2018
A legislative policy agenda for Oregon’s kids
CHILDREN’S AGENDA
Convened by Children First for Oregon
Making Oregon a place where all children thrive means making sure children have opportunities to reach their full potential. Through United for Kids, we bring together a community of advocates, coalitions, and organizations to champion equitable state legislative policies and investments that benefit children’s health, safety, economic security, and education. United by a shared Children’s Agenda, over 100 partner organizations spur communities and elected leaders to action on behalf of Oregon’s 880,000 children.

Children First for Oregon empowers communities to advocate for kids so all children in Oregon thrive.

Children First is pleased to coordinate the 2018 Children’s Agenda as part of our United for Kids initiative. Children First was founded in 1991 to improve the lives of Oregon children by galvanizing community support and informing decision-makers about the solutions kids need. The Children First Board of Directors and staff support and appreciate our colleagues who work in policy arenas impacting Oregon children and families.
Targeted Investments in Oregon’s Children

When the Children’s Agenda was launched in 2015, we compiled the best thinking of over 60 children’s advocacy organizations and coalitions on public policy changes and targeted investments that would benefit our children. In 2018, our partners – united in the knowledge that, together, we can improve children’s lives – have grown to over 100 organizations!

On any given day, Oregon’s children go to childcare and school. Some will need to visit a doctor. Hopefully, at the end of the day, they can crawl into a bed they can call their own. These needs span many policy areas, and all of them are important to a child’s well-being. The Children’s Agenda is the one place where legislators and the public can see the policy and investment proposals that will benefit the health, safety, education, and economic security of all of Oregon’s kids.

As we begin the 2018 Legislative Session, we have the opportunity to support targeted investments that will have tangible, positive impacts on children’s lives in ways that can begin to bring equity for children of color, kids with disabilities, and other disparately impacted populations in our communities.

As United for Kids, we stand together to propose solutions to the challenges our children face. We encourage legislators to work with our partners and make Oregon a place where all children thrive.

— Children’s Agenda Steering Committee

44% of families of single mothers face food insecurity.

Only 42% of 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in preschool.

96% of Oregon children have health insurance.
There are many policy initiatives that should be enacted to ensure Oregon becomes a place where all children thrive. United for Kids prioritized two concepts in the 2018 Children’s Agenda because of the beneficial impact on Oregon children, especially those among communities of color.

**Culturally Specific Early Learning** establishes an equity fund to invest in culturally specific early learning programs with demonstrated success for kids of color.

Currently, state funding in early childhood is restricted by statute to very specific program models, e.g. Head Start, Relief Nurseries, Healthy Families, which has created barriers for culturally specific organizations to access state early childhood funding. Research supports the effectiveness and importance of services that are developed and delivered by the same communities as those being served. This equity fund is designed to invest in existing programs developed, led, and implemented by culturally specific programs in communities of color that are already demonstrating positive results.

**Restore Employer-Related Day Care (ERDC) funding cut from the 2017-19 budget.**

Quality childcare prepares children for their subsequent education and allows parents to reenter the workforce with confidence. Fewer than 20% of eligible families can be served by the program at current funding levels. The $15 million in budget cuts and increased federal requirements required closing ERDC to new enrollments in November 2017. In the first four weeks more than 250 families sought childcare subsidies, but were turned away due to lack of funding. Hundreds more families are looking for help to find dependable quality care so they can work. The Legislature needs to restore the cuts as a first step.
ECONOMIC SECURITY

FAMILI EQUITY ACT
A self-sustaining program, like Unemployment Insurance, to fund wage replacement during qualifying absences from work, such as welcoming a new child or a serious illness of the employee or family member.

SUBMITTED BY: Family Forward

DOCUMENT RECORDING FEE
Kids across Oregon need safe places to call home. Increasing the document recording fee will help prevent homelessness, increase affordable housing, and expand homeownership options.

SUBMITTED BY: Oregon Housing Alliance

UPDATE TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)
Unexpected TANF caseload savings will be used to update quarter-century-old grant levels and improve job placement programs for Oregon’s neediest families.

SUBMITTED BY: TANF Alliance
SUPPORTED BY: 211info, American Association of University Women of Oregon, CareOregon, Central City Concern, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Juliette’s House, Neighborhood Partnerships, OregonASK, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Oregon Center for Public Policy, Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Housing Alliance, Oregon Hunger Task Force, Oregon Law Center, Oregon School-Based Health Alliance, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon, ReadyNation, SEIU Local 503, The Urban League of Portland

PRIORITY

RESTORE EMPLOYMENT-RELATED DAY CARE (ERDC)
Quality childcare helps prepare children for their K-12 education and allows parents to reenter the workforce with confidence. With hundreds of families waiting, let’s increase access.

SUBMITTED BY: Oregon AFSCME Council 75
SUPPORTED BY: 211info, American Association of University Women of Oregon, CareOregon, Central City Concern, Children’s Institute, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Family Forward, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Juliette’s House, Neighborhood Partnerships, OregonASK, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Oregon Center for Public Policy, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Law Center, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon Pediatric Society, Oregon School-Based Health Alliance, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon, ReadyNation, SEIU Local 503, Upstream Public Health, The Urban League of Portland, Voices Set Free, YWCA of Greater Portland

FIX THE BUSINESS OWNER TAX BREAK
Profits for some pass-through business owners are taxed at a reduced rate. This proposal would limit the reduced rate.

SUBMITTED BY: Oregon Center for Public Policy
SUPPORTED BY: 211info, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Juliette’s House, Oregon AFSCME Council 75, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, Tax Fairness Oregon

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PROVIDE CONTINUITY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES
Align special education eligibility between Early Childhood Special Education and K-12 Special Education to create a smoother transition for children and families.

SUBMITTED BY: Children's Institute
SUPPORTED BY: 211info, FACT Oregon, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Healthy Kids Learn Better, Juliette’s House, League of Women Voters of Oregon, Oregon AFSCME Council 75, OregonASK, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Pediatric Society, Oregon School-Based Health Alliance, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, ReadyNation

RESTORE EARLY CHILDHOOD FUNDS
Restoring cuts made in 2017 to early childhood programs such as Early Learning Hubs, Kindergarten Partnerships, and Childcare Networks. This will reset the funding bar and offer opportunities for thousands of Oregon’s children.

SUBMITTED BY: Fight Crime: Invest In Kids

PAY EQUITY FOR HEAD START TEACHERS
Head Start teachers typically receive half the pay of kindergarten teachers. To begin to retain quality instructors, $15 million should be invested.

SUBMITTED BY: Oregon Head Start Association
SUPPORTED BY: 211info, CareOregon, Children’s Institute, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Juliette’s House, Neighborhood Partnerships, Oregon AFSCME Council 75, Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, ReadyNation, YWCA of Greater Portland

CULTURALLY SPECIFIC EARLY LEARNING
Establish an equity fund to invest in culturally specific early learning programs with demonstrated success for kids of color.

SUBMITTED BY: Latino Network
SUPPORTED BY: 211info, CareOregon, Children’s Institute, Clackamas Women’s Services, Coalition of Communities of Color, Family Forward, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Healthy Kids Learn Better, Juliette’s House, Oregon AFSCME Council 75, OregonASK, Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children, Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Latino Health Coalition, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon Pediatric Society, Oregon School-Based Health Alliance, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, ReadyNation, Upstream Public Health, The Urban League of Portland

TEACHERS AND DISTRICTS MUST NEGOTIATE CLASS SIZES
By mandating negotiations on class sizes, children have a chance for reasonable class sizes and improved educational experiences.

SUBMITTED BY: Oregon Education Association
SUPPORTED BY: 211info, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation, YWCA of Greater Portland
**SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION FUND**
Increase funding by $950,000 to put more mental health providers in schools and school-based health centers to help prevent absenteeism and improve graduation rates.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Oregon School-Based Health Alliance  

**CHILDREN’S SPECIAL DISTRICTS**
Allows collection of signatures for a ballot measure to create a special district to provide funds for afterschool and summer programs.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Washington County Kids  
**SUPPORTED BY:** Children’s Institute, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, OregonASK, Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation, ReadyNation, YWCA of Greater Portland

**OREGON HUNGER RESPONSE FUND INVESTMENT**
Invest $300,000 to improve capabilities to receive, store, and distribute more fresh foods to combat hunger, especially for children at risk of malnourishment.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Oregon Food Bank  
**SUPPORTED BY:** 211Info, CareOregon, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, Juliette’s House, League of Women Voters of Oregon, OregonASK, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Housing Alliance, Oregon Hunger Task Force, Oregon Pediatric Society, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon, ReadyNation

**CLEAN ENERGY JOBS**
Promote clean energy jobs that will help Oregon families prosper while preserving a better environment for our children.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Oregon Environmental Council  
**SUPPORTED BY:** American Lung Association, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Juliette’s House, League of Women Voters of Oregon, Oregon AFSCME Council 75, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

**PRESERVE FAMILIES**
To help preserve families, strengthen the warrantless removal statute by ensuring children can only be removed from their families when authorized by a judge or when at serious risk of imminent harm.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association  
**SUPPORTED BY:** Youth, Rights & Justice, 211Info, Juliette’s House, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, Voices Set Free, YWCA of Greater Portland

**ALLOW FAMILIES TO BE RESTORED**
Recognizes that circumstances change and parents sometimes deserve a second chance by allowing the court to set aside termination of a parental rights judgement when it is in the children's best interests.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Youth, Rights & Justice  
**SUPPORTED BY:** Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, 211Info, CareOregon, Juliette’s House, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition, Voices Set Free, YWCA of Greater Portland

**GUN SAFETY: CLOSE THE BOYFRIEND LOOPHOLE**
Adding abusive dating partners to the list of those prohibited from owning a gun is an important measure that will protect women and children.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense, Oregon Chapter  
**SUPPORTED BY:** 211Info, American Association of University Women of Oregon, Clackamas Women’s Services, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Juliette’s House, League of Women Voters of Oregon, Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, Oregon Head Start Association, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon Pediatric Society, Oregon Public Health Association, Oregon School-Based Health Alliance, Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation, Upstream Public Health, YWCA of Greater Portland
CHILDREN’S AGENDA PARTNERS

211info
All Born (In)
American Association of University Women
American Heart Association
American Lung Association in Oregon
American Society for the Positive Care of Children
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Basic Rights Oregon
CareOregon
Catholic Community Services
Causa
Central City Concern
Children First for Oregon
Children’s Health Alliance
Children’s Institute
Children’s Trust Fund of Oregon
Clackamas Women’s Services
Coalition of Communities of Color
College Possible
Community Action Partnership of Oregon
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
FACT Oregon
Family Forward Oregon
Fight Crime: Invest In Kids, Oregon
Friends of Outdoor School
Habitat for Humanity of Oregon
Healthy Kids Learn Better
Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
Impact Northwest
Juliette’s House
Latino Network
League of Women Voters of Oregon
March of Dimes Greater Oregon
Mission: Readiness
Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense, Oregon Chapter
Native American Youth and Family Center
Neighborhood Economic Development Corporation
Neighborhood House, Inc.
Neighborhood Partnerships
Neighbors for Clean Air
New Avenues for Youth
Northwest Down Syndrome Association
Northwest Mothers Milk Bank
Oregon AFSCME Council 75
Oregon Alliance for Gun Safety
Oregon Alliance to End Violence Against Women
OregonASK
Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children
Oregon CASA Network
Oregon Center for Christian Voices
Oregon Center for Public Policy
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence
Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials
Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association
Oregon Dental Association
Oregon Education Association
Oregon Environmental Council
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Foster Youth Connection
Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health
Oregon Head Start Association
Oregon Health Equity Alliance
Oregon Housing Alliance
Oregon Hunger Task Force
Oregon Latino Health Coalition
Oregon Law Center
Oregon Montessori Association
Oregon Network of Child Abuse Intervention Centers
Oregon Nurses Association
Oregon Oral Health Coalition
Oregon Pediatric Society
Oregon Primary Care Association
Oregon Public Health Association
Oregon Public Health Institute
Oregon Safe Routes to School Network
Oregon School-Based Health Alliance
Oregon School Nurses Association
Oregon Student Association
Oregon Trial Lawyers Association
Oregon Women’s Rights Coalition
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
Partnership for Safety and Justice
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon
Playworks
Prevent Child Abuse Oregon
Preventing Tobacco Addiction Foundation
Pro-Choice Coalition of Oregon
Reach Out and Read
ReadyNation
SEIU Local 503, OPEU
Somali American Council Of Oregon
Street Trust
TANF Alliance
Tax Fairness Oregon
UFCW Local 555
Unite Oregon
Upstream Public Health
The Urban League of Portland
Voices Set Free
Washington County Kids
Youth, Rights & Justice
YWCA of Greater Portland