, immigrant, ELL, and geographically isolated families to ensure equitable access to services
- ➡ Full-day services
- ➡ A mixed-service delivery system (public/private, center-based, and home-based) that leverages the expertise of community-based organizations to provide and expand ECE services
- ➡ Facilities development in communities where there are limited ECE programs

PART I:

FRAMING THE ISSUE

The first step in developing an effective advocacy strategy is to identify both the problem and a potential solution. An important part of this process is framing your issue in a compelling, timely, and urgent manner. This section provides tools that help you do just that. The more information you know about the Latino population in your community and the specific challenges families face in accessing ECE programs, the more effective your message will be.

Generally speaking, most ECE public policy is intended to support the early learning of young children and their families. However, ECE legislation often has unintended consequences for families, children, and subgroup populations that can be very far reaching. Thus, you need to think about both the immediate as well as the potential long-term consequences your proposed solution may have.

Every community will have a variety of local, state, and federal policies that affect Hispanic families' access to ECE programs and the quality of those programs. Although there is great variation in these policies, advocates must be prepared to examine how these policies impact the Latino community. In some cases, the effects on the community will be quite obvious for advocates, but in other cases, asking the right questions will help uncover more issues.

Moreover, every community will have a variety of different stakeholders that are engaged in ECE policy debates. Part II of this tool kit describes how to identify coalition partners and your advocacy audience to help you achieve your ECE advocacy goals. Many organizations first choose to identify their partners and then develop and define their advocacy issue. Your organization may already be part of a coalition, or you may be the trailblazer doing work on ECE issues. Regardless, your strategy can start here or with Part II!

Unintended consequences:

Policies have both intended and unintended consequences. For example, requiring parents to list a social security number on an early learning program application would result in fewer children of immigrant families having access to these programs, even though they are eligible to receive these services. Because many immigrant parents are hesitant to reveal documentation of their or their family members' residency status, fewer would be willing to register their children.

Identifying and Framing the Problem

Policy analysis, although a seemingly technical term, is a relatively simple concept that every ECE provider and advocate should have in their back pocket. Policy analysis is the process of assessing how to improve public policies by considering the effects they have on communities, agencies, and, in this case, children and families. The following are three key policy principles identified by NCLR that can guide your assessment of how well ECE policies and programs in your community are addressing the needs of Latino children and families. Each policy principle is followed by questions you should ask to help determine how to develop your advocacy strategy.

Questions to Ask When Considering ECE Policy Principles for Latino Children and Families

Principle 1: Expand access to high-quality ECE programs for Latino children and families.

Does the policy or program:

- ▶ Target low-income families?
- ▶ Target English language learners?
- ▶ Provide targeted outreach to Latino, immigrant, ELL, and geographically isolated families to ensure equitable access to services?
- ▶ Provide adequate financial assistance for low-income families?
- ▶ Provide comprehensive information on available ECE options for families in languages other than English?
- ▶ Have eligibility requirements that restrict access to programs, particularly for Latino children and families (e.g., requiring social security numbers)?
- ▶ Offer a range of settings, including public, private, center-based, and home-based delivery systems, that are accessible to Latino children and families?
- ▶ Fund the development of facilities in communities where there are limited ECE programs?

Principle 2: Improve the quality of programs, particularly for ELL children and families.

Does the policy or program:

- ▶ Offer professional development, training, and technical assistance for ECE providers to meet the needs of Latino and ELL children?
- ▶ Have a commitment to increasing the pool of highly qualified bilingual providers/teachers and personnel with expertise in working with Latinos and ELLs?

- ▶ Offer incentives for bilingual providers/teachers to increase their training and certification?
- ▶ Establish partnerships with institutions of higher education to provide training for the ECE workforce?
- ▶ Provide fair assessments of ELLs?
- ▶ Utilize a culturally and linguistically appropriate curriculum?
- ▶ Support the native language of children and parents participating in the program?
- ▶ Assist families with transitions into kindergarten?

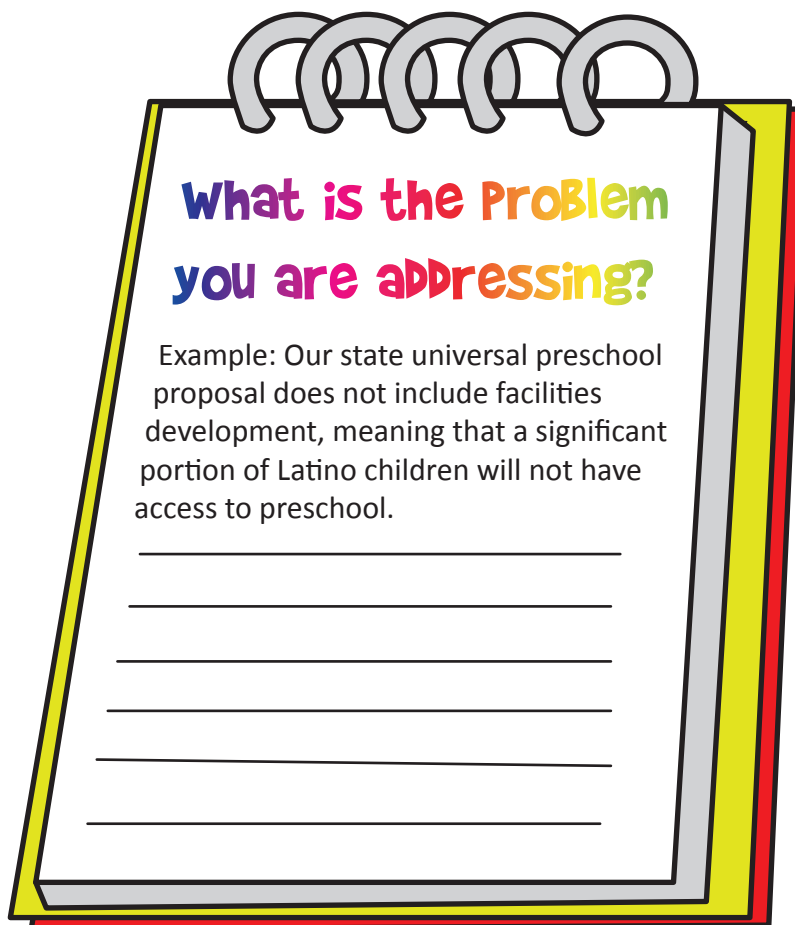
Principle 3: Support meaningful family and community engagement.

Does the policy or program:

- ▶ Include meaningful parental involvement and family literacy opportunities?
- ▶ Provide adult education services for parents of young children in languages other than English?
- ▶ Offer parenting education that addresses topics such as second language development and early literacy activities?
- ▶ Support early learning programs that enhance parents' capacity to advocate for their children's education and development?
- ▶ Establish partnerships and links to community-based organizations that can provide additional services and supports to Latino children and families?

After asking these questions, determine which of these policy issues is most relevant and urgent in your community. Consider the following questions to help you identify the most pressing issue:

- ▶ How do I know that this is a problem? What is the evidence?
- ▶ Is it specific and concrete rather than abstract?
- ▶ How many children and families are affected by this issue?
- ▶ Where is the biggest disparity? (For example, affordability could be the largest factor contributing to low levels of enrollment in ECE programs in your community.)
- ▶ What issue will lend itself to garnering the most community support?
- ▶ Where are we most likely to succeed?



Identifying and Framing the Solution

Now that you have identified the problem, it's time to pinpoint a solution! Identifying a solution is often a process that involves considering the political realities of your issue, the timing, and the possible consequence of your actions. Many organizations develop a strategic solution to an issue by working together with coalition partners or others who are interested in these issues. We encourage you to do the same! Below are a few questions to consider:

- ➡ What do you want to accomplish? Clearly define your desired outcome. For example, "We want to increase enrollment of Latino children in center-based care programs."
 - What do you want in the short-term?
E.g., "Enroll an additional 30 children in Mi Casa Child Care Center."
 - What do you want in the long-term?
E.g., "Increase Latino enrollment in center-based programs by 30% in two years."

➔ Is there a window of opportunity? A window of opportunity is a short period of time during which it is particularly advantageous to do something. They usually provide ideal timing for leveraging resources. Oftentimes, these opportunities can be a significant part of developing a solution. Below is a list of questions to consider in determining whether or not there is a window of opportunity for your issue:

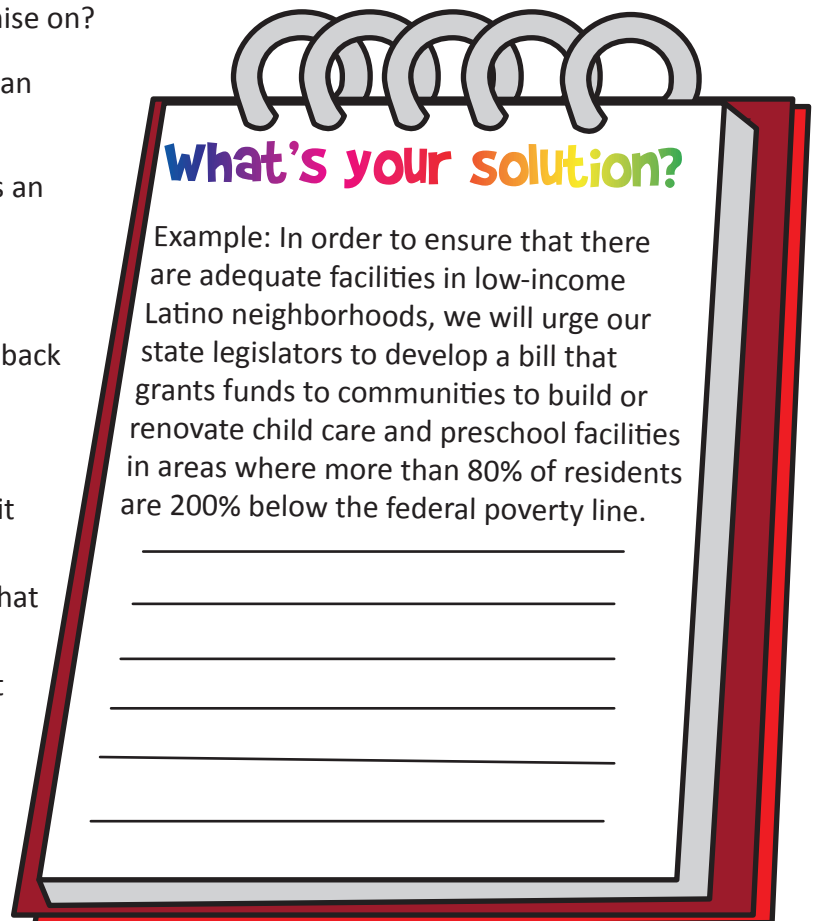
- Has something happened in the media or in the environment that brings this issue to the forefront in a way it was not before?
- Are there particular decisions that will be made soon by policymakers or community leaders who directly impact your issue?
- Are there other groups or coalitions mobilizing around a related issue?
- Is there an influential individual who is available to help carry your message?

➔ What is the range of outcomes between winning and losing?

- What are you willing to compromise on?
- What can you live with? What is an acceptable outcome?
- What can't you live with? What is an unacceptable outcome?

Once you've developed your solution, take a step back and consider the following the questions:

- ➔ Is your proposed solution achievable?
- ➔ Can the change you want really happen? Is it realistic?
- ➔ Is there an early goal you can work toward that is relatively easy to accomplish?
- ➔ What might we lose in the process and what compromises are you willing to make?
- ➔ What are the political risks? The organizational risks?
- ➔ Who will be your friends? Who will become your enemies?
- ➔ Will you gain or lose influence and power?



Crafting Your Message

The next step in crafting your advocacy agenda is to present your issue and solution in a compelling manner. In order to get the attention of key policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels, your advocacy strategy has to tell convincing a story. One of the most effective ways to present your issue is to provide specific information about a family, a program, or a community. The more details you include, the more this issue comes to life for others. Please see the list of additional resources and tools at the end of this section for more ideas on how to present your message in a compelling manner.

Using the Right Framework

ECE advocacy has typically used the school readiness frame to convince policymakers to invest in early learning programs. For example, NCLR's message is that the achievement gap will not close for Latino children until there is equitable access to high-quality early learning programs. Although this tends to be the most effective way to frame the ECE message, here are some other options to consider:

Equality/Civil Rights: "Latino children should be able to access early learning opportunities that improve their ability to be successful in school and in life."

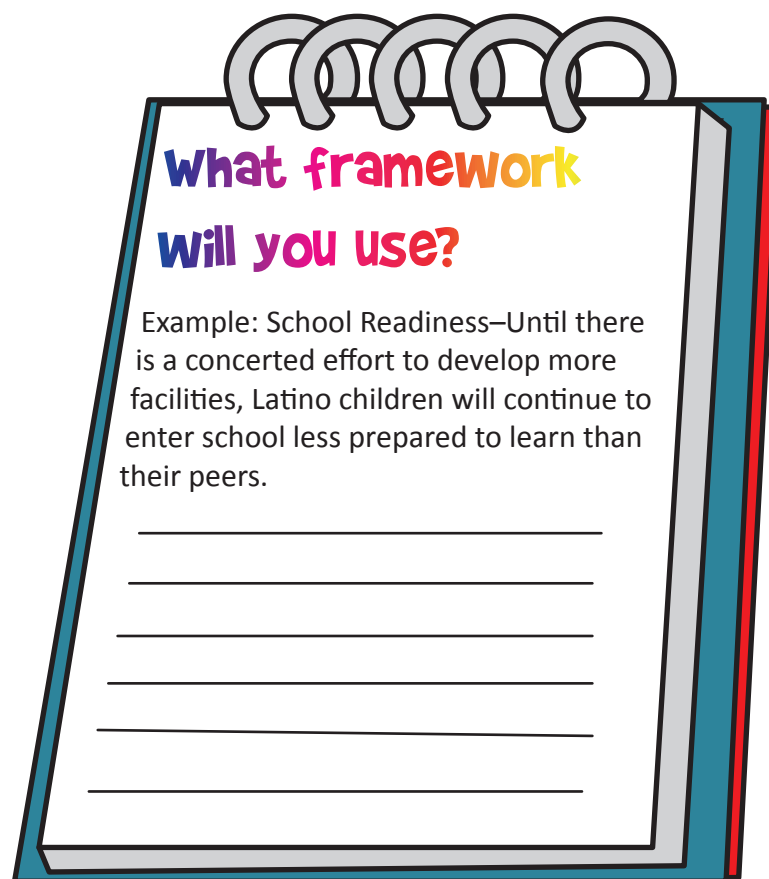
Inclusion: "High-quality standards have to reflect the needs of diverse learners."

Community Development: "Communities must have ECE supports in order to attract families and businesses."

Future Workforce/Economic Development: "In order to remain competitive globally, young children must be provided with high-quality learning opportunities starting at birth" **or** "Studies have shown that economic investments in ECE programs demonstrate significant future savings."

Family Security: "Early learning programs provide families with the essential tools they need to be self-sufficient."

Community Integration: "ECE programs provide an important avenue through which Latino families become familiar with American public schools and communities."



Resources and Tools to Advance your ECE Advocacy Agenda

Communicating your key issue and solution is just as important as developing it! Every advocate should be equipped with information and data about their issue. For example, it's important for advocates to know how many Latino children are currently enrolled in preschool or how many child care providers are trained to work with ELLs. Having such information in your back pocket will help you be more persuasive and compelling in your messaging. Moreover, your organization should develop a position statement and talking points so that your messages are clear, concise, and consistent. Lastly, any kind of resources you can develop, such as one-pagers or fact sheets, about your specific issue will help carry your message further. Take a look at the possibilities below!

Data Collection

Depending on the message you use, you will want to collect data to reflect the urgency of your key policy issue and the strength of your proposed solution. Depending on your approach, data collection

could include collecting stories from families, documenting the needs of local Latino children, or providing state or federal demographic information to help make your case.

Appendix I has additional resources on data collection, and here are some other points to consider along the way:

Ideas for small-scale data collection:

- ▮ Document the needs and challenges of one ECE program in your community. Be sure to include the number of children, families, etc.
- ▮ Interview families and collect their stories.
- ▮ Have parents and/or children write their own stories related to your key issue.

Ideas for large-scale data collection:

- ▮ Collect information on Latino children, including:
 - School readiness indicators
 - Enrollment levels in ECE programs
 - Native language of children and families
- ▮ Collect information on the ECE workforce at the local, state, or national level, including:
 - Demographic characteristics of the workforce
 - Types of professional development provided to the workforce
 - Certification and training levels of the workforce
- ▮ Collect information on ECE programs, including:
 - Types of instruction for ELLs (native language, dual-language, bilingual, English-immersion)
 - Types of supports for parents (adult education services, family literacy, ESL and GED courses)Outreach strategies to Latino communities

Position Statements

Position statements are key to ensuring that your message is clear. They are what most policymakers and advocates reference to help them understand your message and the reasons behind your advocacy efforts. You have already gone through the most basic steps in creating your policy position by identifying your issue, solution, and framework. Now all you have to do is pull all of these pieces together. Of course, the length of this statement is completely up to you!



Here's an example of an ECE position statement from NCLR:

NCLR's Position

NCLR strongly believes that high-quality early education programs can play an integral role in closing the achievement gap for Latino children. To this end, NCLR supports policies at the federal and state levels, which improve access to and the quality of early education programs for Latinos and ELLs. Specifically, NCLR aims to increase Hispanic and farmworker children's participation in the Head Start program and enhance the quality of Head Start academic and family services provided to Hispanic and ELL children and their families.

Talking Points

Talking points are essential for messaging to policymakers. They are the highlights of the message and should be used when conducting interviews and talking with decision-makers or other advocates. The key to talking points is to keep them interesting, convincing, and concise! Think of them as your 30-second elevator speech that you should be prepared to share at any moment. Here are some more tips:

- Keep it simple.
- Keep it on message.
- Make it interesting and compelling.
- Tailor your talking points for different audiences.

Sample Talking Points on Early Care and Education*

- Children's development from birth to five lays the foundation for what follows. It is our responsibility to make those early years ones that start children off in life with a sturdy educational foundation.
- Children who participate in high-quality early care and education programs

By the Numbers



Accurate, reliable data is crucial to building a credible and persuasive case for increased attention to and investments in ECE programs. In a few simple steps, you can find a wide range of data to describe the Latino population in your community.

Go to www.census.gov:

- ➔ Select "American FactFinder."
- ➔ Under "American Community Survey" choose "Get Data."
- ➔ Select "2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates."
- ➔ Choose "Selected Population Profiles."
- ➔ Select geographic type ("State," "County," "Place") from the drop-down menu.
- ➔ Narrow the geographic area by selecting your state, county, or town, click "Add," and then "Next."
- ➔ Select "Hispanic or Latino" and click "Show Result."

* Adapted from *Tools for Meeting with Legislators and Talking Points on Early Care and Education Issues* (Albuquerque, NM: New Mexico Voices for Children, February 2009).



typically perform better in school, are more likely to graduate from high school and college, and are more self-sufficient as adults.

- ▶ Quality early care and education includes and informs parents. Parents who are actively involved in their children's education at an early age often continue to support their children in the K-12 system and beyond. This is very important to long-term success in life.
- ▶ Early education is a good investment of public dollars. For every \$1 invested in high-quality early care and education, the public gets a return of up to \$12 in terms of less remedial education, lower crime, and better economic productivity.
- ▶ Investments in quality early care and education yield one of the best returns on our public dollars.
- ▶ An economic recession is exactly the wrong time to cut early childhood programs because investing in our youngest citizens is a long-term solution to our financial crisis, as well as a short-term support for working families.
- ▶ Now is the time to ensure that parents can access high-quality early learning choices so their children are prepared for school and life. Invest now!

Story Banks/Collections*

One of the most compelling ways to frame your issue is to collect stories about Latino families and children who have benefited from ECE programs. Because many high-profile decision-makers often do not hear about the parents and children participating in ECE programs, they don't realize how much these programs impact their lives. Below are a few tips for collecting and sharing your stories:

- ▶ Interview parents and children participating in ECE programs.
- ▶ Develop one-page or one-paragraph summaries of their stories (make sure to get the families' permission before sharing). These stories can be about:
 - A child's success story due to a great program
 - The quality of ECE programs in your community
 - A story about a great teacher in your community
 - A description of a high-quality program in your community
 - What parents would like to see changed in their children's early learning experiences
 - Why a parent or family decided to participate in the ECE program
 - How ECE programs are helping parents and families learn English

* Adapted from *Parent Advocacy Tool Kit* (Austin, TX: Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition, 2008).



Sample Story

“My name is Anna. I am from Guatemala and I have four daughters. I came to this country 11 years ago with very little education and, even worse, I didn’t know a word of English. But when I was pregnant with my daughter Kimberly, I went to Mary’s Center and they told me about the Even Start Program. I went to Even Start for about two years to learn English, and as a result of that, I went to another school to get my GED, which I received three years ago. Today I am the computer instructor for Even Start and I own a house and drive my own car. Best of all, my daughter, who used to come with me to Even Start, always gets straight A’s on her report card. We are proof that this program works not only for parents but for children too.”

One-Pagers

One-page fact sheets are handy documents that advocates can bring anywhere. Most organizations have a variety of different one-pagers that highlight their advocacy work, research, or policy positions on different issues. Whether you’re talking with policymakers or parents, one-pagers offer a simple means for others to reference your work. One-pagers, much like talking points, should be straightforward, concise, and compelling. Think about the different ways you can use the data you’ve collected to create simple one-pagers.

Consider the following ideas for creating your own:

- ▶ Use a parent’s story to convey the importance of affordability in accessing ECE programs.
- ▶ Highlight the diversity of the Latino community in your programs.
- ▶ Describe the implications of funding cuts to programs in your area, specifying how many programs will be shut down and how many families will be affected.

Sample One-Pagers

NCLR Buenos Principios: Young Latino Children in California

To view the full report, please visit www.nclr.org

Introduction

In 2006, the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) released a report titled *Buenos Principios: Latino Children in the Earliest Years of Life*, which examines key indicators associated with how well Latino children are prepared for the first day of school. The report found that Latino children under age three face numerous barriers to school success, such as poverty and linguistic isolation. Research indicates that these barriers contribute to a gap in the early literacy skills between Latino children and their White peers upon entry into kindergarten, which is particularly relevant in states with large Latino populations such as California. In addition, the report shows that Latino children represent a large and growing segment of the United States child population, suggesting that these demographic trends have important implications for the success of our public schools, the U.S. workforce, and our nation's future.

Key Socio-Demographic Indicators in California

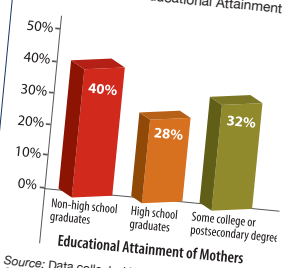
Young Latino children account for more than 50% (1,603,952) of California's child population under the age of six, a growing population that will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in the state's future. As with Latino children nationally, young Latino children in California face considerable challenges in the early years that adversely impact their ability to succeed in school. The data below provide a snapshot of how young Latino children in California fare in several key indicators.

- **Nearly seven in ten young Latino children have mothers with low levels of educational attainment.** Maternal education levels correlate strongly with a child's school readiness, notably in the development of early language and literacy skills. In California, 979,114 (68%) Latino children have mothers with a high school degree or less (see Figure 1).
- **More than two-fifths of young Latino children's mothers do not speak English well.** The degree to which children are exposed to English at home has implications for their preparedness for the first day of school. Additionally, evidence shows that limited-English-proficient parents may have difficulty enrolling their children in early learning programs. In California, 478,614 (42%) Latino children have mothers with limited English-language skills, and 15% of these children live in households where no one speaks English well.
- **Six in ten young Latino children reside in low-income households.** Economic hardship can adversely affect a child's development in domains that are fundamental to school readiness. In California, 953,045 (60%) young Latino children live in families with income levels below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (see Figure 2).
- **Two-thirds of young Latino children have at least one parent born outside the U.S.** A growing body of evidence demonstrates that having an immigrant parent can serve as a barrier to a child's participation in early care and education programs, despite the fact that many children are themselves citizens and therefore eligible for these services. In California, 1,577,605 (97%) Latino children under age six are U.S. citizens, and two-thirds (66%) of them have at least one parent who was born outside the U.S. (see Figure 3).

Conclusion

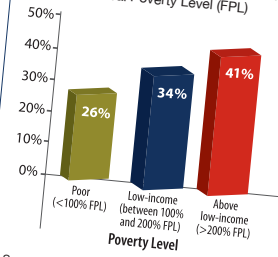
Many young Latino children live in families that provide them with a safe, nurturing environment. These families, however, often encounter considerable challenges that their children must overcome to realize their full potential. Research shows that high-quality early care and education services can support families and equip children to succeed in school and life. At the federal level, NCLR urges Congress and the Administration to expand access for Latinos to key federal programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Even Start Family Literacy programs. States also have an important role to play by increasing investments in early care and education services and supporting policies that address the needs of Latinos. Over the next few decades, the Latino population is expected to grow considerably in California and throughout the nation. Therefore, the nation's economic and social potential is inextricably linked to the developmental experiences of Latino children.

Figure 1: Latino Children Ages 0-5 in California by Mothers' Educational Attainment



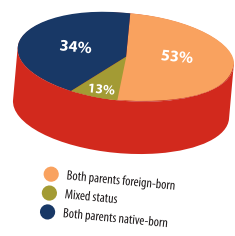
Source: Data collected by the National Center for Children in Poverty for the National Council of La Raza from U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey, Washington, DC, 2007.

Figure 2: Latino Children Ages 0-5 in California by Federal Poverty Level (FPL)



Source: Data collected by the National Center for Children in Poverty for the National Council of La Raza from U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey, Washington, DC, 2007.

Figure 3: Latino Children Ages 0-5 in California by Parental Nativity



Source: Data collected by the National Center for Children in Poverty for the National Council of La Raza from U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey, Washington, DC, 2007.



The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

CHILD CARE SERVICES

FACT SHEET

What We Do

From finding child care to starting a child care business, CHCF provides the resources and tools to support parents and providers every step of the way. Services include: child care referrals, training, a family day care network (Conexiones Entre Familias), and a Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Fiscal Year 2006 Highlights and Accomplishments:

- Referred over 2,000 families to quality child care
- Provided over 1,600 hours of technical assistance to family day care providers
- Provided over 580 hours of intensive technical assistance to family day care providers
- Provided over 380 hours of training to 318 family day care providers

The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families Child Care Services also reach providers, parents and communities through several unique initiatives:

- **Cuidando a Nuestros Niños**—is a bilingual, biannual newsletter which informs providers about new regulations, educates providers on important early childhood issues, and provides helpful tips to improve their programs
- **Annual Latino Family Day Care Provider Conference**—is the only Spanish language family day care conference in New York City
- **Community Health and Resource Fair** introduces families and communities to our services, while providing vital information on health, education, and New York City government services
- **Child Care Services Outreach** activities inform and build partnerships with schools, community based organizations, employers, city agencies, and hospitals through presentations, event tabling, and advertisements in local community newspapers

PART II:

Identifying Your Partners and Targets

Building a Coalition

The ECE advocacy community has developed into a well-established, credible voice in advancing the needs of young children. Unfortunately, although many states and regions of the country have strong ECE advocates, it is frequently the case that the Latino perspective is left out of conversations. As Latino children continue to grow and make up a larger share of the U.S. child population, it is imperative that Hispanic-serving providers and leaders represent the needs of this community. This section of the tool kit is intended to assist you in building and establishing strong partnerships and coalitions to advance a Latino ECE advocacy agenda.

What is a Coalition?*

Coalitions are groups of independent organizations that join together for information sharing, advocacy, or other cooperative activities ranging from research to service delivery. They are an increasingly important vehicle for accomplishing positive community change. The most powerful effort that today's advocates can undertake to effect change is to build a coalition of people and groups in their communities who are sympathetic to their point of view. By approaching, and then convincing, potential partners to join together to work for a common goal, the advocates gain a coalition whose combined strength will provide them with greater opportunities to reach out and spread their message to the public.

Why Form a Coalition?

Coalitions are typically formed to increase influence and build political power, or to meet one or more of the following needs:

- ▶ **To accomplish a specific advocacy goal**, where the efforts of individual advocacy agencies are likely to be less effective than a unified community voice in support of or opposition to a particular policy, program, or action

* Adapted from State and *Local Police Enforcement of Federal Immigration Laws* (Washington, DC: National Council of La Raza, 2006).

- ▶ **To share information or ideas** so that all coalition members are better informed about important issues or programs, such as new proposals to force state and local police to enforce federal immigration laws
- ▶ **To decrease isolation and increase collaboration**, enabling organizations that cannot easily carry out specific activities by themselves to participate indirectly through the coalition's activities
- ▶ **To reduce staff and other costs** for accomplishing a common goal by sharing work and responsibilities

The effectiveness of a coalition depends to a considerable degree on the organizational skills, commitment, interest, and contributions of time and effort of its members. Even fully staffed, coalitions are rarely effective unless they are bound by commitment, shared interests, and priorities sufficient enough to ensure ongoing participation by a significant portion of its members. A coalition is likely to survive if it proves effective enough that there is a positive return on the time and other resources invested. Thus, a coalition that successfully supports or opposes legislation or regulations, or accomplishes other agreed-upon objectives, is likely to survive and grow.

Characteristics of Effective Coalitions*

Clearly Defined Purpose and Scope. Goals, objectives, and strategies are made clear and understandable. The coalition does not try to do everything; instead, it has a clear focus. The coalition may suffer or become ineffective if some members wish to broaden the scope to include other issues.

Coordination. Legislators need to repeatedly hear from many groups, but when time and resources are limited, a “divide and conquer” strategy may work better than focusing everyone on the same lawmaker. Divide up responsibilities rather than have everyone contact the same people. Additionally, coalition members should share resources such as legislative alerts, newsletters, and other advocacy materials.

Networking. While you may not know anyone who can get your senators on the phone, perhaps one of your coalition partners does. If you are working together, this contact can speak for the entire coalition (if everyone agrees) rather than just for one group.

Unified Messaging. Typically, coalitions do not take positions that are bound to be divisive because they pit the interests of some coalition members against each other.

Cooperation. Visit legislators as a coalition to demonstrate a “united front.” When appropriate, you may also want to draft a coalition letter that each member or organization signs.

Expansion. Continually seek out other groups who share the coalition's concerns and positions on the

* Adapted from State and *Local Police Enforcement of Federal Immigration Laws* (Washington, DC: National Council of La Raza, 2006).

issues. Encourage them to join your coalition.

Resource Allocation. One group cannot do all the work or supply all of the resources. Allow groups with limited financial resources to make in-kind contributions.

As you can see, there are many good reasons to start or join a coalition. Coalitions give advocates greater collective power because there is strength in numbers! For early care and education, it is especially important that Latino-serving organizations participate in coalitions. Often, if we are not at the table, our voices and concerns are not heard.

To-Do List Before Joining or Forming a Coalition*

Ensure that participation reflects the priorities of coalition partners.

- ➡ Know what your role in the coalition will be: leader, partner in message and strategy decisions, information dissemination, etc.
- ➡ Consider the resource allocation—is every coalition equal in the amount of time, staffing, and materials development contributed?

Once you're ready to join a coalition, ask some key questions:

- ➡ What does my organization bring to the coalition?
- ➡ What benefits do we gain by joining?
- ➡ How can we build relationships through this coalition?
- ➡ What are the downsides of joining the coalition?

Other questions to consider:

- 📌 Who are your constituents?
 - Who is directly impacted by this issue? They are your primary constituents or primary beneficiaries.
 - Is solving the problem important to a lot of people or just a few? Who else is interested in this issue? Have you asked them to work with you?
- 📌 Who else will benefit?

* Adapted from *National Association for the Education of Young Children Advocacy Toolkit* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2004) and Sylvia Puente, “Nonprofit Business Excellence: Leadership through Learning” (advocacy training, Chicago, IL, March 2009).

- Sometimes the people who will benefit may be different than the people who are your constituents or direct beneficiaries. They are your secondary constituents or beneficiaries.
- Have you asked the secondary beneficiaries to work with you to develop a solution?
- Are there nontraditional partners that you have not considered yet? Some examples might include:

Parents

Health care professionals, law enforcement officials, and other professionals

Community-based and faith-based organizations

Business leaders

Labor unions

- ▶ It is always a good idea to have a core group of people, a coalition, or a group to work with on your issue. Think about who these groups may be and how they can contribute to your work.

Conducting a Power Analysis

Knowing who has the power to make the change you are seeking will make your work not only easier but also more successful! There are a variety of different players in the ECE realm, including policymakers, state and local agency leaders, community leaders, and parents. Depending on the specific issue you are tackling, your advocacy could target any of these individuals. Conducting a power analysis will help you understand how these actors work together, who has power, and who will put you on track for a definite victory.

The two questions guiding a power analysis are:

- ▶ Who has the power to make the decision you need to change the situation? This is the primary target.
- ▶ Who can influence the primary target? This is the secondary target.

You will also want to consider:

- ▮ How do we influence the decision-maker?
 - This may require conducting research, talking to people who know the person, and identifying their strengths and vulnerabilities.
 - If they are an elected official, did your constituency vote for them?

- ▮ What are the other points of influence?
 - Who are your friends and allies?
 - Who are the decision-maker's friends and allies?
 - Who are your enemies?
 - Who are the decision-maker's enemies?
 - Who else cares about this issue? Think beyond your friends and community.
 - Who else can you work in coalition with on this issue?

Resources and Tools to Advance Coalition Work

Sign-On Letter

A sign-on letter states the position of several organizations about a piece of legislation or a change in policy. A strong message can be sent when a letter contains the signature of many organizations, demonstrating that many are in favor of or opposed to a policy.



Sample Sign-On Letter

Organizations Representing Thousands of Children and Families Urge Support of the “Strengthening Communities through Education and Integration Act of 2008”

July 29, 2008

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing thousands of children and families, we write to urge you to cosponsor the “Strengthening Communities through Education and Integration Act of 2008,” introduced by Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D–NY) and Congressman Mike Honda (D–CA) on July 24, 2008.

The “Strengthening Communities through Education and Integration Act of 2008” provides a comprehensive approach to ensuring that immigrants in this country have the opportunity to become a part of the American social fabric and achieve the American Dream. We know from firsthand experience that families will only be able to contribute to the success of our country if they are given the tools they need to succeed, the most important of which is access to educational services.

For immigrant families who come into this country with few resources and low levels of education, multigenerational education programs are essential. Because there is clear evidence that a child’s academic success is directly linked to parental levels of education and income, the “Integration Act” increases access to highly effective family literacy programs, including the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program. Even Start works with both parents and children to improve their basic education and literacy skills and break the cycle of poverty. It is one of the few federal programs that provides classes for adults in parenting, English as second language, and basic literacy while at the same time improving early language and literacy skills for young children.

In communities throughout our country, we have seen the effectiveness of Even Start in helping thousands of extremely low-income and immigrant families obtain the necessary skills to become productive and successful in our society. In fact, almost half (46%) of Even Start families are Latino families, many of whom are English language learners. Even Start has helped parents in these families learn to read, write, and speak English. These essential skills, in turn, help Even Start parents become full partners in their children’s education. Parents are better equipped to help their kids with their homework, more able to communicate with their children’s teachers, and empowered with the skills necessary to prepare their children for academic success. Moreover, parents have enhanced economic and employment opportunities as a result of the English language skills they gain through the program.

The benefits for children who participate in Even Start, the vast majority (97%)

of whom are U.S. citizens, are just as compelling. Given the training and tools their parents receive, children experience more academic support at home, build stronger vocabularies, and develop stronger early literacy and cognitive skills before they enter school. Overall, they are better prepared to meet ambitious academic standards throughout their educational careers. Simply put, the Even Start approach is the right approach for the most vulnerable families throughout the nation.

Immigrant families come to the United States with a dream of a better life for their children and a strong desire to become contributing members of society. Without learning the language and integrating into American culture, these families will fall short of ever achieving their dream. We know from experience that family literacy is an effective tool to help them succeed. Therefore, we seek your support to expand these services to families that need them most.

Our organizations, representing thousands of parents and children throughout the nation, urge you to cosponsor the “Strengthening Communities through Education and Integration Act of 2008.” We must continue to open the doors for immigrant families and enable them to achieve a successful future in our country. Programs such as Even Start are central to giving immigrant children and families an equal chance to improve their educational and social success.

Sincerely,

First Focus
Knowledge Alliance
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)
National Center for Family Literacy
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
National Council of Teachers of English
National Education Association (NEA)
National Even Start Association
Pre-K Now
Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL)
Voices for America’s Children
Alameda Family Literacy Program, Alameda, California
Berkeley Even Start Program, Hayward, California
California Association for Bilingual Education (CABE)
Californians Together
CentroNía, Washington, DC
Gads Hill Center, Chicago, Illinois
San Pedro Family Literacy Program, San Pedro, California

Legislative Advocacy Days at the Capitol

You can organize a day when your coalition travels to your state capitol or to Washington, DC to visit the offices of your representatives. A legislative advocacy day can provide an opportunity to train your organization in how to lobby, the legal rules of lobbying, and the legislative process. This type of event can maximize your voice by addressing all of the issues important to you and your organization in one visit. This type of event can empower your community by giving them an opportunity to influence public policy. Go to www.nclr.org/state_toolkit to find out more on how to organize and carry out a state-level Legislative Advocacy Day.

After workplace raids targeting immigrants became more frequent in the spring of 2007, NCLR wrote a sign-on letter to President Bush asking the administration to consider the impact of workplace raids on children. This resulted in a congressional hearing on how Latino children are affected by workplace raids, as well as the development of two bills designed to protect children from harmful immigration practices.

PART III:

TAKING ACTION

Mapping Out Your Resources and Needs

Before developing your advocacy plan, consider the resources you currently have access to and the tools you will need. Advocacy plans don't have to be costly or expensive, but it's important to consider the financial and capacity constraints that your institution may have.

Questions to Consider

- ▮ Do you have the resources necessary to execute your strategy?
 - Money
 - Time
 - Human resources, people power, leaders
 - Research, data, technical knowledge
 - Relationships
 - Internal**—people who know the decision-maker and can provide information
 - External**—the group that you are working with
- ▮ Can you do it alone or do you need others to help you?
 - Who else cares about this issue?
 - Who else can you work in coalition with? (See “Other questions to consider” in Part II.)
- ▮ How will working on this issue impact you and others?
 - Who will you make friends with?
 - Who will be your enemy?
 - How will it impact your family life?

Check out Alliance for Justice's Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool⁹ for more guidance on assessing your agency's capacity for advocacy at www.afj.org. This particular resource contains a series of self-evaluation measures by which organizations can assess and strengthen their capacity for advocacy.

Developing an Action Plan

Now that you've identified your problem, outcomes, and targets, it's time to develop your action plan! There are many options to consider for generating action and effecting change. Your group can organize to implement any of the following strategies:

Organizing

- Organizing is a very intentional process of meeting with community members to identify the issues that they are most concerned about and then developing an advocacy strategy or issues campaign to address it.
- This process can include parents, students, community members, and a whole range of different stakeholders.

Negotiation

- Negotiation typically takes the form of meeting with decision-makers to ask for what you want and determine what they will do to help you reach your goal.
- This process often requires some back and forth. For example, the individual or institution you are negotiating with may offer less than what you want or say it will take a longer period of time, requiring your organization to respond.

Administrative lobbying

- Administrative lobbying is the process of working directly with a decision-maker to change a specific policy, rule, or procedure.
- Oftentimes, administrative lobbying requires targeting a specific agency or institution to effect change.

Legislative lobbying

- Legislative lobbying is a request to an elected official or governing body for a law to be adopted, amended, or revoked.
- This type of lobbying may include testifying before a legislative body on a particular piece of legislation or working with elected officials to draft legislative language.







Go to Project Vote Smart (www.votesmart.org) to look up all of your federal and state elected officials (and candidates during election season), as well as their positions and voting record, simply by entering your ZIP code!

Media

- Write a letter to the editor.
- Hold a press conference.
- Get an article written about your cause (See Part IV: Media Tools and Resources).

Take Action!





Once you've selected which of these strategies you and/or your coalition will engage in, it's time to take action! Carrying out your advocacy plan may be a daunting task, but it can make a huge impact on the lives of children and families. Try answering these questions before launching into your work:

-  What specific tasks do you have?
-  When will you do it?
-  Is this a single action or will you have to do it again and again?
-  Have you written down what your next steps are?
-  Have you made your assignments?
-  Have people followed through on their commitments?

Resources and Tools for Action

Visits to Early Childhood Programs

Organize a day when you invite policymakers and community leaders to visit exceptional early childhood programs that are serving Latino children and families. Oftentimes, key decision-makers have never stepped foot in an early learning program and don't completely understand how they work. One of the most valuable tools to convince policymakers about the importance of early learning is to show them one in action! Having influential individuals visit a program gives them the personal connection and understanding of the communities they are serving. Moreover, visits can provide the perfect opportunities for parents and children to share their compelling stories about how these services are impacting their day-to-day lives. Consider these other tips to make your visit more successful:

-  Plan a press event around a policymaker's visit to your ECE program.
-  Use the media to maximize attention (see Part IV for resources).
-  Bring a crowd! Invite parents, business and community leaders, and school board members to your event.
-  Bring in experts to interact with the media. (Make sure they have your talking points!)

- ▶ Get the message out! Provide talking points for anyone speaking to policymakers and the media.
- ▶ Evaluate and celebrate! After your event, reflect with participants about what went well and what could be improved. Also, don't forget to send thank you notes to invited guests!

Legislative Advocacy

- ▶ Legislative advocacy is an important activity that your organization can carry out to achieve your mission and engage clients as agents of change.
- ▶ Your organization can build on its mission, address inequalities, and develop solutions to systemic problems by engaging in legislative advocacy strategies.
- ▶ Community-based organizations should be viewed as part of the community rather than strictly as servants of the community, and community members should be active participants in social change.
- ▶ By integrating legislative advocacy into their work, community-based organizations can help change the systems that create the need for services.

Legislative advocacy consists of advocacy and public policy activities, which includes but is not limited to lobbying. Nonprofits, as tax-exempt organizations, are restricted in the amount of money that they can spend on lobbying. Certain advocacy and public policy activities are not considered lobbying and are therefore not restricted. Some forms of legislative advocacy include:

Phone Calls from Constituents

As an organization, you can encourage your community and clients to make phone calls to their lawmakers. This form of grassroots lobbying can have a large impact. Members of Congress record and track the number of phone calls they receive for or against a particular piece of legislation or issue. Phone calls let legislators know what their constituents are thinking when they cannot check in with their home district.

Tips for Telephoning Your Elected Representatives

To find the phone numbers of your senators and representatives, you can reference NCLR's searchable online congressional directory at <http://capwiz.com/nclr/dbq/officials>. This online directory allows you to find your elected officials, including members of Congress, by simply inserting your ZIP code. If you do not have access to the Internet, you can also call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for your senator or representative's office. Remember that telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member, not the member of Congress. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue about which you wish to comment.

After identifying yourself, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as "Please tell Senator/Representative [name] that I support/oppose [bill number or name of bill]."

You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to the bill. Ask for your senator or representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

Office Visits

Office visits are the staples of lobbying—never underestimate how much you can achieve in a simple 20-minute visit. You may meet with your representative or senator, but most likely you will meet with one of their staffers. By knowing the difference between the different staff members and their roles, you can be sure to ask to meet with the best person to communicate your message. A detailed description of staff roles and how-to's for office visits is included in the Appendix.

You accomplish several things by showing up: you show that you care enough about an issue to wear out your feet; you provide verbal arguments with your written materials, thus increasing the likelihood that the staffer will read your literature; and you get a sense of what materials might be persuasive. You can meet with your representatives and senators when they are in the district during congressional recess, or you can also meet with your representatives' staff in the local office when they are unavailable. See Appendix II: After Your Visit: Following Up and Maintaining a Relationship.

Action Alerts

You can use an action alert in the form of an email to ask your clients and supporters to make a phone call or write a letter when you need urgent action. Be sure to frame the issue in fairly straightforward terms, focusing on what is most important for your reader to know. Always include a sample letter or sample agenda for a visit and a target list of critical members with their phone numbers and addresses.

SAMPLE ACTION ALERT:

An Uneven Start for Latino Families

On May 7, with the release of his fiscal year 2010 budget, President Obama revealed a lack of investment in Latino parents, family literacy, and English language learners. The William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy program was eliminated from the budget, making it more difficult for Hispanic parents to reach their educational goals, increase their job skills, and improve the school readiness of their young children. The Even Start program directly addresses many of the educational challenges faced by Latino families through effective family literacy instruction that enables parents to be active participants in their children's education. During this economic downturn, when Hispanic families are most in need, it is appalling to see that the new administration is proposing the elimination of such an essential program.

Take action and tell President Obama how disappointed you are that he gave an uneven start to Latino families.

One-Pagers on Legislation or a Theme

These are critical for lobbying. If you can get your arguments for or against a specific provision of a bill down on one page, you can win the hearts and minds of staffers and their bosses. A concise summary of the issue and arguments is your best tool for lobbying offices that are not experts on a certain issue. You will use this one-pager to communicate with staff members in a representative or senator's office, the media, and the public. These audiences are not experts on your issue. A one-page summary of the facts and the pros and cons will help them understand your message. Attach documentation that supports your case, but make sure to include all of the important information in the one-pager. You can also use one-pagers or short issue briefs on a theme to provide a concise description of bigger issues (e.g., Are immigrants good for America? Do Hispanics benefit from job training programs?). Again, try to stick to one page with bullets and highlighted topic sentences.

NCLR

2009 NATIONAL ISSUE BRIEFING AND ADVOCACY DAY
United in Action

Increase Investments in Family Literacy and After-School Programs

Background

Family literacy and after-school programs help Latino children enter school ready to succeed and provide continued academic support throughout their school careers. Congress must increase investments in the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program and 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) in order to close the achievement gap between Latino students and their peers.

Latinos begin kindergarten significantly behind their White peers, and this gap persists well into elementary and secondary school. Much of this gap is attributed to the lack of language- and literacy-rich environments in the earliest years of life. The William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program provides low-income parents with the tools necessary to support early literacy and language development for their young children. Even Start has been highly effective with the families it serves, almost half (46%) of whom are Latino.

As Latino children enter the K–12 system, they continue to confront academic challenges. Research clearly demonstrates that after-school programs can positively impact students' academic performance. 21st CCLC, the only federal funding source that exclusively targets after-school programs, has shown great promise. Evaluations of the program confirm that students participating in 21st CCLC initiatives, including Latino students, improved their academic performance and school attendance, completed more homework, and enhanced their class participation.

Despite the promises of these programs, funding limitations prohibit Latino students and families from accessing these services. Even Start funding has been slashed from \$225 million to its current level of \$60 million, significantly decreasing the number of families served. Moreover, 21st CCLC is currently funded at half of its authorized level, leaving thousands of Latino students unsupervised during after-school hours.

NCLR's Position

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) urges Congress to increase investments in the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program and 21st Century Community Learning Centers in order to help close the achievement gap between Latino students and their peers.

Main Considerations

- Congress should increase funding for Even Start to \$100 million. To date, the cuts sustained by Even Start have drastically reduced services to thousands of Hispanic children and their parents. By restoring funding to \$100 million, programs throughout the country will be able to remain open and provide high-quality services families in need. As a result, more Latino students will enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- Congress should increase funding for CCLC to \$2.5 billion. Currently, CCLC is funded at \$1.1 billion, only half of the authorized amount, leaving millions of children unsupervised every day. By increasing funding, Latino students will have access to the academic support and enrichment they need to be successful in school.

For more information, contact Erika Beltran, Education Policy Analyst, at (202) 776-1815 or ebeltran@nclr.org.



Testimony

Testimony is very important in establishing a record on an issue and making thorough arguments. If you are giving oral testimony, it will be much shorter than your written statement; you will probably only have time to make your main points and respond to questions. The written statement is important because it outlines in detail all of your arguments and establishes what your priorities are. You would be surprised at how many senators and representatives' offices read these statements carefully.

Issue Briefs

Unlike the one-pagers, issue briefs go into more detail (three to five pages) about a specific bill or piece of legislation's impact on the Latino community. It allows you more space to articulate your arguments and expound on your data. Issue briefs are appropriate for when you are visiting committee staffers, conducting congressional briefings, communicating with federal departments working on the legislation, or talking to reporters who are doing in-depth stories on the legislation or issue area. NCLR maintains timely issue briefs on its website.

Briefings

Briefings are a useful way to present information on an issue to a large group of congressional staffers or members. At the subcommittee stage, it can be a helpful way to present detailed information on an issue and get a reading on what members of the committee are thinking. Briefings are a great way to cover dozens of offices at once, which saves you individual visits. They are usually sponsored by congressional members (it helps to have one from each party) or by subgroups of Congress (like the Congressional Hispanic Caucus). Try to have representatives from several organizations speak and make sure to bring many handouts for staffers to take with them.

PART IV:

MEDIA TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Now that you have developed your message, learned how to build a coalition, and formed an advocacy plan, get your message out there! The media can act as a great resource for you if you use it to your advantage. Getting others to hear your argument and tell your story will help you engage new audiences, create stronger partnerships, influence key decision-makers, and build momentum for change. For all media outlets and journalists, you should know how to:

Find and Talk to the Right People*

Create a list of reporters who cover ECE and general education issues. Reporters change jobs and beats frequently, so it's vital to keep your list updated.

- Keep the following outlets in mind: daily and weekly newspapers; local, city, and regional newspapers and magazines; television and radio stations (including cable and local access stations); and Internet outlets. You may also consider early childhood or education-specific outlets such as *Education Week* or *Education Daily*.
- Stay in touch with reporters via press releases, emails, and phone calls.

Be a Reporter's Go-To Source

- Know the ground rules.* Everything you say to a reporter is on the record. If you don't want to be quoted, or if you just want to speak "on background," say so.
- Know your audience.* Journalists have different needs, interests, and levels of expertise, so vary your remarks accordingly.
- Frame your issue in 30-second sound bites.* Most journalists have neither the time nor the inclination to go deeper than a few quotes. Identify one or two key points about your issue and repeat these often.

Try www.ThePaperBoy.com to get started on your media contact list! It's a great source for national, state, and local news outlets you can use in your media strategy

* Adapted from Physicians for Human Rights, "Advocacy Toolkit," <http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/toolkit> (accessed April 2009).

- ▶ **Keep it simple.** Avoid jargon or overly technical language.
- ▶ **Know the facts.** Know the basic facts about your organization, its mission, and its activities. You should also know basic facts about the local Hispanic population.
- ▶ **Respect deadlines.** Always return press calls promptly.
- ▶ **Offer supplemental or background information.** View press interviews as an opportunity to distribute your organization's reports, statements, and additional information.
- ▶ **Be accurate and credible.** Don't deliberately mislead or misrepresent your views to a reporter, and don't be afraid to say you don't know. If you're unsure of something, offer to call the reporter back with the information.

Always be prepared to field follow-up calls from reporters and refer reporters to other sources, if necessary. People who personify or add a human face to ECE issues, such as families, service providers, educators, or business leaders, and who have a stake in a well-educated workforce are ideal referrals. It is important to vet these sources to see who would be most comfortable talking to the media and who can make the most compelling arguments in favor of your position.

Get Media Coverage

- ▶ **Ensure media coverage by addressing these questions:** Why is this important now? Why is this newsworthy? Who should care about this issue?
- ▶ **Create photo opportunities.** For small or weekly newspapers, you can even provide the photos yourself.
- ▶ **Give the reporter an exclusive.** A media outlet might consider it big news because they will have a "scoop" that makes them look good.
- ▶ **Make it different or unusual.** Stories that are new or original are news because they have the "quirky" factor.
- ▶ **Involve a big name.** Invite an elected official or local celebrity to your event.
- ▶ **Make it personal.** Talk about why this matters to you.
- ▶ **Be part of the solution.** The media hear a lot about the negative impact of the issues we address—tell them what you are doing to change things.
- ▶ **Make the story local.** If the state legislature is debating how to use federal stimulus money, look for any funds that could go to the child care center in your community—talk about how this money could make or break the program.

Ethnic Media

Spanish language media outlets cover news from a Latino perspective and serve to inform and educate the Latino community. In general, Spanish language news organizations do not have the resources to assign a reporter a specific beat like education, health care, or politics, so reporters generally cover a little bit of everything. Additionally, they're often hungry for information and are constantly looking for relevant and culturally sensitive messages. Here are some other tips for working with Spanish language media:

1. *Provide statistics and data on your local Hispanic community.* This increases your chances for coverage and publication.
2. *Remember that many journalists at these outlets are newcomers.* Don't presume they are familiar with U.S. institutions or our political system.
3. *Cultivate your relationships.* Latino journalists tend to be more personal and loyal than mainstream journalists, so be warm and friendly.

New Media

New media tools are Internet-based resources that have a tremendous power to catalyze change. The following are several tools you may want to consider using in your media outreach strategy:

Google Tools

Google offers particularly useful tools for working with advocates outside your organization. Google Groups allows users to create discussion groups and participate in threaded conversations by email. Google Docs acts as an online word processing application that allows users to collaborate with one another in real time. Google Calendar enables you to share calendars, which can help group plan projects together. The best part? All these tools are free!

Blogs

You may want to write a blog tracking your progress in passing a universal prekindergarten bill or building your ECE coalition. Additionally, you should make a list of bloggers who write on ECE issues and would be likely to cover your work.

Early Childhood Education (www.blogcatalog.com/blog/early-childhood-education) is one example of an ECE blog.

YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing website. You could create fireside chats, public service announcements (PSAs), call to action videos, or video story banks to create buzz around ECE issues. SchoolTube.com is a similar, education-specific video website for students, educators, and advocates alike.

Social Networks

Social networks, such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter, are online communities where people meet to socialize and exchange information. You can use social networks to post your organization's newsworthy items, grow your advocacy community, and build advocacy communities, which you can then leverage for support during your campaigns or advocacy drives.

Some ECE advocacy organizations with Facebook pages or groups include Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children, Winning Beginning NY, and Alliance for Early Care & Education. Check them out!

Television and Radio

The Hispanic population spends more hours per week than non-Hispanics watching TV and listening to radio. In fact, television is still Hispanics' preferred medium, so don't underestimate Univision, Telemundo, and CNN en Español! Always be professional and prepared when giving an interview (see Appendix III for more tips on TV interviewing). While many of the suggestions on television interviewing are relevant to radio as well, there are a few radio-specific tips to keep in mind:

- ▶ Vocal inflections are especially important. No one wants to listen to a monotone speaker.
- ▶ Since it's radio, feel free to take note cards as a reference, but be careful not to use them as a script.
- ▶ Speak clearly and enunciate.
- ▶ If your segment is interrupted by a commercial or announcement, be sure to repeat your main talking point.



Traditional Media

Hispanics tend to read more newspapers than non-Hispanics, making “traditional” media critical as you engage in early care and education advocacy. In general, your communication with the press should be catchy and concise. Keep in mind that even if reporters do not use your press release or op-ed, they are still good strategies for putting your organization on the map so that reporters will call you when they do write about ECE issues.

Press Release

A press release is a short memo sent directly to the media to communicate your organization’s perspective or position on an early care and education issue.

How-to:

- Keep it short—one page is best—and stick to your strongest messages and most important points.
- Be as catchy and enticing as possible with your title; think of this as the headline you want to see in tomorrow’s newspaper.
- Use a quotation from your spokesperson or your organization’s director in your closing paragraph, and make sure s/he says exactly what you want to read in tomorrow’s newspaper.
- Include your organization’s name and the contact person’s information on each page, if it’s longer than one page. At the bottom of the first page type “<more>” so that the reader knows there is additional information.

Dissemination:

- Fax and/or email the release to your press list within one week of when the topic will be relevant news.
- If you are particularly interested in certain reporters or media outlets carrying your story, call to follow up on the release.
- For broad and immediate distribution, you can make arrangements with a newswire service (such as U.S. Newswire at (800) 544-8995 or PR Newswire at (202) 547-5155) for them to disseminate your release.

Sample Press Releases



News Release

www.nclr.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 30, 2009

Contact:
Sarah Dolan
(202) 555-1670

LATINO STUDENTS UNDERSERVED IN CURRENT U.S. EDUCATION SYSTEM, FINDS NEW NCLR REPORT

Washington, DC—Today, as people around the globe observed *Día del Niño*, or Children’s Day, NCLR (National Council of La Raza), the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States, marked the day by releasing *Missing Out: Latino Students in America’s Schools*, a statistical brief of Latino students from prekindergarten through postsecondary school. The data presented in this brief suggest that the growing U.S. Latino student population is missing out on many educational opportunities and is not being effectively served by the current American education system.

“Our nation’s classrooms must be more attentive to the rapid growth of Latino students and the high value that Hispanic families place on education,” said Janet Murguía, NCLR President and CEO. “This brief presents the statistics that are crucial to understanding who these children are, a first step in creating policies and programs that improve their chance at success.”

According to the brief, Hispanic children now constitute one-fifth of all school-age children in the U.S., and most are neither immigrants nor undocumented—the vast majority (91%) of Latinos under the age of 18 are U.S. citizens. An overwhelming number (98%) of Hispanics believe that education is “important,” and more than half (51%) report that it is an “extremely important” issue. Still, there are significant disparities in educational success between Latino students and their peers.

For example, young Hispanic children, especially those living in poverty, are much less likely (50%) to attend preschool programs than their White (60%) and Black (62%) peers. Moreover, recent figures state that only 58% of Hispanic students (and 55% of Black students) graduate from high school, compared to 78% of White students. Latino and Black students are more likely to attend high-poverty schools and receive fewer resources that would help them succeed in school. The most recent measures indicate that only 11% of college students are Latino, whereas 66% are White.

NCLR supports increased funding for and proper implementation of programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program, all of which would have a tremendous impact on the ability of Latino students to succeed in school. NCLR also advocates for increased funding for programs that would enhance parental involvement at the high school level, improving accountability and assessment systems for English language learners, and the institution of rigorous academic standards to ensure Latino students’ success and their preparedness for postsecondary education.

“Young Latino learners are not only changing the face of the American student body, but they will soon change the face of the American workforce,” Murguía said. “If we want a well-educated workforce in the future, we need to make investments in Latino students now.”

For more information about NCLR, please visit www.nclr.org.

###

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Contact:**

Erica Acosta
The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.
(212) 206-1090

Council Member Tony Avella and The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families Announce Free Bilingual Civic Education for College Point Community

Queens, NY, Nov. 14, 2007 – City Council Member Tony Avella and The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. have partnered to provide free bilingual U.S. History and Civics classes in the Council Member’s Queens community-district for adults interested in completing the citizenship and naturalization process. Funded by the New York City Council's Immigrant Opportunities Initiative, this service was designed to prepare people for the U.S. Citizenship test. The first group of 12 classes will commence on Monday, November 26, 2007 from 5:45 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. at the Poppenhusen Institute located at 114-04 14th Road in College Point, Queens.

“These classes will serve as a valuable resource for the burgeoning Hispanic community in College Point and will provide them with the civic knowledge they will need to become good citizens and active members of their community,” said Council Member Avella.

“Our classes reflect our commitment to education and our belief that it is the key to success. We have designed this service to meet the needs of the new Latino community in New York City and are happy to be able to offer it to the residents of the College Point area,” said Elba Montalvo, Executive Director of The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc.

The free classes offered in Spanish and English include U.S. History, U.S. Government, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. In addition, The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families will continue to offer advice on citizenship requirements and assist people in completing their Naturalization Application. For more information or to register please call (212) 206-1090.

Since 1982, **The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. (CHCF)** has been dedicated to improving the quality of life for Latino children and their families. Believing that the most effective way to serve Latino families is by building upon their existing strengths and fostering self-sufficiency, CHCF provides a number of programs and services to the community in the areas of Youth Development, Child Care Services, and Family Health Education. Grounded in its direct services, CHCF is active in the local, state and national policy arenas around issues of child welfare and the well-being of Latino children. For more information, please call (212) 206-1090 or visit our website at www.chcfinc.org.

###

Op-Ed¹⁰

An op-ed (which refers to an article opposite the editorial page) is a short opinion piece published in a newspaper written to gain visibility and credibility.

How-to:

- Keep your message and language simple: one main message or argument with up to three supporting points.
- Aim for 600 words in English and no more than 500 in Spanish.
- Be compelling and convincing. Discuss why this issue is important and make a strong case for why the reader should care or take action.
- Write on a newsworthy topic, something current in the news.
- Call for action, offer insight from personal experience, make recommendations, recount an anecdote or personal experience, or evoke a picture or common memory.
- Be prepared by having an ECE op-ed outline ready to be fleshed-out when an opportunity presents itself.

Dissemination:

- Send or deliver the article to the op-ed editor. Include a cover letter on your organization's letterhead thanking the editor for this opportunity.
- If your article is used, write a thank you note to the person who made the decision.
- Consider offering your article to the largest paper in your community on an exclusive basis.

Sample Op-Ed

In response to "Head Start Falls Further Behind"¹¹

To the Editor:

Douglas J. Besharov and Douglas M. Call never acknowledge that Head Start was recently renewed and improved.

While the program has prepared millions of poor black and Latino children to thrive in school, it was clear to us and others that it could be strengthened. And Congress did just that. In 2007, Head Start was renewed with greater emphasis on teacher quality, academic instruction and services to English-language-learning children and families.

The writers say that the money in the stimulus bill has “no strings attached,” that the bill “does not require any real change in return” for the funding. But every dollar Head Start receives in the economic recovery legislation will be subject to the reforms approved by Congress two years ago.

The education of very young children should be a priority for everyone. It is not clear to us how rehashing tired debates about Head Start helps.

Janet Murguía, Carol Brunson-Day, Washington, Feb. 10, 2009

The writers are, respectively, president of the National Council of La Raza and president of the National Black Child Development Institute.

Letter to the Editor*

A letter to the editor is a very short opinion piece usually written in favor of or opposition to a position presented in a recent news story.

How-to:

- Keep it short—between 100 and 200 words and no more than three brief paragraphs.
- Reference the title, date, and author of the original piece in your opening sentence.
- Lead with your most important point in the first paragraph.
- Suggest what the author should have said.
- Include your name, city, state, affiliation, and contact information.

Dissemination:

- Submit your letter the day the article you are responding to appears.

* Adapted from Physicians for Human Rights, “Advocacy Toolkit,” <http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/toolkit> (accessed April 2009).

Sample Letter to the Editor

Early education a must¹²

This is in response to “Advocates: Latinos lack access to pre-K; Kids enter kindergarten at a disadvantage” (Page 1, April 15), which detailed a crisis facing Chicago communities: Latino and other minority families have too little access to quality, affordable early-education opportunities. Quite often low-income families simply don't know where to turn for help. At Christopher House, a non-profit that has been serving Chicago for more than 100 years, we witness every day the strong need for pre-kindergarten programs that make a real difference in the lives of our kids.

When we educate children at an early age, we improve their readiness for kindergarten. Studies show that early learning is one of the key indicators of long-term success in school. Giving children the right academic start is an investment that helps to reduce crime, teen pregnancy and dependency on government programs.

Despite the obvious need – and benefit – Chicago falls short. In Logan Square, there are more than 4,700 Latino children under the age of 5, but only 25 percent were enrolled in early-education programs in 2006. Christopher House's new Logan Square Family Resource Center addresses some of these needs, but far more still needs to be done

We're encouraged that both Gov. Pat Quinn and President Barack Obama have recognized the enormous gaps between the demand and the availability of early-learning opportunities in low-income communities. We urge them and all of our leaders to view the need for more early-childhood education as a non-negotiable priority that will help to give all of our kids the futures they deserve.

— *Lori Baas, executive director,
Christopher House, Chicago*

APPendix I:

National and State Data Sources²⁰

Child Data

NCCP: Demographics Wizard can create custom tables of national- and state-level statistics on low-income children under the age of six. Choose areas of interest, such as parental education, parental employment, marital status, and race/ethnicity, among many other variables. Once the table is created, select the option to view data for children under age six.

www.nccp.org/tools/demographics

Children in Newcomer and Native Families presents a large number of indicators reflecting the characteristics of children from birth through age 17 in immigrant families by country or region of origin and in native-born families by race/ethnicity. Estimates are for the U.S. as a whole and localities including states, metropolitan areas, New York City, California counties and the Great Valley, and the Texas-Mexican border region. Selected results are also presented for specific age groups and by immigrant generation.

http://mumford.albany.edu/children/data_list_open.htm

MPI Data Hub includes *2007 American Community Survey* and Census data on the foreign born by state. State profiles include demographic and social data, language and workforce data, and income and poverty data.

www.migrationinformation.org/DataHub/acscensus.cfm

Annie E. Casey Foundation produces an annual *Kids Count* report that provides state-by-state data on key indicators of children's well-being.

www.aecf.org/kidscount/kc2000

Children's Defense Fund produces a number of reports on an annual basis about children and how states are meeting their needs.

www.childrensdefense.org

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics releases an annual report titled *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*. The report can be obtained by visiting their website or calling the National Maternal and Child Health Clearinghouse at (703) 356-1964.

www.childstats.gov



National Child Care Information Center provides links to child care research, state child care profiles, and a searchable online database with state-by-state information about children and child care.

<http://nccic.org>

Program Data

CLASP's State-by-State Child Care and Early Education Data includes analysis of child care spending from Child Care Development Block Grant and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds; Head Start Program Information Report data; states' use of community-based child care to provide prekindergarten; state infant and toddler initiatives; and state-funded Early Head Start initiatives.

<http://clasp.org/publications/childcareearlyedmap.htm>

NCSL Early Care and Education State Budget Actions is a 50-state survey of state appropriations to child care, prekindergarten, home visiting, and other early learning-related funding information, with an emphasis on general fund appropriations.

www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/budget_report.pdf

For specific charts: www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/t1_childcare.pdf

FRAC's Federal Food Programs State Profiles include information on state demographics, poverty, food insecurity, participation in federal nutrition programs, and state economic security policies.

www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/federal_index.html

Policy Data

Birth to Five Policy Alliance is a pooled fund that invests in state-based advocacy, strategic and broad-based leadership, and knowledge development and dissemination. The Alliance operates by leveraging resources and partnering with grantees to improve state policy and secure the public and private funds necessary to support at-risk young children in the earliest years. The Alliance website includes a compilation of information about state policies from grantee organizations.

www.birthtofivepolicy.org

Policy: http://birthtofivepolicy.org/index.php/state_policies

NCCP: Improving the Odds for Young Children provides state-specific, regional, and national profiles that integrate data about an array of policies that affect early childhood development. Policy categories include health and nutrition, early care and learning, and parenting and economic supports. View state profiles online or download the four-page PDF profile for each state.

www.nccp.org/profiles/early_childhood.html

User Guide to the State Early Childhood Profiles provides descriptions of the policies in the state profiles and the research base for their effectiveness.

www.nccp.org/profiles/pdf/EC_user_guide.pdf

NCCP Research Case for Improving State Early Childhood Policy is a PowerPoint presentation on the research behind why income matters, early experiences matter, and multiple risks matter.

www.nccp.org/downloads/ResearchCaseSept08.pdf

NCCP Income Converter allows users to enter one of the following values—annual income (in dollars), percent of the federal poverty level, or percent of the state median income—and convert that figure into the other two values. Users may also find information specific to the family size, year, and state.

www.nccp.org/tools/converter

NCSL State Early Care and Education Legislative Database provides information on all proposed and enacted legislation covering early care and education, including child care, prekindergarten, and family support.

www.ncsl.org/programs/cyf/ECELD.cfm

National Center for Education Statistics provides online access to education databases and updates national statistics on an annual basis in reports such as *The Condition of Education*.

<http://nces.ed.gov>

Examples of Data-Driven Advocacy and Policymaking

Pennsylvania Risk and Reach is an innovative approach to using data to inform policy and investment decisions in early care and education. Data include risk factors, program information, and funding by county and city.

www.pakeys.org/Reach_Rpt.aspx

How to Use Risk and Reach: www.pakeys.org/OCDEL_Comm/reach/index.aspx

APPendix II:

After Your Visit: Following UP and Maintaining a Relationship

The most valuable thing you return home with from Advocacy Day might be a new relationship with a member of Congress or a congressional staffer. Developing these new relationships can raise the profile of your organization and increase the amount of impact you have on both local and national policy debates. Once you have returned home, send a follow-up letter thanking the member of Congress and his or her staff for spending time with you. Make sure to include materials describing your organization and your current projects. You and your organization may want to try the following to maintain your new relationships:

- Contact your member of Congress when an important bill that affects your community needs his or her attention. You can stay updated on issues affecting the Latino community by signing up for NCLR Action Alerts at www.nclr.org.
- During the congressional recess, schedule an in-district visit when your members are back in your home state. Request that the DC staff who work on the issues you discussed during Advocacy Day join the meeting via conference call.
- Invite your member of Congress to attend or speak at an event you hold in his or her district. This could be an opportunity to demonstrate that what you do directly impacts the Congress member's constituents. If you are a direct service organization, you may want to invite the member to your facilities to view your operations and witness your impact firsthand.
- Speak to the Congress member's district staff to find out if there are opportunities for your organization to partner with the congressperson on a town hall meeting that focuses on the issues most important to your organization.
- If your organization is profiled in a local or national newspaper, send a clipping of the story to your Congress member's office, letting him or her know that you are interested in the member's opinion on the issue covered in the article. This is another way to engage congressional offices and remind your Congress member that you are an important newsmaker in his or her district.

APPendix III:

Effective TV Interviewing

Watch TV: Americans are often stereotyped for watching too much TV, but watching how others handle television interviews is a good way to figure out what works and what doesn't.

Plan Ahead: Writing out concise talking points beforehand will help you convey your message effectively. Refer to your talking points immediately before the interview to keep them fresh in your mind.

“Yes” and “No” are TV No-No's: Speak in complete sentences, especially when replying to a question. You will maximize your chances of being quoted or broadcasted accurately if you avoid simply responding with a “yes” or “no.” Also avoid nodding or shaking your head to respond to a question.

Keep Your Eyes on the Prize: Do not look up at the ceiling when you are thinking of what to say. You will look as if you're not telling the truth. Instead, look down if you need to look away—you will appear thoughtful. Also, try to avoid looking at other items on the set or in the studio, as you will appear nervous and shifty.

Sit Still: Though you don't want to look stiff, do not fidget, rock in your seat, or play with clothing, jewelry, or any other items during the interview. It is distracting and looks unprofessional.

Say the Organization's Full Name: Although you may have referred to your organization by its full name in the beginning of the interview, it is important to repeat the full name throughout the discussion. You do not know how the interview will be edited, and you want to make sure that you properly name your organization for possible sound bites.

Be Animated: Although it's good to be relaxed and comfortable on camera, you may appear bored or uninterested if you are too laid back. Stay focused, listen intensely, and be passionate in your replies.

Fake is for Handbags, Not Interview Answers: If you do not know the answer to a question, do not make something up. You will appear to be more knowledgeable and experienced if you explain that your expertise does not extend to that area. If you know of another person or organization that would have the answer, mention it.

You Can Say that Again: In everyday conversation, it is annoying to repeat yourself; however, in an interview, stating your messages more than once in different ways ensures that they will be heard.

Sending an Email Takes a Second, but Giving an Email Address Should Take Longer: Slow down and repeat email and web addresses and phone numbers so that viewers can take down the information.

Do Your Homework: Research the show and interviewer so that you know the probable style of the interview, including the types of questions you may be asked and the format of the segment.

Fashion Forward: We'd like to think that it's not all about looks, but after all, it is television. Wear comfortable, professional clothing. Avoid pastels and other light colors, and don't overdo it with accessories such as a busy tie or flashy jewelry.

APPendix IV:

Federal Legislative Process

The legislative process will help guide your advocacy activities. To advocate for a new piece of legislation, change legislation, or defeat legislation, you must know the steps of how a bill becomes a law in order to follow the legislation and decide when and how to advocate. To advocate for federal appropriations, you must monitor the separate but similar federal budget and appropriations process. While many states follow a similar process for passing their own laws, you should look up your specific state's legislative process to engage in state and local advocacy.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

With some differences mentioned below, the legislative process is essentially the same in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, and includes six basic steps:

1. Introduction and Referral to Committee

The bill is given a number and usually referred to the appropriate committee. The most intensive consideration of a bill takes place in committee. A committee can choose not to act on a bill and the bill is considered dead. There are 19 committees in the House and 16 in the Senate, as well as several select committees that are appointed to perform a specific function. There are four joint committees between the two chambers with oversight responsibilities.

Each committee is divided into subcommittees.

Example: House Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education

Advocacy Tip: Find out which committees your congressional members are on by visiting house.gov, senate.gov, and congress.org. You can let them know your thoughts on their committee's issues.

2. Subcommittee

Once a subcommittee is created, two steps are normally followed:

a) **Hearings:** The subcommittee listens to testimony from relevant government departments and agencies, members of Congress, senators, and private individuals. A transcript is made of committee hearings, which becomes public record.

b) **Markups:** After hearings are completed, the subcommittee will gather to formally draft the bill. The “base bill,” or bill that was introduced (sometimes with modifications made by the subcommittee chair, known as the “chairman’s mark”), is amended and voted on and subsequently “reported out” of the subcommittee to the full committee.

Advocacy Tip: The subcommittee level is where the legislative process really begins. You can use the information you gathered on your representatives’ committee memberships to contact them about issues they address in subcommittee, inform their staff about issues they might not know about, and develop legislation. This is the stage at which you might prepare and submit testimony in person or in writing for a hearing.

3. Full Committee

The full committee follows the same steps as the subcommittee. Hearings are frequently excluded and a formal written report is always included, which provides details on the intent of the legislation, its impact on existing laws and programs, the position of the executive branch, and the views of dissenting members of the committee.

Advocacy Tip: This is a critical stage for contacting members who are on committees that deal with your chosen issue. Members will debate during committee whether specific pieces of legislation should be included or excluded. The more voices members hear, the more powerful the message and the more likely they will argue and vote your way.

4. Floor Action, Debate, and Voting

After a bill is approved by its assigned committee, it will be reported back to the chamber in which it was introduced. The bill is placed in its chronological order on the calendar. The calendar determines if, when, and in what order bills will come to the floor for debate and a vote. In the House, there are different legislative calendars and the Speaker and Majority Leader determine where a bill is placed on the calendar. Once on the floor, the chamber considers and votes on amendments and a vote is taken on final passage of the bill. If the bill passes, it is referred to the other chamber to begin the process of committee and floor action.

Advocacy Tip: In this step, contact all members of the Senate or House, regardless of committee assignments, since they will all vote on the proposed legislation. Make phone calls and send letters, faxes, and emails asking your representative and senators to vote for or against a specific piece of legislation or amendment. It is crucial that you contact your representatives at this stage. Sending your lobbying materials to reporters who cover your issue and to editorial boards can also be very helpful.

5. Conference Committee

If a bill passes both the House and the Senate, a joint Conference Committee will meet to resolve the differences between the two versions. The final result, known as the conference report, is sent back to both chambers for consideration.

Advocacy Tip: If your members are on the Conference Committee, let them know your position about which pieces of legislation you think should be in the final bill. If your members are not on the Conference Committee, ask them to convey your messages to their colleagues on the committee.

6. President's Signature

Once the conference report is voted on and passes in the House and the Senate, the bill is sent to the President. Once the President signs the bill, it becomes public law. The bill dies if the President decides to veto the bill, unless Congress overrides the veto. The House and the Senate must both vote by a two-thirds majority to override the President's veto.

Endnotes

- 1 NCLR calculation using U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Sex by Age," *American Community Survey*. Conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Washington, DC, 2007, http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/MetadataBrowserServlet?type=DTtable&id=ACS_2007_3YR_G00_&table=ACS_2007_3YR_G2000_B01001&_lang=en (accessed June 2009).
- 2 National Center for Children in Poverty calculation using U.S. Bureau of the Census, *2006 American Community Survey*. Conducted by the Bureau of the Census. Washington, DC, 2007.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Glen Flores, Sandra C. Tomany-Korman, and Lynn Olson, "Does Disadvantage Start At Home? Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health-Related Early Childhood Home Routines and Safety Practices," *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 159, no. 2 (February 2005): 158-65.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 *The Condition of Latinos in Education 2008* (Washington, DC: Excelencia in Education, 2008).
- 8 Sarah Dolan, *Missing Out: Latino Students in America's Schools* (Washington, DC: National Council of La Raza, 2009.)
- 9 *Build Your Advocacy Grantmaking: Advocacy Evaluation Tool & Advocacy Capacity Assessment Tool* (Washington, DC: Alliance for Justice, 2005).
- 10 National Council for the Social Studies, "Toolkit: Today's Social Studies...Creating Effective Citizens," <http://www.socialstudies.org/toolkit> (accessed April 2009).
- 11 Douglas Besharov and Douglas Call, "Head Start Falls Further Behind," *New York Times*, February 7, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/08/opinion/08besharov.html?_r=2&scp=3&sq=Douglas+Besharov+OpEd&st=cse (accessed May 2009).
- 12 Lori Baas, "Early Education a Must," *Chicago Tribune*, April 27, 2009.
- 13 Sarah Dolan, *Missing Out: Latino Students in America's Schools* (Washington, DC: National Council of La Raza, 2009.)
- 14 *National Association for the Education of Young Children Advocacy Toolkit* (Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2004); Helene Stebbins et al., "Smart Start: Data-Driven Advocacy and Policymaking Session" (workshop, Smart Start National Conference, Greensboro, NC, May 2009).

	Notes
●	
●	
●	
●	
●	



	Notes
●	
●	
●	
●	
●	

	Notes
●	
●	
●	
●	
●	

	Notes
●	
●	
●	
●	
●	

	Notes
●	
●	
●	
●	
●	

www.nclr.org

