



NC Civic Index Recommendations

Civic education for our state's young people should be a high priority for schools, families, and communities. Here are a few ways that North Carolinians can help:

FOR PARENTS & FAMILY

Setting an Example

Parents and family members can help young people become active, informed citizens by discussing political and current events with children; volunteering time or donating money to meet community needs; and engaging in political activities, such as voting or attending public meetings.

FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS

Linking Service and Citizenship

Most of North Carolina's young people are involved in community service, but these experiences will have a stronger impact on their civic knowledge and school involvement if they more clearly address real community problems and are more clearly connected to civics studies.

Involving Diverse Youth

Schools and community organizations can help close the civics gap among youth from different backgrounds by ensuring that both nonwhite and lower-income youth have access to engaging civics programs. The key is to relate studies to issues that are relevant to all young people.

FOR SCHOOLS

Enhancing Existing Courses

All schools, especially middle and high schools, can have a positive impact on student civic knowledge and involvement by implementing a number of basic strategies. Those that show the most promise include interactive current events discussions; student interactions with public officials; and hands-on class activities, such as service-learning, that explore and address real school or community issues.

Providing Students with a Voice

National studies have consistently shown that involvement in student government and other leadership programs can be the strongest predictor of lifelong civic participation, especially voting. Schools can support their civic mission by fostering strong student councils that have a meaningful role in school issues. Additionally, schools can involve students through committees, surveys, and other activities that give students multiple opportunities to voice their viewpoints.

FOR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Engaging Young People

The positive connection between interaction with public officials and youth confidence in government means that all public officials—elected and appointed—should create opportunities to talk with young people and find effective ways of involving youth in government programs, services, or decision making.

For more information, please visit www.civics.org or call the Civic Education Consortium at 919.962.8273.

North Carolina

CIVIC EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

Program of The School of Government

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill