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Child Advocacy Coalition Prioritizing Unmet Needs for Children

Following key budget investments, OCBC Pivots to child care, financial security

COLUMBUS, OH – The [Ohio Children's Budget Coalition \(OCBC\)](#), made up of child-focused organizations, is pivoting to address basic needs for children that were left unmet in the state budget completed last month. While OCBC applauds the progress made for children in the budget signed by Governor DeWine on July 18, the coalition points out critical omissions that could have a dramatic impact for children and calls on the state's leaders to address the lack of affordability and accessibility of publicly funded child care, and the lack of tax relief for low-income working families. Working closely with the newly-formed Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus, OCBC looks forward to addressing these priorities.

"Ohio's investments in children are critical to make up lost ground in terms of child well-being. We thank Governor DeWine, Senate President Obhof, Speaker Householder and members of the Ohio General Assembly for their leadership prioritizing important investments for children," said Tracy Nájera, executive director of Children's Defense Fund-Ohio. "We want to ensure that all Ohio children can live, learn, grow and thrive into adulthood; yet, far too many children and working families are still unable to make ends meet. This enacted budget marks a turning point – one that we must build on."

Today, too many children in Ohio experience hunger, housing insecurity, and poor health outcomes, because Ohio's low-wage job market doesn't pay enough to support thousands of working families. Six of Ohio's 10 most common jobs pay too little to feed a family of three without food assistance. Further, the lack of public investment in children over the last decade and the emergence of the opioid crisis has torn apart families and put a strain on public services.

In concert with the Ohio Legislative Children's Caucus, OCBC will work to address the following:

- **[Increase Access to Quality Child Care:](#)** Quality child care is a critical family need, allowing parents to work while keeping children safe and supporting their healthy development. Currently, Ohio has the second lowest eligibility threshold in the nation at 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This means that a parent with two children cannot make more than \$12.99 an hour to qualify and that, in a dual earner household, two parents earning minimum wage don't qualify. Many parents are faced with the decision of putting their children in unsafe care or dropping out of the workforce as a result. "If we are serious about building the workforce of today and tomorrow, we have to commit to returning eligibility to the pre-recession threshold of 200% FPL and commit state dollars to expanding access to quality child care so that families and young children can break the cycle of intergenerational poverty," said Lynanne Gutierrez, Policy Director and Legal Counsel for Groundwork Ohio.

- **Refundable Earned-Income Tax Credit:** Children in households that receive refundable federal credits have better health and academic outcomes, leading to better jobs with higher wages. Recent changes to Ohio's EITC are important but only benefit an additional 1% of Ohio's poorest families. "By adding a 10% refundable earned income tax credit – we reward work, reduce tax liability, help financially vulnerable families, and boost local economies," said Kalitha Williams, project director of Policy Matters Ohio. "Our policy makers must continue working together to ensure working families can build assets and become more economically secure."

To see a complete listing of policy issues monitored and advocated for by members of the Ohio Children's Budget Coalition, please see the Coalition's [Policy Scorecard](#).

To learn more about the OCBC and its unprecedented partnership, visit ohiochildrensbudget.org

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Ohio Children's Budget Coalition (OCB) was established in 2018 and is committed to prioritizing the needs of children in Ohio's state policy and budget decisions. This unprecedented statewide partnership is comprised of fifteen child advocacy organizations, including:

- [Advocates for Ohio's Future](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics-Ohio Chapter](#)
- [Center for Community Solutions](#)
- [Children's Defense Fund-Ohio](#)
- [Groundwork Ohio](#)
- [Innovation Ohio-Education Fund; Women's Public Policy Network; Ohio Mayor's Alliance](#)
- [Ohio Children's Alliance](#)
- [Ohio Children's Hunger Alliance](#)
- [Ohio Education Association](#)
- [Ohio Federation of Teachers](#)
- [Ohio Healthy Homes Network](#)
- [Ohio Juvenile Justice Coalition](#)
- [Policy Matters Ohio](#)
- [Public Children's Services Association of Ohio](#)
- [Voices for Ohio's Children](#)