

2023 Children's Agenda Budget



Introduction

We are falling short to meet the needs of Oregon’s children, especially our children of color, children in rural counties, children who are low-income, LGBTQ+ children, and children with disabilities. Our 863,000 children represent a fifth of the population of Oregon, and 100% of our future. Yet Oregon continues to rank in the bottom half of states nationwide in economic well-being (30th) and education (41st). We know we can do better.

Families are struggling with rising costs of living and the end of pandemic emergency support – the expansion of SNAP, Child Tax Credit, school meals, and Medicaid. Passing policies and funding programs that support Oregon’s children and families is evermore important. Racial and regional inequities will continue to impact our most vulnerable children and families if we don’t address these issues today.

The Children’s Agenda Budget lays out the multiple children’s issues areas that we must invest in to holistically improve child well-being in Oregon: Climate and Sustainability, Economic Well-being, Education, Physical and Mental Health, and Family and Community. The Children’s Agenda advocates for and prioritizes solutions that address Oregon’s ongoing inequities to improve outcomes for *all* children, families, and communities. We collectively call on state legislators to act for Oregon’s children and families. We have the responsibility to make sure *all* kids have what they need right now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Children’s Agenda Steering Committee



Who We Are

Our Children Oregon (OCO) is a statewide organization that advances equitable policies, data and research, and whole-child advocacy. The Children's Agenda, convened by OCO, brings together ~130 organizations statewide to create a holistic legislative agenda dedicated to improving the overall well-being of Oregon's children, youth, and families.

Our Top 10 priorities elevate urgent bills and investments that Oregon's children need to thrive. Our priorities center children in underserved communities, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, rural children, low-income families, LGBTQ+ youth, children with disabilities, and children in foster care.

The 2023 Children's Agenda Top Priorities:

- Climate & Sustainability:
 - Right to Refuse Dangerous Work (SB 907)
 - Toxic Free Schools (SB 426)
- Economic Well-being:
 - Invest in Early Childhood & Child Care (SB 599, HB 2727, HB 2991, HB 3005, HB 3027)
 - Food for All (SB 610)
 - Oregon Kids' Credit (HB 3235)
- Education:
 - Healthy School Meals for All (HB 5014)
 - Students with Disabilities Success Plan (SB 575)
- Physical & Mental Health:
 - Racism is a Public Health Crisis, Mobile Health Units (HB 2918, HB 2925)
 - School Health Crisis Response Act (SB 549)
- Family & Community:
 - Advocacy for Children in Foster Care, Funding Oregon CASA Network (Budget Request)

View the 2023 Children's Agenda at www.ourchildrenoregon.org/2023-childrens-agenda.

2023 Children’s Agenda

Climate & Sustainability

Children need access to healthy environments and a sustainable future, resilient to climate change.

Bill Number	Estimated Cost	Description
PRIORITY Toxic Free Schools SB 426 <i>Beyond Toxics</i>	\$700,00	Exposure to toxic chemicals can have lasting and detrimental effects on a child’s lifelong development and health. In 2009, the Legislature passed the Oregon School Integrated Pest Management Law, which was one of the nation’s strongest rules to reduce pesticide use in schools. More than a decade later, this bill needs to be strengthened to ensure toxic-free learning environments for children.
Toxic Free Cosmetics SB 546 <i>Oregon Environmental Council</i>	\$207,000 (2025-2027)	Chemicals in cosmetics pose a significant health threat because they are repeatedly applied directly to our skin and are absorbed into our bodies. Oregon can act to protect our health by requiring the public disclosure of chemical ingredients on a company’s product webpage and by prohibiting the sale of the worst chemicals in cosmetics.

Economic Well-being

Children’s basic needs, such as housing, food, financial stability, and child care, must be met in affordable, accessible ways.

Bill Number	Estimated Cost	Description
PRIORITY Invest in Early Childhood & Child Care HB 2727 HB 2991 HB 3027 HB 5013 HB 3005 <i>Child Care For Oregon, Children's Institute,</i>	 \$215,000 \$300,000 \$193,043 \$260M \$110M	The early learning and care industry continues to face ongoing challenges including rising increasing demand, rising costs of care, and pervasive racial and regional disparities. We can address this crisis by investing in infrastructure, workforce development, access, and affordability. - Examine and address how zoning regulations, state and local building codes, and permitting practices inhibit or support the expansion of early learning and care facilities (HB 2727).

<p><i>Southern Oregon Success</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove unnecessary barriers to professional credentials for child care workers (HB 2991). - Create an Early Learning & Care Facilities Fund to support quality child care and early learning facilities (HB 3005). - Establish a workgroup to report a plan to create a “one-door” experience for families needing to access child care in Oregon (HB 3027). - The DELC budget (HB 5013) must continue to increase access to quality services that meet the varied needs of Oregon families. \$10 million (DELC POP 101) to grow culturally-specific early learning programs through the Early Childhood Equity Fund. \$250 million to increase child care subsidies (DELC POP 102) to take a step toward addressing Oregon’s child care crisis.
<p>PRIORITY Food for All Oregonians SB 610 <i>Food for All Coalition</i></p>	<p>\$40M</p>	<p>Oregon has diligently worked to expand access to health care, coverage, and other basic rights for immigrants, refugees, and the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) community members. However, these communities continue to face higher rates of hunger and poverty, causing downfalls in long-term health and overall well-being. We must make food assistance available to <i>all</i> Oregonians and ensure applying for assistance is more welcoming.</p>
<p>PRIORITY Oregon Kids Credit HB 3235 <i>Oregon Center for Public Policy</i></p>	<p>\$50M</p>	<p>When Congress expanded the Federal Child Tax Credit in 2021, child poverty nationwide dropped faster than at any point in history. When the expansion ended, an estimated 190,000 Oregon children lost access. The Legislature can immediately reduce child poverty by creating the Oregon Kids’ Credit, a \$1,000 refundable tax credit for each child under 6 in a low-income family. It would provide financial support to nearly 100,000 children in Oregon.</p>
<p>Stable Homes for Oregon Families Homelessness Prevention SB 611</p>	<p>\$100M</p>	<p>Stable housing is essential for the development, growth, and health of children. Rising rents and instability affect the entire family and can cause lifelong and multigenerational consequences.</p>

SB 5511 <i>Stable Homes for Oregon Families</i>		Passage of SB 611 is essential to rein in extreme rent spikes during a tenancy. Inclusion of \$100 million in rent assistance in the OHCS budget (SB 5511) will provide access to emergency eviction and homelessness prevention resources. Together, these proposals will prioritize housing stability for households across the state.
Stable Housing for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness SB 658 <i>Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon</i>	\$5-10M	Oregon has one of the highest student homelessness rates in the country. Oregon must expand services for houseless youth by providing culturally-specific, trauma-informed housing and wraparound services for K-12 houseless youth. The bill proposes a pilot program that allocates funding to schools to provide direct assistance and support for students.
Individual Development Accounts SB 5511 <i>Neighborhood Partnership, Oregon IDA Initiative</i>	\$35M	The Oregon IDA Initiative supports financial stability and wealth building among Oregonians with lower incomes, working to ensure an equitable and statewide impact in communities historically and systemically excluded from economic opportunities. IDAs are a demonstrated and effective tool for Oregonians with low incomes. We ask that the OHCS budget (SB 5511) includes \$35 million to ensure robust funding to meet current demand across the Initiative.

Education

Children need quality learning and caring environments beginning at birth.

Bill Number	Estimated Cost	Description
PRIORITY Healthy School Meals for All HB 5014 <i>Oregon Food Bank</i>	\$32.6M (2023-2025)	When kids are hunger-free, they focus and learn better in school. A new federal rule (USDA) has expanded access to the Community Eligibility Provision, which means hundreds more Oregon schools will become eligible to serve breakfast and lunch at no charge to students. We ask that the ODE budget (HB 5014) includes enough funding to maximize the impact of this rule to be one step closer to Health School Meals for All in Oregon.

<p>PRIORITY</p> <p>Students with Disabilities Success Plan</p> <p>SB 575</p> <p><i>FACT Oregon</i></p>	<p>\$2M</p>	<p>Students with disabilities, through no fault of their own, face disproportionate systemic inequities, which have led to the worst educational outcomes of any student group in our state. Implementing policies and targeted strategies that promote inclusion, accessibility, and equity for students with disabilities is essential.</p>
<p>The Youth Collaborative</p> <p>SB 421</p> <p><i>Oregon Association of Student Councils</i></p>	<p>\$391,658 (2023-2025)</p> <p>\$399,933 (2025-2027)</p>	<p>Oregon does not maintain a youth majority-led advisory body to make policy recommendations related to their experiences. ODE, OHA, and Youth Development Division have all committed to elevating racial equity issues, but representation in these spaces exclude youth voices by overshadowing, overlooking, or tokenizing their perspectives. This bill hopes to support diverse student leaders in the policymaking process to ensure historically and currently underserved youth are meaningfully involved in the creation and implementation of policies that impact their lives.</p>
<p>Expanding Afterschool and Summer Program Access</p> <p>SB 531 & HB 3198</p> <p><i>OregonASK, Oregon Alliance of YMCAs, Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs, Oregon Camp Association, Oregon Association of Education Service Districts</i></p>	<p>\$30M</p>	<p>Participating in high-quality expanded learning programs provides children and youth with the needed opportunity and support to succeed in school and in life. Comprehensive afterschool and summer programs provide young people with opportunities to engage in hands-on activities that hold students' interests and develop their skills. Additionally, Afterschool & Summer programs engage youth and families to help mitigate isolation, improve mental health, reduce food insecurity, and support the whole child through adulthood.</p>
<p>Elevating Student Voice Act</p> <p>HB 2656</p> <p><i>Oregon Education Association</i></p>	<p>\$1.46M (2023-2025)</p> <p>\$1.67M (2025-2027)</p>	<p>Currently, we measure school quality and student success predominantly through test scores and attendance. But do these metrics reflect the deeper learning that occurs inside the classroom? We can require participation in the SEED and Student Health Survey for districts and include a benchmark for school engagement.</p>
<p>Outdoor Preschool Licensure Increase Capacity and Equity</p>	<p>\$65,496 (2023-2025)</p> <p>\$216,635</p>	<p>Outdoor preschools offer physical, cognitive, and social development benefits unique from a traditional indoor environment. Yet many families lack access to outdoor and nature-based</p>

<p>HB 2717</p> <p><i>Willamette Partnership</i></p>	<p>(2025-2027)</p>	<p>experiences, and these inequities often fall across socioeconomic and racial lines. Licensing outdoor preschools is a simple way for the state to increase capacity and create more equitable and accessible childcare options for all families.</p>
<p>Early Literacy Success Initiative</p> <p>HB 3198</p> <p><i>Stand for Children, Oregon Kids Read</i></p>	<p>\$225M</p>	<p>Literacy is a basic civil right. Reading is a foundational skill for children to succeed in school and access opportunities now and in the future. Yet fewer than 40% of Oregon’s 3rd graders can read at grade level. For students in under-resourced schools, students of color, students with disabilities, and multilingual students, the numbers are worse. Research shows 95% of children can learn to read given clear, structured instruction. Starting at early childhood and beyond with tools grounded in the science of reading, we can better support teachers and ensure our kids can thrive by learning to read.</p>

Physical & Mental Health

Children need access to quality health care and mental health services.

Bill Number	Estimated Cost	Description
<p>PRIORITY</p> <p>Racism is a Public Health Crisis, Mobile Health Units</p> <p>HB 2918</p> <p>HB 2925</p> <p><i>Oregon Public Health Association</i></p>	<p>\$4M</p> <p>\$785,092</p>	<p>Progress was made when the Oregon Legislature passed HB 4052 in 2022. However, without the necessary funds, this bill cannot be fully implemented. For children and families of color in our state, health disparities have been longstanding and tied to downstream impacts of systemic and institutional racism. These bills complete the promise of HB 4052 by fully funding mobile health pilot program grants and extend the staffing support provided to the affinity groups making recommendations to reduce health inequities.</p>
<p>PRIORITY</p> <p>School Health Crisis Response Package</p> <p>SB 549</p> <p><i>Oregon School-Based</i></p>	<p>\$15.67M</p>	<p>Youth in Oregon are struggling with anxiety and depression at unprecedented levels. We need to increase access to mental health services, including funding School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) that allocate resources, ensure capacity, and provide wrap-around care. SBHCs are a return on investment and a vital community tool with a youth-centered</p>

<i>Health Alliance</i>		model that supports young people's health and well-being.
Community Health Workers Pilot Program SB 1074 <i>Catholic Community Services</i>	\$3.86M (2023-2025) \$1.35M (2025-2027)	Certified community health workers have been shown to positively address social determinants of health and improve outcomes for children and families facing multiple types of adversity. Providing funding for these workers will allow families to get compassionate support, systems navigation, and advocacy they need.
Improving Health Outcomes Stabilizing Immigrant & Refugee Families HB 2957 <i>Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon</i>	\$6.03M (2023-2025) \$1.74M (2025-2027)	For immigrant and refugee children, immigration status acts as a significant social determinant of health. This proposal would ensure universal immigration legal screenings and services for children, their families, and other community members enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan and related programs, resulting in improved health outcomes and family stability.

Family & Community

Children and their family need safety, stability, and sense of belonging to thrive.

Bill Number	Estimated Cost	Description
PRIORITY Advocacy for Children in Foster Care Budget Ask <i>Oregon CASA Network</i>	\$6.4M	The Oregon CASA Network supports local CASA programs across Oregon that speak for the best interests of abused and neglected children experiencing protective custody. They ensure each child finds a safe, permanent, and nurturing home. To continue to provide advocates for these children, as well as develop organizational capacity, OCN is seeking a continuation of \$6.4M in funding.
Children Advocacy Center (CAC) Funding HB 2732 <i>Oregon Child Abuse Solutions</i>	\$6M	Oregon Child Abuse Solutions (OCAS) is seeking the continuation of \$6M in funding for Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) during the 2023 Session. CACs provide child abuse medical exams, forensic interviews, therapy, and additional family support services when child abuse is suspected or confirmed. The funding will allow for the continuation of supporting children, families, and organizations with staffing.

<p>Increase Funding for Healthy Families Oregon</p> <p>HB 5013</p> <p><i>Healthy Families Oregon</i></p>	<p>\$14.4M</p>	<p>Healthy Families Oregon provides voluntary in-home visiting and parent education that help build nurturing, safe, and secure relationships between the parent and child. We ask for increased funding to reach pay parity for staff and to stabilize the Healthy Families Oregon workforce, ensuring staff receives a living wage.</p>
<p>Nurse-Family Partnership Ask for State to Pay Medicaid Match</p> <p>Budget Ask</p> <p><i>Nurse-Family Partnership</i></p>	<p>\$8M</p>	<p>Nurse-Family Partnership programs (NFP) is an evidence-based, community health program with over 40 years of evidence that shows significant improvements in the health and lives of first-time parents and their children, especially those living in poverty. NFP has served over 6,500 families in 9 counties across Oregon, covering rural, urban, and frontier areas.</p>
<p>Renew Funding for Community Violence Intervention Program</p> <p>Budget Ask</p> <p><i>Everytown for Gun Safety</i></p>	<p>\$15M</p>	<p>We must fund community violence intervention programs to reduce gun violence, its devastating impacts, and ensure the health, safety, and resilience of our communities. Oregon can invest more in evidence-based programs that work with communities at the highest risk of involvement in gun violence. Investing in community violence intervention programs allows communities to apply a localized approach in reducing gun violence across Oregon’s hardest-hit neighborhoods.</p>