

Legislative Priorities



Stop Child Abuse and Neglect Before It Occurs

Preventing child abuse reduces the long-term financial burden on taxpayers by minimizing costly interventions like foster care, medical treatments, and welfare, ultimately promoting stronger, more stable families and communities.

13,397

children in substantiated investigations of abuse and neglect in South Carolina last year

Allocate funds to Children's Trust of South Carolina to expand evidence-based prevention programs that provide family support services, parenting education and home visitation.



Provide School Meals to All Children

No child in South Carolina should go hungry, yet many still do, with almost 200,000 experiencing food insecurity. Chronically hungry children are more likely to be disruptive in class and have lasting health complications.

28%

of children in South Carolina live in households where children are not eating enough because food is unaffordable

Pass legislation to provide healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunch free of charge to all students in South Carolina public schools, eliminating the stigma and administrative burden associated with free and reduced-price meal programs.



Address Child Care Challenges

Child care in South Carolina remains among the top ten barriers to workforce entry. Workers without stable child care are also more likely to have unplanned absences, get to work late or leave early.

MORE THAN

15%

of unemployed women can't work because of a lack of child care.

Expand access to affordable, high-quality child care to ensure that parents can fully participate in the workforce.

Children's Trust is the only statewide organization focused on preventing child abuse and neglect in South Carolina. We lead and support a network that shares our belief that all children should thrive, live in secure families and be surrounded by supportive communities. We advocate for investments to make prevention services available to more children and families, saving the state from costly interventions such as social services, law enforcement, court systems and out-of-home placement.

*“Don't put off until tomorrow
what you can do today.”*

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 1700s

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Sources - Children in Substantiated CPS Investigations for SFY 2023-2024 by Age of the Child, S.C. Department of Social Services, <https://dss.sc.gov/about/data-and-resources/child-welfare-data/child-protective-services-data/>. S.C. Labor Force Participation, S.C. Labor Force Participation, <https://dew.sc.gov/sites/dew/files/Documents/FinalReportSEP30.pdf>. Annie E. Casey Foundation, <https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/tables/11131-households-with-children-where-children-were-not-eating-enough-because-food-was-unaffordable?loc=1&loct=2#detailed/2/2-52/true/2484/any/21494>.