



Update on the Sacramento Political and Policy Landscape Around Equitable Supports for Children

**Ted Lempert, President
Children Now**

MVLALAH Challenge Team
June 12, 2020

www.childrennow.org



The May Revise proposal fails to reflect that the majority of the state's children were in crises before the pandemic, in part because California failed to prioritize children above other interests. Since then, kids have been significantly affected by the pandemic – from a dramatic loss of learning time to a sharp increase in the need for mental health support. The May Revise proposed reductions to child care and elimination of a crises hotline for foster youth experiencing trauma are particularly inexplicable given the need for such emergency supports at this time. As California leaders make decisions in the upcoming and extremely difficult state budget process, they must ensure that programs serving kids, including early childhood, K-12, children's physical and mental health and foster care, are the least impacted by budget cuts, and not repeat the history of the last recession when many of these services were cut the most.

See Children Now's summary of May Revise below:

<https://www.childrennow.org/blog/20-21-may-revise-breakdown/>

California is home to 9,159,878 children.

KIDS AGES 0-TO-17

9,159,878

TRANSITION AGE YOUTH
(AGES 18-TO-25)

4,744,453

RACE/ETHNICITY BREAKDOWN

49%

Latino

30%

White

11%

Asian

6%

Black

4%

Multiracial

<1%

American Indian
or Alaska Native

<1%

Native Hawaiian or
Pacific Islander

KIDS ENROLLED IN MEDICAL

5,353,060

FROM IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

4,195,000

KIDS WHO ARE LOW-INCOME

43%

ENGLISH LEARNERS IN
K-12 SCHOOLS

1,195,998

KIDS IN FOSTER CARE

61,501

KIDS WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ
(AGES 13-TO-17)

11%

2020

California Children's Report Card



A survey of kids' well-being
and roadmap for the future.

Available for download:

<https://www.childrennow.org/portfolio-posts/20-report-card/>

HEALTH

- A** Health Insurance
- D** Health Care Accountability
- C-** Health Care Access
- D** Preventive Screenings
- D** Behavioral Health Care
- C-** Preventing Trauma & Supporting Healing
- C-** Oral Health Care
- C-** Food Security

ADOLESCENTS & TRANSITION AGE YOUTH

- C-** Relationships & Sexual Health Education
- D+** Supports for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
- D+** Decriminalization of Youth
- C-** Opportunities for Youth Voice & Civic Engagement

EDUCATION

- D+** Infant & Toddler Care
- B** Preschool & Transitional Kindergarten
- C-** Early Care & Education Workforce
- D** Early Intervention & Special Education
- C-** Education for Dual Language & English Learners
- D+** Education Funding
- C-** STEM Education
- D+** Teacher Pipeline & Retention
- F** School Climate: Caring Professionals at School
- B** School Climate: Discipline & Attendance
- B-** Afterschool & Summer Learning Programs
- C+** Higher Education

FAMILY SUPPORTS

- C-** Voluntary Evidence-Based Home Visiting
- B-** Paid Family Leave
- B-** Income Assistance for Low-income Families

CHILD WELFARE

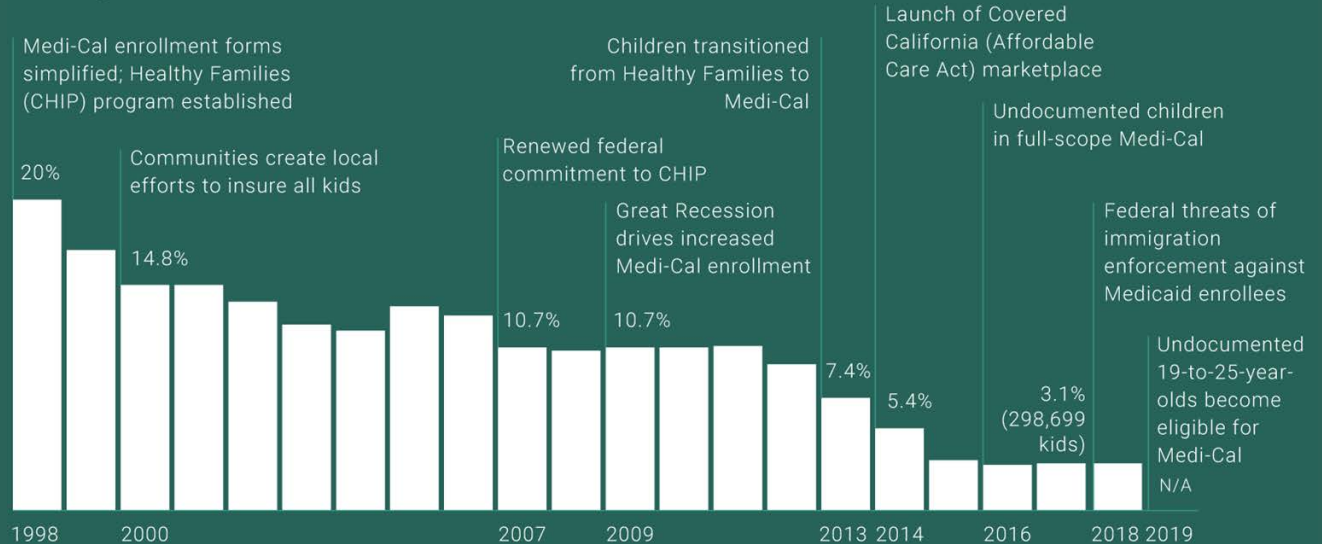
- C** Stable Homes & Enduring Relationships
- C-** Health Care for Kids in Foster Care
- D+** Education Supports for Students in Foster Care
- D** Connected Cradle-to-Career Systems

Health Insurance

Grade A

California has made effective strides towards insuring all kids.

Percentage of children in California under age 18 who were uninsured



Health Care Accountability

Grade D

The Early & Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, & Treatment (EPSDT) benefit:



Applies to every child in Medi-Cal



Covers medical, dental, vision, and hearing screens



Requires timely access to language-appropriate care, including transportation to and from appointments if needed



Guarantees any Medicaid services necessary to “correct or ameliorate” a diagnosed physical or mental condition



Requires state monitoring of health plan compliance to ensure children are getting care

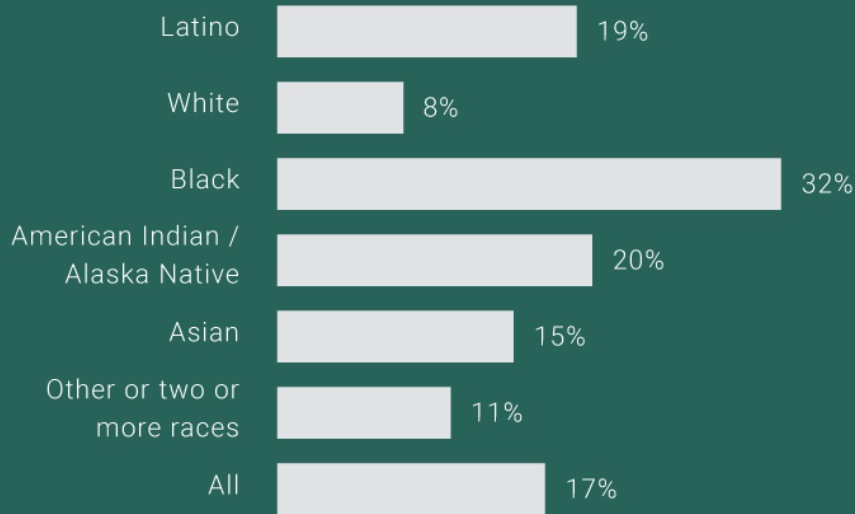
Children have a unique legal guarantee to medically necessary services.

This standard is broader for children than adults. Services to maintain or improve a child’s health, not just to correct a problem, must be covered.

Health Care Access

Grade C-

Current asthmatic children by race who had emergency room/urgent care visits for asthma in the past 12 months



More kids visit the ER for asthma if they lack access to quality preventive care and healthy environmental factors.

Environmental triggers for asthma can include mold, allergens, pollution, and tobacco smoke. Due to environmental racism, children of color are more likely to live near such triggers.

Preventive Screenings

Grade D



Developmental screenings at the 9-, 18-, and 30-month well-child visits



Vision screenings regularly throughout childhood and adolescence



Psychosocial/behavioral assessments at every visit



Autism Spectrum Disorder screening at the 24-month well-child visit



Hearing screenings for newborns and then periodically throughout childhood



Trauma screenings



Maternal depression screening during the first 6 months of a child's life



Dental screenings for children up to age 21



Blood lead screening for young children

Young kids need several types of preventive screenings.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has identified guidelines for preventive care that include regular well-child visits and a range of screenings.

Preventive Screenings

Grade D

California's rank on well-child screening rates by age group

1 year	50th
1-to-2 years	48th
3-to-5 years	19th
6-to-9 years	35th
10-to-14 years	34th
15-to-18 years	37th
19-to-20 years	40th

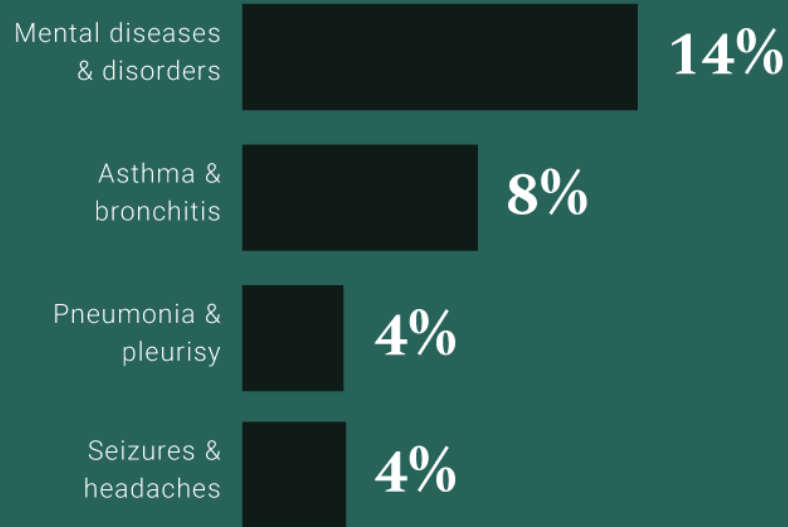
California is among the worst of all states in ensuring well-child screenings for Medicaid participants.

For all but one age group, California is in the lower half of all states for percentage of completed well-child screenings. For the youngest children, California ranks among the bottom handful of states.

Behavioral Health Care

Grade D

Top child hospitalizations by primary diagnosis



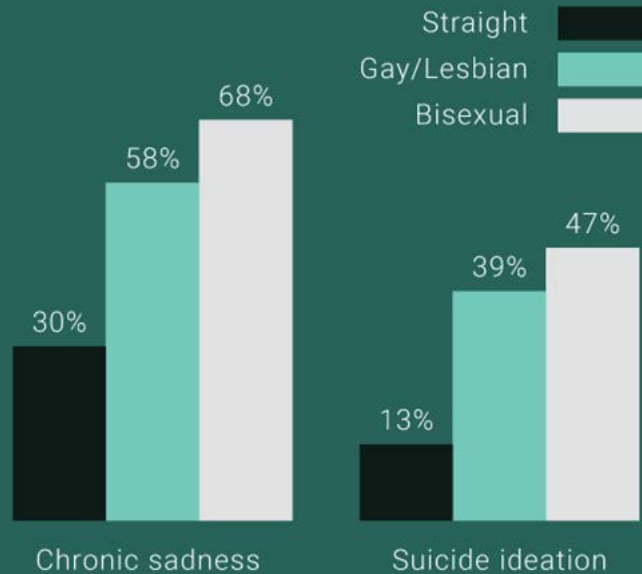
Mental illness is the #1 reason California kids are hospitalized.

In 2017 there were 227,432 hospital discharges among California children ages birth-to-17; one in seven were for a primary diagnosis of mental disease or disorder.

Behavioral Health Care

Grade D

Percent of students in 9th and 11th grade reporting chronic sadness or suicide ideation by sexual orientation





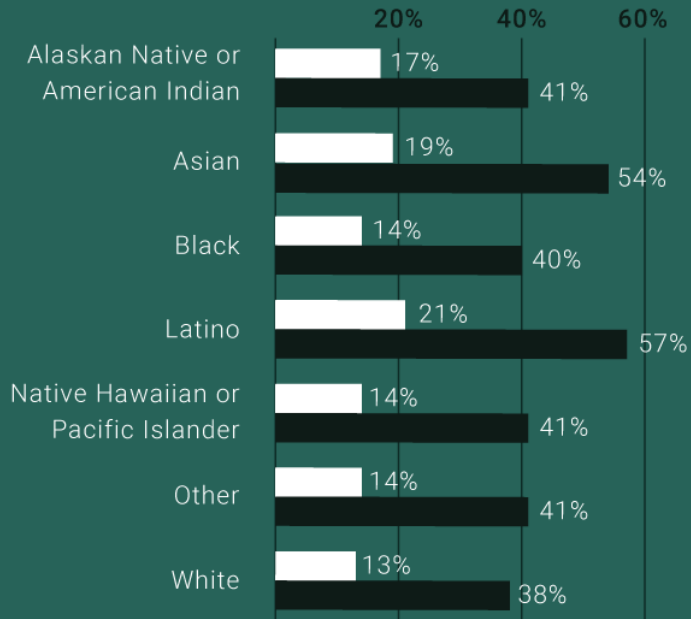
There are high levels of chronic sadness and suicide ideation reported among all students; students who are lesbian, gay and bisexual report even higher levels.

Oral Health Care

Grade C-

Percent of children in Medi-Cal, ages birth-to-5, who received preventive dental services

Ages 0-to-2 
Ages 3-to-5 





Medi-Cal is not providing adequate access for young kids to obtain preventive dental services.

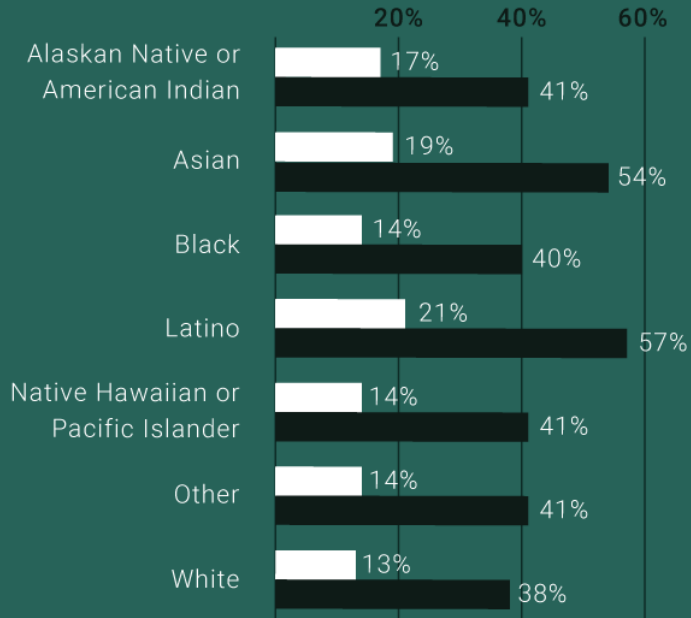
Children should begin getting preventive dental services by age one, and law requires dental health assessments and referrals in Medi-Cal. However, dental services are low overall, and vary significantly by race. Sustained outreach and education efforts to Latino and Asian families seem to be improving kids' utilization; these efforts, including using care coordinators, should be expanded and replicated with other racial groups.

Oral Health Care

Grade C-

Percent of children in Medi-Cal, ages birth-to-5, who received preventive dental services

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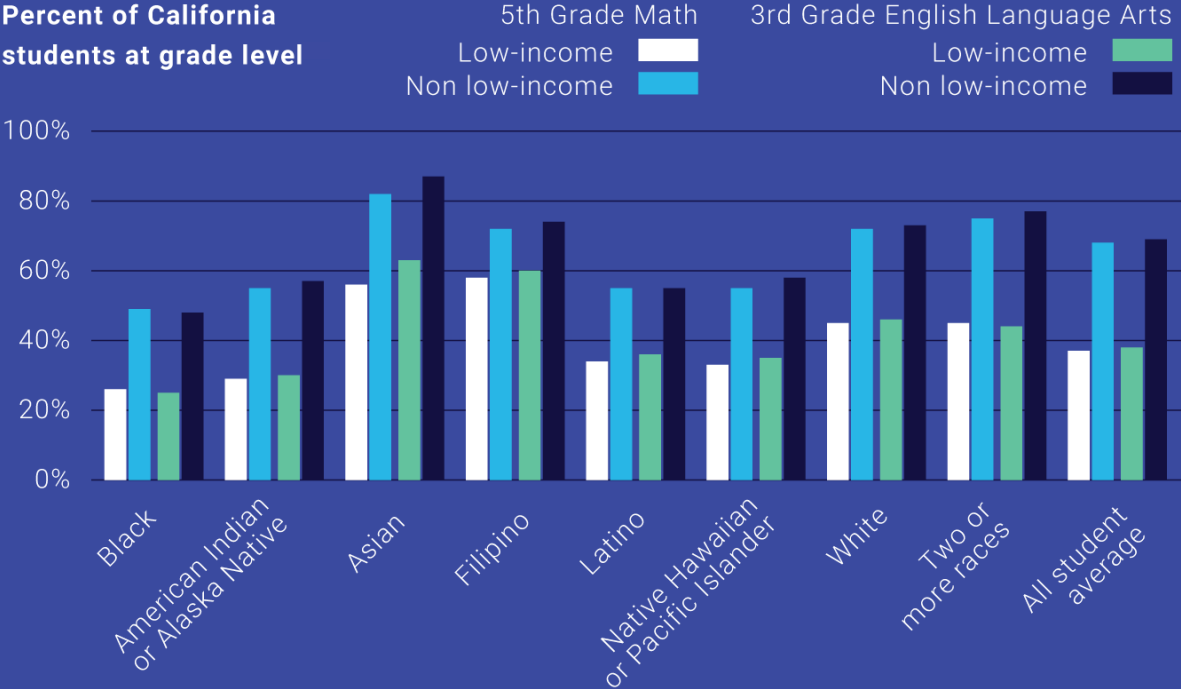
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Education

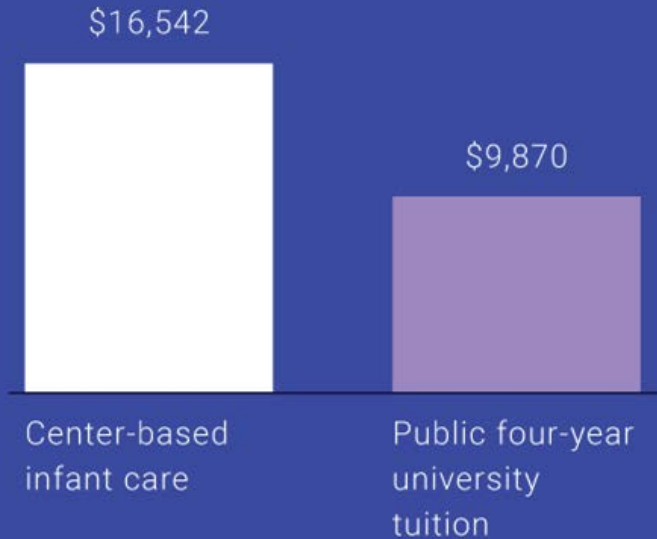
Race disparities in academic achievement

Fewer than one-half of students meet standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics, and significant disparities in outcomes by race and income demonstrate the structural barriers that exist for too many students.



Infant & Toddler Care

Grade D+



The cost of child care consumes a huge portion of family income.

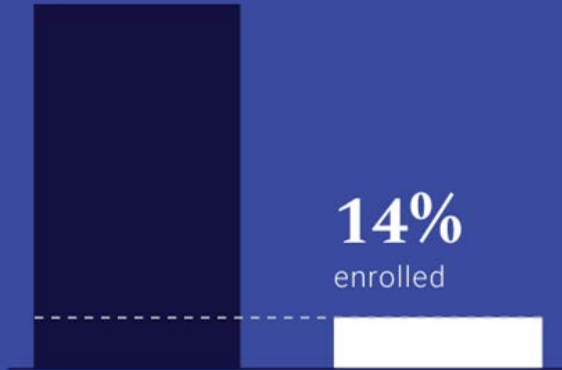
The average annual cost of child care for an infant in a licensed center is more than college tuition.

Infant & Toddler Care

Grade D+

California's early care and education programs serve few income-eligible birth-to-3-year-olds

505,000
eligible



Low-income families with young kids need much better access to quality child care programs in California.

Of California's infants and toddlers, 62% are born into low-income households and are therefore eligible for subsidized child care.

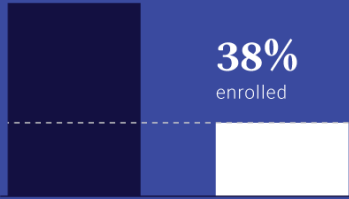
Preschool & Transitional Kindergarten

Grade B

Percent of income-eligible 3-year-olds enrolled in early care and education programs

216,000

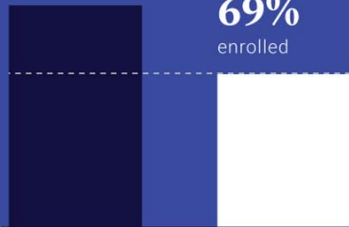
eligible



Percent of income-eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in early care and education programs

242,000

eligible



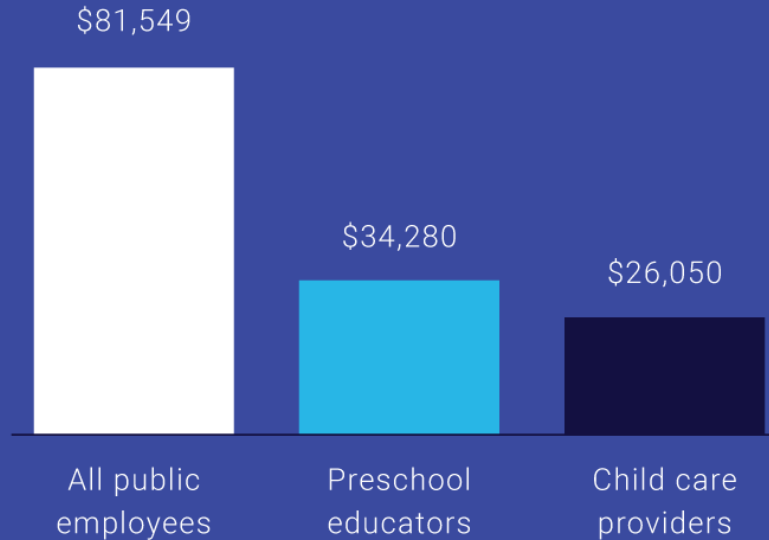
Too few 3- and 4-year-olds have access to preschool.

High-quality early learning programs can narrow the achievement gap and produce more equity in academic opportunities.

Early Care & Education Workforce

Grade C-

Average of annual earnings in California

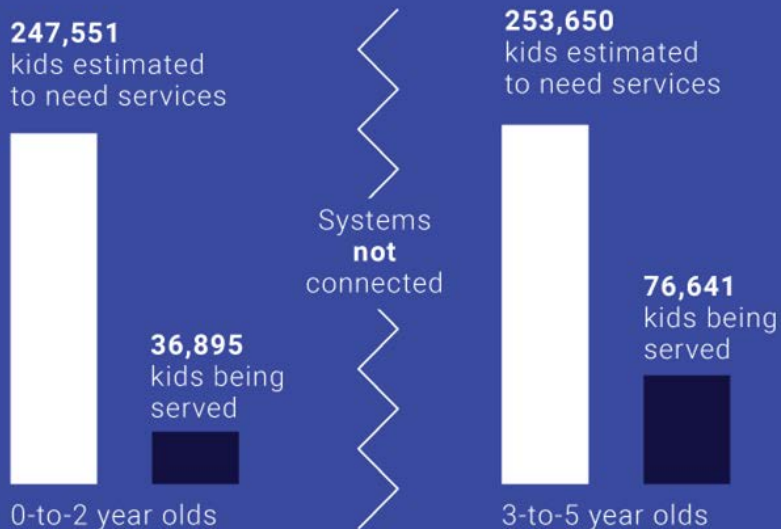


Early child care providers are supporting kids during the period of their lives with the most rapid brain development, yet they are poorly compensated.

Early Intervention & Special Education

Grade D

Gap between children estimated to need early intervention services and those served



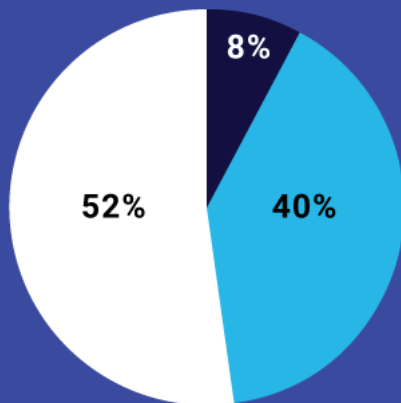
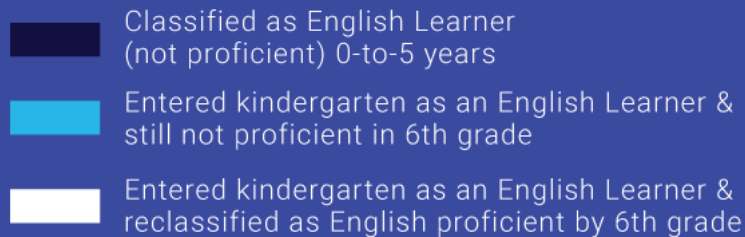
California is failing to provide services to young children who need early intervention.

The two systems — for infants/toddlers, and preschool-age kids — are disconnected and do not work together to serve kids.

Education for Dual Language & English Learners

Grade C-

6th grade English proficiency outcomes, 2018-19



Nearly half of English Learners are not receiving the support they need to become proficient in English.

English Learners need opportunities to integrate language development, literacy, and content learning, as well as comprehension and participation through native language instruction and scaffolding.

Education Funding

Grade D+

\$10,499 — \$30,219

Range of costs per child per year in the current system; costs vary by age of child, program, setting, and region.

More than \$20 billion

Cost for a comprehensive, high-quality early care system that adequately compensates teachers and serves all eligible children birth-to-5.

California is vastly underfunding its early learning system.

Approximately 645,000 children birth-to-5 are eligible for California's early care programs, but unserved.

Education Funding

Grade D+

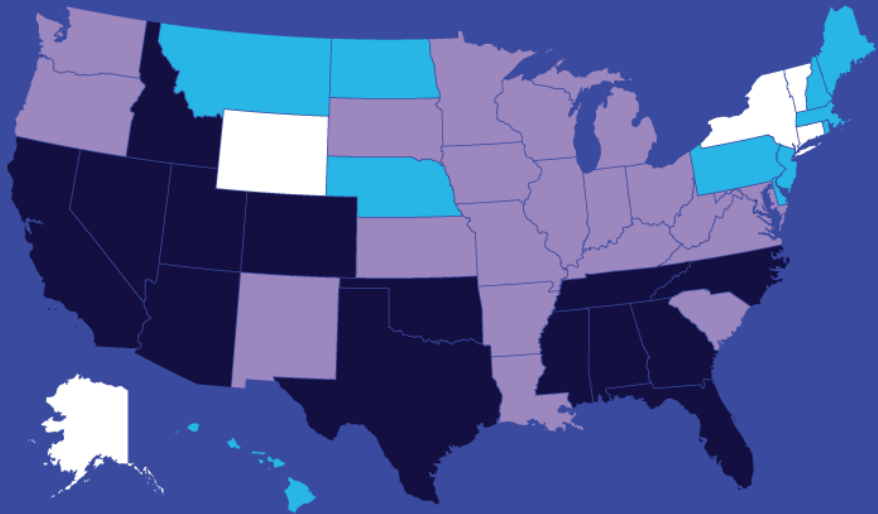
California ranks 39th in per-pupil expenditure adjusted for regional cost differences

\$7,000 - \$10,500

\$10,501 - \$14,000

\$14,001 - \$17,500

\$17,501 - \$21,000

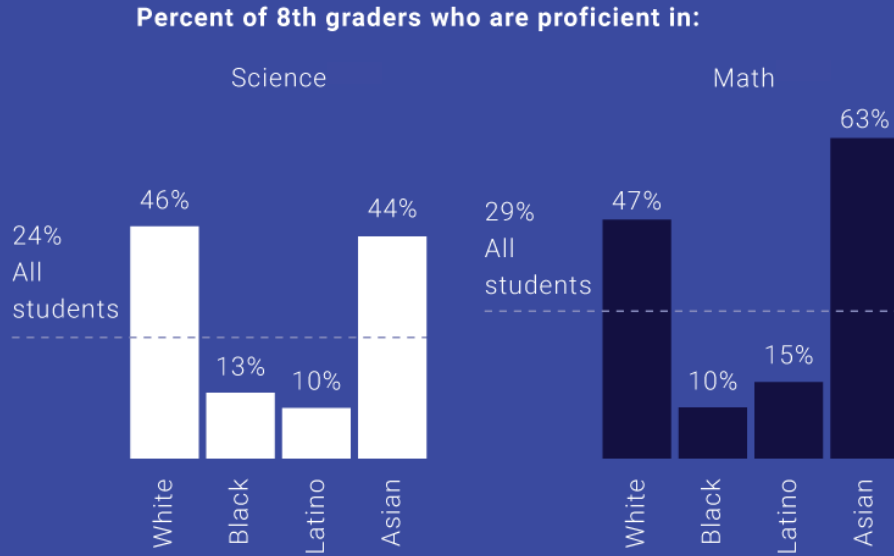


California TK-12 per-pupil expenditures are among the lowest in the nation.

If California was at the national average of total taxable resources spent on K-12 education, it would support an additional \$11 billion investment.

STEM Education

Grade C-



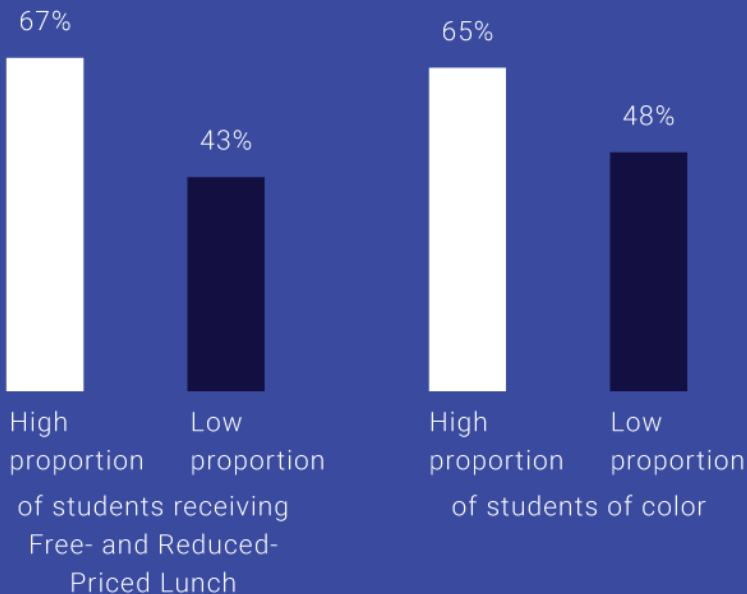
California schools are not preparing students to meet expectations in math and science, and racial disparities are significant.

Due to major systemic inequities, Black and Latino students perform well below their White and Asian peers in math and science on the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

Teacher Pipeline & Retention

Grade D+

Teachers hired on substandard credentials or vacant positions left open by school characteristics



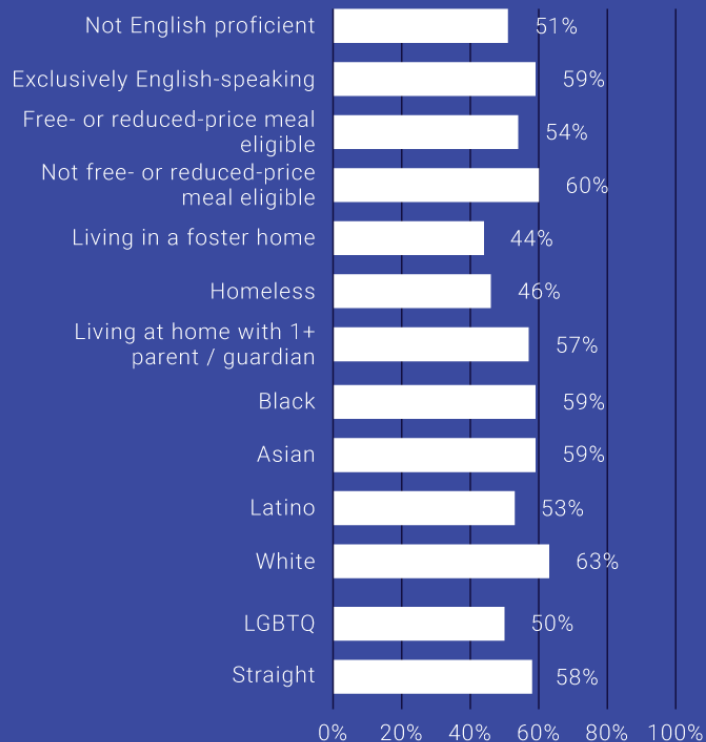
Schools with more students in poverty and students of color have more vacant teaching positions and teachers with substandard credentials.

This problem is widespread, but is amplified in higher-need schools.

School Climate: Caring Professionals at School

Grade F

Percent of 9th graders who report a caring relationship with an adult at school



Only 57% of California's 9th graders report a caring relationship with at least one adult at school.

Students who face systemic barriers are even less likely to say it's very much or pretty true that "at my school, there is a teacher or some other adult who really cares about me, who notices when I'm not there, and who listens to me when I have something to say."

School Climate: Caring Professionals at School Grade F

	California rank	National average ratio	California ratio
Total staff	46th	8:1	11:1
Teacher	50th	16:1	23:1
Principals & assistant principals	45th	276:1	355:1
Guidance counselor	48th	455:1	663:1
Student support staff	47th	148:1	315:1

The ratio of teachers and other professionals to students is a prominent factor in education quality.

California ranks near the bottom among the 50 states in staff-to-student ratios.

School Climate: Caring Professionals at School

Grade F

Less than 1% of total school districts in California average one nurse per school.

1,026

school districts
in California

625

districts don't have at
least one full-time
equivalent nurse

Only 10

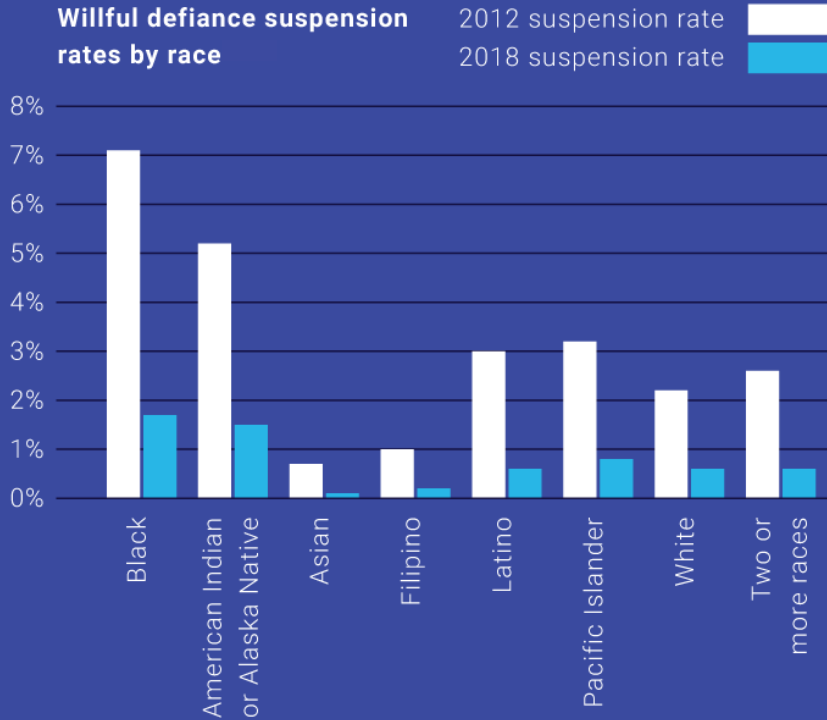
districts average one
nurse per school

School nurses continue to be in startlingly short supply.

The school nurse serves a critical role bridging health and education.

School Climate: Discipline & Attendance

Grade B



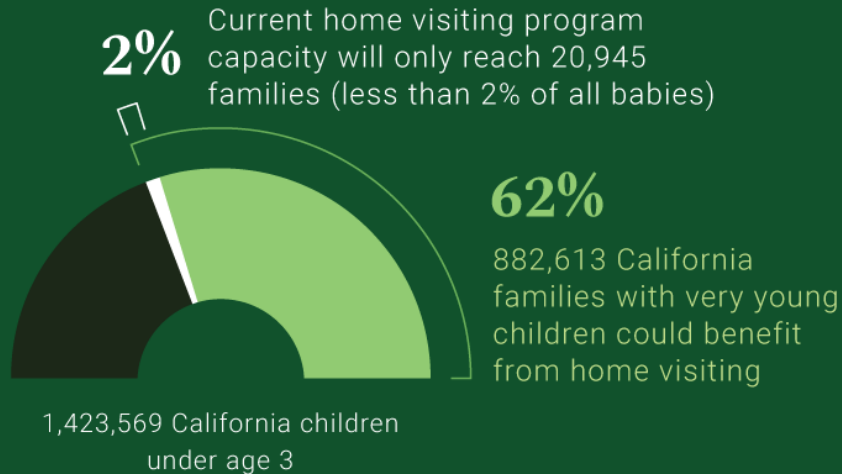
Student suspensions in California are declining.

The decline is due in part to a state law banning suspensions for willful defiance (a subjective category of overly broad and minor offenses that are vulnerable to disproportionate racial impact) for kindergarteners through third-graders.

Voluntary Evidence-Based Home Visiting

Grade C-

Children with one or more risk factors who could benefit from home visiting



Despite research proving the benefits of voluntary home visiting programs, home visiting is not reaching enough California families.

As many as two-thirds of California families with babies and toddlers could benefit from home visiting, yet current programs reach fewer than 2%.

Paid Family Leave

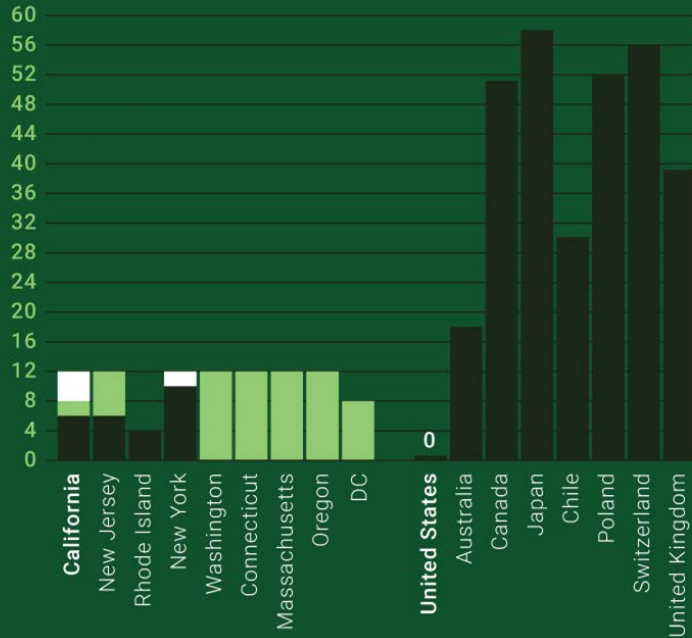
Grade B-

Paid family leave duration (weeks)

Current duration
2020 (expected)
2021 (expected)

State-specific policies

Nationwide policies



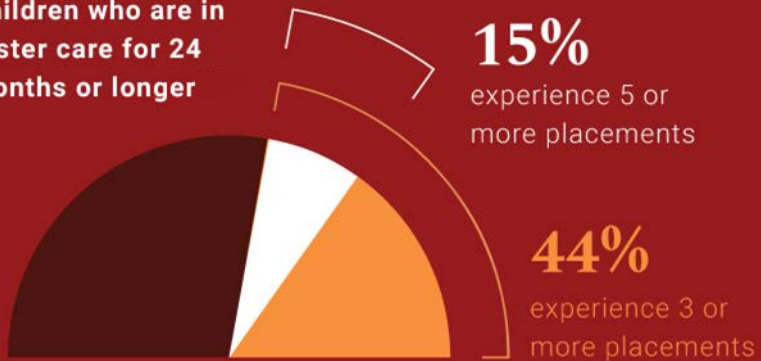
California is a leader among states in the U.S. providing PFL but lags far behind many other countries worldwide.

State leaders have committed to increases in PFL duration over the next few years.

Stable Homes & Enduring Relationships

Grade C

Children who are in
foster care for 24
months or longer



15%

experience 5 or
more placements

44%

experience 3 or
more placements

Many children and youth in foster care experience frequent placement changes, adding to their trauma.

Factors that affect placement stability include how prepared families are to care for children who have experienced abuse or neglect, and whether supports are available to help children and caregivers build strong relationships. There is also a shortage of trauma-informed caregivers, which can lead to poor placement matching, frequent moves, and overcrowded homes.

Health Care for Kids in Foster Care

Grade C-

Children in foster care are

3-6 times

more likely to have a mental health need than children in the general population

46-60%

of children who enter foster care under age six have a developmental disability at the time they enter foster care

33%

of children who enter foster care have a chronic health condition

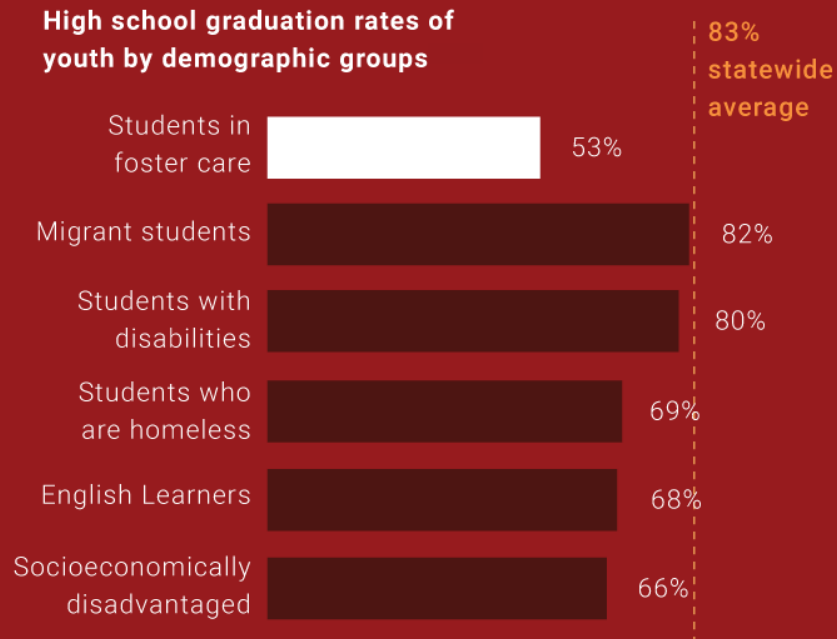
20%

of children who enter foster care enter with significant dental issues

Children in foster care have complex health needs because they have experienced trauma.

Children in foster care have experienced abuse, neglect, and other adverse childhood experiences that can negatively impact their health. In fact, half of all kids in foster care have endured four or more adverse childhood experiences.

Education Support for Students in Foster Care Grade D+



As a result of inequities in the education system, too few youth in foster care finish high school on time.

Low graduation rates among youth in foster care point to inadequate preparation for college and careers. Although 93% of youth in care want to go to college, only 4% obtain a bachelor's degree by age 26.

Supports for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Grade D+

Common pathways to youth homelessness:



Abuse and neglect



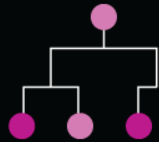
Substance abuse



Illness or death
of a parent



Parental
incarceration



Histories of family
homelessness



Experience with
foster care or the
youth justice systems

**One-third of all
the nation's
unaccompanied
homeless youth
are in California.**

Supports for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Grade D+

33% of California's youth who are homeless identify as LGBTQ

120% higher risk for LGBTQ youth to be homeless than peers, often due to family rejection²⁰⁵

62% of LGBTQ youth who are homeless reported being physically harmed by others²⁰⁶

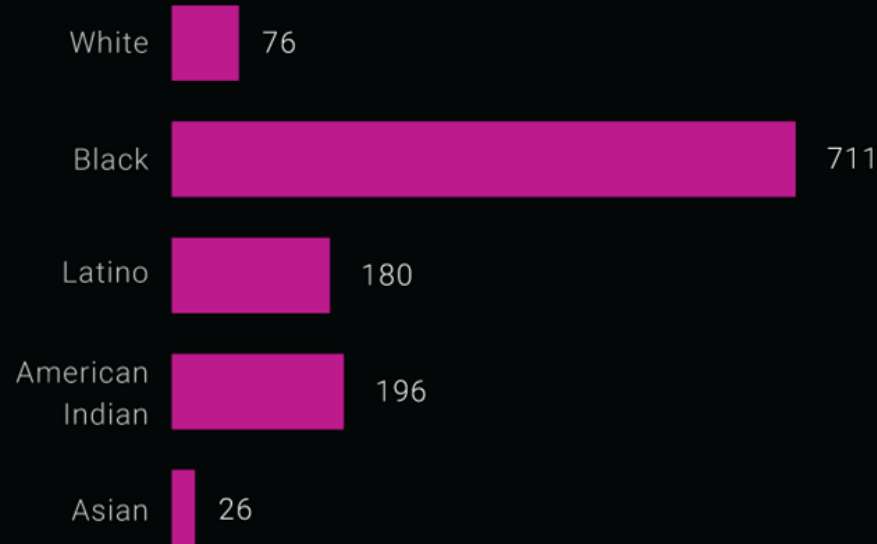
LGBTQ youth are especially at risk of homelessness.

Most LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness report that they were forced out of their homes or ran away because their families rejected their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Decriminalization of Youth

Grade D+

Number of children per 100,000 that enter the California juvenile justice system



Youth of color are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system.

Implicit and explicit racial biases persist at all levels of the juvenile justice system, resulting in disproportionate treatment for youth of color, who are treated more harshly — from arrest through incarceration — for the same crimes committed by White youth.

Opportunities for Youth Voice & Civic Engagement

Grade C-

State	18-to-24-year-old voter participation rate
Texas	27%
New York	35%
California	38%
Alabama	41%
Colorado	43%
Maine	49%
Virginia	55%

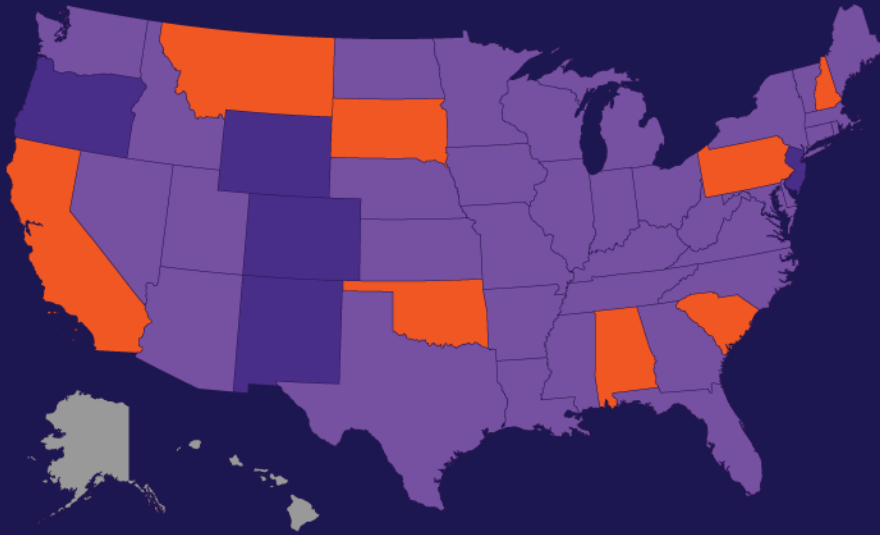
Youth voter participation rates are low nationwide; California is in the bottom third of states that reported youth voter turnout from the high-profile November 2016 election.

A recent survey shows that California youth are much more likely to vote after direct contact by a candidate or voter-rights organization. Yet, youth of color are less likely to be contacted, with the highest rates of contact at 61% for youth who are White and lowest at 44% for youth who are Black.

Connected Cradle-to-Career Systems

Grade D

- System exists
- System in progress
- No system as of 2019



California has no longitudinal education data system.

California lacks many of the informational systems that parents/caregivers need to better understand how their kids are doing and plan for what's next. For example, California is one of only eight states that lack a statewide data system to track students' pathways from TK–12 schools to college and into the workplace.

The Children's Movement 2020 Budget Campaign



May 25, 2020



The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
State of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, California 95834

The Honorable Tim Atkins
President pro Tempore
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, California 95834

The Honorable Anthony Rendón
Speaker
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 203
Sacramento, California 95834

Safeguard California's Kids in the 2020-21 State Budget

Dear Governor Newsom and State Legislators,

Thank you for your leadership in addressing this pandemic and your tireless work to support our health, our economy, our communities and our most vulnerable residents.

The spread of COVID-19 is impacting everyone, and every corner of life. It is particularly devastating for California's children and families who were already in crisis before the pandemic: families with young children – the cohort of our state's population most in poverty – who couldn't access essential supports, including sufficient nutrition and quality child care and preschool; children who were abused and neglected and/or witness to domestic violence; the majority of California students who lacked the educational supports they needed to meet basic grade-level reading and math standards; many children living in immigrant or undocumented families; the once-probably-less-visible children in Black-Cal who received preventive care and health screenings; and the millions of young people experiencing mental health challenges, including many who struggled with suicidal thoughts. Vulnerable kids were not receiving the supports and services they needed as we entered 2020, requiring a significant shift in state priorities to ensure our collective future. Now this shift is essential as a result of COVID-19.

Moreover, during the last economic downturn, it was child-serving programs, including early childhood and K-12 education, that received the most dramatic funding cuts in California. We can't repeat that history.

The undersigned call on you to prioritize kids in the upcoming 2020-21 state budget – holding crucial children's programs and services in reserve and accessing targeted supports as much as possible.

Specifically, we urge the following:

- Sustain the fragile child care system by extending the hold harmless provisions for child development programs through budget year 2020-21.
- Ensure our education system has sufficient resources for the summer months to provide school meals and to address the significant learning loss that has occurred.
- Prioritize school-based budget reductions, and year-one and funding deferrals through the next academic year, and prioritize support for our most vulnerable students as required by LFE.
- Provide targeted funding for training programs like youth mental health first aid so that adults who care for children, including school staff, are able to de-escalate tense emotional situations and provide appropriate support.
- Ensure expanded implementation of the Family Urgent Response System (FURS) for foster youth and their caregivers, who need immediate access to trauma-informed supports during moments of instability.
- Establish the Child Welfare Disaster Response Fund to provide critical resources for children and youth in foster care and their caregivers who face unique challenges when disasters strike.

We recognize the strain you are experiencing as you try to grapple with the enormity of this crisis and keep the Golden State intact. As always, prioritization is essential, and we urge you to ensure that our most precious constituency, our kids, are your top priority.

Sincerely,
The Undersigned Organizations

1424 Franklin Street, Ste 700, Oakland, California 94612

www.childrensmovement.org



Learn more and get involved:

The California Children's Report Card

<https://www.childrennow.org/portfolio-posts/20-report-card/>

County Scorecard of Children's Well-Being

<https://www.childrennow.org/portfolio-posts/2018scorecard/>

The 2020 Pro-Kid Agenda

<https://www.childrennow.org/portfolio-posts/2020-pro-kid-agenda/>

Join The Children's Movement™

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