2025 Policy Priorities

Community Briefing

January 23, 2025

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

FOR EVERY KID. FOR 40 YEARS.

Community Language Cooperative

Our Issues

- K-12 Education
- Early Childhood
- Health
- Economic Security

Trends at the Capitol

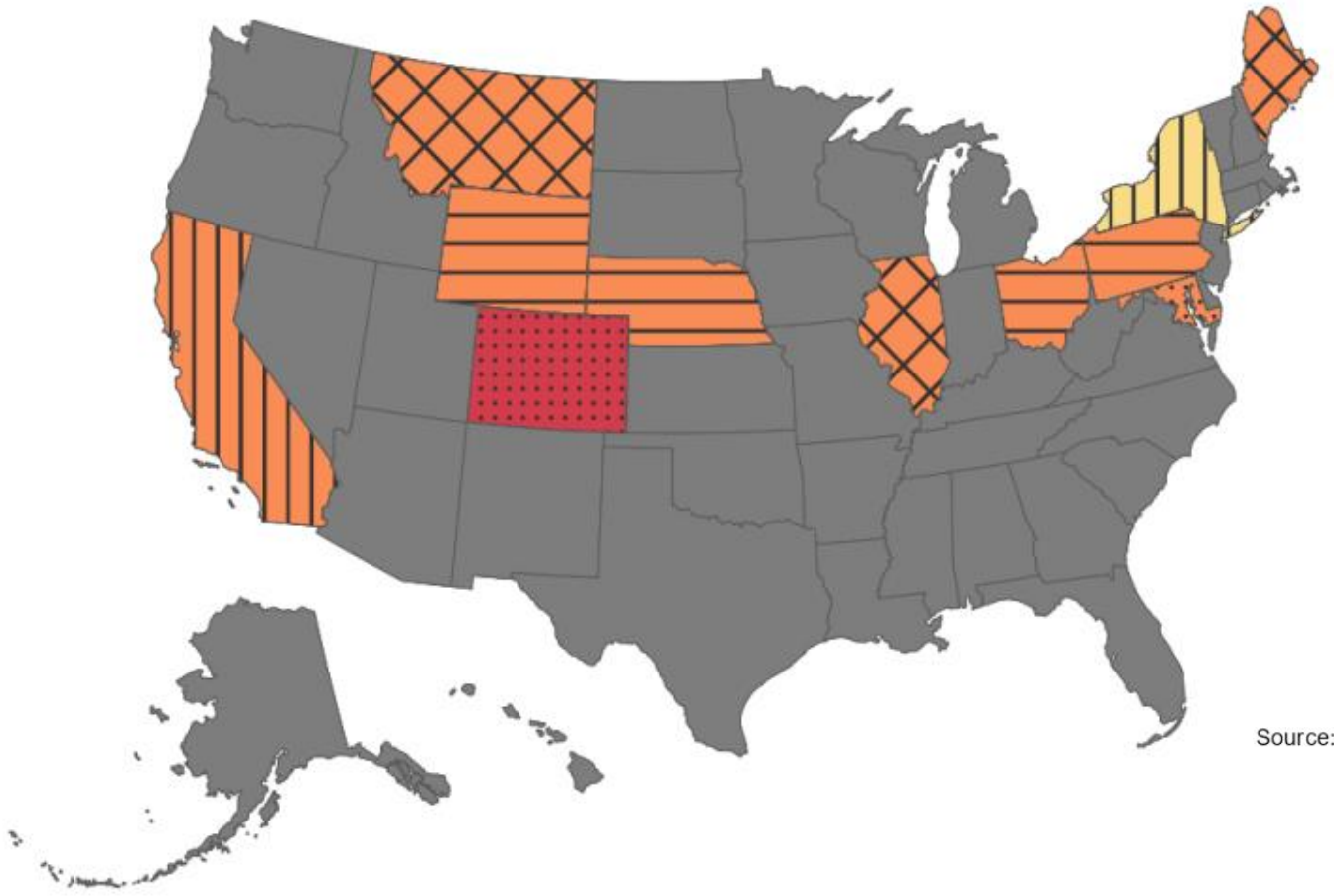
- Difficult budget situation, but programs for kids well-positioned for protection
- Need to address ending pandemic policies and shifting federal landscape

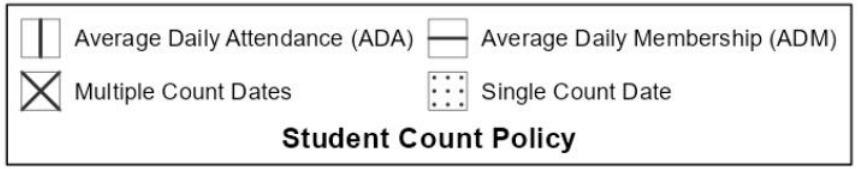
K-12 Education

Implement the New School Funding Formula

- **Student Centered:** Student characteristics come first
- **Increased Weights:** Schools get funding increases for all their students living in poverty, learning English, or with special learning needs
- **Capped Cost of Living:** Cost-of-living factor updated to not exceed 23%, directing funds to poorer and more divers districts

Find Balance in the State Budget





Source: EdChoice, Education Commission of the States, NASBO, Colorado Children's Campaign, OSPB Calculation

Accurately Measure and Support Student Needs

- Finalize a new way to **count at-risk students**
- **Prioritize hungry students** in the ongoing work to fund Healthy School Meals for All

Enhance Positive School Climates

- HB22-1376 required CDE to collect and compile data related to **chronic absenteeism, discipline, and school use of restraint and seclusion**. The first compilation was released in Sept 2024 ... without data on restraint and seclusion.

- Programs like **iMatter, mental health screening in schools, social-emotional professional development and the Youth Mental Health Corp** are underway and serving students, but further implementation and coordination work is needed.

Early Childhood

Universal Preschool Is Working for Families

43,479 4-year-olds participated in UPK during the 2023-24 school year

Over 18,000
low-income children served

2,000 Providers
About 50% community-based

Average $6,000
annual savings for families

Ensure Sustained Success for UPK

- Governor's proposed **$11.1M increase for UPK**
- **Support for Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs)**
- **Provider Rate Increase**
- **UPK/CDEC bill coming**, but changing rapidly
  - Holding the line on LCOs, Dept. Governance, and mixed-delivery!

Improvements to Child Care Assistance

- A **$10 million proposed increase for CCCAP** will support low-income working families, ensuring access to affordable child care and helping parents maintain employment or pursue education.

- Funding for counties to handle rising costs from new federal requirements

- Prioritizing CCCAP funding is crucial and should not compete with Universal Preschool resources—**both are vital to supporting Colorado's children and working families.**

Sustain Investments & Support Families

- Support recent workforce investments, like the **Care Worker Tax Credit**
- Ensure the **Family Affordability Tax Credit (FATC)** is properly implemented and maximized to provide robust support for low-income families.
- Two bills introduced to support **child care affordability**:
  - SB25-004: Child Care Waitlist fees
  - HB25-1011: Private Equity Acquisition of Child Care Centers

Accountability & Advocacy for EC

- **Data Advocacy**: Advocate for publicly available, disaggregated, and deidentified data

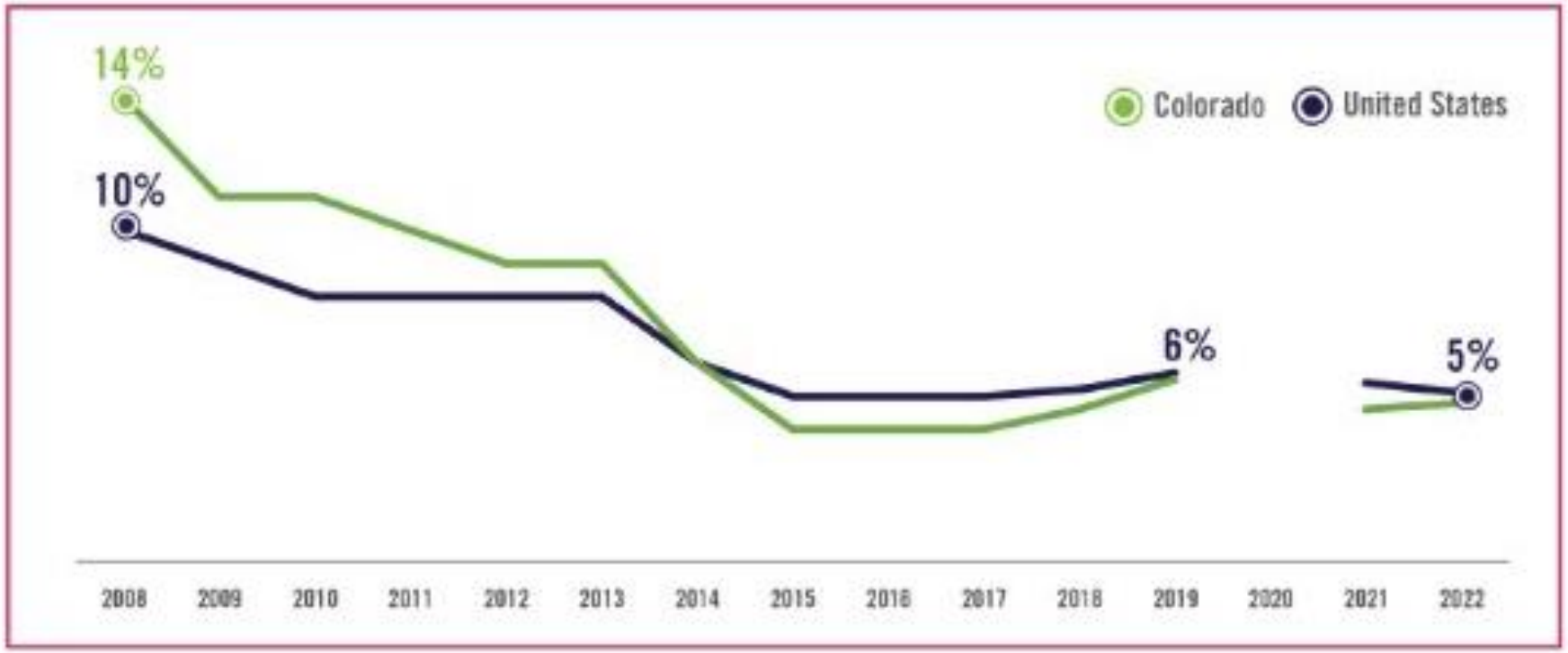
- **Strengthen Advocacy Ecosystem**: Enhance coordination among early childhood advocacy groups through a steering committee and coalition structure

- **Leverage Third-Party Evaluations & Rule Rewrites**: Guide meaningful reviews of CDEC, UPK, and CCCAP
  - Children's Campaign named to steering committee for CDEC review and CCCAP rule re-write

Health

Keeping Kids Covered

Percent of children under 19 without health insurance, 2008 to 2022*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Health Insurance Historical Tables, 2008 to 2022.

*The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted data collection for the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS), depressing response rates and requiring the U.S. Census Bureau to publish experimental estimates for 2020. Experimental estimates from 2020 are not comparable to other years of ACS data and thus are not shown here.

Sustaining & Improving Coverage for Kids

OmniSalud
Affordable health coverage for undocumented families

Cover All Coloradans
Medicaid coverage for undocumented children and pregnant adults

Colorado's 1115 Federal Waivers

- Continuous Medicaid Eligibility Coverage for children birth to 3
- Health-related social needs for Medicaid members

Cover All Coloradans Update!

9,000 more children are now enrolled in Medicaid or CHP+ health coverage regardless of their documentation status.

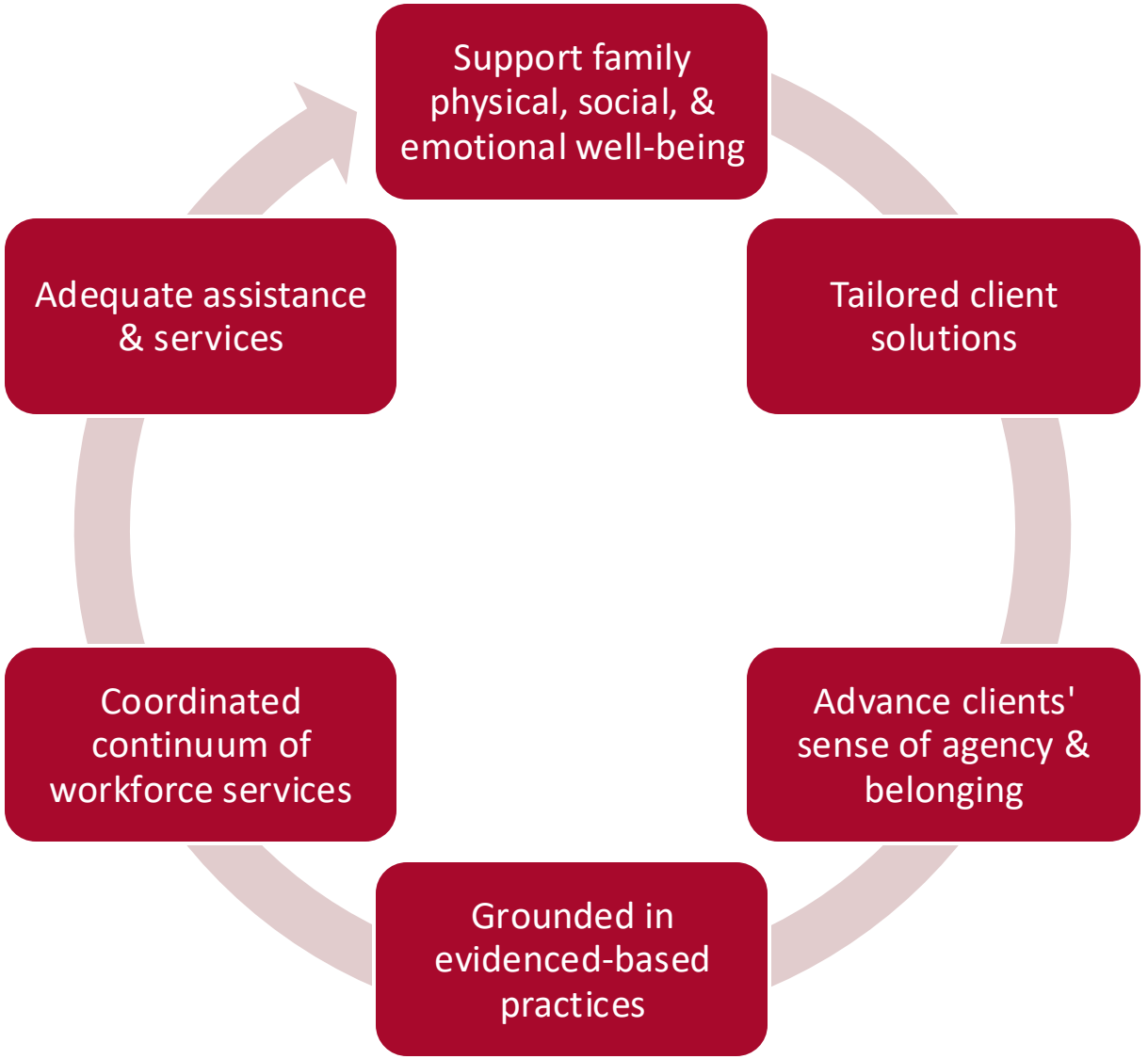
Access to Health Coverage Across Programs

2025 Legislation

A technical fix to ensure undocumented Coloradans can access health care coverage across **OmniSalud** and **Cover All Coloradans**

Economic Security

Measure the Impact of the TANF Program

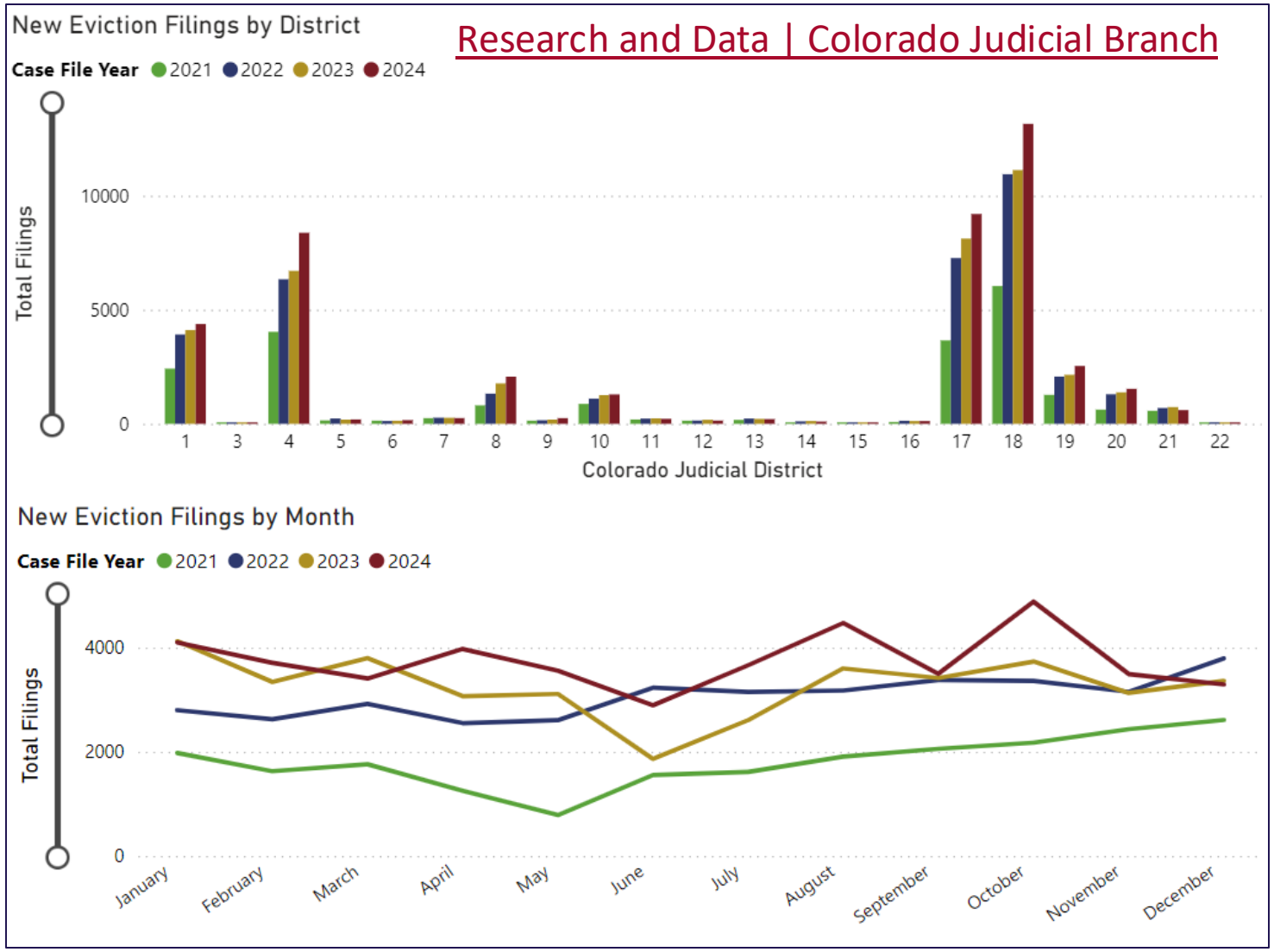


Measure the Impact of the TANF Program

Better collect data in the TANF program to:

- Understand spending drivers in the program
- Assess the impact of recent policy changes
- Maximize spending to decrease extreme child poverty

Keep Families Housed



[Research and Data | Colorado Judicial Branch]

Uplifting Kids in the Face of Budget Cuts

- **Full Child Support:** Preserving the full pass-through of payments for TANF families to help them meet basic needs.

- **Eviction Legal Defense Fund:** Exploring creative solutions to maintain funding for this program is critical to helping keep families housed

Questions?

Upcoming Policy Webinars

- **Mid-Session Update**
  - Thursday, March 13
  - 10am
- **End-of-Session Update**
  - Thursday, May 8
  - 10am

Register Here!

Annual Lobby Day at the Capitol

14th Annual Speak Up for Kids with Clayton Early Learning

Thursday, April 2

- History Colorado & then to the Capitol to advocate with legislators!

Boost your advocacy skills and speak up for kids during the 2025 session and beyond!

Register Here!

Sign Up for KidsFlash

Stay up-to-date with the latest on child well-being and what's happening at the capitol!

Sign up for our newsletter here!

COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN

40 YEARS OF LIGHTING THE WAY

Take a look back at the Children's Campaign's impact, and a look forward at what's to come.

VIP Reception
4:00-5:30pm

General Event Begins
5:30-10pm

September 25, 2025

Hangar Club Denver
7600 E 1st Pl, Denver,
CO 80230

40th Anniversary Video

Paddle Raise

Other great surprises

Thank you!

Heather Tritten, President & CEO

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