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Advocates for Ohio's Future

Appalachian Children Coalition

Center for Community Solutions

Council for a Strong America

Coalition on Housing & Homelessness in Ohio (COHHIO)

Children's Defense Fund-Ohio

Groundwork Ohio

Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI)

Ohio Children's Alliance

Ohio Children's Hunger Alliance

Ohio Education Association

Ohio Federation of Teachers

Ohio Juvenile Justice Coalition

Ohio Lead Free Kids Coalition

Ohio Poverty Law Center

The Ohio Women's Public Policy Network

Policy Matters Ohio

Public Children Services Association of Ohio

Buckeye Hills Regional Council

Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity (Technical Assistance partner)

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www.OhioChildrensBudget.org

2022-2023 OHIO BIENNIUM BUDGET:

Creating a Vision of Child Wellbeing in Ohio

While children make up 22% of Ohio's population, they represent 100% of Ohio's future. The budget is a moral document that is a reflection of our priorities as a state – we must do right by the children of Ohio.

Children do not come in pieces, and neither should our policy and budget decisions when it comes to their overall wellbeing. In the last biennium budget, state policymakers increased public funding to protect the youngest Ohioans and expand opportunities for children of all races and backgrounds. In the middle of a pandemic and recession, that support hangs in the balance. Investing in a whole child budget agenda is critical for Ohio's continued success. We must maintain, protect, and strengthen the public resources dedicated to ensuring the wellbeing of our children in the upcoming biennial budget.

To support the potential of each child, they must be cared for, healthy, educated, fed, and nurtured. Unfortunately, too many Ohio children are not adequately supported in all areas of their wellbeing.

- Nearly one in six Ohio families with children (15%) said they had no or only slight confidence they would be able to make their next rent or mortgage payment.
- Fourteen percent of Ohio families with children reported in October that there was sometimes or always not enough to eat in their household.
- One in fourteen Ohio families with children (7%) lack health insurance.
- A fifth of Ohioans with children in their households (23%) reported that they had felt down, depressed or hopeless.
- Analyses from the Center for American Progress demonstrate that Ohio families are at risk of losing access to childcare with Ohio losing nearly half of its capacity in this past ten months.
- Despite a strong stock market, the economy has not yet rounded the corner and 30,000 additional applications for unemployment were filed in December 2020 alone.

The Ohio Children's Budget Coalition (OCBC), a partnership of 19 organizations across the state committed to the health and well-being of children, was established to advocate for the needs of the "whole child" in Ohio's state policy and budget decisions. Together, we are advocating for a fair and just children's agenda that elevates equitable opportunities for all children to thrive.

We applaud the DeWine Team for its early focus on and dedication to children. The Ohio Children's Budget Coalition recommendations represent effective investments of taxpayer dollars that help children thrive across our great state.



Overview: FY22-23 Ohio Children's Budget

State lawmakers and the DeWine Administration must:

- Prioritize the whole child, including the communities they call home and the systems they depend on.
- Improve outcomes and eliminate silos by building a comprehensive, coordinated continuum of services and programs to address issues beyond the artificial boundaries of agencies and funding streams.
- Protect essential programs that promote whole child well-being. Maintain and build on previous investments that promote health, nutrition, housing security, quality child care, economic stability, strong families, quality education, and critical infrastructure, like broadband, that connects children and families to the services and supports needed during the pandemic and beyond.
- Advance budget solutions that prioritize racial equity and combat the effects of structural racism in our communities, which negatively impact child outcomes.
- Support the transition to adulthood. Childhood is a continuum and adolescent development continues through the early 20s. Many youth need additional support to successfully transition to adulthood.
- Ensure all investments go toward data/research-driven best practices, approaches, programs, and services that maximize benefits for children and families and represent an effective use of taxpayer investments.

Specific Recommendations: Ohio Children's Budget

The Ohio Children's Budget Coalition has put together a series of issue briefs outlining critical issues in this budget.

- [Strengthen the Ohio Earned Income Tax Credit](#)
- [Infant and Maternal Health](#)
- [Bridging Ohio's Digital Divide](#)
- [Telehealth and Mental Health](#)
- [Youth Incarceration](#)
- [Paid Family and Medical Leave](#)
- [Children Services Stabilization & Transformation](#)
- [EdChoice School Vouchers](#)
- [Child Lead Poisoning](#)
- [Expand Summer Food Access for Children](#)
- [Ending Homelessness for Children and Families](#)
- [Expand Access to High Quality Child Care](#)
- [K-12 School Funding Opportunity](#)
- [Voluntary Evidence-Based Home Visiting](#)
- [Family First Prevention Services Act](#)
- [Extending Medicaid Postpartum Coverage](#)

We look forward to working with the DeWine Administration and the General Assembly on whole child issues as the FY22-23 executive budget is developed and considered.