

2026

Policy Priorities



At the Colorado Children's Campaign, we believe every child deserves a seat at the table when public policy decisions are made that impact their lives. But kids can't vote or run for office, so we are their voice, their conscience, and their champion.

The Campaign works to make Colorado the best place to be a kid and raise a kid. We use data and research to identify what kids across our state need most, then advocate for policies that strengthen their well-being and help them thrive. Our focus is on the whole child. We work across Early Childhood, K-12 Education, Health, and Economic Security for the greatest long-term impact.

In 2026, Colorado's kids are counting on us to act. With another round of painful budget cuts looming and federal changes threatening essential supports, we cannot wait for someone else to solve the challenges facing children.

It is time for Colorado to lead, find its own solutions, protect what works, and build a stronger, more equitable future for every child in our state.

When kids have someone to fight their fight, they can focus on simply being kids. We are going to fight to:

- **Guarantee affordable, high-quality health care for every child and family.**
- **Modernize safety net programs to secure children's financial stability.**
- **Make early childhood care affordable, accessible, and effective.**
- **Fund schools and protect students with disabilities.**

HEALTH

Strengthen Affordability & Protect Access

Make Private Health Coverage Affordable & Stable for All Families

Sustain the Health Insurance Affordability Enterprise, Reinsurance, and OmniSalud to keep health premiums low and markets stable. These initiatives protect families who earn too much to qualify for public health coverage and provide undocumented residents with affordable coverage plans. Continued investment will prevent rising premiums, reduce uncompensated care, and save money for families and our state.

Protect Coverage for Undocumented Children Through Cover All Coloradans

Fully fund and safeguard Cover All Coloradans to maintain comprehensive health coverage for undocumented children and pregnant adults. Preserving this program will prevent coverage losses, reduce uncompensated care, and ensure every child can access essential health care that strengthens their long-term health outcomes, educational opportunities, and economic stability.

Expand Vaccine Access to Keep Kids Healthy

Clarify vaccine guidance and expand vaccine access to protect children, prevent disease outbreaks, and avoid costly long-term health burdens. Ensuring Colorado can continue to access critical vaccines and enforce proper insurance coverage is essential to protecting public health.

ECONOMIC SECURITY**Modernize Family Supports & Reduce Child Poverty****Strengthen TANF to Deliver Results for Families in Deep Poverty**

Reform the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to be more transparent, effective, and equitable. Require public reporting, tie spending to measurable outcomes, and fund evidence-based strategies that lift families from deep poverty. Accountability and modernization will ensure resources reach families who need them most and improve economic mobility.

Protect & Maximize Family Tax Credits

Protect and maximize family tax credits like the Family Affordability Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit to reduce child poverty. Closing select tax loopholes can responsibly fund these credits, ensuring stable support for working and middle-income families. Investing in tax credits delivers one of the highest returns for child well-being and state prosperity.

EARLY CHILDHOOD**Build an Affordable, Streamlined System****End CCCAP Waitlists**

Eliminate waitlists for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) by modernizing systems, reducing administrative costs, and improving equitable access. More than 10,000 children are currently affected by CCCAP underfunding and inefficiencies. Fixing these gaps will expand affordable care, stabilize providers, and strengthen Colorado's early care and education infrastructure.

Strengthen Child Care Access Locally

Streamline early childhood governance by aligning Local Coordinating Organizations (LCOs), Early Childhood Councils (ECCs), and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&R). Reduce red tape for small business child care providers. Reducing duplication in contracts and statute and using funds for direct services will improve access, quality, and affordability statewide. Better coordination and less bureaucracy will result in more resources for families.

Renew the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit

Renew the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit to attract private investment and sustain child care providers. This proven tool expands child care access for families and strengthens local economies, delivering long-term benefits for children and the workforce alike.

K-12 EDUCATION**Deliver on Equity & Opportunity****Fully Implement the New School Finance Formula**

Prioritize full implementation of the new formula to deliver fair, student-centered funding. Direct resources to English learners, students with disabilities, and those in poverty and rural areas. Getting this right will close opportunity gaps and ensure taxpayer dollars make the greatest impact.

Stabilize Food Security Through HSMA & SNAP

Maximize Healthy School Meals for All (HSMA) and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) funding to support nutrition, attendance, and learning outcomes. Maintaining food access at school and at home helps students thrive and reduces hunger-related barriers to achievement.

Strengthen Disability Rights & Special Education Protections

Enforce and strengthen special education and Section 504 protections at the state level to fill federal gaps. Strong oversight will ensure safe, inclusive learning environments and protect every student's right to a fair education, which is core to Colorado's equity commitments.

**SPEAK UP FOR KIDS**

Our 15th Annual advocacy day, **Speak Up For Kids**, takes place on **Wednesday, April 8, 2026**, at History Colorado and the State Capitol. This event provides training to help advocates speak up about the issues they care about most.

**SIGN UP FOR KIDS FLASH**

Our biweekly newsletter features the latest on child well-being in Colorado. During the legislative session, we'll highlight bills affecting kids and families and provide regular Capitol Updates.