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# Ways to Educate & Engage your Community & State Leaders



## Educate and engage your local early care and education workforce.

- Distribute the *I Make a Difference* tools to the workforce to increase their awareness about the importance of their work and role in supporting a healthy, productive community.
- Email the downloadable *I Make a Difference* poster to your professional network and request they download materials and share with their families, staff, suppliers, funders and supporters.
- Share key issues, relevant research and data about the field, the services it provides and the importance of an educated workforce in ready to print/post newsletter articles and tip sheets, in emails and in trainings to help early educators convey messages and/or make the case for support.
- Assist early educators in sharing their message by providing training about strategies they can use to reach a community and/or state leader.
- Offer sample letters and email messages that early educators can tailor for their use.
- Provide contact information for community and state leaders.
- Set up a time when early educators can gather together to meet with key leaders.
- Encourage teachers and other early childhood professionals to post the *I Make a Difference* banner on their facebook pages.

## Educate and engage your community and state leaders.

- Write letters and emails to share key issues, relevant research and data about the field, the services it provides and the importance of an educated workforce.
- Host a breakfast and/or lunch and learning events to educate leaders about the importance of the work, what services exist in their communities/district, the research demonstrating the impact and what they can do to make a difference for young children.
- Invite leaders to community forums to listen to and talk with early educators and experts about the social and economic impact of the industry on children, families, the teaching workforce, schools, higher education, businesses, communities and states.
- Offer opportunities to tour early care and education programs of varying quality to help leaders experience a firsthand view of the difference an educated workforce makes.
- Organize job shadow opportunities to provide a frontline perspective of the work of an early childhood professional to leaders who make the policies and funders who do/could support the work.

## Educate and engage your general community.

- Distribute *I Make a Difference* materials to share information about the key issues, relevant research and data about the field, the services it provides and the importance of an educated workforce.
- Create *I Make a Difference* tip sheets tailored to your community to help neighbors, employers, places of faith, civic groups, schools, institutions of higher education, funders, and community leaders learn how to engage in activities that make a difference for young children.
- Raise community awareness by using the tailored tools to share information with your community via local newspapers and radio and television stations.
- Encourage community members to contact their local and state leaders to share campaign materials to pass on key messages.
- Build a virtual buzz by using social media strategies including posting the "*I Make a Difference for Young Children*" banner on your organization's website and Facebook page.