



The Colorado Children's Campaign serves as the leading voice for kids and their families at the state Capitol and in communities across the state. For almost four decades, we have worked with policymakers across various political perspectives to ensure **every chance for every child**.

Children's issues are not partisan, and our work proves we can find systemic solutions when we work together. Our commitment to kids and families includes developing and advocating for legislation throughout the 2023 legislative session. It also involves sustained work with government agencies, partners, and communities to ensure that successful bills become departments, programs, initiatives, and policies that respond to the needs of Colorado kids and families.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### **Child & Family Health: Multi-Year Continuous Eligibility for Medicaid and CHP+**

Policies that keep people enrolled in Medicaid and the Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) have reduced the state's uninsurance rate - a silver lining of the pandemic. However, hundreds of thousands of Colorado kids are at risk of losing their health insurance coverage when the declared public health emergency ends, even though most will still be eligible for coverage—largely due to complex, burdensome processes required to stay enrolled that have been paused since early 2020. Colorado can ensure that families with low incomes can access the health care they need to thrive by providing longer periods of continuous Medicaid and CHP+ coverage to young children and other critical populations.

### **Child & Family Health: Access to Reproductive and Preventive Health Services**

Recent federal court rulings jeopardize Coloradans' access to family planning and preventive services. Increasing state funding for family planning clinics will help ensure that Coloradans can continue to access the comprehensive, confidential family planning services that all people deserve. Colorado must also strengthen state coverage requirements for private health plans to ensure that access to critical preventive care, including reproductive health, oral health, and behavioral health services, is protected.

### **Early Childhood: Child Care Contribution Tax Credit Reauthorization**

Colorado's Child Care Contribution Tax Credit brings an estimated \$60 million each year to child care providers across the state, helping them keep their doors open and helping families access care. Coloradans can receive tax credits for donations to child care programs, child care provider training, and child care resource and referral systems. Reauthorizing Colorado's Child Care Contribution Tax Credit will ensure that Colorado continues to provide an essential support to child care providers and Colorado families in the years to come.



### **Family Economic Prosperity: Transparency and Access for Eviction Proceedings**

Eviction takes a toll on health, well-being, and economic prosperity - and those impacts are magnified for families with children. When families are involved in eviction proceedings, they have a better chance of staying in their homes and avoiding an automatic judgment against them. Allowing all parties to attend eviction hearings remotely - a practice that had positive results during the pandemic - would remove many barriers to participation in these proceedings. Colorado can also improve the transparency of its eviction processes by collecting and publishing more consistent, comprehensive data. This would increase our understanding of who is most affected and allow us to identify the best ways to prevent families from being evicted.

### **Youth Success: Equitable Changes to School Finance**

Colorado's school finance formula is nearly 30 years old. An update is sorely needed to remove structural barriers to opportunity and improve student outcomes. Colorado has an opportunity to update the way it defines and provides resources to students experiencing economic disadvantage. In addition, the state can better support school districts that struggle to raise adequate revenue due to low property wealth.

**STAY INFORMED** The West Steps podcast digs into policies affecting kids and families across the state, with insight and analysis from our staff, community partners, and advocates in the field. Look for The West Steps on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or wherever you listen.



# REGULATORY & ADMINISTRATIVE PRIORITIES

## Child & Family Health: Cover All Coloradans

The Children's Campaign is working closely with partners to ensure that House Bill 22-1289, Cover All Coloradans, achieves its goals of increasing access to health insurance and care. In 2023, this work will include improving data collection about the perinatal period, health coverage for pregnant Coloradans, and access to services that improve well-being in the perinatal period. The Children's Campaign will engage with three state agencies - the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, the Colorado Division of Insurance and the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing - to achieve these goals. We are committed to supporting and promoting community involvement throughout the implementation of this bill.

## Early Childhood: Establish New Department of Early Childhood and Universal Preschool Program

Our early childhood system is strongest when it can respond to the needs of all Colorado families and early childhood program providers. House Bill 22-1295 aligned nearly all the programs and services that support Colorado's young children and their families under the purview of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood and created the Colorado Universal Preschool Program. To realize the whole child, whole family, whole community vision for early childhood established through HB22-1295's stakeholder processes, those who are most impacted by changes to early childhood policy - families and providers - must remain engaged. The Children's Campaign will be working to ensure community involvement is sustained throughout the implementation of Colorado's new early childhood system.

## Family Economic Prosperity: Improve Colorado Works (TANF)

House Bill 22-1259 advanced significant improvements to Colorado's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, known here as Colorado Works. This included enhancement of its basic cash assistance; smoothing the program's "cliff effect," which occurs when families are disenrolled after small increases in earnings; easing punitive sanctions; and enhancing family outreach and engagement. The TANF Coalition, co-convened by the Children's Campaign, will work with the Colorado Department of Human Services and other stakeholders to ensure that the rulemaking and implementation processes for these improvements promote economic security and reduce barriers for Colorado families

## Youth Success: Enhance School Climate Data

Schools play a crucial role in fostering safety, community, and healthy conditions for students' learning and development. We will continue our work with the Colorado Department of Education to improve transparency and accuracy in data collection related to school discipline, absenteeism, harassment, and bullying. These data will be the foundation of school climate profile reports that provide crucial information about learning environments to parents, students, educators, and policymakers.



### SPEAK UP FOR KIDS

Our annual advocacy day, held in partnership with Clayton Early Learning, will be held in person for the first time since 2019! This event provides training to help advocates speak up about the issues they care about. We are excited to share that the event will be taking place on Jan. 19, 2023, at Clayton Early Learning in Denver. For more information, visit [bit.ly/SpeakUp2023](https://bit.ly/SpeakUp2023).

### CONNECT WITH US

The It's About Kids Network is the Colorado Children's Campaign statewide advocacy network. Volunteer community leaders from across the state 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, visit [bit.ly/IAKnetwork](https://bit.ly/IAKnetwork).



It's About Kids  
*Bringing Colorado Communities Together*

### SIGN UP FOR KIDSFLASH

Our weekly newsletter features the latest on child well-being in Colorado. During the legislative session, our staff analyze hundreds of bills affecting kids and families and provide weekly Capitol Updates. Sign up at [coloradokids.org](https://coloradokids.org). You can also find the Colorado Children's Campaign on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

