



# News Release

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## **Connecticut Voices for Children Hires Emily Byrne as Executive Director**

Following an extensive search, Connecticut Voices for Children, a research-based child advocacy organization that works to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential, has chosen a new Executive Director with wide-ranging experience and a record of leadership in government and nonprofit organizations. Today the organization announced the hiring of Emily Byrne, who has begun her work as leader of the organization this week.

“Emily brings a wealth of management experience and a lifelong commitment to improving opportunities for Connecticut’s children and families. With Emily at the helm, I am confident that Connecticut Voices will continue to build on its successes and its reputation for effective, research-based advocacy,” said David Nee, Chairperson of Connecticut Voices’ Board of Directors.

Byrne, a long-time Connecticut resident, has extensive experience in developing education, housing, economic development and anti-poverty policies and programs. She has organized and led advocacy campaigns on local, state and federal legislation affecting children and families. A public servant by training, she started her career as a policy analyst for the City of New Haven, where she helped design the nation’s first municipal identification card for all residents, regardless of their immigration status. Since then she has held various governmental leadership positions at the state and local levels, including a role as Director of Strategic Initiatives at the Connecticut State Department of Education, where she spearheaded the agency’s reorganization and led the transition to the state’s new educational assessments. She also served as Director of Strategy and Innovation at the New Haven Housing Authority, where she designed policies and programs that supported public housing residents and led advocacy efforts that preserved affordable housing. Most notably, she was the founding Executive Director of New Haven Promise.

“Connecticut Voices for Children has been a provenance of progressive policies, rooted in research, that support the state’s most vulnerable children and families for nearly twenty-five years. Together—with communities and partners—we endeavor to build upon past efforts in service of equitable, inclusive change and justice,” said Byrne. “I am honored and humbled to lead the organization into the next quarter century of its work so that all children in Connecticut have the opportunity to reach their full potential.”

Byrne has led and contributed to work that has been recognized by past White House administrations. She is a 2011 Yale University Steton Elm Awardee and a 2012 Connecticut Magazine 40 under 40 recipient. A graduate of Providence College and New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, she is also a past U.S. Visiting Fellow with the Robert Bosch Foundation in Germany, where her research focused on migrant rights and racial justice in relation to democratic participation and education.

*A photo of Emily Byrne is attached. (Photo credit: Mistina Hanscom.)*

*Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based child advocacy organization working to ensure that all Connecticut children have an equitable opportunity to achieve their full potential. In furtherance of its mission, Connecticut Voices for Children produces high-quality research and analysis, promotes citizen education, advocates for policy change at the state and local level, and works to develop the next generation of leaders.*

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