Policy Agenda | 2020-2021

Children’s Institute’s mission is to transform the lives of children exposed to adversity & poverty in Los Angeles.

Through a comprehensive, dual-generation approach, we champion a vision of healthy children, thriving families and empowered communities. In order to fulfill this vision, we must confront the disproportionate impact and harm of racism and multiple forms of discrimination across our institutions. Centering on equity, our policy agenda advocates for a just system where historically marginalized communities can access the tools, resources and opportunities to reach their fullest potential.

Early Childhood Education
We envision that every family has access to high-quality early learning opportunities. To ensure children enter kindergarten ready to learn, we advocate to:

• Expand investments in home visitation and early childhood education to provide full day, year round programs.
• Increase compensation for early childhood educators to professionalize the workforce and address the race and gender wage gap.
• Provide protection and equipment for essential childcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Child Welfare
We envision children and their families strong and thriving in healthy and stable environments. To break the cycle of intergenerational system involvement and trauma, we advocate to:

• Strengthen and expand evidence-based, trauma-informed prevention services so children and families are healthy and whole.
• Increase access to safe, supportive and inclusive housing for LGBTQ+ youth by expanding appropriate resources and psycho-education for caregivers and foster parents.
• Ensure transition age youth in foster care receive equitable resources and support in their education and career development, by automatically extending eligibility -- particularly in times of crises like COVID-19.

Behavioral Health & Wellness
We envision a comprehensive, family-centered behavioral health system with expanded funding that is culturally responsive for children and families. To do this, we advocate to:

• Invest in school-based mental health strategies to address the social and emotional well-being of children amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic.
• Increase investments in an integrated, community-based behavioral health system that is inclusive of nonprofit agencies.
• Fund the mental health safety net to safeguard the specialty mental health carve out and protect a robust public system.

Community Investment & Impact
We envision a coordinated, place-based initiative focused on addressing trauma and building resiliency through community wellness and capacity building. To accomplish this, we advocate to:

• Invest in collaborative mental health initiatives to support overall well-being that engage community partners, law enforcement and government institutions.
• Invest in the economic security of under/ unemployed adults and opportunity youth through cross-sector partnerships.
• Expand community awareness of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and the buffering impact of positive relational health.

childrensinstitute.org
Policy Agenda 2020-2021

Community Schools
We envision that all schools, in partnership with families and community partners, serve as hubs of the community and organize a trauma-informed, whole child and family approach to learning and development. To do this, we advocate for:

• Public investments in community schools that integrate quality instruction, comprehensive support services like behavioral health, and expanded learning opportunities for student success and growth.

Nonprofit Sustainability & Partnership
COVID-19 has made clear the critical role of nonprofits during a health and economic crisis. Social service organizations like Children’s Institute are invaluable partners with government to respond to emergencies. As an essential service organization, we envision the financial stability of nonprofit organizations to be a safety net for our communities. To do this, we advocate to:

• Fund the safe reopening of service delivery so community-based organizations have the necessary PPE equipment to re-open their workplaces safely.
• Restructure contracting process for nonprofit/social impact organizations to acknowledge the key partnership role that they serve in equitably and proportionally extending government response.

For more information, please contact:
Terry Kim
Director of Government Relations & Advocacy
213-260-7605 | tkim@childrensinstitute.org

CHAMPIONING A VISION OF
Healthy Children
Thriving Families
Empowered Communities

childrensinstitute.org