In November 2019, all 140 seats in the Virginia General Assembly are up for election. The 40 senators and 100 delegates will determine how laws will be written and whether those laws will help Virginia’s children succeed.

Voices for Virginia’s Children encourages child advocates to use these nonpartisan talking points and questions to educate candidates and encourage them to address these issues during their campaigns — and, after they are elected.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Early Childhood
- Family Economic Security
- Foster Care
- Children’s Mental Health
- Trauma-Informed Care

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 10/15: Last day to register to vote
- 11/05: Election Day!

For 25 years, Voices for Virginia’s Children has championed public policies that improve the lives of children across the Commonwealth. We support all kids, especially those who are often overlooked — young children, children of color, those who are economically disadvantaged, those with mental health challenges, or those in foster care — to grow up safe, healthy, and reach their full potential.
**How to Use This Election Guide**

**What is electoral advocacy and why does it matter?**

Electoral advocacy is a nonpartisan way to champion issues and bring them to the forefront. We want candidates to be highlighting topics that matter most to kids and families in the Commonwealth. Getting to know candidates’ positions while they are campaigning provides a foundation for engaging our leaders after the election.

**How can social media be used in this election in a nonpartisan way?**

Social media can be a powerful way to distribute information and call voters to action. Voices will be sharing a variety of articles and media from candidate forums and debates, as well as facts and images from our report to bring issues to the forefront. Check out our blogs and use your social media platforms to raise awareness and engage with candidates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL MEDIA FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DO</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Share media coverage of candidates’ positions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encourage followers to get informed and vote</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Create and share media on your issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>• #VAVotes4Kids</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DON’T</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Show favoritism toward candidates</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Share or retweet candidate posts</td>
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<td>• Share media from partisan sources</td>
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Follow us on @vakids @vakids @va_kids

**What can nonprofit organizations do to get involved?**

Elections provide nonprofits with opportunities to connect with community members, interact with officials, and promote children’s issues. As 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, it is important to know how to protect your nonprofit status.

**HOSTING FORUMS AND CANDIDATE EVENTS FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

**DO**                                                                 **DON’T**

• Invite all candidates                                                                 • Ask one candidate more questions than another or give unequal time
• Use a nonpartisan moderator to ask a variety of questions (These inserts are great starting points!) • Allow staff or board members to distribute candidates’ literature or campaign materials
• Allow media to record and share feeds on your organization’s pages • Appear to endorse a candidate

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

**DO**                                                                 **DON’T**

• Talk with candidates going door-to-door                                                                 • Post personal opinions on sites about the elections
• Ask questions at a town hall                                                                                             • Connect personal opinions to your nonprofit organization
• Learn about candidates’ policy platforms                                                                              •
• VOTE!                                                                   •