

Using the Build Stronger Child Care Policy Roadmap in State Advocacy

The Build Stronger Child Care Policy Roadmap is not “one size fits all.” Like a traditional roadmap, this document presents numerous routes to the destination—and different states will surely choose different courses of action. Some may go faster or slower than others. Some may skip certain steps because they are not priorities or relevant. The intent is to lay out the general arc of the journey that all of us can follow. Also know that this as a living document. Future changes in terms of politics, the economy, the public health, etc. will require changes in the itinerary or open up new paths we can take.

How can your state use the roadmap to build stronger?

Use the roadmap to determine the “state of the state.”

The roadmap’s structure provides a useful framework for assessing the state situation. The roadmap can also serve as the foundation for advocacy benchmarks that can drive short-term agendas, ongoing priority reassessments, and goal-setting.

Organize the work into the four “lanes” presented in the roadmap.

Taken together, the sections of the roadmap lay out the common areas of work that all of us need to tackle to build a stronger child care system. Organizing your agenda into these categories can help ensure that you are taking a comprehensive approach.

Use the roadmap for coalition building and stakeholder engagement.

The roadmap can help bring more groups to the table. In addition to families, we need to engage providers, educators, businesses, higher education leaders, workforce development agencies, and other advocates for children and families. Engaging these diverse voices will make this roadmap more reflective of the priorities and interests of your state or community.

Educate policymakers on the comprehensive policy solution.

Few outside of the early childhood advocacy community likely appreciate the complexity of the challenge—and the degree to which it extends into finance, workforce development, business support, racial equity, and other related areas. Briefing policymakers on the high-level recommendations of the roadmap can help broaden their thinking about child care.

How do you get started? You can begin by asking yourselves a few key questions. *What are the most critical and/or urgent actions to take to build a stronger child care system in my state? What can my state implement immediately? Which policy/funding ideas are movable but require a systematic campaign and advocacy strategy? Which policy/funding ideas are important, but not politically feasible right now – but could be if there was an intentional communications or stakeholder engagement strategy to change “hearts and minds”?*

The roadmap is, above all, a planning tool. We hope you’ll use it to plan—**and then act.**