

Children's Funding Project

About Us

February 2024 | Children and Youth

Children and youth spend 80% of their time outside of school. Yet the public services that help nurture and prepare them remain dramatically underfunded and deeply inequitable. Without robust public funding, a family's income alone often dictates whether a child can access high-quality early care and education, after-school and summer programs, mental health support, college and workforce preparation, and other essential services. Children from households with fewer resources get left behind. They are the ones least able to access the programs and services all children need and deserve.

In a nation with so much collective abundance, a family's income should not prevent children from receiving the care and support they need to thrive.

[Children's Funding Project](#) is a nonprofit social impact organization that helps communities, states, and Native nations expand equitable opportunities for children and youth through strategic public financing. Through our hands-on technical assistance and collection of resources, we

- *help* local, state, and Native nation leaders and agency staff understand the multiple sources that fund services for children and youth;
- *coach* policymakers on aligning existing funds with local priorities and implementing strategies to achieve their goals for children;
- *equip* advocates with the skills and resources to build public and policymaker support for children and youth services and to generate new and sustainable funding sources;
- *collaborate* with communities, states, and Native nations to develop customized financing solutions tailored to their individual needs and goals; and
- *build* collective momentum toward an equitable and proactive approach to children's funding.



In 2018, we started Children's Funding Project based on a simple idea—kids can't thrive without sustained financial investments in the programs and services that support them. We set out to help leaders and advocates think differently about how cities, counties, and states fund the full set of experiences that young people need during their first two decades of life.

Our Mission

Children's Funding Project helps communities and states expand equitable opportunities for children and youth through strategic public financing.

Our Vision

Children's Funding Project envisions a nation where all children and youth thrive because all communities maintain equitable, coordinated, and sustainable funding for comprehensive programs and services.

During [our first five years](#), our collective work reached 151 communities and states. We helped localities track and organize \$179 billion in local, state, federal, and local philanthropic funds that support kids. Meanwhile, among past attendees to our three Children's Funding Institutes, eight community teams successfully created [voter-approved children's funds](#) that collectively generate approximately \$313 million annually for kids. Since collaborating with us, our partners in communities like [New Orleans, LA](#); [San Antonio, TX](#); and [Whatcom County, WA](#), have sustained and expanded the work they started with us to grow strategic investments in children and youth. Additionally, in 2023, we began supporting Native nations and Indigenous communities with research

and strategic financing tools codesigned and tailored to their unique legal, cultural, and economic contexts.

Building on these successes, we hope to achieve the following goals by 2026:

- We aim to see **13 million children and youth** growing up in communities with dedicated public funding for kids' services.
- We will train **1,000 professionals** in strategic public financing.
- We will support the development of fiscal data infrastructure* in **50% of the country**.
- We will help communities and states secure **\$2 billion in new public funding** for children and youth.

By working with communities, states, Native nations, and national partners, Children's Funding Project builds a constituency of advocates committed to supporting children and youth—from birth to young adulthood. Through this collective action, we will realize our vision for a nation where all children and youth thrive because all communities maintain equitable, coordinated, and sustainable funding for comprehensive programs and services.

*Fiscal data infrastructure refers to having either a cost model, fiscal map, voter-approved children's fund, and/or a children's funding coordinator.



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