



CHILDREN'S 
FUNDING PROJECT

5

**Years of
Impact**

2018-2022

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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.

Children’s Funding Project is a nonprofit social impact organization that helps communities and states expand equitable opportunities for children and youth through strategic public financing. childrensfundingproject.org



@FundOurKids



@childrens-funding-project



@childrensfundingproject

From Our CEO and Board Chairperson

All Kids Are Our Kids—and Our Public Investments Should Reflect That

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. Throughout our years in direct service, we experienced firsthand the constant challenge of securing the funds needed to support the programs our children and youth deserve. We also saw how easy it is to believe that resources for our work were, and always would be, scarce—a mindset that still affects far too many advocates and leaders for children and youth services.

In the absence of robust public funding, coming from a family of means is a prerequisite for accessing high-quality early childhood 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 resources they need and deserve.

Like advocates across the country, Elizabeth knew this had to change. The only way to expand equitable opportunities for kids was to 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 country needed a team of leaders who could wake up every morning focused on the flow and use of money to support kids in communities nationwide. So Children’s Funding Project was born.

When the organization launched in 2018, no one knew that we would soon be heading into a historic disruption to both public health and child and youth development. As the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools, colleges, child care centers, and after-school programs, the vital services that these institutions provide to society took center stage. At the same time, organizers for racial justice lifted their voices and demanded that the nation face its legacy of injustice and white supremacy.

Through the awareness raised during this long season of change, recovering from the pandemic no longer meant returning to the status quo. Our communities and states had to build more equitable systems and services—and the infusion of federal **COVID-relief and stimulus dollars** offered them the chance to start doing just that.

The flexibility of the relief funds gave local leaders a burst of energy to think boldly and creatively about child- and youth-focused services as well as an opportunity to rewire the funding systems that support them.

Sustaining the investments and improvements made with the federal dollars requires a deliberate effort to build the capacity of state and local leaders to track, administer, and analyze the flow and impact of public funds and deploy resources equitably to improve outcomes for children and youth. Children’s Funding Project **helps state and local leaders build this capacity in three ways:**

1. Delivering services and tools to support state and local leaders with their strategic finance planning and to grow their awareness about the true costs of programs and the flow of funds into and through communities.
2. **Coaching state and local leaders** to help them develop the skills to create and execute their own strategic public financing plans.
3. Building a movement among state and community leaders to promote additional funding for children and youth services by elevating local and state success stories and best practices, inspiring a racially and geographically diverse pipeline of professionals to pursue strategic public financing, and partnering with advocacy organizations and funders across the cradle-to-career spectrum.

During Children’s Funding Project’s 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. You can read more about their work in our Stories of Impact.

We would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the valuable contributions our funders, partners, and staff have made to support our success. In many ways, Elizabeth’s prior work with Karen Pittman, one of Children’s Funding Project’s initial board members, inspired Elizabeth to create Children’s Funding Project as an organization focused specifically on the funding communities need to create the system of supports that contributes to positive youth development. Meanwhile, our long-term partnership with Margaret Brodtkin, founder of Funding the Next Generation, provided a foundation for our biennial Children’s Funding Institute and continues to inform our work on local ballot measures for voter-approved children’s funds. Finally, Olivia Allen, our strategy director, worked side by side with Elizabeth to launch Children’s Funding Project.

Slowly but surely, advocates for children and youth are shifting from a scarcity mindset to an abundance mindset. They are learning to use their newfound budget prowess to challenge their local leaders to invest in programs and services for kids.

Even amidst politically polarizing times for our nation, these advocates are building bridges in their communities around a shared belief in the **importance of giving all children a strong start in life** and a shared desire to ensure they have every opportunity to lead happy, healthy, and productive lives. We invite you to join them—and us—as we work together to help communities create robust and sustainable funding systems that ensure all children and youth can access the programs, services, and resources they need and deserve.

Elizabeth Gaines

Elizabeth Gaines, Founder and CEO

Ryan Lugalía-Hollon

Ryan Lugalía-Hollon, Chairperson, Children’s Funding Project Board of Directors



Impact by the Numbers: 2018-2022

Since our founding, our work has reached communities in

41
states



plus Washington, DC

376

campaign leaders and local advocates received training at our three Children's Funding Institutes



8

community teams that attended our institutes successfully created voter-approved children's funds



95



local fund managers, advocates, and campaign organizers received ongoing coaching through our cohorts and communities of practice



72

clients received our direct technical assistance with their strategic finance planning



465

examples in our American Rescue Plan database of how states and communities are using federal relief funds to support kids



Five Years of Impact



July
2018

Elizabeth Gaines and Olivia Allen launch Children's Funding Project to help communities identify how to fund their strategic goals for infants, toddlers, children, and youth.



FUNDING SOURCES:
parents: \$620.6 M
state: \$64.1 M
local: \$53.6 M
federal: \$22.2 M
private: \$1.5 M



January
2019

Leaders from Montgomery County, MD, contract with us as our first **fiscal map** client. The final fiscal map documents all federal, state, local, and private funds supporting early childhood programs and services in the county.

CHILDREN'S
FUNDING PROJECT

November
2019

Children's Funding Project officially incorporates as an independent nonprofit organization.



February
2020



Children's Funding Accelerator our partner 501c4 organization forms. It has so far supported 12 successful campaigns for **voter-approved children's funds** that collectively raise more than half a billion dollars annually for kids.



September
2019

More than 120 advocates and policymakers from 27 communities attend our first Children's Funding Institute, held in Denver, CO. Attendees receive personalized coaching about how to secure local dedicated funding for kids, with eight community teams successfully creating **voter-approved children's funds** in the following years.



April
2020

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we expand our work to help communities understand the **newly available pandemic-relief funding** and help communities leverage these new funds to support kids.

Five Years of Impact



November
2020

In a significant victory for children's funding, **voters in five local communities and one state** prioritize kids by creating and renewing children's funds on their ballots. We, and our partner Children's Funding Accelerator, support all six campaigns to successfully pass these measures, which will raise over \$300 million annually for universal pre-K, birth-to-five programs, youth mental health, and more

 **FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION**

January
2021

Children's Funding Project expands our collaboration with long-time partner Margaret Brodtkin and becomes the fiscal sponsor for Funding the Next Generation, a California-based project that promotes local public funding measures for services that support children, youth, and their families.



October
2021

Our new **American Rescue Plan** database debuts, highlighting funding available for all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia as well as more than 27,000 counties, cities, and towns; nearly 17,000 school districts; 3,500 higher education institutions; and 577 tribal nations.



April
2022

We partner with the Community Innovation and Action Center at the University of Missouri–St. Louis to expand our fiscal mapping work. Through this partnership we launch our state child and youth fiscal mapping cohort to help leaders in 15 states build their capacity to track and analyze their public spending for kids.



February
2021

Wisconsin contracts with us as Children's Funding Project's first **cost modeling** client. The state's cost model measures the true cost of infant and toddler care in the state.



November
2022

Three local communities and one state create new children's funds via ballot measure with our support. Together, these new funds will raise \$200 million annually for youth mental health, early childhood education, child care, and more.

Leveraging American Rescue Plan Dollars to Support Youth in San Antonio

As a backbone agency dedicated to supporting young people in Bexar County, TX, [UP Partnership](#) has spent years compiling data on kids' well-being. By working through cross-sector partnerships, the organization has focused on increasing the county's kindergarten readiness, third grade reading levels, and high school graduation rates, all of which have consistently fallen below state averages. As of 2018, [less than half](#) of the county's students were considered ready for college upon graduating from high school. Leaders from UP Partnership knew this had to change and recognized that looking at the outcome data alone wasn't enough. They also needed to examine funding in the county and the alignment between county funding and the needs of children and youth. In 2019, the team reached out to us at Children's Funding Project for help understanding and coordinating the funding necessary to improve youth outcomes. With our help and support, UP Partnership's advocates ultimately led a successful effort to secure \$24 million in pandemic-relief funding to support youth in Bexar County and City of San Antonio.

Their first step was understanding the amount of funding being allocated to youth programs and services throughout the region at the time. Then they needed estimates about the amount necessary to reach their goals of supporting kids' well-being. Advocates and leaders from UP Partnership worked with us to create a fiscal map to document the federal, state, local, and private dollars supporting young people from cradle to career in Bexar County. The [fiscal map](#) helped local philanthropies and government officials understand the extent of kids' funding in the county, showed the county's existing funding priorities, and highlighted areas where additional funding was needed to impact youth success.

Right after the release of the fiscal map, the COVID-19 pandemic began. The effects of the pandemic, including the closing of child care centers and after-school programs, elevated the sense of urgency to examine and rework funding for children and youth. "The pandemic shifted the stakes in terms of where people were paying the most attention," says Kimberly Sama, chief finance and operations officer of UP Partnership. As a result, in the summer of 2020 UP Partnership spearheaded the creation of the Strategic Funding Alignment Task Force. The goal of the task force was to compile the youth outcomes data collected in previous years and the fiscal

map findings and recommend actions the community could take during the pandemic to improve outcomes for young people. The task force consisted of a cross-sector group of more than 60 community members, government officials, boards of education members, and private funders. At the end of 2020, the group released [Interwoven Futures: Activating Strategic Alignment for Youth Success](#), a report that identified how leaders in the local children and youth field could align existing funding with the programs and services that could address the community's needs, like increasing high school graduation and college readiness rates.

An opportunity to secure additional funding to help close the youth outcome gaps arose when Congress passed the [American Rescue Plan Act](#) in March 2021. UP Partnership again partnered with us to create an [action plan](#) that outlined how city leaders could allocate the \$330 million of American Rescue Plan funds allocated to San Antonio to support youth. The UP Partnership team launched an advocacy campaign to urge the city to take up the recommendations made in its report. As a direct result of their efforts, the San Antonio City Council committed \$10 million for youth programs and \$14 million to youth mental health services.

In 2022, UP Partnership released the [Future Ready Bexar County](#) plan. This strategic plan commits more than 85 community institutions to collaboration and funding to help increase the percentage of Bexar County high school graduates enrolling in a postsecondary degree or credential program to 70% by 2030. These institutions will work together to advocate for positive policy changes, strengthen community resources for youth, and provide financial resources for implementing the plan. "This plan came directly from the fiscal mapping process and equitable recovery work we did with Children's Funding Project," says Sama. "That work provided the building blocks to where we are now."

Currently, all 85 partners are implementing the plan within their own organizations and collaboratively with UP Partnership and their fellow partners via leadership roundtables. An additional, multigenerational decision-making group includes youth members and ensures that all the plan's partners remain accountable for the actions they committed to in the plan.

Photo provided by UP Partnership.

“ This plan came directly from the fiscal mapping process and equitable recovery work we did with Children’s Funding Project. That work provided the building blocks to where we are now. ”

- Kimberly Sama, chief finance and operations officer, UP Partnership

Financing a Youth Master Plan in New Orleans

Like many cities, New Orleans, LA, has hundreds of organizations working to improve the lives of children and youth. Building on past collaborations and input from the city’s youth, city leaders united in 2019 to coordinate the efforts of those organizations, maximize the resources available to support children, and create a unified vision for positive youth development. The resulting [Youth Master Plan](#)—developed by the [New Orleans Mayor’s Office of Youth and Families](#), [New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board](#), and [New Orleans Youth Alliance](#)—outlines a 10-year approach for improving the lives of the city’s children and youth from birth to age 24.

As the city’s leaders embarked on their visioning and strategic planning process, they realized it was essential to understand how money flowed into and through the city to support programs and services for kids. That’s when they partnered with us at Children’s Funding Project from 2019–2020 to develop the city’s first comprehensive child and youth [fiscal map](#).

“We knew before we got too deep in [the Youth Master Plan work] that we needed to navigate the space where funding lived to really explain how our limited investment has yielded limited return,” says Karen Evans, executive director of the New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board. “The fiscal map that Children’s Funding Project built for and with New Orleans helped us understand where the public dollar is being invested for young people and what percentage of that money is in positive youth development versus punitive lanes.”

Once New Orleans’ leaders had identified the city’s existing financial resources, they focused on aligning funding with the priorities identified in the Youth Master Plan. Leaders from the Youth Master Plan partner organizations first estimated the costs associated with the plan’s initial goals and identified potential sources of funding, with our coaching and assistance. Then they advocated for funding from the city’s general fund and [American Rescue Plan](#) allocation to meet the identified needs. The 2023 City of New Orleans Budget allocates nearly \$7.5 million of the city’s American Rescue Plan funds to youth programming, according to Jack Shaevitz, deputy director of policy for the New Orleans Mayor’s Office of Youth and Families. Evans notes that the team’s efforts benefited from the [coaching and strategic public financing](#) resources Children’s Funding Project provided.

“We could enumerate the exact amount [of money] that we needed,” she explains. “We were able to point out the resource that was there, what amount could be pulled out for this cause, and that this cause represents a priority to the young people of the city.”

Since concluding their coaching with us in 2021, New Orleans’ leaders continue to implement the goals and activities of the Youth Master Plan. Additionally, the Office of Youth and Families has completed [two additional iterations](#) of the city’s child and youth fiscal map and plans to update it annually. The city’s annual investments in children and youth have increased from \$40 million in 2020 to \$53 million in 2022. Additionally, in April 2022, city voters approved [a tax levy that will raise up to \\$21 million annually for early childhood education](#). With this new revenue, combined with state matching funds, New Orleans will be able to expand its early childhood education program starting in the 2023–2024 school year.

“The Office of Youth and Families had a great experience working with Children’s Funding Project,” says Shaevitz. “They provided crucial technical assistance to create tools that will shape the way policymakers, nonprofits, and city leaders make decisions that impact vulnerable families for years to come.”

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- Jack Shaevitz, deputy director of policy, New Orleans Mayor’s Office of Youth and Families



Photos provided by the New Orleans Mayor’s Office of Youth and Families.

How Whatcom County Created a Sustainable Funding Source to Support Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children

In 2018, community leaders, activists, and funders in Whatcom County, WA, were examining the most pressing issues in the community. Lack of child care, mental health programs, and stable housing supports persisted as the most critical issues preventing the county's children from having a safe and healthy start in life. However, at the time, almost all county spending focused on crisis management created by the lack of these services, which made it challenging for local leaders to make significant investments in programs to support children and families and prevent these inequitable outcomes.

In response to the lack of sustainable funding, county advocates convened to focus on, among other things, identifying new funding streams to support the county's goals for kids. The group attended Children's Funding Project's first Children's Funding Institute in Denver, CO, in 2019 to learn about possible ways to establish a public funding stream for children and youth.

"From the beginning, Children's Funding Project was by far the most instrumental support in helping Whatcom

County move from theoretical discussions and dreams to taking action and making a campaign for children possible in our community," says Heather Flaherty, executive director of the Chuckanut Health Foundation and one of the key leaders throughout Whatcom's effort. "Without [Children's Funding Project] and the ways they showed us how to turn ideas into community-wide commitments, we would not be able to make the impacts we are poised to make for children and families and the future vibrancy of our county."

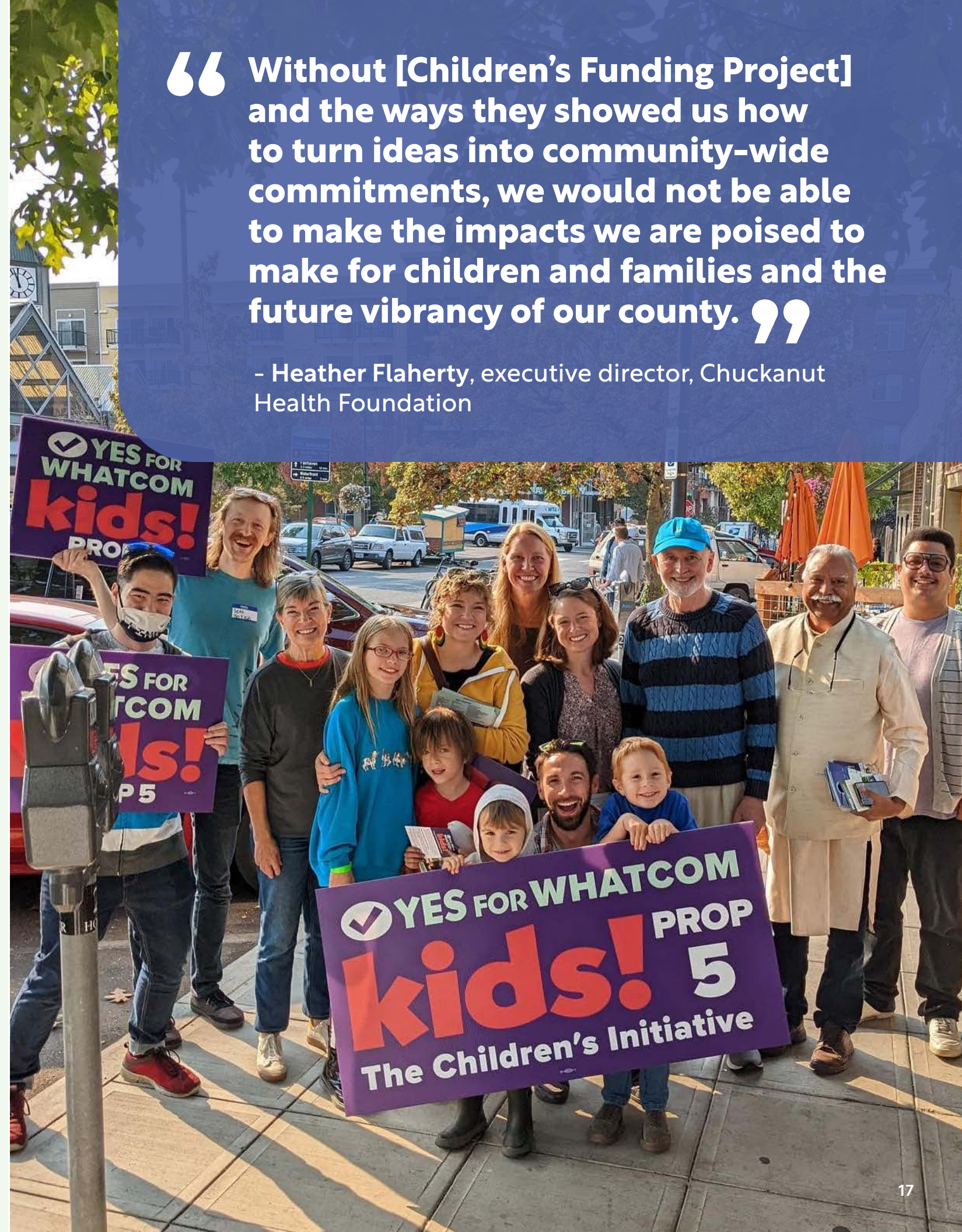
In 2022, advocates established a new Children's Initiative group that began the process of pursuing a ballot measure that would dedicate new property tax revenue to child care, mental health programs, and housing support. The group drafted the potential ordinance with feedback from community leaders and experts and successfully advocated for the Whatcom County Council to place the question on the November 2022 ballot. The Yes for Whatcom Kids campaign launched, focusing on community and voter outreach. Campaign members knocked on thousands of doors to build support for the ballot measure; called and texted potential voters; released digital, radio, and television advertisements; and met with various community, business, and policy groups to win their endorsements.

As members of our children's funding cohort, Whatcom's campaign leaders received ongoing coaching from Children's Funding Project's staff and learned from similar campaign efforts from across the country. "As a group of citizens campaigning for a public funding stream, there were so many things we needed to learn," says Meredith Hayes, a parent, community advocate, and one of the campaign's leaders. "[Children's Funding Project's] toolkits, technical assistance, and willingness to connect us with experts around the country at the drop of a hat were instrumental in getting the Healthy Children's Fund passed in Whatcom County." The Healthy Children's Fund, which Whatcom voters passed in November 2022, will raise an estimated \$10 million annually to fund high-quality affordable child care, mental and behavioral health services, and housing programs for vulnerable infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children. The successful campaign provided advocates in Whatcom the opportunity to secure new dedicated dollars for the county's children.

Photos provided by the Yes for Whatcom Kids campaign.

“ Without [Children's Funding Project] and the ways they showed us how to turn ideas into community-wide commitments, we would not be able to make the impacts we are poised to make for children and families and the future vibrancy of our county. ”

- Heather Flaherty, executive director, Chuckanut Health Foundation



Supporters and Clients

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the following foundations, organizations, and community clients from 2018 to 2022.

Alaska Children's Trust

Alliance for Early Success

Ballmer Group

Baptist Community Ministries

Bipartisan Policy Center

Boston Public Schools

BUILD Initiative/Third Sector New England, Inc.

C.E. and S. Foundation, Inc.

California Community Foundation

Chuckanut Health Foundation

City of Richmond's Office of Children and Families

Cleveland Foundation

Compass Evaluation and Research, Inc.

Early Childhood Investment Corporation

Early Learning Alliance

Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services

First Children's Finance

First Five Nebraska

First Quarter Strategies

Foundation for Louisiana

Grantmakers for Education

Harlem Children's Zone

Harvard Graduate School of Education—The EdRedesign Lab

Heising-Simons Foundation

Howard County Office of Children and Families

Kaua'i Planning & Action Alliance

Los Alamos National Laboratory Foundation

Louisiana Department of Education

Louisiana Policy Institute for Children

Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation

Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board

Minnesota Management and Budget/Minnesota Children's Cabinet

NC State University

Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

New Venture Fund

Nonprofit Montgomery/Montgomery Moving Forward

Northern Illinois University/Center for Early Learning Funding Equity

Oakland Thrives

P16Plus Council of Greater Bexar County

Partners for Education at Berea College

Poughkeepsie Alliance Inc

Poughkeepsie Children's Cabinet

Pritzker Children's Initiative

Read On Arizona

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Rodel Foundation of Delaware

San Francisco State University

Skillman Foundation

SomerPromise

Southside Early Childhood Center

Spartanburg Academic Movement

StriveTogether

The California Endowment

The Children's Cabinet

The Kresge Foundation

The Ohio State University

The Wallace Foundation

United Way of Greater Atlanta

UP Partnership

W. K. Kellogg Foundation

Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers

WhyNot Initiative

Wisconsin Early Childhood Association



Children's Funding Project Board of Directors



Ryan Lugalia-Hollon

Chairperson
Chief Executive Officer,
UP Partnership



Karen Pittman

Vice Chairperson
Founding Partner, Knowledge
to Power Catalysts



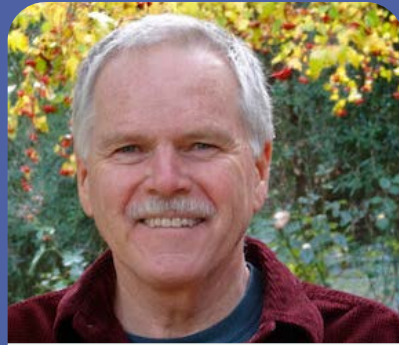
Harriet Dichter

Secretary
Early Childhood Systems/
Strategy Consultant



Vikki Frank

Treasurer
Director, LanierPlace
Strategy



Ed Harrington

Retired City and County
of San Francisco
Controller



Kim Perry

Executive Director, DC
Action for Children



Julie Segovia

Vice President for
Research, Policy, and
Learning, HopeWell, Inc.

These individuals served on our board of directors
as of December 31, 2022.

Call to Action

Join our movement of advocates for children and youth who are shifting from a scarcity mindset to an abundance mindset and securing greater investments in programs and services for kids.



Learn

Read our [Funding Our Kids 101 fact sheets](#), watch our [webinars and videos](#), and explore other [resources](#) to learn how strategic public financing supports services for children and youth. Be sure to [join our mailing list](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) for updates about new tools and resources.

Act

Search our [federal funding streams database](#) to identify federal funding sources that can support your community's goals for infants, toddlers, children, and youth. Then explore examples of [local and state fiscal maps](#) to see how other communities have prioritized funding for kids.



Collaborate

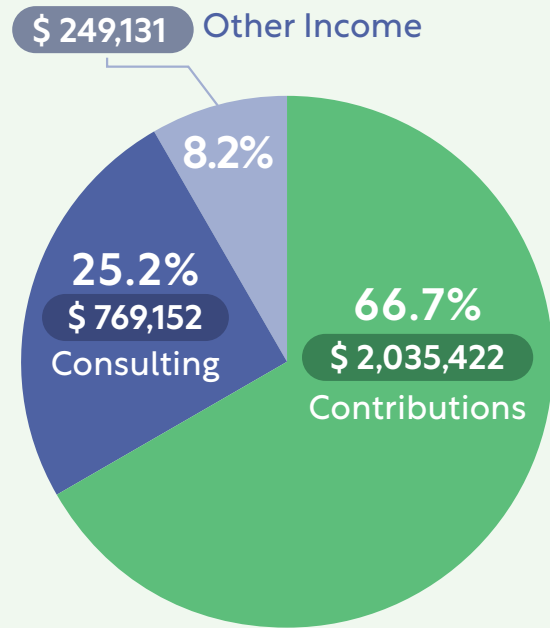
[Contact us](#) to find out how we can help your community leverage strategic public financing to support programs for children and youth.



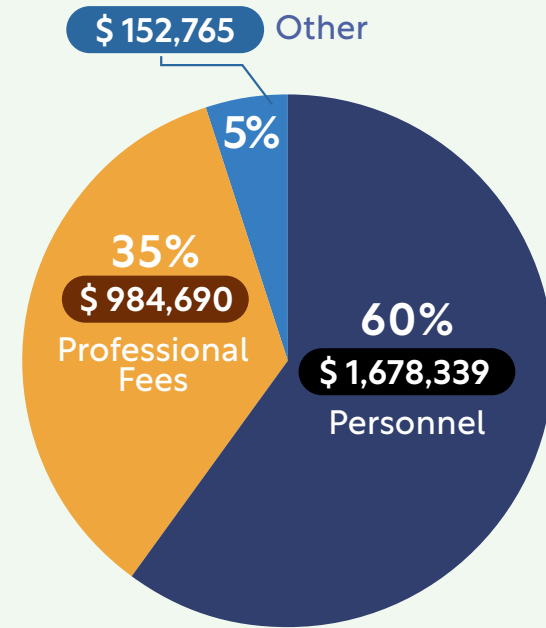
Financials

January 1-December 31, 2022

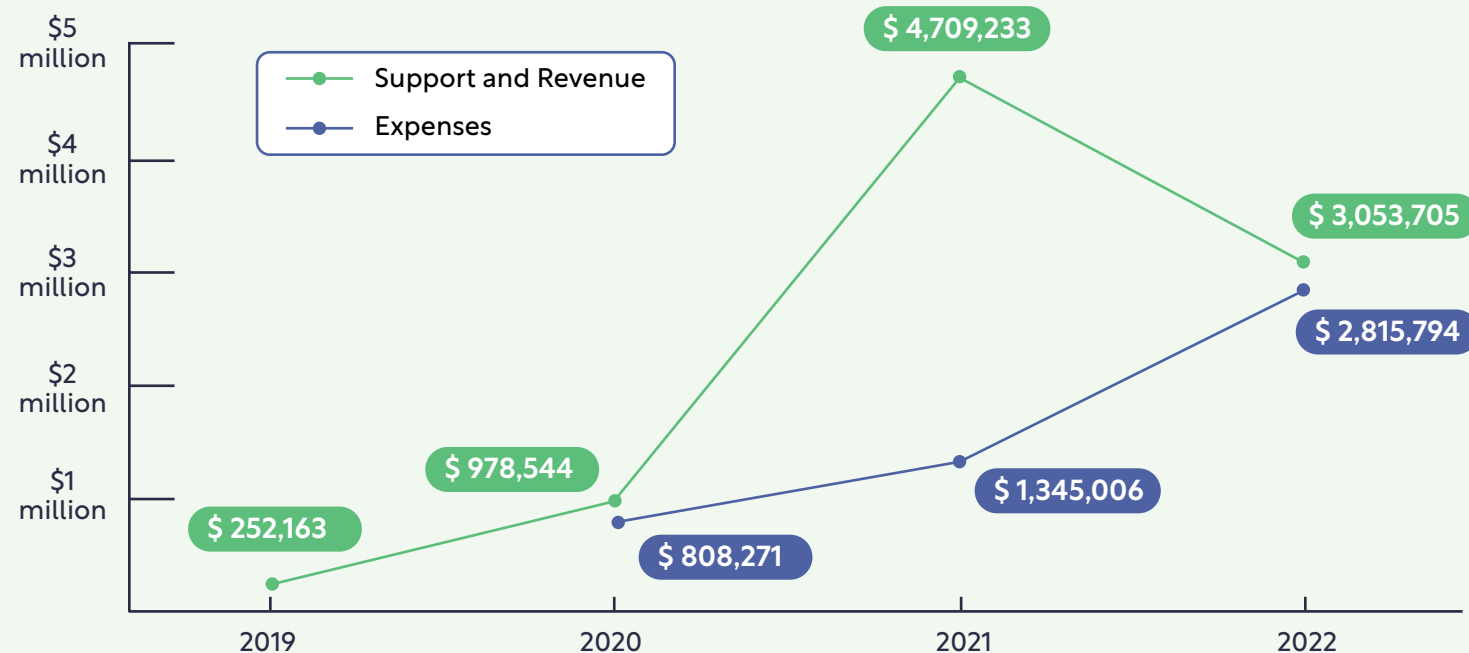
2022 Revenue



2022 Expenses



Revenue and Expenses 2019-2022



To view the complete audit of our 2022 financial activity, visit <https://childrensfundingproject.org/s/Final-Financial-Statements.pdf>

“ There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children. ”

- Nelson Mandela

CHILDREN'S 
FUNDING PROJECT