

# My Nebraska Story

Campaign Messaging Guide | MyNEstory.org

## What's your role in making quality child care part of your community's success story?

Every community in Nebraska has a story.

These are stories about hope and imagination, pride and perseverance. Most of all these are stories about opportunity, and how it creates vibrant communities where people can live, work and thrive. The decisions we make about the care and education of our youngest children profoundly affect how these stories unfold.

Building a robust early childhood infrastructure is a key part in making our state and communities the right place to put down roots, raise a family, build a career, grow a business and create social, educational and economic opportunity for the up-and-coming generation of Nebraskans.

**My Nebraska Story** is a social media campaign developed by First Five Nebraska in collaboration with Nebraska Children and Families Foundation/Communities for Kids. It has two key objectives:

- Empower our state's families, educators, business leaders and others to share their own stories about the importance of quality child care in their communities.
- Help early childhood advocates spark broader conversations with employers, civic leaders and other stakeholders who are well positioned to play a crucial role in strengthening quality child care options in their community.

Visit the **My Nebraska Story** website at [MyNEstory.org](http://MyNEstory.org) for campaign messaging materials and information.



## How to use this Guide

This booklet provides an overview of the **My Nebraska Story** campaign audiences, messages, objectives, social media calendar and other resources for early childhood advocates throughout the state.

All campaign materials are available through the **My Nebraska Story** website:

### **MyNEstory.org**

While many of the materials on the campaign website are specific to featured communities, you will also find more generalized versions that can be used in any location throughout the state.

The **My Nebraska Story** website also serves as the hub for an expanding library of downloadable resources specifically intended to help business and economic development audiences connect with local conversations about quality child care.

Feel free to reach out to us with questions or comments at:

**info@FirstFiveNebraska.org**

## Campaign Timeline

### ■ **Week 1 | July 20 to 24: Statewide and Local Campaign Kickoff**

We begin the public messaging phase of the campaign by releasing the statewide and community-specific campaign videos, and distributing press releases to print and broadcast media outlets.

### ■ **Week 2 | July 27 to 31: Business Leaders Week**

We focus on the role of business leaders and economic developers in promoting quality child care as a factor in marketing our communities to young families, growing our current and future workforce and increasing economic productivity.

### ■ **Week 3 | August 3 to 7: Working Parents Week**

Nebraska ranks among the highest states in the nation the percentage of workforce participation by parents. This week, we look at the role access to quality child care plays in enabling parents to provide for their families and support local business.

### ■ **Week 4 | August 10 to 14: Child Care Professionals Week**

This week acknowledges the importance of quality child care as a skilled profession and why it's in our best interest to help providers run successful programs.

### ■ **Week 5 | August 17 to 21: Our Children's Story Week**

We conclude our weekly campaign themes by looking at how quality early care and learning put children on the path to grow our future workforce and become capable, confident future leaders of our communities.

### ■ **Week 6 | Campaign Milestone Week**

We come together again to share our insights and observations about the campaign—what resonated, what didn't and why. We'll also take a look at additional resources and efforts for keeping the campaign message fresh in the months ahead.

# Campaign Audiences and Core Messages

The story of quality child care in Nebraska is a story about social, educational and economic opportunity in our communities. What's **your** role in this story?

## Audience



### Local Business and Economic Leaders



### Civic Leaders and Influencers



### Child Care Owners and Operators



### Working Parents and Families

## Their Role

Create local economic activity and opportunity for employers and working families

Organize civic resources and develop public policies that support high-quality child care

Educate children, support working families and enhance the local economy

Raise successful children, provide for their families and grow stronger communities

## Call to Action

Cultivate family-friendly workplaces, partner with local child care programs and create a child care-friendly business environment

Convene public and private partners in support of quality child care

Become more visible and actively involved in the local business community

Recognize and advocate for access to quality child care options

# Social Media Assets

## Statewide Campaign Video



Our social media messaging efforts kick off with statewide campaign (or “hero”) video.

This video provides an overview of the campaign’s key messages by bringing together footage from the individual, community-specific videos produced for Broken Bow, Gothenburg, Lincoln, McCook, Norfolk, North Platte, Ogallala, Oshkosh, Schuyler, Stuart and York.

## Community Campaign Videos



Each community campaign video focuses on the the stories that connect economic development, working families and child care in your hometown.

Featured spokespersons include local employers, economic development directors, working parents, policymakers, school administrators and early childhood professionals.

## Animated “Explainer” Videos



The campaign also features a series of animated videos that illustrate key concepts that align with weekly themes.

- Child care is vital to local infrastructure
- What employers can do to help working parents with young children
- Child care is a skilled profession
- Nebraska communities depend on home-based child care
- Working together to strengthen child care

## Weekly Themed Social Media Posts



Each featured community in the campaign has four pre-scripted social media posts, most of which focus on a particular spokesperson representing that community and the weekly messaging theme. These posts are optimized for Facebook, but can be used on other social media platforms as well. In addition, the campaign features non-location-specific posts that can be used in any community throughout the state.

# Social Media Calendar

## July 20 to August 7

### STATEWIDE & LOCAL CAMPAIGN KICKOFF WEEK

Monday	20-Jul	Tuesday	21-Jul	Wednesday	22-Jul	Thursday	23-Jul	Friday	24-Jul
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN sends weekly email to local campaign partners</li> <li>▶ FFN issues statewide press release</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN posts statewide campaign video</li> <li>▶ Local partners post their community campaign videos</li> <li>▶ Local partners issue localized press release (anytime this week)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Broken Bow campaign video</li> </ul>		<p><b>Campaign Tip:</b> Stay alert for any outreach from local media. Be sure to check out the MNS Campaign Messaging Guide for helpful tips on talking with reporters.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Local partners re-post community campaign videos</li> <li>▶ FFN shares Gothenburg campaign video</li> </ul>	

### BUSINESS LEADERS WEEK

Monday	27-Jul	Tuesday	28-Jul	Wednesday	29-Jul	Thursday	30-Jul	Friday	31-Jul
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN sends weekly email to local campaign partners</li> <li>▶ FFN and local partners post animated campaign video ["Child care is vital to local infrastructure"]</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Lincoln campaign video</li> <li>▶ Local partners publish Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Business Leaders"]</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares York's Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Business Leaders"]</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares McCook campaign video</li> <li>▶ Local partners publish supplemental post on weekly theme</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Local partners publish supplemental post on weekly theme</li> <li>▶ FFN shares North Platte's Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Business Leaders"]</li> </ul>	

### WORKING PARENTS WEEK

Monday	3-Aug	Tuesday	4-Aug	Wednesday	5-Aug	Thursday	6-Aug	Friday	7-Aug
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN sends weekly email to local campaign partners</li> <li>▶ FFN and local partners post animated campaign video ["What employers can do to help working parents with young children"]</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Norfolk campaign video</li> <li>▶ Local partners publish Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Working Parents"]</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Local partners re-post their community campaign videos</li> <li>▶ FFN shares Ogallala's Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Working Parents"]</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN &amp; local partners publish supplemental post on weekly theme</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares North Platte campaign video</li> </ul>	

▶ First Five Nebraska campaign activity    ▶ Local partner campaign activity    ▶ Simultaneous FFN/local partner campaign activity

# Social Media Calendar

## August 10 to 28

### CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS WEEK

Monday 10-Aug	Tuesday 11-Aug	Wednesday 12-Aug	Thursday 13-Aug	Friday 14-Aug
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN sends weekly email to local campaign partners</li> <li>▶ FFN and local partners post animated campaign video ["Child care is a skilled profession"]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Local partners publish Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Child Care Professionals"]</li> <li>▶ FFN shares Norfolk's Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Child Care Professionals"]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Ogallala campaign video</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN and Local partners post supplemental post on weekly theme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Oshkosh campaign video</li> </ul>

### OUR CHILDREN'S STORY WEEK

Monday 17-Jul	Tuesday 18-Jul	Wednesday 19-Jul	Thursday 20-Jul	Friday 21-Jul
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN sends weekly email to local campaign partners</li> <li>▶ FFN and local partners post campaign video on child development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Schuyler campaign video</li> <li>▶ Local partners publish Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Our Children's Story"]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Broken Bow's Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Our Children's Story"]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares Stuart campaign video</li> <li>▶ Local partners publish supplemental post on weekly theme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares McCook's Weekly Themed Social Media Post ["Our Children's Story"]</li> </ul>

### CAMPAIGN MILESTONE WEEK

Monday 24-Aug	Tuesday 25-Aug	Wednesday 26-Aug	Thursday 27-Aug	Friday 28-Aug
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN sends weekly email to local campaign partners</li> <li>▶ FFN and local partners post animated campaign video ["Working together to strengthen child care"]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN shares York campaign video</li> <li>▶ Local partners re-post their community campaign videos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Campaign Milestone Webinar: Keeping the Message Going</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ FFN re-posts statewide campaign video</li> </ul>	

▶ First Five Nebraska campaign activity    ▶ Local partner campaign activity    ▶ Simultaneous FFN/local partner campaign activity



# Getting the Word Out

## Social Media Tips and Strategies

Effective social media engagement is the backbone of the **My Nebraska Story** campaign. Keeping a few simple strategies in mind may make a great deal of difference in the success of your messaging efforts.

### ► Know your platforms and their audiences

The social media content developed for **My Nebraska Story** is optimized for Facebook, but it's not the only platform available to you. If you have specific audiences you want to reach, research where they're most active on social media and use those platforms in your messaging.

### ► Strategic tagging

One of the surest ways to catch someone's attention is to mention them in conversation. If your **My Nebraska Story** post is particularly relevant to a specific audience, consider tagging that organization or entity in your post. However, avoid tagging others too often—at most once or twice during the first five weeks of the campaign—and be sure never to challenge them (or “call them out”) on your issue. Gently does it.

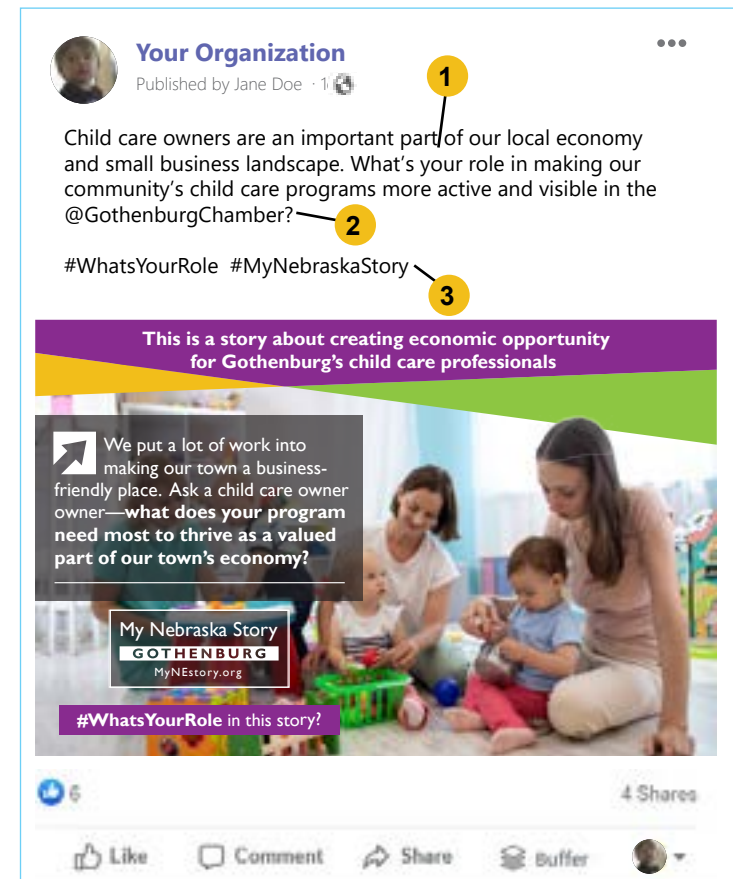
### ► Use the campaign tagline and hashtags

This campaign is built on a central theme: the story of quality child care is also a story about successful families, thriving businesses, strong economies, dynamic communities and flourishing children. Our call to action is for audiences to consider what *their* role might be in that story.

Try to work the “What's your role” tagline into your posts where possible, and be sure to use the campaign hashtags **#WhatsYourRole** and **#MyNebraskaStory**.

### ► Keep the conversation going

Pay attention to who reacts to your social media posts and how. If they offer comments or questions, be intentional about responding in as timely a manner as possible. Let them know you're listening. If someone has specific questions about the campaign in general, feel free to direct them to First Five Nebraska at [info@FirstFiveNebraska.org](mailto:info@FirstFiveNebraska.org).



- 1 Use the campaign tagline to frame your call to action
- 2 If appropriate, tag a local organization or entity in your post
- 3 Using campaign hashtags can help us track the conversation and evaluate the success of our messaging efforts

# Getting the Word Out

## Talking to the Press

The **My Nebraska Story** campaign comes at a time when a great deal of attention is being focused on the disruptions caused by COVID-19 and our state's path to economic recovery. The campaign's economic development theme is likely to spark interest among statewide and local media, which means that reporters may reach out for additional information or insight.

If a reporter contacts you about your community partnership or involvement in the campaign, the following guidelines can help:

### ► **Keep three messages top-of-mind**

You may not always know when a reporter is going to reach out to you for a comment, so try to prepare three key messages that you can memorize and produce at a moment's notice. If you ever feel yourself going off track in an interview, grab onto one of your key messages and use it to steer the conversation back in the direction you want it to go.

### ► **If in doubt, leave it out**

Don't try to answer questions that you're not comfortable answering. If you don't have the information a reporter is asking for, offer to find out or connect them to someone else who can help. If a reporter has a specific question about an aspect of the campaign that you'd rather not answer, just refer them to [First Five Nebraska](#).

### ► **Keep it simple**

Child care is an enormously complex, often technical issue that touches on state policy, economics, civic planning, business practice and neuroscience. Feel free to offer relevant data or statistics, but try to avoid jargon or giving so much information that the point you want to make becomes unclear.

### ► **Stay Positive**

Child care providers, parents and other advocates may be feeling frustrated or even scared due to the pressures they are facing in the age of COVID-19. It's okay to acknowledge the urgency of our child care challenges. Even so, strive to be both realistic *and* optimistic when talking about the benefits of quality early care and learning to your community. Keep the focus on working together toward a solution.

## Key Campaign Messages

- Business owners can offer supports to working parents with young children without unduly threatening their own bottom lines. That begins with having a clear understanding of their employees' child care needs.
- There are many ways employers can strengthen quality child care options for their workers. These include partnering with providers to reserve slots for their employees, helping to increase program capacity, or coaching them in effective business practice.
- Access to affordable, quality child care helps communities market themselves more effectively as the right place to put down roots, raise a family, grow a career or build a business.
- Quality, sustainable child care programs are important economic assets to their communities. The service they provide improves workplace productivity, generates local revenue, attracts new talent and contributes to a stronger future workforce.
- No parent who wants or needs to participate in the workforce to better provide for their family should be prevented from doing so because they lack access to quality child care.
- Building a strong child care system in our communities and state is not the responsibility of any single organization or special interest group. It has to be a community-wide effort involving multiple public and private sector partners.

## A Note on "Quality"

*Offering a hard-and-fast definition of "quality" in child care can be a sensitive issue in many communities. For the purposes of this campaign, we suggest the following:*

**Quality programs are physically safe, cognitively stimulating and emotionally nurturing for young children. To deliver quality, these programs must be consistently and responsibly managed by professional caregivers and educators who are fully prepared to meet the needs of the families they serve.**





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Campaign content is solely the responsibility of its authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.