



# Michigan's *Children*

Public Policy in  
the Best Interest of  
Children & Families.



## “How to Talk to Policymakers: Effective Tips for Messaging Your Issue”

Lunch and Learn: January 2021

# Welcome and Housekeeping

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Thank you for being here!

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Please take a moment and say hello in the chat- your name and organization

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If you have questions throughout the day, please put them into the chat!

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Stay tuned- Lunch and Learn spot on our website is coming soon

# Agenda for today

Messaging and Tips for Engagement

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Panel of Experts from the field

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Question and Answer



Matt Gillard,  
President and  
CEO of Michigan's  
Children

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**Any time is a good time to make change**

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**Policymakers Need to Know - but they can't know it all at once**

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**Understand where policymakers often get their information**

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**Understand how you can be a resource**

# Reaching Policymakers:

**Any time is a good time to make change (especially as new lawmakers or returning lawmakers are starting a new session:**

- ▶ Talk to Each Other-About our experiences
- ▶ Know that You Are the Experts-You can talk with decision makers and you **MUST**
- ▶ Find common ground or connecting to similar issues
- ▶ Strengthen our messages through partnerships with others

**Policymakers Need to Know - but they can't know it all at once**

- ▶ Identify what policymakers need to know about your issue and what does or doesn't work
- ▶ What is the best way to get them that information?

# Engaging with Policymakers:

## **Understand where policymakers often get their information**

- ▶ Friends and Colleagues
- ▶ Statistical Information and Numbers
- ▶ Constituents

## **Understand how you can be a resource**

- ▶ Become Their Resource-Share What You Know
- ▶ Find Out Who Else Could Be a Valuable Partner to the Cause



Questions?



# Panel of Experts and Advocates

- ▶ Deb Frisbie, Policy and Advocacy Group Co-Lead, Kinship Care Coalition of Michigan
- ▶ Erica Willard, Executive Directors, Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children
- ▶ Sarah Plachta Elliott, Executive Director, Youth Development Resource Center (Detroit)
- ▶ Patrick Brown, Director, Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education



# Question to the Panelists:



How do you approach a meeting with a lawmaker; how do you frame out your ask; how do you prepare for it; what are your do's and don'ts you can share with others, based on your experience?

Challenges and Opportunities. What have you found works? Share a time when you succeeded at winning support, either by overcoming a challenge with a lawmaker or by taking advantage of an opportunity.

Question to the  
Panelist:

## Question to the Panelist:

Strategy: Everyone says they love kids and families, especially politicians. How do you get passed a policymaker's weak agreement that he/she supports you to having them take action on your request/needs?

## Additional Resources

How to Develop and Advocacy Plan Handout

Sample advocacy plans and timelines

Will be available on the Michigan's Children website as a follow up



Thank you for joining us!

Look for our next Lunch and Learn in mid February!

Questions or Follow Up: Please contact Stephen Wallace, Community Engagement and Mobilization:

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