

## 2025 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

### INVEST IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

North Carolina's child care crisis is costing our state economy billions of dollars per year. By funding programs that incentivize ECE educators and support providers, we bolster the workforce and can serve more children.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Implement a statewide child care subsidy floor & invest in statewide programs to boost the ECE workforce.

### ADDRESS THE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Suicide is the leading cause of death for youth ages 10-14 in North Carolina. It is crucial that trained professionals can support our children when they are in crisis.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Increase suicide prevention training for teachers to recognize and respond to warning signs of youth suicide.

### PROMOTE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL HEALTH THROUGH ECU & TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Across the state, there are far too few counselors to meet the mental and behavioral health needs of students. The ECU's Healthier Lives at School and Beyond is a school-based telehealth program serves the students, staff, and faculty of medically underserved communities in rural eastern North Carolina.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Expand the program into 1-2 additional counties while sustaining current programmatic work in Pitt, Greene, and Duplin counties.

### INCREASE SNAP BENEFIT CERTIFICATION PERIOD FROM 6 MONTHS TO 12 MONTHS

North Carolina's current recertification requirements for SNAP participants places unnecessary administrative burdens on families, requiring them to reapply for SNAP benefits every six months and threatening access to vital food assistance if they fail to.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Extend the SNAP recertification period to 12 months while maintaining requirements to report eligibility criteria changes.

**NC Child advocates and supports priorities of EarlyWell and the NC Child Fatality Task Force to prevent maternal and child deaths.**

- Modernize the QRIS system for Early Childhood Education Programs
- Expand Peer-to-Peer Support by Investing in the Family Support Network
- Promote Positive Childhood Experiences by Expanding Reach Out and Read Statewide

## ABOUT NC CHILD

Founded in 2014, NC Child is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for policies that improve the lives of all NC children. Each year, we work diligently to present the legislature with evidence-based, community-informed policy proposals.