The #Bthru8 Early Success Social Media Campaign

APRIL 2013

A HOW TO GUIDE FOR

JOINING THIS CAMPAIGN

& SAMPLE

TWEETS/POSTS

Alliance *for* **Early Success**

*Advancing State Policies
for Young Children*

Please feel free to use any tweets and posts from these sample ones included in this document. The topics covered are listed below. We hope these are helpful to you in your efforts!

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A How to Guide for Joining the #Bthru8 Early Success Campaign

Join the #Bthru8 Early Success campaign!

The #Bthru8 Early Success campaign is an effort to spread research-based messages via Facebook and Twitter in order to increase awareness about the benefits of strong early childhood policies, practices and smart investments.

Email us at info@earlysuccess.org and we'll add you to our list of participating groups!

Who can participate?

Anyone who wants to help inform state discussions about early childhood programs who is willing to use social media (such as Twitter or Facebook).

What do we do?

Groups and individuals with an interest in advancing better state early childhood policies and practices can participate in social media conversations by adding #Bthru8 to Tweets and posting information about early childhood research and news in other social media forums such as Facebook.

Ideas for using social media to disseminate research and news

1. **Tweet and Post!** Please tweet and post research-based messages on Twitter and Facebook and **add #Bthru8.**

   Not sure what to write? We have some sample tweets and Facebook posts you can use that link back to short descriptions of the research with citations on the Alliance website.

2. **Directly message opinion leaders with facts, and/or tag them in your posts.**
   Every state has its own set of opinion leaders and stakeholders in the field of early childhood, usually a mix of policymakers, advocates, parents and reporters. Some states might consider tagging these opinion leaders (simply by typing the "@" symbol followed by their user name on either Facebook or Twitter, and/or by directly messaging them to alert them to the #Bthru8 Early Success effort.) More ideas on this outreach can be found later in this guide.

3. **Host a Twitter Town Hall.** You may want to also consider doing an "ask the experts" town hall for policymakers, the media and the public in your state.

Getting started with Twitter

1. Sign up for an account at www.twitter.com.
   a. Pick a handle that reflects you or your organization. Try to keep it short.
2. Click on the cog to change your account profile and settings. Add a square profile picture of your organization or a picture of you.
3. Write a brief bio.
4. Find the little picture of a pen with a quill in the top right hand corner. Click on that to write your first tweet.

5. Type your tweet into the box that says, "What's Happening". Keep it less than 140 characters. In example below, we have 24 left to use. Click on Tweet and you're off and running.

6. Voila! You've just become part of the Twitter conversation on #Bthru8.

FAQ by people new to Twitter

1. **What is a hashtag and why are they everywhere?**
A hashtag is a great way to unify conversations across the millions of Tweets happening all day long. For example, if you wanted to see what people were saying about the State of the Union address given by the president every year, search for #SOTU and you'll see all the tweets that marked their conversations with it.

   Or let's say, you want to see what's going on in early childhood education, search for #ECE.

   And we hope you'll try #Bthru8 now as well!

2. **What is the difference between Following and Followers?**
This can be a little tricky to understand at first. Basically, at the top of your home Twitter page, next to your counter of Tweets, it also shows the number of people you are following, as well as people who are followers of you.
   - Tweets from the people you are following will show up in your Twitter feed.
   - Your tweets will show up in the feeds up the people who are your followers.

3. **No one is following me, so when I tweet, no one will see it.**
Not true! One of the strange but cool things about Twitter is that people can see your tweets if they are looking for things you are tweeting about. For example, if you just tweeted about childhood poverty, and someone is searching for and following that conversation, your tweet will show up in their search.

   And as you explore the Twittersphere, take note of tweeters whom seem to be saying things you agree with or are interested in. Follow them, and their tweets (no matter what the topic) will show up in your feed. People will be doing the same thing to you, so you'll slowly build a following.

   You can always unfollow people later if it turns out you don't really want to see all their tweets.

4. **Retweet or not to Retweet?**
You may see the letters, RT, showing up in your feed. That stands for Retweet and it means that someone saw a tweet they liked and retweeted it to their own followers. So, let's say you liked the Alliance's tweet about the latest state early childhood policies. You could click on the RT bottom (which can be found on every tweet, simply let your mouse float over the bottom of the tweet and it will magically appear.) and then click on retweet. See below.

April 2013 // Created by Child Trends & True North Group

- Have something people can click on in your tweets (links back to content or news)

- Tweet 5 to 10 times a day from 9 to 5 p.m. if you want to be seen 10-12 and 2-4 are ideal times.

- Follow others, retweet, mention them.

- Use 120 characters or less and you will be more likely to be retweeted.

- Be chatty, be witty, be real.

- Use a Twitter platform such as HootSuite to schedule tweets or track multiple Twitter accounts.

Facebook

You may not know this but Facebook is not just for friends anymore. Nonprofits, academic institutions, government agencies and corporations alike are using Facebook to connect with "the people," because so many of their target constituents "live" on the social media site. It's a great forum to share information but on a less frequent basis than you might be doing on Twitter.

Using your Facebook site to participate in #Bthru8 is easy. Consider posting once a week on a new research study or news article about policies or practices that affect children age birth through 8 years old.

Try to be conversational and friendly in your Facebook posts. Share photos whenever possible as people are more likely to click on links with photos. And, be personal. Talk about your organization, staff, those kinds of things to make your organization seem more real and, well, friend like!

But we don't have a Facebook page… yet!

It's pretty easy to create a Facebook page for an organization. Simply go to www.facebook.com/pages and click on Create a page.

Facebook will walk you through all the steps.

Worth noting, you can have multiple administrators of a Facebook page, after you've created it. And if you leave an organization, you can transfer ownership of the organizational page to someone else who is still on staff.

More social media how-to resources!

Hootsuite or Tweetdeck are both great ways to schedule and manage your social media platforms. Note: It's better to use the bit.ly abbreviator rather than either of these.

Reporter outreach: When to tweet a reporter, (and when not to) - http://www.ereleases.com/prfuel/when-to-tweet-a-reporter-and-when-not-to/

Find a reporter here: http://journalisttweets.com

www.Tweetcongress.org: Though the #Bthru8 Early Success campaign is a state-based effort, there may be some overlap and desire to reach out to Congress as well.

Tips for non-profits on Facebook and Twitter - http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/26/twitter-tips-nonprofits_n_1380200.html

From Facebook-Tips for Nonprofits:
http://www.facebook.com/nonprofits?sk=app_149255468478339
Or
https://fb-public.box.com/s/8dxyv66biabfnesvr3jj

Sample Tweets and Posts

Encouraging groups to join the campaign

Tweets:

Care about Early Childhood Issues? Follow #Bthru8 for latest news & research! http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7 #ECE

Learn more about why early childhood policies are so important http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7 Follow #Bthru8

Does your org work on early childhood issues? Post & tweet about the early years using #Bthru8 http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7

How can you increase attention to important early childhood policies? Post & tweet w/ us! http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7 #Bthru8

Who else is working on early childhood issues? Check out: http://bit.ly/14g09nW #Bthru8

Help us elevate early childhood issues on the public policy agenda! http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7 #Bthru8

Have something to say about early childhood issues? Use #Bthru8 and join the Early Success campaign! http://bit.ly/Zq2y6E #ECE #PreK

Facebook posts

1. Please help us raise awareness about early childhood issues and the many benefits for children and society. Like us and help spread the word by visiting the Alliance for Early Success: http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7

2. When times are tough, it's even more important to make wise investments. Visit the Alliance for Early Success and learn why investing in the early years is one of the smartest policy choices we can make: http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7

3. Join our campaign and help spread the word about the benefits of stronger early childhood policies for children and society! You can tweet or share information via Facebook. Check out: http://bit.ly/16Qq4A7 for more information.

About the Birth through 8 State Policy Framework

Check out #Bthru8 State Policy Framework: a roadmap for improving children's health, learning & economic outcomes bit.ly/151PKLE

#Bthru8 State Policy Framework focuses on 3 policy areas for young children: Health, family support and learning bit.ly/151PKLE

The #Bthru8 State Policy Framework offers policy options to improve children's health, learning & econ outcomes http://bit.ly/151PKLE

Health

Tweets

Young children w/ poor health at higher risk for obesity & cardiovascular disease http://bit.ly/ZQd6ff #Bthru8

Early stress from abuse causes neural circuitry changes & increased risk for physical/mental illness http://bit.ly/ZQd6ff #Bthru8

Children w/ poor nutrition & chronic illness=more likely 2 miss school/social & academic opps http://bit.ly/ZQd6ff #Bthru8

Uninsured children less likely 2 get preventive care, services, & screenings that manage health concerns http://bit.ly/ZQd6ff #Bthru8

Uninsured children in #poverty disproportionately suffer from lack of access to #healthcare http://bit.ly/ZQd6ff #Bthru8

Facebook

- **Did You Know:** Prolonged and elevated stress due to adverse experiences early in life such as violence or abuse changes the wiring in the brain as well as the chemical composition, which can make children less resilient over time. This reduced adaptability undercuts the developmental benefits of positive experiences and puts children at risk for physical and mental illness later in life. http://bit.ly/ZQd6ff

Family Support

Tweets

Supported #families can ensure young #children get adequate food, shelter, & medical attention http://bit.ly/111BYoa #Bthru8

Strong #families ensure #children live in safe/stimulating environments for exploring/learning http://bit.ly/111BYoa #Bthru8

Lack of warm, positive relationship w/caregivers increases #children's risk 4 behavioral & emotional problems http://bit.ly/111BYoa #Bthru8

Lack of positive relationship w/caregivers increases children's risk 4 sub abuse, antisocial beh & juv crime http://bit.ly/111BYoa #Bthru8

Support programs help families provide young kids w/nurturing environ, healthy development & school readiness #Bthru8 http://bit.ly/111BYoa

Facebook

- **True or False:** A lack of a warm positive relationship with parents/caregivers increases the risk that children develop major behavioral and emotional problems, including substance abuse, antisocial behavior, and juvenile crime. http://bit.ly/111BYoa

Learning

Tweets

Language acquisition increases rapidly in 1st 4 yrs http://bit.ly/10XraF4 #Bthru8

3rd grade=watershed for moving from "learning to read" to "reading to learn" http://bit.ly/10XraF4 #Bthru8

Large physical/motor & social-emotional development gains made from infancy-early elementary http://bit.ly/10XraF4 #school #Bthru8

#Children in #highquality #ece=typically better outcomes across #developmental domains http://bit.ly/10XraF4 #Bthru8

Children in poor-quality #ece oft have more behav problems, fewer language skills & lower academic skills http://bit.ly/10XraF4 #Bthru8

Benefits from #highquality #ece are greater for vulnerable #children http://bit.ly/10XraF4 #Bthru8

#Children entering school w/ stronger #schoolreadiness skills tend to maintain advantage over elem. school yrs http://bit.ly/10XraF4 #Bthru8

Facebook
- **Did You Know?** The benefits of high-quality early care and education are greater for vulnerable children. http://bit.ly/10XraF4
- **True or False:** Children who experience high-quality care and education tend to have better outcomes across developmental domains than similar children who are not exposed to high-quality care. http://bit.ly/10XraF4

Standards

Tweets

State quality standards address cognitive & foundational skills; both are essential 4 school/life success #Bthru8 http://bit.ly/YskDpY

Facebook
- Many states have developed a statewide quality rating and improvement system to define, measure, monitor, and promote high-quality child care in homes, centers, or school-based settings.

Screening and Assessment

Tweets

Screenings in well-child visits may detect maternal depression (can have neg effects on #child develpm't) #Bthru8 http://bit.ly/10PxuzA

Assessments measure #children's progress toward meeting standards/benchmarks of child development #Bthru8 http://bit.ly/10PxuzA

Facebook
- **Benefits of Early Childhood Assessments:** Effective assessment systems benefit young children by informing adults and educators about individual children's strengths and areas of growth, particularly as they transition from early care and education settings to elementary school. http://bit.ly/10PxuzA

Tweets

Linking statewide longitudinal #earlychildhood and K12 data systems can provide info on workforce/program quality #bthru8 http://bit.ly/12Rrfgv

Facebook

- **How to Use Accountability Systems:** Accountability systems help define important benchmarks and outcomes for programs, children and families, and measure progress towards identified goals. http://bit.ly/12Rrfgv