A diverse array of early childhood stakeholders work across the North Carolina's public and private sectors with the same goals – improve school readiness, access to and quality of child care, and essential support services for North Carolina's infants, toddlers, young children, and families.

The following four sections capture the major state agencies, a public-private partnership, nonprofits, and university-based programs working in the early childhood space in North Carolina. The last two sections, starting on page five, highlight current and former collaborations. Note that this high-level summary is neither an exhaustive list of all partners, nor a comprehensive depiction of any individual organization.

**State Agencies**

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**ABOUT:**
The NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is home to the vast majority of state and federally funded early childhood programs, including child care licensing and subsidy, and the NC Pre-K Program.

**GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:**
Statewide

**MAJOR PROGRAMS & CURRENT INITIATIVES:**
Development of the NC Early Childhood Action Plan; Child Care Subsidy/Financial Assistance (Child Care and Development Block Grant); Child Care Licensing; Child Care Workforce Online Reporting and Knowledge System; Birth-Kindergarten Education and Licensure for Early Educators Working in Nonpublic Schools; NC Pre-K Program; Criminal Background Checks for Individuals Working in Early Childhood Settings; Funds Child Care Resource and Referral System; IDEA Part C Early Intervention Program; Preschool Development Grant (Birth-Five); Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV); NC Medicaid (Transformation); Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS); Child Welfare Services; Triple P (Positive Parenting Program); Care Coordination for Children; Child Care Health Consultation; School Health; Early Hearing Detection and Intervention; Essentials for Childhood; Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program; Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

**ABOUT:**
The NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) supports school districts serving students enrolled in grades K-3 and is home to the state's IDEA Part B (Section 619) Preschool Special Education program. DPI also houses the state's Head Start Collaboration Office.

**GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:**
Statewide

**CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:**
IDEA Part B (619) Preschool Special Education; support of public school programs serving children from kindergarten to grade 3; Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA); Title 1 preschool and a PreK/K Demonstration Program; early learning standards.

**Public-Private Partnership**

**NORTH CAROLINA PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN (SMART START)**

**ABOUT:**
Created by former Governor Jim Hunt in 1993, Smart Start is the state’s comprehensive public-private school readiness initiative. Community-level programming is administered through a network of 75 county-based and/or regional nonprofit Smart Start Partnerships. The NC Partnership for Children serves as the network’s state-level funder and oversight mechanism.

**GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:**
Statewide via a network of 75 nonprofit Smart Start partnerships

**CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:**
Smart Start partnerships across the state have flexibility to identify and fund evidence-based programs identified in their local communities. Partnership investments are heavily focused on childcare quality and subsidy, evidence-based home visitation, and literacy programs including The Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Partner in the Pathways to Grade-Level Reading initiative.
Nonprofits

BEST NC

ABOUT:
BEST NC is a nonpartisan nonprofit coalition of business leaders committed to improving North Carolina’s education system through policy and advocacy.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Wide variety of advocacy and policy efforts related to K-12 education; partner of the Pathways to Grade-Level Reading initiative; contributing partner to the NC Early Childhood Action Plan; leading TeachNC.org initiative to recruit Pre-K through 12 educators.

CHILD CARE SERVICES ASSOCIATION (CCSA)

ABOUT:
As a national nonprofit agency based in North Carolina, the Child Care Services Association is a leader and innovator in strengthening the early care and education system, both throughout NC and across the nation.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide: National

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Classroom technical assistance, training, developmental screenings, referrals, scholarship programs; NC Babies First; PDG B5 grant application; Meal service program in Triangle.

THE HUNT INSTITUTE

ABOUT:
Established in 2001, The Hunt Institute honors the legacy of former North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt. An affiliate of the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy, The Hunt Institute is a recognized leader in the movement to transform public education. The Institute brings together people and resources that help build and nurture visionary leadership and mobilize strategic action for greater educational outcomes and student success.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide: National

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Supporting collaboration among policymakers and stakeholders to move early childhood forward within states through annual convenings of state teams and ongoing technical assistance; provides on-demand research and analysis; engages state legislators in retreats, policy dinners, and site visits with a focus on early childhood topics.

NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN

ABOUT:
NCAEYC is a professional membership association of professionals working in early childhood that works to serve and connect members to: each other, resources, networks, high quality professional development, and advocacy opportunities.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide; Affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Early childhood workforce development; developmentally appropriate practice; wellness and well-being of children and adults; professionalization of the field.
NC CHILD

ABOUT:
NC Child is a children's advocacy organization advancing public policies to ensure all children – regardless of race, ethnicity, or place of birth – have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
NC Kids Count Grantee/Data Center; Annual legislative agenda, which currently includes: 1) Expanding Access to Affordable Healthcare, 2) Early Childhood Education, 3) Raising the Age for Adult Incarceration, 4) Census Funding, and 5) Suicide Prevention. Also a partner in the Pathways to Grade Level Reading initiative.

NORTH CAROLINA CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL COUNCIL (CCR&R)

ABOUT:
CCR&R provides an interrelated set of services to families, child care providers, employers, and communities that: facilitate access to early care and education and school-age child care options for families; improve the quality of those child care options; and provide objective information for planning and policy development to the public and private sectors.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide; CCR&R Council is comprised of 14 regional agencies across the state that, collectively, serve all 100 counties.

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Child care resources and referral services including consumer education and referral, professional development and training, technical assistance, data collection and analysis, and public awareness.

NORTH CAROLINA EARLY CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION (NCECF)

ABOUT:
Focused on the needs of children from birth through age eight, the NCECF works to promote understanding, spearhead collaboration, and advance policies to ensure each North Carolina child is on track by the end of third grade.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Pathways to Grade Level Reading and the Campaign for Grade Level Reading; Family Forward NC; Early Learning and the Every Student Succeeds Act; local Financing for Early Learning Toolkit; First 2000 Days Campaign.

NORTH CAROLINA EARLY EDUCATION COALITION (NCEEC)

ABOUT:
The NC Early Education Coalition is a statewide advocacy coalition dedicated to promoting high-quality, accessible and affordable child care in North Carolina. Its membership includes statewide organizations, regional and local child care agencies, child care providers, and individuals committed to improving the quality of child care and early childhood education in North Carolina.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Think Babies Campaign (Zero to Three); National Collaborative for Infants-Toddlers (Pritzker Children’s Initiative); Focus on Child Care Assistance, Availability and Workforce.
NORTH CAROLINA HEAD START ASSOCIATION (NCHSA)

ABOUT:
NCHSA is a membership association for Head Start grantees that works to support advocacy efforts at the state and federal level and provide professional development and networking opportunities.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide; NCHSA represents 59 Head Start grantees across North Carolina.

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Professional development for the early childhood workforce

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE NC

ABOUT:
Prevent Child Abuse NC is a statewide organization dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Child abuse prevention programs including: Circle of Parents; The Incredible Years (IY) BASIC Preschool and School Age Parent Programs; Strengthening Families Program 6-11 (SFP); and Triple P Positive Parenting Program.

T.E.A.C.H. NATIONAL CENTER

ABOUT:
T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) is a national program based in Chapel Hill through which early childhood teachers can access scholarship supports designed to advance their education and compensation.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide; National

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
T.E.A.C.H., and the companion WAGE$ program (both implemented in North Carolina), support salary supplements associated with educational attainment for early childhood educators.

DUKE UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR CHILD AND FAMILY POLICY

ABOUT:
Duke University’s Center for Child and Family Policy works to identify science-based solutions to problems affecting today’s children and families. The Center emphasizes the bridge from research to policy and practice through an integrated system of research, teaching, service, and policy engagement.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:
Statewide; National

CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES:
Center research includes a number of projects impacting children and families. Faculty fellows focus on the effect of economic distress on child development, study early childhood, the development of risky behaviors, and childhood mental illness. In North Carolina, the Center created the Family Connects home visiting program now implemented in Durham, Forsyth, and Guilford Counties.