



Chapter 4:

VOTER REGISTRATION

For Effective Advocacy On Behalf of Early Education

Voter participation in elections can be vital to any advocacy campaign, whether citizens are electing representatives who will support your position on children's issues or whether they are deciding specific policy questions directly through a ballot initiative. But you cannot win in the ballot box if you don't have like-minded voters who turn out on Election Day.

Voter participation in presidential election years has been on the rise since 2000, and in 2008 was approximately 62 percent, according to the [United States Elections Project](#) at George Mason University.³ When voters care about the issues on the ballot, they go to the polls, and your advocacy coalition can help ensure they get there. But first, of course, eligible voters must be registered.

Preventing or discouraging any eligible voter from registering is illegal, but you can concentrate your voter registration efforts on those who are likely to share your interests and support your cause, for example, preschool teachers, child development students, and parents. You will want to make sure these constituents are registered to vote, that they understand your issue, and that they go to the polls.

Before holding a voter registration drive, check with your county elections office. The elections office can provide you with the materials and support you will need to organize your campaign. The Secretary of State also provides a [guide](#) to help you comply with regulations and avoid problems.

Here are some resources to support your voter registration efforts:

[The Right Way to Hold a Voter Registration Drive](#). From [Local Victory: Your Guide to Winning Elections](#)

[Guide to Voter Registration Drives](#). (2010). California Secretary of State.

³ See the [United States Elections Project data tables](#)