



THE *Heart* OF THE TRIANGLE

Sharing the vision and supporting the mission of the Triangle area non-profit community.

NC Child

Advocates for North Carolina Children

by Judy Liu, MPH

The first 2,000 days of a child's life have a lasting impact on later learning, health, and success.

The not-for-profit NC Child organization was created on January 1, 2014 through a merger of Action for Children North Carolina and the Covenant with North Carolina's Children, two organizations with a long history of effective advocacy for our state's children.

Action for Children North Carolina was founded in 1983 to ensure that North Carolina's children were healthy, safe, well-educated, and had every opportunity for success in life. Action for Children used research, data analysis, advocacy, and education to influence a broad cross-section of people and policymakers across the state. Action for Children was the first state advocacy group in the nation to develop an annual index identifying "leading indicators" of child well-being. Many other states have since followed Action for Children's lead.

The Covenant with North Carolina's Children was founded in 1996 to give children a stronger voice at the state legislature. The Covenant was a membership-based organization composed of more than 50 service providers, professional associations, and other advocacy groups who worked together to identify the most pressing issues facing children and to take action on those issues. For nearly two decades, the Covenant employed a full-time lobbyist who played a major role in tackling the most important public policy decisions facing children.

NC Child creates an annual legislative agenda that promotes the health, safety, education, and economic security of North Carolina's children. NC Child believes all children should have equal access to these essential building blocks:

- Grow up in safe, stable, and nurturing homes and communities
- Live in economically secure homes with their basic needs met
- Have access to high-quality physical and behavioral health care
- Receive an effective pre-kindergarten education (0–5 years old) and K–12 education
- Have the opportunity to become successful, self-supporting adults

NC Child is based in Raleigh. Their mission is to "build a strong North Carolina by advancing

public policies to ensure all children – regardless of race, ethnicity, or place of birth – have the opportunity to achieve their full potential." NC Child also provides limited data and research support free of charge to the public including one-on-one technical assistance, data presentations, and analyses of emerging conditions and child well-being.

Membership is free! To enroll online, visit: ncchild.salsalabs.org/nccanmembership/index.html. To learn more visit www.ncchild.org/about

The NC Child Advocacy Network is a project of NC Child. Members benefits of the Child Advocacy Network (CAN) fall into three categories:

- **Information:** To have an impact, you've got to know what's going on. In addition to NC Child's regular legislative updates, blog posts, webinars, and other publications, CAN members have access to legislative insiders, data experts, and messaging support.
- **Collaboration:** The issues facing children in North Carolina are big, and that's why the CAN supports statewide collaboration among state and local advocacy groups and individuals.
- **Activation:** Advocacy isn't easy—it's not always clear what to say and who to say it to. NC Child and our allies provide CAN members with easy and effective ways to take action to protect NC kids.

Natural Awakenings supports Triangle area non-profits by offering a free full-page feature article each month. It is a very visible platform from which an organization can tell its story and detail the services it offers. Please let us know if you would like for your non-profit organization to be considered for inclusion in an upcoming issue. Call 919-342-2831 or email TrianglePublisher@NaturalAwakeningsMag.com.