Coalition Toolkit
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Core Message Narrative:

Despite known, proven solutions for child poverty, children continue to disproportionately experience poverty in the U.S. This means that there are millions of children each day living in poverty and trying to thrive and, through no fault of their own, they are faced with barriers at every stage of their development. These barriers often include: lack of access to quality early childhood education, lack of access to proper nutrition and healthcare, and under-resourced schools.

Everyone–regardless of socioeconomic status–benefits from strategies that lift children out of poverty. Solutions to child poverty are tied to economic gains that result in a strong and educated workforce. These solutions benefit businesses, communities and, not least of all, children and families.

There are also significant cost savings to be had in sectors that have long-plagued the United States. Reducing child poverty means reduction in costs in the healthcare and criminal justice systems.

Additionally, child development research shows that kids benefit from resources provided at an early age – and that those resources create a long-term positive impact on the child’s life, regardless of family’s socioeconomic status. That's why now is the time to prioritize child poverty. Our country can’t afford to wait.

A gap exists among our nation’s children: those who are a path to success, and those who face challenges at every turn. When we begin to address the gap, however, we are likely to realize a brighter future for everyone. When all kids are successful, all of us benefit.
• Because of the chronic stress, food insecurity, and lack of access to other basic needs associated with poverty, children who grow up in poverty are more likely to experience short-and long-term health and developmental issues.

• When these multiple barriers are compounded by a lack of access to opportunity and disinvestment in communities early in life, it sets a foundation for disparately poor outcomes throughout their lives. This “snowball effect” creates an entirely different trajectory for children living in poverty, increasing the likelihood that they will move around more frequently, and that their parents will struggle to adequately provide for their basic needs. Families in poverty are much more likely to rely on government resources such as food stamps and government-subsidized health care.

• Early investments in a child are critical for the right track for healthy development and success. Expanding access to high-quality early childhood and preschool programs, including quality childcare, prepare children for school as well as support parents’ ability to maintain stable employment and provide adequate resources for their children.

• Parents living in poverty also experience considerable stress and trauma, which affects a child’s healthy development. Home visiting programs help reduce stress for new parents and have proven results that include reductions in children’s developmental delays, intimate partner violence, and maternal depression. Immediate, short-term costs now will reduce a greater burden on our healthcare system in the future.

• Tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) improve maternal and infant health through providing an increase in income and supporting living standards.
Core Message Narrative (continued):

Proof point #2: Children are our future workforce, therefore we need a skilled, educated workforce for a strong economy.

- The long-term viability of our economy is dependent upon the education we provide our children and youth. Strengthening our education system includes ensuring that Title I funds are targeted to public schools in areas of concentrated poverty, as well as investing in educational spaces where children’s academic, health and mentoring needs are met.

- Investments that increase income and resources for families are necessary to boost their educational attainment. For example, children in families that received the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit have higher test scores and academic achievement in elementary and middle-school. They are also more likely to attend college and have higher earnings as adults.

- Supporting a 21st century workforce can strengthen career pathways making employees more competitive, and thus better able to provide for their children over time. A stronger workforce means a stronger and more competitive nation.

- Due to the speed of changing technology, there is high demand for qualified, competent workers. More than 52% of employers have noted difficulty in hiring people with adequate skills, training or education. With access to technical training programs, students are more likely gain new skills, and attain and retain higher-paying jobs in the future.
Core Message Narrative (continued):

Proof point #3: There is a strong return on investment for our economy when reduce child poverty.

- Investing in our children meets the same criteria business executives use when they make corporate investments: a quality product, a proven track record, and reliable and consistent long-term returns (Share Our Strength).
- Every $5 invested in new Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits translates into 9 dollars in economic activity.
- According to economist and Nobel Prize winner James Heckman, high-quality, early learning programs for low-income children under five years old result in a 13 percent return on investment per year, much of which is due to increased earnings for these children later in life.
- A high-quality, publicly-funded pre-kindergarten program serving all 3- and 4-year-old children would generate financial benefits to society that would surpass the annual costs of the program within eight years. By 2050, the annual benefits would exceed the costs of the program by a ratio of nearly 9 to 1.
- Child poverty is expensive – some estimates find that it costs the United States $672 billion a year, or 3.8 percent of GDP. Dollars put towards child poverty would be better spent elsewhere.
- Child poverty raises the costs associated with crime by $170 billion annually (1.3 percent of GDP).
Sample Blog #1:

When all kids are successful, all of us benefit. Children are our future workforce, and a strong, educated, healthy workforce means a strong economy in which businesses, communities, and families thrive.

But unfortunately, roughly 1 in 5 children live in poverty in this country. That’s millions of children each day trying to thrive and, through no fault of their own, they are faced with barriers at every stage of their development. In fact, more children experience poverty than adults in our society.

[Insert stats about state/local child poverty population]

We know that poverty negatively effects child development due to chronic stress, hunger, and a lack of other basic needs. But child poverty has effects that hold us all back, costing our economy over $670 billion every year.

Thankfully, we also know the proven solutions to lift children out of poverty and support their healthy development.

Those include early investments such as expanding access to high-quality early childhood and preschool programs, including quality childcare, which prepare children for school as well as support parents’ ability to maintain stable employment and provide enough resources for their children.

Or expanding access to tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) so they reach more children. These credits have been shown to improve maternal and infant health as well as improve a child’s test scores through providing an increase in income and supporting living standards.

[Room to add or replace with state/local policy ask]

The long-term viability of our economy depends on the success of our country’s children.

Currently, a gap exists among our nation’s children: those who are a path to success, and those who face challenges at every turn. When we begin to address the gap, however, we are likely to realize a brighter future for everyone.

Everyone benefits from strategies that lift children out of poverty.
Sample Blog #2:

Child poverty is expensive – estimates find that it costs our society over $600 billion annually. Over 15 million children in the U.S. are living in poverty. These children face barriers that include lack of access to quality early childhood education, lack of access to proper nutrition and healthcare and under-resourced schools.

[Insert stats about state/local child poverty population]

Fortunately, there are known, proven solutions to child poverty that can help cut costs, create a strong, educated workforce, and produce big economic gains. These solutions benefit businesses, communities and, not least of all, children and families.

Early investments in children are critical in getting them on the right track for healthy development and success. Expanding access to high-quality early childhood and preschool programs, including quality childcare, prepare children for school as well as support parents’ ability to maintain stable employment and provide adequate resources for their children.

Strengthening our education system also includes ensuring that Title I funds are targeted to public schools in areas of concentrated poverty, as well as investing in educational spaces where children’s academic, health and mentoring needs are met.

[Room to add or replace with state/local policy ask]

Improving our education system has a high return on investment because it spurs economic activity and reduces costs to our health and criminal justice systems.

In fact, research has found that high-quality, early learning programs for low-income children under five years old result in a 13 percent return on investment per year, much of which is due to increased earnings for these children later in life.

Everyone – regardless of socioeconomic status – benefits from strategies that lift children out of poverty. The long-term viability of our economy is dependent upon the investments we make in our children and youth. It’s time to prioritize child poverty. Our country can’t afford to wait.
Sample Social Media:

*Please note: This social media content is sample only. You may use the URLs interchangeably to link to resources from CPAG or your own organization.*

**Main Hashtags:**

#InvestInKids  
#EndChildPoverty  
#DoNoHarm  
#CutsHurtKids  
#DontHarmKids

**Tweets:**

To realize our country’s full economic potential, we must #EndChildPoverty: childpovertyusa.org

#InvestInKids #DoNoHarm #CutsHurtKids

Reducing child poverty isn’t just good for kids—it’s good for businesses and the economy: childpovertyusa.org #InvestInKids

Want to help grow the economy and make savings in healthcare and criminal justice? Then #InvestInKids. childpovertyusa.org

Reducing child poverty means huge cost savings, a stronger workforce, and a better economy. childpovertyusa.org #InvestInKids #DoNoHarm

When we #InvestInKids, we *all* benefit thru increased savings & better economic growth: http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/ #CutsHurtKids #DoNoHarm

Children are our future workforce. Unfortunately, too many are held back by poverty. It’s time to #InvestInKids http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/

Child poverty is a drain on our economy. If we #InvestInKids, we can realize our full economic potential. http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/ #DoNoHarm

Did you know child poverty costs our country $672 billion annually? If we #InvestInKids, we can cut that cost. http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/

Child poverty doesn’t just harm kids—it’s also a drag on our economy. We must #InvestInKids. [Insert URL] #DoNoHarm #CutsHurtKids

Programs like #SNAP can help us reduce poverty *and* achieve big, long-term savings. [Insert URL] #SNAPworks #InvestInKids

Did you know #earlychildhood programs can yield a return on investment of 13%? [Insert URL] #InvestInKids #DontHarmKids
Poverty is a heavy drag on the healthy development of kids—our country’s future workforce. [Insert URL] #InvestInKids

Child poverty is expensive! But strategies to reduce it can create huge savings and returns on investments. [Insert URL] #EndChildPoverty

**Tweets to Promote the Child Poverty Reduction Act**

Take action! Add your support to the Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2017: [http://ow.ly/DCx630ejzzH #InvestInKids](http://ow.ly/DCx630ejzzH #InvestInKids)

Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2017 would plan to cut # of kids living in poverty by ½ in 10 years. [http://ow.ly/DCx630ejzzH #InvestInKids](http://ow.ly/DCx630ejzzH #InvestInKids)

We support the Child Poverty Reduction Act of 2017 as a way to #EndChildPoverty: [http://ow.ly/DCx630ejzzH #InvestInKids](http://ow.ly/DCx630ejzzH #InvestInKids)

**Sample Facebook Posts**

Child poverty doesn’t just harm kids—it’s also a drag on businesses and our economy. To realize our country’s full economic potential, we must make smart investments to reduce child poverty. [http://www.childpovertyusa.org](http://www.childpovertyusa.org)

Did you know that child poverty imposes a $672 billion cost on our country each year? If we invest in programs and policies that reduce child poverty, we can achieve huge costs savings and produce economic gains. [http://www.childpovertyusa.org](http://www.childpovertyusa.org)

Programs that reduce child poverty—like federal nutrition assistance and early childhood education—have been shown to produce huge returns on investments that benefit us all. [http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/](http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/)

The long-term viability of our economy depends on the success of our country’s children. But unfortunately, roughly 1 in 5 live in poverty. To realize our country’s full economic potential, we must invest in programs that reduce child poverty. [http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/](http://www.childpovertyusa.org/resources-2/)
Shareable Social Media Graphics:

Click here to access to a shareable version of these graphics.

There are millions of children living in poverty today. This means millions of children without access to quality education, proper nutrition, and adequate healthcare. Let's work together to #EndChildPoverty. Visit childpovertyusa.org to learn more.
**Additional Resources:**

*Child Poverty Action Group partner resources*

- The High Cost of Poverty for the Poor–and for Us All (Shriver Center)

- Basic Facts about Low-Income Children (National Center for Children in Poverty)

- Investing in Kids – Investing in Our Future: Early Education (Save the Children Action Network)

- Big Business, Little Kids, Smart Investments (Share Our Strength)

- Family Tax Policy: A Path Forward to Lifting Children out of Poverty (Child Poverty Action Group)

*Outside Research*

- Assessing the Long-Run Benefits of Transfers to Low-Income Families (Brookings Institution)

- Why Hurting the Poor Will Hurt the Economy (Washington Post)

- Economic Costs of Childhood Poverty in the United States (University of Chicago)