



CHOOSE CHILDREN

Communications Toolkit

**A Guide to Elevating Early Childhood in
California's 2026 Gubernatorial Cycle**

www.choosechildren.org

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Objective

Ensure California's Next Governor Prioritizes Young Children

Choose Children 2026 is a statewide, nonpartisan candidate engagement and education initiative with a clear goal: ensuring California's next governor prioritizes young children.

We build understanding of why the early years matter and advocate for leadership that advances the well-being, care, and learning of young children, their families, and the essential workers who support them.



Why Choose Children?

The Facts

California has the 4th largest economy in the world, yet our children's health and well-being do not match our economic output.



1 in **5**

young children live in poverty

2x

The cost of childcare is twice the cost of attending a public college

60%

of babies miss recommended pediatric check-ups during their first year of life

3 in **4**

children miss recommended developmental screenings before age three

17%

of early educators make less than a living wage

Learn more about why early childhood matters, the current state of early childhood and critical opportunities in [Choose Children's Policy Primer](#). 

What California Voters Are Saying

[Full presentation of voter polling results](#) 

83%

More than four in five California voters (83%) agree that the next Governor should make California a place young children can thrive.

9 in 10
Voters

Nearly nine in ten California voters support policies that:

- › Make childcare and preschool affordable
- › Provide quality prenatal and postpartum care
- › Provide fair wages and benefits for childcare workers
- › Build children's behavioral / mental health workforce
- › Increase mental health support for young kids and caregivers

#1
Priority

Affordability and cost of living are a top priority for California voters.

75%

Nearly three-quarters of parents say raising children places a financial strain on their family.

Policy Platform

The California That Every Family Deserves



Navigation — Families can easily find support in their language and culture.



Economic Security — Families have the financial resources to help their children thrive.



Birth Justice — Families receive quality, culturally responsive care before, during, and after birth.



Early Learning — Families have affordable, quality childcare and education from birth to age 5.



Health Care — Every child and family has affordable, quality health care.



Governance — California invests in strong infrastructure that puts families first.

How to Use This Toolkit

Partners are encouraged to use these materials for websites, newsletters, presentations, social media, conversations with candidates and public-facing communications.

Your participation and alignment help ensure early childhood remains visible, understood, and prioritized in statewide conversations.

Inside, you will find:

- › Core messaging guidance and key messages
- › Plain-language explanations of early childhood issues
- › Sample content for digital, media, and partner communications
- › Visual and messaging standards to ensure consistency

How You Can Help

Sign Up for Our Newsletter

Help us build a statewide conversation about early childhood. Sign up on Choose Children's website to learn about events and to stay engaged. Share language across your website, newsletters, presentations, and communications — and direct audiences to www.choosechildren.org to stay up to date.

Help Make Early Childhood Visible

Early childhood issues often stay invisible until families are directly affected. When using language, content, or messaging from this toolkit, ground your communications in lived experience and real outcomes — making the experiences of families with young children visible and relatable. Consistent, human-centered storytelling is what helps audiences understand why the first five years matter.

Use Consistent Language

Use the approved framing and language in this toolkit when communicating publicly. This ensures messages stay accurate, nonpartisan, and consistent across all partners.

Engage in Public Conversations

Early childhood shows up in almost every issue Californians care about — affordability, workforce, health, community well-being. When these topics arise, make sure early childhood is part of the conversation and explained in terms anyone can understand.

Leverage Digital and Social Channels

Social media is one of the fastest ways to shift public understanding. Share Choose Children content, explainers, and messages on your channels to normalize early childhood as the foundational issue it is.

Support Local and Regional Visibility

You know your community best. Share opportunities with the Choose Children team — whether to distribute materials or participate in local conversations. Local context strengthens statewide understanding and keeps early childhood relevant across regions.

Primary Key Messages

- ✓ **California must elect a governor who will put young children and families first.**
- ✓ California's affordability crisis is crushing families with young children.
One in five babies, toddlers, and preschoolers live in poverty.
- ✓ Federal policy shifts and uncertainty means we need strong and bold California leadership more than ever.
- ✓ California's voters want a children's governor:
83% of likely June voters believe our next Governor must prioritize children and families.
- ✓ California's next Governor must take immediate action during the first 100 days of the administration to support young children and families.



Secondary Key Messages

✓ **Economic stability supports healthy child development.**

When families can afford child care, housing, and time to care for their children, stress is reduced and outcomes improve.

Polling data underscores how central affordability is to voters:

- **98% of undecided voters cite affordability and cost of living as top priorities for the next Governor**
- Affordability ranks among the most important issues voters want leadership to address

✓ **Families want systems that work.**

Families interact with early childhood systems across health care, child care, and basic supports that do not connect. When systems are hard to navigate, families are more likely to delay care or miss support altogether.

Polling shows:

- **88% of voters support removing barriers to accessing essential services**
- **75% want social services to be easier to access**

✓ **Reliable child care supports families and the workforce.**

Child care is essential infrastructure for working families and for California's economy. When care is unreliable or unaffordable, families face impossible trade-offs.

Polling shows:

- **88% of likely voters support making child care and preschool affordable**
- **86% support fair wages and benefits for child care workers**

✓ **Healthy beginnings shape lifelong outcomes.**

Health during pregnancy, birth, and the earliest years has lasting impacts on physical, cognitive, and emotional development. Supporting healthy beginnings helps prevent challenges later and strengthens communities over time.

Polling finds:

- **88% of voters support providing quality prenatal and postpartum care**
- **72% support expanding early health care for infants, toddlers, and new mothers**

Blog Post: Early Childhood Builds California

Our ready-to-use blog post highlights key findings from Choose Children 2026 polling, showing strong voter support for early childhood investment. Share it on your website or newsletter to build public awareness — customize the intro for your community, but keep the core message and data consistent.

What's included:

- Key polling data points on voter support for early childhood services, affordability, and prenatal/postpartum care
- Context on why these findings matter across geography and family status
- A closing call to action linking to choosechildren.org

[Download the full blog post content](#) 

Social Media Post # 1

Systems & Access

Below are sample social media posts for use on Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram. Partners are encouraged to copy, paste, and adapt these posts while maintaining the core framing and tone. Use consistent initiative identifiers where appropriate.

Facebook

Families experience early childhood systems in real time, often across health care, child care, and basic supports that do not connect. When systems are easier to navigate, families face less stress and children experience better outcomes. **88% of voters support removing barriers to accessing essential services as a top priority for our next Governor.** Learn more at www.choosechildren.org.

X (Twitter)

Families shouldn't have to navigate disconnected systems to get support. **88% of voters support removing barriers to accessing essential services as a top priority for our next Governor. Early childhood systems work best when they work for families.** www.choosechildren.org

Instagram

Families experience early childhood systems as they really are—often fragmented and hard to navigate. **88% of voters support removing barriers to accessing essential services as a top priority for our next Governor.** Learn more at the link in our bio. #ChooseChildren

[Download Social Media Graphics](#) 



88%

of California voters support

**REMOVING
BARRIERS
TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES**

as a top priority for our next Governor

Learn more at choosechildren.org

Social Media Post # 2

Affordability

Below are sample social media posts for use on Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram. Partners are encouraged to copy, paste, and adapt these posts while maintaining the core framing and tone. Use consistent initiative identifiers where appropriate.

Facebook

Affordability shapes daily decisions for families with young children, from child care to housing to health care. When families in California are economically stable, children and communities benefit. **98% of undecided voters rank affordability and cost of living as top priorities for the next Governor.**

Learn more at www.choosechildren.org.

X (Twitter)

Affordability isn't abstract for families with young children in California.

98% of undecided voters rank cost of living as a top priority for the next Governor. Economic stability supports healthy child development.

www.choosechildren.org

Instagram

Affordability affects California families every day. When families are stable, children do better. **98% of undecided voters rank cost of living as a top priority for our next Governor.** Learn more at the link in our bio.

#ChooseChildren

[Download Social Media Graphics](#) 



Social Media Post # 3

Early Health

Below are sample social media posts for use on Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram. Partners are encouraged to copy, paste, and adapt these posts while maintaining the core framing and tone. Use consistent initiative identifiers where appropriate.

Facebook

Health during pregnancy, birth, and the earliest years shapes lifelong outcomes. Supporting healthy beginnings helps children grow, learn, and thrive over time. **88% of voters support providing quality prenatal and postpartum care as a top priority for our next Governor.**

Learn more at www.choosechildren.org.

X (Twitter)

Healthy beginnings matter. **88% of voters support quality prenatal and postpartum care as a top priority for our next Governor.** Early health shapes lifelong outcomes for children. www.choosechildren.org

Instagram

Healthy beginnings shape lifelong health and well-being. **88% of voters support quality prenatal and postpartum care as a top priority for our next Governor.** Learn more at the link in our bio. #ChooseChildren

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88%
of voters support

QUALITY PRENATAL & POSTPARTUM CARE

as a top priority for our
NEXT GOVERNOR

Learn more at choosechildren.org

Social Media Post # 4

Child Care & Early Learning

Below are sample social media posts for use on Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram. Partners are encouraged to copy, paste, and adapt these posts while maintaining the core framing and tone. Use consistent initiative identifiers where appropriate.

Facebook

Reliable, affordable child care supports children, working families, and California's workforce. When care is accessible, families are more stable and communities are stronger. **88% of voters support making child care and preschool affordable as a priority for California's next Governor.**

Learn more at www.choosechildren.org.

X (Twitter)

Child care is essential infrastructure for families and the workforce. **88% of voters support making child care and preschool affordable as a priority for California's next Governor.** www.choosechildren.org

Instagram

Reliable child care helps families work and children thrive. **88% of voters support making child care and preschool affordable as a priority for California's next Governor.** Learn more at the link in our bio.

#ChooseChildren

[Download Social Media Graphics](#) 



Visual Identity

Horizontal Logo



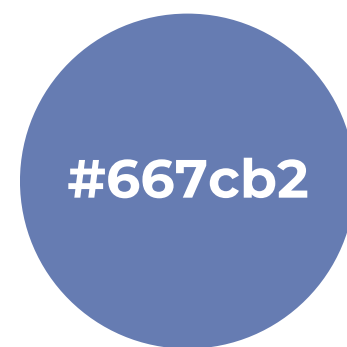
Stacked Logo



Icon



Colors



Frequently Asked Questions



Who Leads Choose Children?

Choose Children is a statewide coalition of over 40 child and family serving organizations and advocates — spanning health, education, family support, and community systems.

The initiative is co-led by a steering committee of First 5 Association of California, The Children's Partnership, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment.

Is Choose Children affiliated with a political party or candidate?

No. Choose Children is a nonpartisan 501(c)(3) public education initiative. It does not endorse or oppose candidates, political parties, or ballot measures.

Initiative Contacts

Get Involved

For questions, guidance, or support related to Choose Children 2026, including use of this toolkit, messaging alignment, or partnership coordination, please contact:

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