

CHILDREN AND THE 2024 ELECTIONS

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Care and the 2024 Election: Unpacking the “Care for Kids” Agenda: FAQs and Talking Points

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What is the Care for Kids Agenda?

The “care agenda” or “care for kids agenda” is a specific agenda that has been initiated by 2021-4 Congressional actions and is part of the White House and Administration’s agenda going forward:

- An expanded Child Tax Credit (refundable and \$3000+ per child)
- Paid family and medical leave
- Affordable child care (increases in subsidies and credits to make child care cost no more than 7 percent of family income)
- Expanded home-and-community services under Medicaid (eliminating 700,000 waiting list)

Overall, the care for kids agenda is an investment agenda in excess of \$500 billion over the next ten years that can better ensure the country’s future prosperity. Those at the federal level advocating for it have proposed financing it by ensuring that the wealthiest individuals and most profitable corporations “pay their fair share” by cutting back on the 2017 tax cuts to them and/or developing new ways to tax the wealthiest (billionaires, those with incomes over \$400,000, and highly profitable corporations).

Where did the Care for Kids Agenda come from?

The care for kids agenda and its elements have emerged as a comprehensive agenda only in the last few years, but they have been long-standing priorities among child advocates that have built a base of public and policy maker understanding:

- All elements are major parts of the child policy advocacy agenda over the last forty years.

- They are needed due to the changing economy and challenges and opportunities for children.
- Policy research, demonstration programs, philanthropic investments, and child policy advocacy have shown their effectiveness and impact.
- They recognize the specific roles of the federal government in making it happen (where federal government has the primary government role in supporting children and families)

Where is it today?

Much of the enabling legislation has been introduced in various forms but it has not been introduced as a stand-alone package in the 2023-24 Congress.

- The next President and Congress will determine if it is fully enacted and how it is financed. Most of its provisions were adopted on a temporary basis in the American Rescue Plan Act, but ultimately fell a few votes short of being extended.
- Some of the provisions, such as the child tax credit, are set to expire in their current form as the temporary tax changes in the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017 expire, and are generally considered as something Congress must take action on in 2025, including revisiting the overall provisions in that Act.
- Voters and advocates can make sure that this is recognized as the direction they want the federal government to take.

Who does the care for kids agenda benefit?

It benefits society as a whole, but it also directly helps a large share of the population and the voting electorate. A large share of the total U.S. population (of 335 million) and the vast majority of voters (170 million projected in 2024) receive direct benefits from the agenda:

- 73 million children (“one-quarter of the population and one hundred percent of the future” – Laura Bush)
- 83 million parents (12 million in sandwich generation)
- 70 million grandparents (7 million living with grandchildren and 2 million raising them)
- 9 million caregivers and early educators (occupations growing in demand but lowest paid workers in society)
- 38 million people with disabilities and complex health needs

Iowa by the Numbers (Data Available for Any State)

730,000 children (23 percent of the population)

820,000 parents of children under 18

670,000 grandparents

1,690,000 voters in 2020

80,000 workers in frontline care positions for children and families (nurses' assistants and direct care workers in hospitals and care facilities and providing home-and-community services and in child care – 6 percent of the workforce)

40,000 primary and secondary teachers and educators

It benefits all types of families – urban and rural, professional and working class, nuclear, blended, and multi-generational, etc. – particularly those who need a little extra help and recognition to fulfill their breadwinning and caregiving roles, illustrated by the following:

- White, rural, working class, husband and wife Christian family worried about the viability of their way of life for themselves and their children and feeling ignored and left behind.
- Gay married couple adopting a special needs daughter worried about her receiving the extra support she needs to optimize her health and development.
- Single 21-year old mother of a two year-old working part-time and trying to get her AA degree and worrying about the quality time she has for her son.
- Grandparent with a disabled spouse strained in providing 10 hours of child care for her granddaughter to help her parents out and wanting to make sure she can go to summer camp.

Who supports it?

The public and voters at large:

- Strong bipartisan voter support in national polls for each of its elements (D's and R's) – (85-95+ percent among Democrats and 60 to 75 percent among Republicans)
- Those who are tired of divisive politics that pit people and their families against one another

How Voters Poll About the Care Agenda

	-- Favor Investing More --		
	ALL	D'S	R'S
Child tax credit	75	86	64
Paid family and medical leave	80	89	60
Child care and preschool	78	89	68
Home and community services	86	98	75
	-- Favor taxing to do so--		
Wealthy and big corporations pay fair share	83	97	69

Child Tax Credit – Lake Research (9/2022); Paid family leave – Global Strategy Group (9/2022); Child care and preschool – Public Opinion Strategies (7/2023); Home and community services and wealthy – Hart Research (4/2023)

Child policy experts and advocates and those providing care and support:

- Children’s Budget Coalition of 80 national organizations representing or serving children and families
- Caring Across Generations and the Care Can’t Wait Coalition, Moms Rising Together, Care in Action, and Parents Together, among many others, representing over 5 million advocates and people providing care at the community level
- Organizations from A to Z – AARP to Zero-to-Three

The current President and administration and all Democratic members in Congress (nonpartisan as an agenda and having bipartisan voter support, but currently only supported by members of one party in Congress)

What is needed to make it happen?

Electing a working majority in Congress who will vote for it and a President who will sign it.

Engaging, educating, and energizing “influencers” and “persuadables” to vote on that basis and make their voices heard.

Who knows about it?

Right now, most people are not aware of this agenda, even among the care community which would receive the most overall benefit from it for themselves and their families.

While the agenda is only a few votes short of passage in Congress, many people who have heard elements of it don't believe that Congress and the President will really take action on it and they do not know which candidates truly support it,

Who are the influencers and what can they do to make it better known?

The most effective way of getting the message out is deliberative dialogue, with those who are recognized in their communities as supporters or providers of caregiving meeting the needs of children – e.g. influencers at the community level who can engage and educate people who know them as knowledgeable and trustworthy on these issues.

Who are the persuadables and how can we persuade them?

Polls show that the most persuadable voters who can be engaged on these issues are parents, particularly those who now are facing challenges meeting their family budgets, particularly women. They can be engaged and appealed to based upon what are their core values.

	Parents	Grandparents
Being a parent	88 %	79 %
Your romantic relationship	61 %	45 %
Your friendships	44 %	50 %
What you do for work	42 %	23 %
Your religion	36 %	47 %
Your political views	34 %	48 %
Your economic class	17 %	21 %

-- Parents Together Poll, 2024

In addition, those working in child care and direct care represent 6 percent of all voters and most do not know about this agenda nor which candidates are championing it. These workers not only can be persuadable, but they also can be key influencers with their peers, partners, and those they serve.

How can we talk about it?

As a pro-child, pro-parent, pro-family, pro-caregiver, and pro-economy agenda that reflect our country's values and bring us together!

- Pro-child – supports the nurturing, health, education and development, safety, and economic security of children so all children have opportunities to realize their dreams.
- Pro-parent – supports parents in both breadwinning and caregiving roles, relieves stress and enabling them to raise their children according to their faith and values.
- Pro-family -- provides essential care to respond to emergencies and meet special health care needs within families for loved ones, not having to choose between one family need and another.
- Pro-caregiver -- recognizes the need for and value of care workers (the heroes of responding to Covid-19) and not shortchanging them but paying them for their value.
- Pro-economy – improves worker productivity and availability of workforce (care givers as the workforce behind the workforce) and creates more decent-paying jobs in the economy.

What can we stress to those who may hold different views from us on other campaign issues?

We can emphasize that this agenda helps all families (including those white, rural, working class, husband and wife Christian families concerned about the viability of their way of life – who may feel that government does not value and has left them behind) and is based upon values of family, faith, and supporting one another. It can bring us together rather than push us apart. It does not intrude upon the rights of parents to raise their children according to their faith and values, but rather enables parents of all types to do so and, most importantly, to give all children the opportunity to succeed.



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ELECT CARE FOR KIDS 2024

Child tax credit

Paid family and medical leave

Child care & preschool

Home and community-based services

Excellent policy... Game-changing politics

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CARE FOR KIDS 2024 AGENDA

PRO-CHILD	Improves nurturing and child learning Ensures meeting basic needs Addresses special health needs
PRO-PARENT	Offers options, choices, quality time Improves financial security Reduces stress and extra care burden
PRO-ECONOMY	Improves worker productivity Creates more decent paying jobs Invests in local community economy