



A STRATEGIC VISION FOR NORTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN

2021-2023



WHO WE ARE ●●●●●●●●●●

Our goal is to nurture and advance an equitable early childhood ecosystem that improves health and well-being for children, particularly children and families of color from under-resourced and overburdened communities, and leads to a healthier, more prosperous state, now and in the future.

WHAT WE DO ●●●●●●●●●●

Change happens through coordinated action across communities. We help improve the health, education, and well-being of North Carolina's children from birth-to-age-eight and their families by:

PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING

- Effectively communicating the importance of early childhood investments
- Centering racial equity in our work and communicating why it is critical to close the opportunity gap for children of color in their earliest years
- Engaging business leaders and elected officials to champion early care and education
- Lifting up community and family voices to guide decision making

SPEARHEADING COLLABORATION

- Convening state and local health, education, family, business, and policy leaders, to build strong alignment across early childhood systems and actively foster discussion, dialogue, and collaboration
- Encouraging accountability

VISION

Each North Carolina child has a strong foundation for life-long health, education, and well-being supported by a comprehensive, equitable birth-to-eight ecosystem.

MISSION

To marshal North Carolina's great people, ideas, and achievements to ensure equitable access to opportunity and success for every child by the end of third grade.

ADVANCING POLICIES

- Providing policy analysis, resources and data
- Inspiring innovation and action for change
- Connecting and clarifying the complex landscape of policies, programs, research, and state agency agendas that impact children and families

IN OUR DAILY WORK, WE:

- Continuously grow our understanding of systems of oppression, power, and antiracism and challenge racist policies and ideas
- Lead and convene holistic, collaborative, and solution-based coalitions, workgroups, and discussions within the early childhood ecosystem to drive and inspire systemic change
- Act as a bridge that can nimbly connect the work that each organization brings to the early childhood ecosystem
- Collect, distill, and synthesize essential information to inform early childhood stakeholders
- Leverage, advise, and influence policies that are beneficial to align the early childhood ecosystem and lead to better outcomes for children and families, especially children and families of color



OUR IMPACT

Generations of young children and their families, especially children of color from under-resourced and overburdened communities, are healthier, better educated, and achieve greater well-being.

THE FUTURE NCECF IS:

- The driving force that guides North Carolina's early childhood ecosystem through discussion and decision-making centering racial equity and remaining nonpartisan
- Creators of a safe, open, and collaborative space to solve issues that improve the health, education, and well-being of children birth-to-age-eight and their families
- The go-to early childhood resource in both the public and private sectors, influencing and supporting all stakeholders within the early childhood ecosystem
- A leader in early childhood systems change across the state and the country
- An organization that is continuously learning and growing our understanding of systems of oppression and power and antiracism
- A leader in equipping other organizations to center racial equity—that means prioritizing strategies to improve outcomes for children of color and giving special consideration to the wisdom and innovation of people of color to develop responses that are lasting and reach all children
- A megaphone for the voice of families, particularly families of color from under-resourced and overburdened communities

TOP ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS FOR 2021-2023:

- To build capacity for:
 - » Policy analysis at the state and national level, and
 - » Communications about NCECF and the early childhood ecosystem

- To promote understanding through: lifting up the voices of our state-level advocates, community and family voice across all of our platforms and channels
- To spearhead collaboration through: serving as a bridge to support our partners in the early childhood field to meet their goals for children and families (ReBuild, EarlyWell)
- To advance policy through: building capacity to create and maintain the Pathways Action Map; a new online tool designed to help drive action in NC by providing a snapshot of what's happening in 40 prioritized areas.
- To clearly align our initiatives such as the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, Family Forward NC, and our work to rebuild NC's child care system post-COVID within the Pathways framework and measures

TOP COMMUNICATIONS GOAL FOR 2021-2023:

Create a more cohesive brand with the goal of presenting NCECF as an organization that leads aligned initiatives rather than a series of initiatives that happen to be run by the same organization. We will meet this goal by:

- Creating core messaging for the organization, then complementary messaging for each initiative and audience
- Assessing the current website for flow, usability, and opportunities to focus more on communications from an organizational level rather than an initiative level
- Designing an ongoing communications strategy centered in racial equity across all of our social channels, digital platforms, and collateral
- Creating a brand book that clearly articulates rules and guidelines for the brand across initiatives, then re-work branding for initiatives as needed to bring them more in line
- Considering a new brand identity for the organization, which could include a new name, organizational logo, and logos for the individual initiatives that better tie everything together