In the midst of an ongoing public health crisis, the Colorado Children’s Campaign began 2021 focused on our mission as the pandemic laid bare the many systemic barriers faced by kids and families in Colorado. Despite the economic downturn and unpredictable school schedules, the new year brought with it an urgency to restructure socioeconomic systems to benefit all Coloradans.

Legislators, advocates, and our dedicated team all worked diligently to advance policy solutions to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. In fact, most of the funding that was cut from our state budget last year was restored, and many of our priority bills passed with bipartisan support. We also continued to engage in a strategic planning process, which, among other things, highlighted the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion into our policy work.

One of our most notable successes was the passage of House Bill 1104, which initiates a community-informed process to unify early childhood services under a cabinet level department, and requires a plan to implement voluntary universal preschool in alignment with voter intent in Prop EE. This monumental bill provides children and families with essential support in their earliest years, while also ensuring that the early childhood workforce can provide the high-quality care and education kids need to thrive.

In addition to elevating early childhood, the Children’s Campaign saw major wins across our main issue areas of child health, K-12 education, and family economic security. Some of our other achievements in the 2021 legislative session included fully funding the Child Tax Credit, expanding coverage for family planning services, and correcting a longstanding error in the state's property tax system for funding public education.

These successes are a strong testament to the commitment of our staff and statewide partners. As we reflect upon and celebrate these successes, I’m excited to share our accomplishments from 2021. We thank you for your continued commitment to helping us meet the moment for Colorado kids and families.

Here are some of our policy advocacy successes in 2021.

In 2021, legislators and advocates continued to respond to the numerous issues exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the funding that was cut from 2020 was restored, providing necessary support to education, health care, and child care programs, among many others. During this critical period, the Children’s Campaign and its partners seized the opportunity to develop transformative solutions that were rooted in community voice and impact in dismantling barriers for all Coloradans and families.

Here are the results of the critical policies championed and supported by the Colorado Children’s Campaign.

**Early Childhood:** Colorado is now one of eight states to have a cabinet level Department of Early Childhood (source for this data: [https://www.ecs.org/early-care-and-education-governance/]). House Bill 21-1304 consolidates various early childhood programs currently dispersed across state agencies into the Colorado Department of Early Childhood, and sets into motion a community informed transition process to unify services in the new department. Additionally, the early childhood workforce received essential support through grant programs and the reduction of burdensome regulations on family child care homes. These policies will improve child care capacity and strengthen our early childhood system at a time in which many families continue to face significant barriers to accessing early care and education.

**Health:** The 2021 legislative session saw tremendous progress for family health, including improvements to Colorado’s maternal health system and several expansions of family planning services. Legislation improved the integration of certified midwives into our maternal health system, improved stakeholder engagement in Colorado’s maternal mortality review process, expanded Medicaid and CHIP coverage for family planning services, and improved access to depression screenings in the perinatal period. Coverage for family planning services was expanded to Coloradans who live scarcely above the Medicaid income eligibility threshold. The Children’s Campaign also championed legislation to improve access to mental health care in schools and child care settings, improve access to quality health insurance and ensure the safe storage of firearms.

**Family Economic Security:** The COVID-19 crisis posed a critical moment to assess how we support Colorado families pursing economic opportunity and stable housing. In 2021, Colorado supported safe and stable housing with multiple bills which increased fairness and representation in the eviction court process, and allowed communities to create affordable housing options. The state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) was expanded and increased alongside the state Child Tax Credit (CTC) – improving two of Colorado’s most effective tools for eliminating child poverty. Finally, with the state budget in hand, a new grant program, millions were invested in ensuring all Colorado families are able to purchase the diapers essentials they need to keep their children healthy and happy.

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Colorado Children’s Campaign by the Numbers

**123**
Community presentations on child well-being that reached nearly 5,547 individual Coloradans

**57**
Times our experts provided testimony on the well-being of children before committees of the Colorado General Assembly or state regulatory boards

**175**
Bills that affected Colorado children and families tracked during the 2021 session of the Colorado General Assembly

**43,584**
Visits to Colorado data that we provide to the national KIDS COUNT Data Center.

**177**
News media articles citing our work, research or activities

**6,976**
Website page views of 2021 KIDS COUNT in Colorado!

**8,526**
Downloads of the third season of our podcast, The West Steps

**2021 Financial Snapshot**

**SOURCES OF INCOME**
- Foundations: $2,077,902
- Individuals: $164,636 (does not include event support)
- Investments: $146,950
- Special Events: $31,195 (net of expenses)
- Total: $2,420,683

**EXPENSES**
- Program: $2,078,375
- Fundraising: $401,567
- Administration: $212,667
- Total: $2,692,609