



The Colorado Children's Campaign is the leading voice for kids at the state Capitol and in communities across the state. In our 36-year history we've worked with policymakers from every political perspective to improve the well-being of Colorado kids, and we will continue to do so as we work together to get through these unprecedented times. The COVID-19 pandemic has upended lives across our state and nation. It has overwhelmed essential services on which we all rely, from health care to public safety to child care. It has impacted our students, both academically and emotionally. And it has threatened families' access to safe, stable housing. The Children's Campaign is committed to meeting this moment and centering the kids and families in Colorado who face the most barriers to success. We will get through this, together.

## OUR TOP PRIORITY POLICIES

### **K-12 Education: Equity & Transparency in Public School Finance**

The quality of a child's education and the resources that schools can access should not depend on a child's zip code or local property wealth. By fixing the unintended consequences of Colorado's inflexible tax system and increasing transparency around funds raised at the local level, the state can target investments in our students and communities living in poverty and experiencing the most barriers to opportunity.

### **K-12 Education: Addressing How Students Are Doing During the Pandemic**

We need to develop creative solutions to assess how students are doing during this crisis—to understand the impact of learning disruptions and remote instruction, the extent of learning losses or gains, and how our kids are faring emotionally. Children, families, and community members deserve to know how students are progressing, and policymakers and advocates need this information to target future investments. We also need to work together to support policies that align with the COVID Implications Workgroup recommendations.

### **Early Childhood: Increasing the Supply of Child Care**

Even before the pandemic, Colorado was facing a severe child care shortage, especially among family child care home providers and care for infants and toddlers. We must remove inequitable barriers and streamline burdensome regulations to allow more educators and families to set up these small businesses, including in their homes, and provide care for their communities.

### **Early Childhood: Implementation of Universal Pre-K**

With the passage of Proposition EE, Colorado is now poised to establish a first-in-the-nation preschool program that is both accessible for all and targeted to those families with the greatest needs. Based on the work of a community-informed policy development process, Colorado can set the stage for implementation of this vital program in the years ahead.

### **Health: Maternal Physical & Mental Well-Being**

Moms need to be physically and mentally healthy to be the kind of parents they want and need to be for their kids. We can help all families in this area by ensuring access to family planning services, improving access to culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and patient-centered care, and improving the quality of mental and physical health care provided to pregnant and postpartum people.

### **Health: Expanding Access to Health Insurance Coverage**

Health insurance coverage provides access to the physical, mental and oral health services that pregnant people and kids need to stay healthy, and it protects family financial resources. We need to expand health insurance options, ensure that coverage provides all the benefits that Colorado families need to thrive, and continue working to enroll eligible Coloradans.



### **Speak Up For Kids at the Capitol**

Our annual advocacy day will be March 18, 2021 in partnership with Clayton Early Learning and Children's Hospital Colorado. This virtual event will provide training and coaching to help advocates speak up about the issues they care about. For more information, contact Jacy Montoya Price at 303-620-4547 or [jacy@coloradokids.org](mailto:jacy@coloradokids.org)

### **Connect With Us**

The It's About Kids Network is the Colorado Children's Campaign's statewide advocacy network. More than 70 volunteer community leaders provide guidance and direction to thousands of child advocates by hosting presentations in their communities and activating Coloradans to speak up on behalf of kids. To learn more, contact Katie Creedon at 303-620-4532 or [katie@coloradokids.org](mailto:katie@coloradokids.org).



**It's About Kids**

*Bringing Colorado Communities Together*

# ADDITIONAL POLICIES WE SUPPORT

- Ensuring families have access to safe, quality, and affordable housing without having to move frequently
- Implementing a statewide paid family and medical leave program that is accessible, affordable, adequate, and equitable
- Investing in the recruitment, retention, and compensation of early educators who have done heroic work in supporting families and essential workers during the pandemic
- Supporting the behavioral health needs of children and youth through both crisis and school-based mental health services
- Improving gun safety to reduce unintentional injuries and deaths as well as instances of suicide
- Increasing access to a variety of high-quality and culturally competent birth workers
- Increasing data transparency related to race and ethnicity among both clients and providers in the Medicaid program
- Removing barriers to opportunity by improving access to benefits and services for people without proper documentation

## DEFENDING PROGRESS

Legislators faced historic budget cuts during the 2020 legislative session due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Children's Campaign supports the restoration of funding to programs that support the well-being of children, students, and families, including their physical and mental health and economic security. We also support:

- Maintaining funding for the **Eviction Legal Defense Fund**, which funds legal aid organizations throughout the state that assist families facing eviction and help them stay in their homes as many children attend school remotely and the state recovers from the economic consequences of the pandemic
- Protecting quality affordable health insurance coverage options for kids and families like the **Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+)** and the **Health Insurance Affordability Fund**
- Restoring funding for Colorado's successful **Family Planning Program** to support the health and well-being of families and their children
- Supporting access to quality early care and education for working families through the **Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP)** and **Colorado Preschool Program (CPP)**
- Maintaining funding for our youngest students going into **Full-day Kindergarten** and ensuring parents will not have to pay tuition again
- Targeting funding and resources to the students facing the most barriers to opportunity, including those who benefit from **Breakfast after the Bell** and recent expansions of the **Child Nutrition Lunch Protection Act**
- Protecting the **Healthy Kids Colorado Survey** and **Smart Source**, the two primary ways we are able to understand the health and well-being of Colorado youth
- Adjusting the **School Finance Act** formula factors as targeted solutions in a tough budget year instead of resorting to potential across-the board reductions through the budget stabilization factor

## STAY INFORMED

The West Steps is our podcast that digs into the policies affecting kids, with insights and analysis from our staff, partners, and advocates in the field. Look for the West Steps every week during the legislative session on Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen.



Sign up for KidsFlash, our weekly e-newsletter featuring the latest on child well-being in Colorado. During the legislative session, our staff analyze hundreds of bills affecting kids and families and provide free updates and analysis in our weekly Capitol Updates. Sign up at [coloradokids.org](http://coloradokids.org). You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn.

