


So you have a candidate on your doorstep ... Now what?

It's election season! That means candidates are out in their communities right now, trying to speak with as many voters as possible.

They want to hear what you care about and share information about their platform. If a candidate or their campaign volunteer shows up on your doorstep, **DON'T** turn off the lights and hide ...

 **This is a GREAT opportunity to make affordable access to high-quality child care a top campaign issue!**

But what do I say?!

 **Good question. Here are some simple steps to guide the conversation:**

- 1.** If the candidate or campaign volunteer hasn't mentioned child care, you can bring it up:
 - It's great to hear that you care about so many important issues that impact our community. An issue I really care about is high-quality, affordable child care.
 - I'm glad you brought up wanting to make VT more affordable. That makes me think of child care.
- 2.** Then share your personal story related to child care. How have you struggled?
- 3.** Talk about how this isn't only a problem for you—it negatively affects Vermont as a whole.
- 4.** Finally, ask the candidate or campaign volunteer about the candidate's position:
 - If elected, what would you do to address Vermont's child care challenges?
 - Do you support or oppose efforts to expand high-quality, affordable child care in Vermont?
If you support it, how do you suggest Vermont fund a system of high-quality and affordable early care and learning for all Vermont families?
 - If elected, what would you do to ensure that more Vermont families with young children can find and afford child care?

Want more talking points and statistics to support your conversation? Visit letsgrowkids.org!
If you get to talk to a candidate, tell us how it went! Submit a report at letsgrowkids.org/volunteer

So you find yourself at a candidate forum ...



Good for you! Now's your chance to ask candidates to go on the record in support of high-quality, affordable child care! How to do that depends on the type of forum.

Town hall-style forums

Any event that allows constituents to interact directly with a politician may be called a town hall. Town halls are public meetings in person, over the phone or via the internet at which constituents ask legislators/candidates questions about their positions on various issues.

If you plan to attend a town hall-style forum:

- 1.** Do your homework: Check out the LGK Candidate Dashboard to see if the candidates attending the event have provided statements about their position on high-quality, affordable child care. If they have, you'll be able to ask a more specific question: letsgrowkids.org/candidate-dashboard
- 2.** Prepare your question in advance. Write it out and practice saying it out loud before the event so you can ask your question clearly and succinctly. It's perfectly acceptable to read the question from a piece of paper if you don't have it memorized.
- 3.** If the candidates try to skip over your question or don't answer it directly, make a note to follow up with them through a one-on-one meeting, email or letter after the event.

Moderated forums

Sometimes the audience only plays a listening role at a candidate forum because the questions have been collected/prepared in advance and are asked by a moderator. There may still be an opportunity to insert child care into the conversation! Some moderated forums ask for questions from constituents in advance of the event, at which point you can contribute. Your LGK field manager will keep you aware of opportunities to submit questions to moderated candidate forums.

So what should I ask?!



Here are some sample questions to get you started:

- Do you support or oppose efforts to develop a high-quality, affordable early care and learning system in Vermont, and why?
- Research shows that more than half of Vermont's infants and toddlers likely to need child care don't have access to regulated child care programs. If elected, what will you do to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet the needs of Vermont families with young children?
- Vermont's Blue Ribbon Commission on Financing High Quality, Affordable Child Care found that ensuring every family that needs child care in Vermont has affordable access to high-quality care would require an increased investment of at least \$205 million into the system. What's your recommendation on how to fund a high-quality, affordable system in our state?

Let us know how it goes!

After the event, let us know how it went! Use our Representative Recon form to report your experience at letsgrowkids.org/volunteer.

And please note: While we can help you stay informed about engaging with candidates and we can ask ALL candidates where they stand on issues relating to our work, as a 501(c)(3) organization LGK cannot support or oppose any political candidate or party. **Thanks for helping us put child care on the campaign map!**