PLANNING FOR THE LONG-TERM

Each year, Children's Action Alliance pursues a legislative agenda that advances our long-term strategy for improving the lives of all Arizona children. We seek to:

1. Shape the public conversation to expect better state budgets and policies for kids
2. Nurture leaders and champions for kids
3. Promote fiscal policies that facilitate children's health, education, and security
4. Improve children's access to health care
5. Improve the protection of abused and neglected children
6. Improve community safety and youth development by increasing community treatment and decreasing youth incarceration
7. Promote early education policies and practices that improve reading success by third grade

Children's Action Alliance

A voice for Arizona's children since 1988

Children's Action Alliance is an independent voice for Arizona children at the state capitol and in the community.

Since 1988, CAA has worked to improve children's health, education and security through information and action.

Visit us online at www.azchildren.org to learn more about current issues impacting Arizona's struggling children and families, and to stay connected throughout the year.

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CHILDREN'S ACTION ALLIANCE

2015 POLICY PRIORITIES

for the Arizona Governor, State Legislature and State Agencies

December 2014

Children's Action Alliance invites you to join us as we stand up for policies and practices that create a brighter future for our children and a vibrant economy for Arizona.

Each year, the Governor and state legislature must enact a balanced budget that meets voter priorities for health, education, and security.

As Arizona faces a growing gap between projected revenues and the cost of current services, state lawmakers should:

- Sustain investments in the safety net and health and education that prevent crisis and save on long-term expenses.

- Support a fair and sustainable tax base that closes the gap between revenues and current services.

HEALTH

- Restore KidsCare or other access to health coverage for children – even when they don't have coverage through their parents' jobs.

- Strengthen consumer information and quality of kids' health coverage in the federal Marketplace.

- Streamline state application and enrollment policies so that qualified children can get covered through AHCCCS/Medicaid, including former foster youth.

EDUCATION

- Improve early learning and workforce stability for families earning low incomes by expanding participation in child care assistance and updating implementation policies.

- Invest in K-12 education to match resources with expectations for third grade reading success, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) achievement, and high school graduation.

- Clarify the process for tuition waivers at Arizona universities and community colleges so that more foster alumni can benefit from a college education.

SECURITY

- Reduce long-term crisis costs and strengthen opportunities for children in struggling families by leveraging community resources and federal and state funding for the safety net and prevention strategies.

- Sustain resources and reform for the new Department of Child Safety, juvenile courts, and community partners to protect children from abuse and neglect and connect them with safe and permanent homes.

- Reduce the number of foster children entering group homes and treatment centers; increase the opportunity for children to live with relatives or foster families.

- Improve access to "independent living" services and supports so that older foster youth can successfully transition to adulthood.

- Coordinate state agency procedures so that more children being raised by grandparents and other relatives have better financial security through cash assistance (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, aka TANF).

- Allow youth in the juvenile justice system to complete treatment up to age 19 to promote a safe and stable return to the community and to reduce the number of youth prosecuted as adults.