



The Children's Partnership (TCP) works with local, state and national partners to advance solutions that provide all of California's 10 million children – regardless of their race, ethnicity or place of birth – the resources and opportunities they need to grow up healthy and thrive.

Through policy, research and community engagement, TCP seeks to dismantle the racism embedded in our social, economic and political systems and structures that create and perpetuate persistent inequities that shape the outcomes and life trajectory of California's children from historically marginalized communities, including communities of color and immigrant communities. **All of our policy priorities center the experiences of marginalized children and families.**

Children and families continue to face multiple threats to their health and well-being, including COVID-19, losing their health coverage, facing economic insecurity, experiencing mental health crises and dealing with ongoing racial injustices. In reimagining child well-being, our policy agenda utilizes a whole-child approach with policy priorities that consider a child's full range of needs that must be addressed to advance child health equity:

HEALTHY CHILDREN

STRONG, ECONOMICALLY STABLE AND WELL-CONNECTED FAMILIES

SAFE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITIES



## HEALTHY CHILDREN

Children of color face alarming health inequities and the greatest barriers to accessing needed care, including during critical stages of development like early childhood. Unmet health, dental and mental health needs can result in developmental delays that affect a child's health, social and academic outcomes. California has recently laid out programs and services that prioritize the health and mental health of children in our state. They include a [Comprehensive Quality Strategy](#) and [Children's Strategy](#), which prioritize children's preventive care as an area of focus and outline specific initiatives and proposals intended to improve child and family health; and the [Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative](#) and [Community Schools Partnership Program](#), which center and support the mental health and well-being of children and youth. By leveraging these and other opportunities, our advocacy will support an even stronger commitment to healthy children through public policies that:

- ▶ Customize Medi-Cal reforms for child-specific systems of care and treat families and communities as experts;
- ▶ Emphasize early childhood development as the foundation of lifelong health and well-being, starting with ensuring continuous coverage for young children; and
- ▶ Improve mental health for children and youth through family and community-centered healing that is trauma-informed, culturally-responsive and gender-affirming.



## STRONG, ECONOMICALLY STABLE AND WELL-CONNECTED FAMILIES

A child's health often reflects the health of the adults they rely on for love, support and security. Families are strongest when they are economically stable and well-connected to resources that support their well-being and that of their children. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted California's communities of color with severe health and economic consequences, disrupting the stability of children and families across the state. Our advocacy will support strong, economically stable and well-connected families through public policies that:

- ▶ Ensure an equitable COVID-19 response;
- ▶ Provide direct financial supports for kids and families;
- ▶ Eliminate digital inequities that stand in the way of an inclusive online infrastructure for telehealth, learning and workforce development; and
- ▶ Strengthen coordination and availability of health, mental health and social services and resources for whole-child and whole-family well-being in community spaces.



## SAFE AND WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

Children need an environment that is safe, stable and nurturing with easy access to quality resources and services so they can grow up healthy and thrive. In order to create more nurturing environments, we must reimagine where our children grow, play and learn. This includes strengthening our education, health care and social services systems, and how those systems serve children and families. Our advocacy will help create and strengthen safe and welcoming communities through public policies that:

- ▶ Bring health care into the community and the community into health care through a community health workforce;
- ▶ Build strong, well-resourced schools and early learning programs that support the whole child, including mental health supports, cultural identity and leadership development, the arts and dual immersion/bilingual programs; and
- ▶ Uphold the rights and dignity of immigrant families and advance their meaningful integration and access to health, food, housing, mental health and social supports.

## FEDERAL POLICY

Federal and state public policies work in tandem in shaping the health and well-being of children. In order to advance our state policy agenda, we will support efforts at the federal level that:

- ▶ Reform our federal immigration system so that it includes a pathway to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented in the country, keeps families together, and increases access to services and programs that protect health and well-being;
- ▶ Increase federal flexibilities to improve state and local child health programs through continuous multi-year coverage;
- ▶ Prioritize a child-focused agenda across federal departments, including the creation of the White House Office on Children and Youth;
- ▶ Provide economic supports for family members by making the Expanded Child Tax Credit permanent and removing its immigration-related restrictions; and
- ▶ Increase investments in supports that address maternal and infant mortality like community-based doulas and the reauthorization of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) legislation.



*For questions about The Children's Partnership's 2022 Policy Agenda, please contact Gabriella Barbosa at [gbarbosa@childrenspartnership.org](mailto:gbarbosa@childrenspartnership.org).*

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