



Dear Governor DeWine,

Since our establishment in 2019, the Ohio Children's Budget Coalition has been committed to creating a better future for Ohio's children. While children make up 22% of Ohio's population, they absolutely represent 100% of our state's future. As a coalition, we thank you for your leadership through the budget process to fight for a bright future for every child, no matter their race, zip code, ability, or income.

Amid an unprecedented pandemic, we were grateful to stand with you on the side of children and make positive strides forward for their well-being.

In **Infant and Maternal Health**, Ohio's enacted budget extends Medicaid postpartum coverage from just 60 days to a full year – prioritizing healthy mothers and infants, the foundation for healthy childhoods.

In **K-12 Education**, Ohio has enacted a more equitable system of funding our children's K-12 schools, the Fair School Funding Plan, to ensure every child has access to a world-class education.

In **Children Services**, historic investments from the previous biennium were maintained and the enacted budget requires ODJFS to establish a Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

In **Youth Justice**, increased investments in targeted RECLAIM and other community-based alternatives to youth incarceration will place more emphasis on services and programs that do not inflict physical, mental, and emotional harm on youth.

In **Economic Stability**, the final budget will help more working families afford child care and provide more children a strong foundation to thrive in school by increasing initial eligibility for publicly funded child care from 130% to 142% of the federal poverty level.

In **Broadband Infrastructure**, the enacted budget invests \$250 million to begin chipping away at the digital divide and expand connectivity to support more Ohioans to derive opportunities from critical internet access.

In **Child Health**, the new budget contains an unprecedented investment in the new statewide Lead Safe Home Fund, as well as ongoing critical support to the SCHIP lead abatement program and other investments to support primary prevention of child lead poisoning.

We also commend the exclusion of provisions that would have harmed many Ohioans, such as those that would have derailed OhioRISE, jeopardized affordable housing projects, or restricted access to public assistance like SNAP and Medicaid.

We applaud this progress made to improve the well-being of Ohio children, their families, and communities - but we know that the work to make Ohio a state where all children can flourish remains unfinished.

Just as we stood ready to work alongside you for a fair and just budget for Ohio's children, we stand ready now to continue our work together to make good on these investments and to ensure federal relief, such as those made available through the American Rescue Plan Act, are allocated to build the equitable recovery that every Ohioan deserves.

With gratitude,

The Ohio Children's Budget Coalition

Advocates for Ohio's Future

Center for Community Solutions

Children's Defense Fund-Ohio

Groundwork Ohio

Juvenile Justice Coalition

Public Children Services Association of Ohio

Women's Public Policy Network

Ohio Children's Alliance

Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)

Buckeye Hills Regional Council

Ohio Children's Hunger Alliance

Ohio Lead Free Kids Coalition

Policy Matters Ohio

Ohio Education Association

Ohio Federation of Teachers

OCALI

Ohio Poverty Law Center

Council for a Strong America

Appalachian Children Coalition

Research & Technical Assistance partner: Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University