



children's
defense fund
minnesota

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

MAKE CHILD CARE MORE AFFORDABLE

The Child Care Assistance Program is critical for lower income, working families to afford the high cost of child care so that parents can work or go to school while children are cared for in environments that help them flourish from kindergarten to career. However, the program is severely underfunded resulting in thousands of eligible families across the state unable to access it. In 2019, CDF-MN will advocate for increased state investment to increase provider reimbursement rates and the number of children and families who can access child care services. Additionally, CDF-MN will continue to support the efforts to align CCAP with family-friendly federal requirements and national best practices that will reduce barriers to accessing the program.



INVEST IN COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Children of color and American Indian children face a steeper ladder to success in Minnesota, and by 2035, these populations will make up one-quarter of the state's residents. To ensure the healthy development of children of color and American Indian children, CDF-MN supports the work of the Voices and Choices for Children coalition to seek passage of the Community Solutions Fund. This would allow cultural communities across the state the flexibility to advance locally generated approaches to improving measures of well-being, based on a broad subset of child well-being outcomes, for children of color and American Indian children from prenatal to 3rd grade.



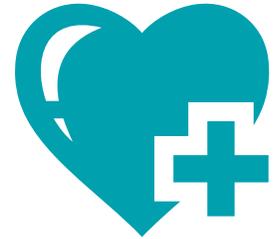
EXPAND ACCESS TO PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Nearly everyone needs paid family or medical leave at some point in their lives, whether to care for a new child, an aging parent, or themselves. Yet, only 13 percent of Minnesotans have paid leave through their employers and this access is unevenly distributed across geography, earning level, and race. CDF-MN supports the Minnesotans for Paid Family & Medical Leave coalition, to advocate for a state-administered paid leave insurance program, in which everyone contributes and everyone benefits.



PROTECT HEALTH CARE GAINS

Since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the number of uninsured Minnesota children has dropped 50 percent. Uninsured rates for all Minnesotans have reached an all-time low resulting in cost savings from uncompensated care, preventative care, and increased federal funding. However, the year-over-year increases in the number of insured children that started with the implementation of the ACA has stagnated in 2017, so protecting these health care gains has become more critical. In 2019, CDF-MN remains committed at both the state and federal levels to protect and advance our state's health care gains for children and families. MnSure and its robust outreach system must be maintained, and we will continue to ensure that Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and MinnesotaCare remain strong and accessible. CDF-MN will advocate to protect the Health Care Access Fund and the important programs funded by it through a repeal of the provider tax sunset scheduled for the end of 2019. This tax is the main revenue source for the HCAF, which funds critical programs that provide access to health coverage and care, reduce uncompensated care costs and promote health and well-being for all Minnesotans.



IMPROVE THE MINNESOTA FAMILY INVESTMENT PROGRAM (MFIP)

MFIP is the state's cash assistance and work support program for Minnesota's lowest income working families. More than 70 percent of the people accessing MFIP are children and more than half of households accessing the program have at least one child under age 6. The MFIP cash grant is about half the amount of the average rent cost for families and has not increased since 1986. Children in households accessing MFIP are at risk of or are already experiencing the harmful effects of living in deep poverty that can last a lifetime. CDF-MN will work with other organizations to advocate for a significant increase to the cash grant and support other potential program changes that would improve outcomes for children and families.



CREATE A BUDGET THAT MOVES MINNESOTA FAMILIES FORWARD

In 2019, CDF-MN supports budgets at the state and federal levels designed to meet the basic needs of Minnesotans, not revenue limitations, and a progressive tax structure that opens the door to the middle class. We oppose cuts to critical programs and tax credits and advocate for expanding the Working Family Tax Credit (WFC) that helps lower income, working young adults and parents make ends meet. Research shows tax credits like the WFC improve children's immediate and longer term outcomes.



CDF-MN prioritizes these issues at the Capitol for the 2019 legislative session. We will also track other issues and participate in several coalitions in order to advance policies that support Minnesota children and family well-being.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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