

## PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AMERICA 2022 ELECTION GUIDE

The 2022 United States elections will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022. During this [midterm election](#) year, control of both chambers of Congress and dozens of governorships and state offices will be decided. These include all 435 seats in the [House of Representatives](#) and 35 of the 100 seats in the [Senate](#) which will be contested. Thirty-nine state and territorial [gubernatorial](#) and numerous other state and local elections will also be contested. This will be the first election affected by the [redistricting](#) that will follow the [2020 census](#).

- ✿ 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives
- ✿ 35 seats in the United States Senate
- ✿ 36 State and 3 Territorial Governorships
- ✿ 6,000 seats in State Legislatures
- ✿ 88 state legislative chambers in 46 states
- ✿ Municipal elections – Mayors and City Council positions

Elections present an opportunity to promote child abuse and neglect prevention policies and strategies, and to make investments to support these vital initiatives. This time allows us to get to know the candidates, introduce candidates to our organizations, and educate them on the importance of supporting families and improving both child and parent well-being.

By voting, organizing in our communities, and having conversations with loved ones, we can come together as a society to speak out in favor of the country we want to live in. Let us continue supporting fair policies and programs that enable every child, family, and community to thrive today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

## Prevent Child Abuse America: Election Guide

The following content provides information on voting in an Election Year. The resource includes information and links to online references to assist you and your networks in becoming informed and active participants during this Election Year and beyond.

### CONTENTS

I. What is Advocacy.....	3
II. What Non Profits Can and Cannot Do In An Election Year .....	3
 Candidate Education .....	4
III. Who Are The Candidates.....	4
IV. Primary Prevention Lens in Policy .....	5
V. Why Is It Important To Vote.....	6
VI. Voter Considerations.....	7
 Voter Registration Laws .....	8
VII. How To “Get Out The Vote” .....	8
VIII. Messaging Strategies.....	9

*\*The information contained in this Election Guide and any websites referenced are being provided for informational purposes only. In viewing this resource, we encourage you to independently verify the rules and regulations on non-profit election, voter engagement activities, and state specific voter requirements. In addition, please also verify if there are legal requirements or restrictions on any verbal or written public communication.\**

## I. WHAT IS ADVOCACY

Advocacy can happen in many different ways, but at its core it's about raising awareness, building and leveraging relationships, and educating others around the issues and policies that matter to you. There are varying degrees in which a Prevent Child Abuse chapter, or nonprofit organization, can engage in advocacy that do not cross into lobbying. Advocacy can include such activities as:

- Educating and informing lawmakers
- Helping to shape state laws and budgets
- Making your voice(s) heard about important issues that affect our daily lives
- Helping policymakers find solutions to problems
- Providing critical information for adoption or rejection of introduced legislation

## II. WHAT NON PROFITS CAN AND CANNOT DO IN AN ELECTION YEAR

Nonprofit organizations *can* conduct advocacy during an election year. In fact, an election year offers a unique opportunity to influence the agendas of our future policymakers by educating candidates running for public office about upstream policies and strategies that can prevent child abuse and neglect

While advocacy during an election year is permissible, it is important to know the legal limitations nonprofits must adhere to when conducting this work. Remaining impartial and nonpartisan while focusing on educating the candidates and the public is critical. Fundamentally, nonprofits are not allowed to engage in what is termed “electioneering.” This means that nonprofits are not permitted to express or imply support or opposition to any candidate or political party. While, 501(c)(3) organizations are prohibited from supporting or opposing a candidate or political party, they can continue to promote issues and policy change to further its mission, connect with candidates on a nonpartisan basis, and conduct voter engagement or registration activities in an election year.

Following are a few resources that can be helpful in understanding the limitations of advocacy:

- <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/lobbying>
- [Advocacy By The Book: Legal & Compliance Issues for Grassroots Advocacy Organizations](#)
- [National Council of Nonprofits](#)
- [You have questions, we have answers! – Bolder Advocacy](#)

### **CANDIDATE EDUCATION**

The [federal tax code](#) defines the prohibition of partisan political activities by 501(c)(3) charitable organizations. It states 501(c)(3) organizations are “prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in – or intervening in – any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for elective public office.” While partisan activities are prohibited, it is clear there is still a lot a 501(c)(3) can do on a nonpartisan basis to promote voter and civic engagement as part of its charitable and educational mission during the election season and beyond.

Nonpartisan Activities and Common Examples include:

- Advocate on public policy reason; not preference or endorsement for any candidate
- Advocate for an organization’s issues during an election year
- Candidate education
- Voter outreach (e.g., register voters, encourage voters to vote or educate voters on the voting process)
- Distribute sample ballots or nonpartisan voter guides
- Share lists, poll results, and resources
- Participate in ballot measures

The guidelines of election related activities apply to 501(c)(3) staff and volunteers who act on behalf of 501(c)(3). These *do not* apply to people acting as an individual on their own time. If you work for a 501(c)(3) you can support candidates on your own time, but cannot use organizational resources when doing so. Here is a [website](#) for more information on the role 501(c)(3)s during an election season and [here](#) is general information on advocacy for nonprofits.

### **III. WHO ARE THE CANDIDATES**

It’s important to become familiar with new candidates and those up for re-election. Each candidate has ideas and issues that they hope to advance while in office and understanding how or if they align with your organization’s mission are important before casting a vote. The following are helpful links that include information about candidates at the state and national levels:

#### **Congressional**

- [US Senate 2022 elections](#)
- [US House 2022 elections](#)

### State Elections

- [U.S. Government Election Assistance Commission](#): Features a US map that allows voters to easily find and research who is running for state and local office in their jurisdiction.

### Nonpartisan Sites for more candidate information:

- [Ballotpedia](#): Billing itself as “An interactive almanac of state politics”, this site provides voters with information regarding local, state and congressional candidates. It also includes a state by state guide of measures that will appear on November ballots.
- [Vote411.org](#): From the League of Women Voters, Vote411 provides a tool that allows voters to enter their address to find their polling place and learn more about who is running in their local, state and federal elections. It also allows voters to “build” a ballot that they can print out and take to the polls with them.
- [Fact Check.org](#): This site, run by the Annenberg Public Policy Committee, is a nationally recognized nonpartisan leader in analyzing campaign rhetoric to provide voters with solid facts about key issues.

## IV. PRIMARY PREVENTION LENS IN POLICY

Whether it’s a local race that will affect your community or a state or national race, elections are a good time to consider the issues that are important to you and your organization. Understanding the policy platform of a candidate, at any level of government, and their plans to prioritize children and families is important before going to the ballot box.

Policies that support and invest in children and families are top of mind for voters.<sup>1</sup> There are a range of primary prevention policy options that support and strengthen children and families. These policy options address the conditions that support and promote stable communities, healthy families, and the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

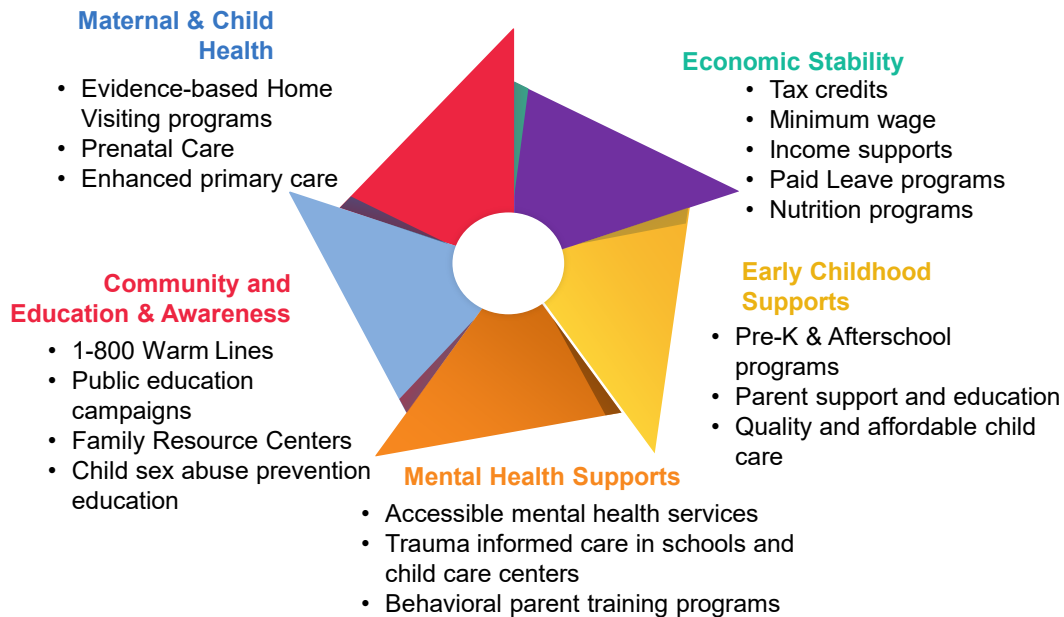
There is nothing more important for the future success of our nation than to ensure that children and families in every community have the support they need to thrive. There are many resources available to educate a candidate on what is important to you as a non-profit prevention-focused organization and member of their community.

- [2022 State Public Policy Strategies | Prevent Child Abuse America](#)
- [2022 Federal Policy Agenda | Prevent Child Abuse America](#)
- [Growing Better Together Infographic | Prevent Child Abuse America](#)
- [Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\) One-Pager | Prevent Child Abuse America](#)
- [Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting \(MIECHV\) Program | Prevent Child Abuse America](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> See First Focus Campaign for Children, May 2022 Poll by Lake Research Partners at <https://tinyurl.com/2vykwyzy>.

## POLICY OPTIONS TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT



**Research shows that with the right policies and programs, we can prevent child abuse and neglect and ensure that every child and family has the support they need to thrive.**

### V. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO VOTE

YOU can make a difference in the course of the future for our children and their families. Your power to vote provides you with the opportunity to bring awareness to your cause and creates an equal playing field for the healthy development of all children. Your vote provides a unique opportunity to influence the agenda of future policymakers by educating the candidates running for public office on issues like the protective factors, home visiting, evidence-based programming, and child abuse and neglect prevention strategies.

We represent children who don't have a voice in politics or elections. We also represent communities that are struggling on many levels, economically, socially, etc., and individuals in those communities who may be disengaged or even disinterested in elections. For those reasons (among many more), it is that much more critical for us to make sure that the issues we work on are incorporated into candidates' platforms and made a high priority. It is also important that we educate others about where candidates stand. Among other important issues, a few examples include candidate support for measures that serve to prevent child abuse and neglect, increase economic supports for families, funding for

research to help prevent child sexual abuse and ACEs, as well as work to find ways to decrease child poverty.

Elected officials hold a great deal of power over the lives of children and their families. These officials play a significant role in:

- Developing legislative agendas & policy priorities
- Supporting or opposing legislation & adequate funding levels
- Deciding how to set a budget
- Creating and shaping laws that can improve, or harm, child and family health and well-being
- Setting priorities for our nation and communities

Each vote holds candidates (and potentially future elected officials) accountable for supporting your work. The ongoing impact of the pandemic, acute civil unrest, and community violence makes this election year an especially important one to have your voice heard and represented.

## **VI. VOTER CONSIDERATIONS**

Voters in the 2022 elections will be navigating new voting laws implemented in the aftermath of the 2020 election. While some states made permanent the new election laws enacted due to the evolving dynamics brought on by the pandemic (increased ballot drop boxes, easier mail in ballots, drive-through voting, etc.) other states passed laws with greater requirements to ward off potential voter fraud (increased identification at the polls, cutting off early voting hours and drop boxes, and making it more difficult to vote by mail). The results of all these efforts are wide differences between states in how residents can vote.

At least 19 states have passed 33 laws since the 2020 election that restrict voting access. Over that same period, 25 states adopted 62 measures that make it easier to vote.<sup>2</sup> It remains to be known whether these measures across states will have a significant impact on turnout this November, but any new restrictions and rules could complicate voters' ability to successfully cast their ballots. Regardless, it is important to research to find out what, if any, changes have been made in your state before casting your vote this year. You can also help others in your network to understand new voting laws.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-laws-roundup-may-2022>



### **VOTER REGISTRATION LAWS**

Each state makes its own voting and election rules, including when and how to register. Every state, aside from North Dakota, requires citizens to register to vote if they want to become voters. Depending on your state laws, the [voter registration deadline](#) varies and could be as much as a month before an election. You can find local election official information [here](#).

There are 21 states and the District of Columbia that have implemented same-day registration, allowing any qualified resident of the state to register to vote and cast a ballot at the same time. Of these states, Montana and North Carolina make same-day registration possible for a portion of the early voting period, but not on Election Day. And Alaska allows same-day registration only to vote for president and vice-president.

You can register to vote *online* at [Vote.gov](#) in 42 states plus the District of Columbia. It's great to have a plan, get out and vote early to avoid crowds, and cast your ballot before Election Day. Lastly, for anyone voting on Election Day, please plan to arrive as soon as the polls open if you can to avoid long lines and stay safe while casting your vote.

The following are links to further information on voter registration requirements and deadlines as well as voting and election laws.

- [Nonprofit Vote](#): Provides up to date information regarding each state's voter registration requirements and deadlines; and also has tools for Election Day that allows voters to find their polling place and learn about any Voter ID laws that have been passed in their state.
- [USAGOV](#): This is an online guide to government services and information with a section specific to voting and election law. Among a plethora of voting related issues, the site provides Voter ID requirement details, information for first time voters, as well as voter registration and contact information to speak with election officials.

## **VII. HOW TO "GET OUT THE VOTE"**

Voter turn-out is critical. There is power in numbers. When we vote, and get our community to vote, we can impact outcomes and change the debate. Get out the vote efforts are aimed at increasing voter turnout. 501(c)(3)s can educate voters and get them to the polls, as long as they aren't supporting or opposing any candidate. When you engage in voter registration or remind people to vote, it demonstrates the importance of voting, encourages active



citizenship, and gives voice to the communities you serve. Below are helpful ideas and steps to increase voter turnout directly in your community.

- Make a concrete plan.
- Encourage staff and volunteers to vote.
- Use your normal internal communication efforts (i.e. email, staff mail, etc.), staff meetings, events, etc. to encourage voting.
- Encourage everyone to call or text five people to encourage them to vote.
- Encourage voter that will be voting by mail to register and mail their ballot in immediately.

To encourage get out the vote drives in your respective community it's important that your networks know how to:

- [Determine your state's voter registration deadline.](#)
- [Register to vote.](#)
- [Locate polling stations.](#) and
- [Request an absentee \(or mail in\) ballot.](#)

There are many opportunities for nonprofit organizations to ensure that their communities are well-represented at the ballot box. While there are guidelines for conducting voter registration drives, understanding these rules will guide nonprofits in planning their activities this election season. For more in-depth information on nonprofits and voter engagement, see Bolder Advocacy's [The Rules of the Game: A Guide to Election-Related Activities for 501\(c\)\(3\) Organizations.](#)

## VIII. MESSAGING STRATEGIES

As is the case for education, outreach, or advocacy efforts, any messaging strategy to help build awareness are critical. A [recent poll](#) showed that voters believe too little is being spent on children and strongly support making increased investments in children. Issues such as preventing child abuse and neglect and child poverty are important to voters, and we can help amplify these issues during this election year. Following are examples of messages to use in your own voting and election and education efforts.

### **Sample social media language to be coupled with images:**

- Now is the time to invest in our children's future. Make #GreatChildhoods happen all year long! @PCAAmerica @HFAatPCA

- Don't forget to vote on November 8th! Make #GreatChildhoods happen all year long! @PCAAmerica
- Vote for candidates that are invested in prevention and supporting families! Make #GreatChildhoods happen all year long! @PCAAmerica

### **Sample Talking Points:**

- Child abuse and neglect occurs across the country regardless of income and education, race and region.
- Every year in the United States, at least 1 in 7 children experience child abuse or neglect, and an estimated 4 to 8 children die from abuse and neglect every day.
- It is estimated that the victims of child abuse and neglect, from a single year, will cost taxpayers nearly \$2 trillion in social services and after-the-fact costs throughout their lifetime.
- Prevention is possible. Home visiting programs, such as Healthy Families America, educate parents and caregivers and provide them with valuable resources.
- Kids raised in safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments are more likely to enjoy good physical and mental health and succeed academically and socially. Children who grow up happy and healthy also go on to contribute to economic prosperity for everyone. We can save billions of dollars in social services and after-the-fact costs every year.
- All parents and caregivers want to be good parents and caregivers, sometimes we just need a little extra help to be the best parents and caregivers we can be. Evidence-based home visiting, such as Healthy Families America, educates parents and caregivers and gives them the skills they need to develop nurturing relationships with their children for lifelong health and success.
- Ensuring families have adequate income is basic to creating an environment in which young children thrive. Families need a range of equitable policies that ensure they can support their young children and access safe and stable housing, health and mental health care, healthy food, and high-quality early care and education for their young children.

### **Sample Candidate Questions:**

- There are a range of programs and policies that strengthen families, lessening the stressors that overload families while promoting safe and stable family environments and while increasing access to resources and ultimately building more prosperous communities. How would you increase access and adequate funding for programs and policies that support the upstream prevention of child abuse and neglect?

# 50 **Prevent Child Abuse** America®

- All families can benefit from support during pregnancy and throughout early childhood. Many evidence-based home visiting programs and parenting education programs have a proven track record of preventing child maltreatment. What plans do you have to ensure that there is funding for evidence-based home visiting that serves all children and families in need?
- Access to concrete and economic supports can be instrumental in lowering familial stress which is linked to child abuse and neglect. How will you be engaged in promoting and strengthening the economic supports for families, such as state tax credits, child care subsidies, or paid family leave programs?
- Programs that help children learn and grow in their earliest years can change the trajectories of their lives. What will you do to make sure that all families have access to affordable, high-quality child care and early education?