



DEVELOPING YOUR DIGITAL VOICE

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS TO
SUPPORT YOUR BUSINESS & ADVOCACY GOALS



Welcome!

Goal: This training is specifically designed to support early childhood educators to use digital tools, like email and social media, to become a stronger child care advocates and grow your businesses by creating meaningful connections with the families in your programs.



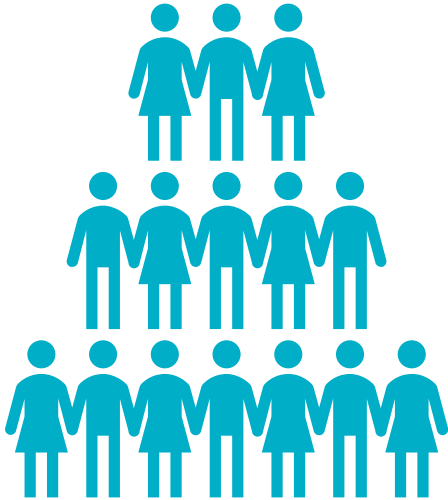
LET'S GROW KIDS
Action Network



Vermont Association for the
Education of Young Children

USING YOUR DIGITAL VOICE FOR ADVOCACY

Advocacy Campaigns Thrive on Volume



- When large swaths of supporters from different walks of life post on social media or talk with their friends online about the issue, it helps to spread the word with our individual networks and get more people involved to address the child care crisis in Vermont.
- Sharing personal stories is the best way to show your social media followers, or friends that you email with, why you care about an issue and share ways they can get involved, too. Make it yours!

Cultivate the Power of “We”

SEPARATELY - early childhood educators and families of young children are advocates.

TOGETHER – you are unstoppable.

By working, standing, advocating together, we can demand a strong and stable child care system that meets the needs of all Vermont's children, families, ECE, businesses, and economy.



USING YOUR DIGITAL VOICE FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Digital communications....



- Lend legitimacy to businesses – proof that you exist!
- Allow for direct communications with your audiences
- Support multi-media – text, photos, videos, music, ads, etc. The more ways you share information the more inclusive your communications will be and the more likely you are to connect with a broader audience.
- Are an affordable way to spread your word

Don't Get Left Behind!!



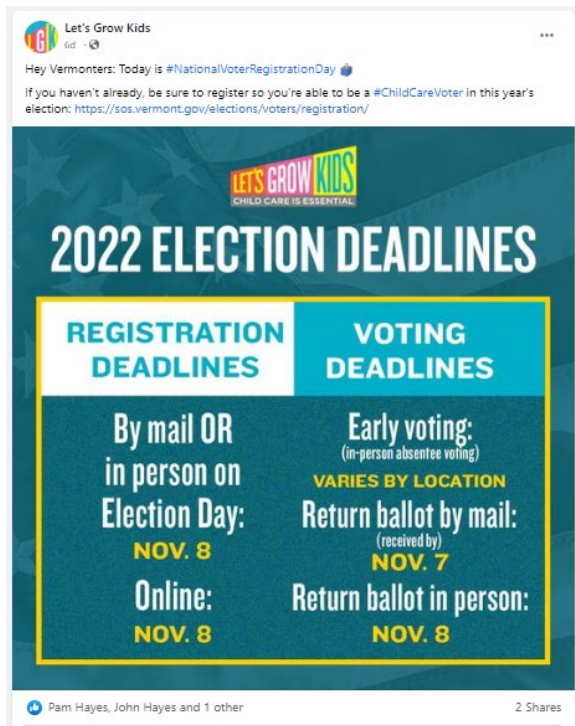
- 71% of small businesses in the United States use some form of digital communications to promote their business
- 77% of American adults own a smartphone and use it to communicate and consume information
- 72% of Americans use some sort of social media

THE ROLES OF SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Social Channels Roles

Channel	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
In a nutshell	The townhall	The magazine	The newsroom
How to show up and when to use it.	<p>Use Facebook for sharing links to relevant news articles, photos from events or from volunteers or staff, and longer posts.</p> <p>Facebook is great for elevating personal stories, providing context for why an issue is so important, or sharing your organization's purpose and mission.</p> <p>Facebook posts reach larger audiences and make it easy to share your story or why you are supporting Vermont's Child Care Campaign with a link for your followers to easily join the campaign themselves.</p>	<p>Since Instagram is a visual-focused medium, it's best to use photos or videos from your real life with information on why you are involved in Vermont's child care campaign, how the child care crisis has impacted you, and providing ways for your followers to get involved.</p> <p>Instagram is also great for spreading the word to your own followers by sharing content on your Instagram story that is from LGK or LGKAN.</p>	<p>Twitter is great for providing quick updates or actions for your followers to take. Just like the other platforms you can easily share why you are involved in the campaign and provide a link for your followers to join Vermont's child care campaign as well.</p>
Best Practices	Links work super well, as well as longer-form stories.	Photos of real people perform best. And don't forget to use Instagram stories to share content!	Shorter is key! This is also a great place to repost our content or quote tweet it.

Using Social Media for Advocacy



FACEBOOK



INSTAGRAM



TWITTER

Using Social Media to Connect with Families & Grow Your Business



SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

Social Media Best Practices & Examples

- **Keep it short!**
- **Be authentic** – use our own words, your own stories, your own voice
- **Include a clear call to action.** Whenever possible, include an action link in your post.
- **Follow & elevate thought leaders.** Find, follow, like, comment and repost content from thought leaders you admire to help spread messages you believe in.
- **Child Care Advocacy Example:** Let's Grow Kids, VTAEYC, Building Bright Futures, etc.
- **Tag accounts and use hashtags.** Tag people and accounts when you mention them in a post to make sure they see and are connected to content that is relevant to them. Add to the broader by conversation using hashtags.
- **Child Care Advocacy Example:** Tag LGK when you post about Child Care in VT and use hashtags: @LetsGrowKids, #letsgrowkids #childcareisessential #childcarevoter

People love videos! Best practices for recording content



Recording a selfie video on your cell phone or computer and posting it to your social media pages can be a great way to elevate your message. As we all know, people love video!

Recording Tips:

- Be clear and concise! People love videos, but not long, rambling ones.
- Try to shoot in a quiet room with minimal sound or wind and take care to consider sounds you typically overlook. These include: TV, radio, air conditioning, ceiling fans or heating units. These will create a hum or buzz.
- Pick a room or location that is well lit to avoid shadows and ensure that we can see your face easily while speaking
- Shoot horizontally
- Try to sound as conversational and unscripted as possible. If you are using a script, be sure to say it out loud a few times before you shoot so your cadence and rhythm sounds more natural and even trying talking a little slower than you normally would

Let's practice! Shoot a short selfie video



DRAFT SCRIPT:

Intro: Hello _____ families! This is _____ coming to you from the VtAEYC conference in Burlington.

Right this very second I am working with early childhood educators and communicators from Let's Grow Kids to learn how to better use digital communications tools to support (program name) and be a stronger advocate for child care in Vermont.

So here I am! Sending you a digital video and asking you to join Vermont's child care campaign and help me advocate for a child care system that is affordable and accessible to ALL Vermont families, compensates early childhood educators for our work, and enables thousands of parents to join the workforce and revitalize Vermont's economy,

The coming election is an important opportunity to elect leaders who are ready to prioritize child care in Vermont. Please take a moment right now to visit [lets grow kids dot org](https://lets-grow-kids.org), join Vermont's Child Care Campaign and learn how you can be a child care voter.

Homework: Post this video!



- **Find our accounts!**
 - **LGK:** [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)
 - **LGKAN:** [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#)

Tag @letsgrowkids

Include an actionable link to the [Let's Grow Kids Action Network Action Center](#)

EMAIL BEST PRACTICES

Email Best Practices



Email is a great way to communicate with the parents in your child care program – to share important information and opportunities, invite feedback, and stay connected.

General best practices:

- **Keep it short!** Make sure the main message and call-to-action above the fold.
- Write compelling (but concise) subject lines.
- **Make sure content is relevant and timely to your audience.**
- **Share photos of kids (make sure you have permission!)**
- Add a PS (people love ps's)
- Track your data - use an email program to help you track your email data – how many people are opening and clicking, etc. This data will help you hone in on what content, timing, format your audiences like best. Example platforms: Mailchimp, Constant Contact, Smore

Child Care Advocacy best practices:

- **Speak from experience:** Explain why child care is essential to YOU. Explain why you have joined the Child Care Campaign and what you're doing to make change. Invite your audiences to join you. Link to a specific action.

Using Email for Advocacy

Once a month we send out an advocacy ask for you to share in your newsletter or on social media. Help us spread the word by sharing advocacy opportunities with families in your program!

Robin's Nest Flyer

October 7, 2022

Be a Child Care Voter!

As a Robin's Nest family, you are intimately familiar with Vermont's Child Care Crisis: a lack of affordable, high-quality child care, and an early childhood education workforce that is not compensated fairly for their efforts. **What you may not know is that you're in a position to help solve this crisis.**

On Wednesday, October 26 at 6:15 pm, join Let's Grow Kids for a quick Zoom presentation about **how you can be part of our historic child care campaign.** Learn about the campaign and the impact your voice can have during the 2023 legislative session. We know you are busy, but this short amount of time can make a big difference. Just by attending, you'll receive a "Child Care Voter" t-shirt and learn about opportunities to get involved. [Click here to REGISTER >>>](#)



Using Email for Advocacy



Call to Action for Parents!

On **Wednesday, October 26 at 6:15 pm**, join Let's Grow Kids for a quick Zoom presentation about how you can be part of their historic child care campaign. If needed, you can attend and have your camera off.

This is an opportunity to learn about the campaign and the impact both your vote and your voice can have in the upcoming election and during the 2023 legislative session. We know you are busy, but this short amount of time can make a big difference.

Just by attending, you'll receive a "Child Care Voter" t-shirt and learn about opportunities to get involved.

[Click here to REGISTER >>>](#)

You can check out the list of [2022 Endorsed Child Care Candidates](#) put together by the Let's Grow Kids Action Network

Remember, **YOU** are in a position to help solve this crisis.

Please help us spread the word to other families you may know!

Using Email to Connect with Families & Grow Your Business

EJ'S COMMUNITY CONNECTION

WEEK OF 3/21 - 3/25/22



WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD FAMILY EVENT

Please check out the poster below to learn more about the upcoming family event happening in celebration of the Week of the Young Child! A few hours of fun, family and community! We hope you will join us for this event! See you there!



GOF Poster.pdf
READ ME! :)

[Download](#)
1.0 MB

EJ'S INFORMATION FOR THE WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

Find a handout below that outlines some of the upcoming activities that will be happening in the program, and also that families can consider doing at home. And don't forget that we are kicking off our week with a family event on 4/2 - we hope to see you there! Check out the GOF Poster above for all the details. There will be activities like painting flower pots, planting seeds, face painting, music and games, sugar on snow and more. Join the fun!



WOYC 2022.pdf
READ ME! :)

[Download](#)
109.6 KB

ADDITIONAL DIGITAL RESOURCES

Digital Resources to Support Your Business

Canva

Home Design Templates Features Learn Plans

What will you design?

Try logo, poster, anything!



For you



Presentations



Social media



Video



Print products



Marketing



Office



More



Play with Canva



Video



Presentation (16:9)



Instagram Post



Poster



Logo

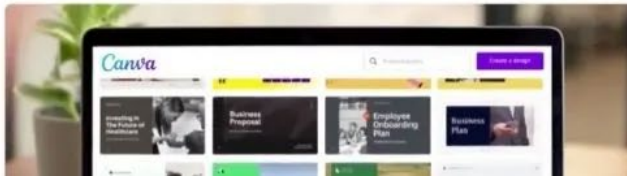


Facebook Post



A4 Document

Canva is a free-to-use online graphic design tool. Use it to create social media posts, presentations, posters, videos, logos and more.



Start inspired

With thousands of professional templates, images and quality

Digital Resources to Support Your Business



[SharedServicesVT.org](https://www.sharedservicesvt.org) is an online resource platform that offers ECE program support to all regulated programs in VT through HR resources, customizable templates, curriculum ideas, professional development, discounts, safety tips, tools for parent engagement, and Vermont specific information.



[Vermont Child Care Lynx](https://www.vermontchildcarelynx.org) is a user-friendly online resource to help early education programs throughout Vermont market themselves to families at no cost. Promote your early childhood program by highlighting all you have to offer, share your website, update openings, and add a detailed description and photo!



Slack is a new way to communicate with your team. It's faster, better organized, and more secure than email.



smore

Create beautiful, engaging school newsletters, updates and announcements. Super fast.

Digital Resources to Support Your Business



Capterra helps millions of people find the best business software. They assist consumers with selecting software for their needs based on user reviews and research.



Child care software to help you manage your students, classrooms, families, and business - all from one app.



Easily manage every part of your child care business by letting Procare organize family information, track attendance, automate tuition collection and do more for you!



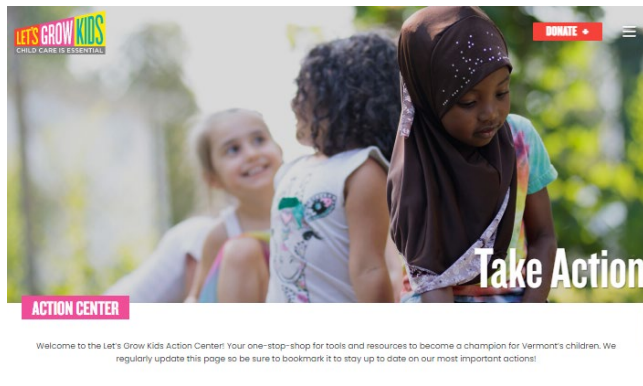
An end-to-end solution for family child care providers designed to allow early educators to spend less time with administrative tasks and more time with children. Wonderschool offers small child care program leaders many features such as online attendance, billing, wait list, communicating with families and expense tracking.

CHILD CARE ADVOCACY MESSAGES, ACTIONS, & WATCH OUTS

The Child Care Campaign: Key Advocacy Talking Points

- **The Problem:** Our families are in crisis and our economy is in decline because our child care system is broken. 3 out of 5 of Vermont's youngest children don't have access to the care they need; employers can't fill positions because parents can't work; parents who *do* have care can't afford it; and early childhood educators can't afford to stay in the field.
- **The Solution:** *Right now*, for the first time in Vermont's history, we have everything in place to make long-term public investments in a comprehensive child care system that will fix our economy, support our families, and shape our next generation. We cannot miss this opportunity. We must use our voices and our votes to elect the child care changemakers that will partner with us to make this happen - and then we must get it done!
- **The Call To Action:** We all need to work together to get child care champions elected on Tuesday, November 8. Visit [LGK.org/LGKAN](https://lgk.org/LGKAN) and join the campaign, contact your candidates, and be a child care voter.

Advocacy Action Centers



SIGN OUR PETITION

Sign our petition to join Vermont's Child Care Campaign and become a champion for Vermont's children. Once you sign, share with 5 friends and ask them to do the same!

20 seconds

SIGN +

JOIN US FOR AN EVENT

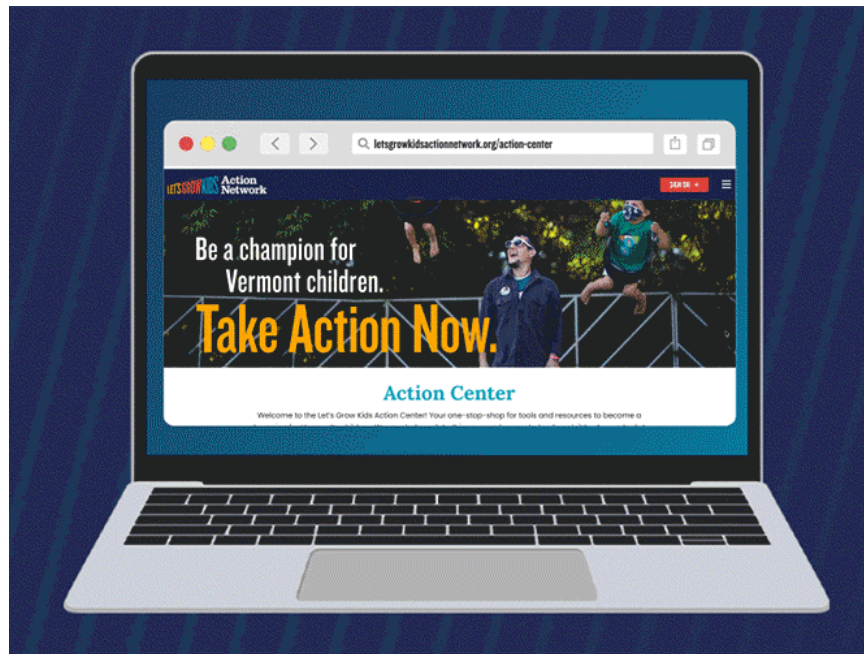
Whether in-person or virtually, join us for an event. No matter how you get involved, you are taking part in Vermont's Child Care Campaign!

1+ hour

JOIN +

3/5 OF VERMONT'S YOUNGEST CHILDREN
CAN'T ACCESS THE CARE THEY NEED

letsgrowkids.org/action-center



letsgrowkidsactionnetwork.org/action-center

Advocacy Messaging Watch-Outs:

1. **Avoid overtly partisan language:** In order to ensure all Vermonters feel represented in the Vermont Child Care Campaign, it's important to focus on the similarities and shared experiences that bring us together and transcend traditional party lines.
2. **Use accessible language:** All messaging should be comprehensive and easily digestible across audiences regardless of educational attainment.
3. **There is no villain, only potential heroes:** The focus is on the need for investment to solve this crisis and build a better future, not on calling out or placing blame on any single person or entity.
4. **Ground compensation messaging in data, equity, and positivity.** Early childhood educators should be well-compensated on par with other professions and in accordance with our skill, education, experience and to the essential role we play in our education system, our society, and our economy. Early childhood educators are the workforce behind the workforce. Positively framed messaging focused on needs and solutions out-perform negative messages.
5. **Consider the messenger:** Match the most compelling voice/perspective with the right audiences

What does success look like?

Successful Communications = Reaching the right audience, with the right message, at the right time

We've given you lots of ideas and examples here, but every audience is different and it may take a little time to figure out when and how your audience likes to receive information. How do we do it?

- Ask your audience! Use a paper or online poll to ask your audience how they'd like to receive information,
- Test, review data, adjust, repeat!
- Keep learning and trying new channels. No, parents are not getting younger, yes you ARE getting older, AND communications are ALWAYS changing

IN PRACTICE / QUESTIONS

Digital Advocacy in Action

Q & A:

- What questions do you all have?

Practice:

- Identify one advocacy or business development goal you'd like to achieve over the next 2-3 months, and build a plan to get there

S

SPECIFIC

State what you'll do, use action words

M

MEASURABLE

Provide a way to evaluate, use metrics or data

A

ACHIEVABLE

Within your scope, possible to accomplish

R

REALISTIC

Is your goal realistically achievable with the time given and the resources available?

T

TIME-BOUND

State when you'll get it done

NEXT STEPS

Next Steps:

- Look for email soon with links to this presentation, recording, toolkit, etc.
- Do your homework! Share your selfie video, post on social channels, tag LGK and add #hashtags
- Execute your digital advocacy plan and let us know how it goes
- Extra credit: Join the LGK Early Educator Facebook Page
 - Share & engage



Thank you!

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