

Children's Funding Project 2025 Annual Snapshot

Children's Funding Project is a national nonprofit that partners with local communities, Native nations, states, and advocates to secure dedicated public funding for children and youth. We help partners nationwide understand where dollars are flowing, where funding gaps remain, and what's possible when communities align on children's needs.

We believe that lasting national progress begins at the local level. We support local advocates so they are equipped not only to secure resources for children but also to strengthen the broader state and national movement to increase fair and sustainable public investments in children's services.

By collaborating across regions and systems, we promote a future where public funding reflects the nation's resources and our shared responsibility to invest in children and youth.

Read more about our organization's work in the message from our CEO at childrensfundingproject.org/update/reflecting-on-2025.

CHILDREN'S 
FUNDING PROJECT

In 2025, We Made a Difference in

the Face of Widespread Uncertainty

45

communities nationwide received our advice and support as they prepared to pursue local ballot measures to create dedicated public funding streams for children's services.

\$272 million

of new dedicated annual public revenue for children's services was approved by voters in communities we supported.

330

professionals gained the skills, tools, and expertise to influence budgets through our coaching and support.

Our Mission

We help communities and states expand equitable opportunities for children and youth through strategic public financing.

Our Vision

We envision a nation where all children and youth thrive because all communities maintain equitable, coordinated, and sustainable funding for comprehensive programs and services.

We Helped Secure New Public Funding for Children and Youth

Coalition and campaign leaders who participated in our [ballot measure cohort](#) and attended our [Children's Funding Institute](#) secured new funding for child care.

Voters in Garfield, Pitkin, and SW Eagle Counties, CO, created the nation's first Early Childhood Development Service District to improve access to child care in the rural region with **\$12 million annually** in new tax revenue.

Larimer County, CO, voters passed a measure to generate **\$22 million** per year in new tax revenue to reduce the cost of care for children ages 0–5.

Our [community of practice for leaders of voter-approved children's funds](#) empowered communities to sustain and expand access to funding for preschool and out-of-school-time.

Nearly 78% of Seattle, WA, voters approved the [Every Child Ready Levy](#), which will double access to affordable child care slots and increase out-of-school time opportunities through **\$217 million annually in funding over six years**.

Voters in Cincinnati reauthorized the **\$15 million**-per-year property tax that funds [Cincinnati Preschool Promise](#), which supports 3- and 4-year-old pre-K.

Our technical assistance helped advocates establish significant new [state-level funding for early childhood](#).

[Montana](#) created the Montana Early Childhood Account, a dedicated state-level fund that will receive **\$1 million in revenue surplus** from fiscal year 2026.

In Texas, a coalition of advocates helped secure a historic one-time investment of **\$100 million** for early childhood, mitigating the number of families facing loss of care due to rising costs.

Our support and tools contributed to new legislation and policies that increased state investment in early childhood funding.

In [New Hampshire](#), approximately **2,000 additional children and families** gained access to child care subsidies after legislation was passed to expand eligibility and allocate and draw down millions in additional federal and state funds.

Advocates in Connecticut secured **\$300 million** in revenue surplus from fiscal year 2025 to invest in a previously established but unfunded Early Care and Education Fund.

We Trained Leaders and Advocates in Strategic Public Financing

In 2025, **132** communities, **38** states, and **2** Native communities received our technical assistance.

This is what some of that assistance looked like.

Child and youth advocates, policymakers, and funders representing 43 local communities across 17 states **participated in training** at our 2025 Children's Funding Institute.

Local advocates for children and youth representing 24 communities **received tailored coaching, guidance, and training** as part of our ballot measure cohort, which is designed to build the foundational skills and knowledge to drive action toward successful voter-approved children's fund campaigns.

Communities across 12 states **participated in peer-to-peer learning opportunities and ongoing implementation support** through our voter-approved children's fund community of practice.

Arkansas, Hawaii, Maryland, Ohio, and Wisconsin **joined us as state fiscal mapping partners**, bringing the total number of states in our fiscal map database to 22.

States completing our first national cost modeling cohort **created cost models** that represent the true cost of child care with adequate compensation for the early childhood workforce.

States and communities **received research and coaching** on potential sources of additional funding.

Communities across seven states **built strategic public financing expertise** by hiring children's funding coordinators who received individualized coaching and training in fiscal mapping, cost modeling, and sourcing additional funding.

We Empowered a Movement of Funding Advocates

Groundbreaking Work to Connect Federal Funding to Treaty Obligations

We conducted a comprehensive analysis tracing federal funding streams back to their original treaty obligations, revealing how long-standing commitments to Native nations remain embedded, though often obscured, in modern reporting systems. By cross-verifying data from separate reporting systems, we mapped treaty-related programs and quantified the funding Tribes receive annually, creating new transparency and reframing these dollars as matters of treaty rights rather than discretionary support. This precedent-setting work equips Tribes with clearer fiscal insight and strengthens advocacy for the resources owed them, ensuring that future generations understand how federal dollars connect to their ancestors' sacrifices and agreements.

Building Infrastructure and Capacity in Maryland

The Maryland Governor's Office for Children joined our state child and youth fiscal mapping cohort to develop two comprehensive fiscal mapping tools. One is a statewide tool that incorporates federal and state investments, while the other consists of local tools for each of Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City, covering federal, state, and local funding. As part of this effort, a total of 50 staff members from all 24 county local management boards in the state received training in data collection and verification to support statewide fiscal mapping. This project makes Maryland the first state in the nation to create a comprehensive fiscal map that includes both state-level funding and all local municipality funding. These fiscal mapping tools will help the Maryland government and communities partner more effectively and give community leaders the information they need to drive community-led solutions and foster lasting change.

Responding to Federal Funding Cuts

During a year when federal funding for kids faced multiple threats, we equipped advocates with essential analyses to navigate the uncertainty. We helped make sense during three pivotal moments:

- [Threats to After-School Funding](#)
- [Federal Budget Bill Cuts](#)
- [Federal Government Shutdown](#)

Preparing for Social Media Payouts

Children's Funding Project leads a coalition, called Fund IRL, that is working to make sure legal settlements or other payouts from social media lawsuits—meant to address harms to youth mental health and safety—are invested in programs that help children and youth thrive. The coalition unites young people and the people who care about them to turn the harms of social media into “in real life” (IRL) opportunities where young people can build skills, make friends, and grow, whether that's through after-school and summer programs, arts, sports, outdoor experiences, library programs or other positive youth development opportunities.

What Partners Said About Our Work



“This experience was exceptionally well-designed and aligned seamlessly with our current stage of work. Breakout sessions were diverse and our team was able to divide and conquer. Attending as a team allowed us to deepen our collective understanding of sustainable public financing strategies and clarify the steps needed to move our initiative forward. The content of the Institute, paired with a fresh rereading of the Buell Foundation’s Local Financing Toolkit, felt like unlocking new insight. Concepts that previously felt abstract came into focus, and we returned with a clearer roadmap for success. It was as though we were reading the toolkit with new eyes—equipped with practical context, examples, and peer-tested strategies.”

—Meg Franges, Executive Director of First Impressions Routt County

“Thank you all so much for your help in getting us here! You are truly making the biggest difference across the country, and I am deeply grateful for your work and your belief in our campaign!! Your assistance in helping us (and our consultants) understand the voter appetite/landscape in other communities was very helpful when we were undecided if we should go in 2025. Also your steadfast support and willingness to take a big swing with no expectation of a win—that was HUGE in getting our consultants on board. They had to significantly shift their risk threshold to move forward this year, and that was in large part due to your data, resources and support.”

—Christina Taylor, CEO, Early Childhood Council of Larimer County

“I am grateful for each of you and your commitment to children, youth and families, as you tirelessly work to influence for more, dedicated and sustainable funding and policies that work on their behalf. Your work has a rippling impact on their safety, health, education, well-being and beyond.”

—Brittany Anuskiewicz, strategic public financing coordinator, Montgomery County Children’s Opportunity Alliance

“Our work with the Children’s Funding project made a significant difference in standing out for this grant. We were able to share our out-of-school {time} cost model for grades pre-K-5 along with how we leveraged the research and related insights to influence the local school district to add \$1.8M to the general fund, approved by voters, to make extended learning time permanently available, despite loss of state and reduced federal dollars, while additionally increasing from 3 to 5 days per week. Your selection of Poughkeepsie for funding to hire a children’s funding coordinator, and the hands on technical assistance and training, made a huge difference in our competitiveness.”

—Jill Gomez, CEO, Poughkeepsie Children’s Cabinet



You Asked, We're Answering – Some of What's Coming in 2026

Needs You Identified

How We're Responding

Fiscal maps for your states and communities

We're updating our existing state fiscal maps to current data, adding new states (to reach all 50 states by 2028), and launching an online course to help localities add city and county data to their state fiscal maps.

Help translating and applying fiscal map data for advocacy in your state

We're making our state fiscal maps more user-friendly and accessible, conducting focused analyses using the cradle-to-career data, and collecting stories about how advocates are using their fiscal maps to create change.

Support communicating complex cost modeling data to decision-makers

We're building data visualization tools to help transform cost data into compelling visual stories and we're expanding our cost analysis services to include forecasting and return on investment analyses.

Tools for understanding the changing funding landscape

We're enhancing our federal funding database to track federal funding and policy changes affecting children's funding since January 2025, and translating this information into rapid, digestible communications for advocates.

Help finding new funding to fill gaps

We're building supports and services around a wide range of emerging funding sources.

Increased capacity for strategic public financing in your community

We're coaching additional local children's funding coordinators, releasing online courses, and starting a strategic public financing cohort for communities.

Support applying strategic public financing in a Tribal context

We're developing a Strategic Public Financing 101 for Native nations, expanding capacity for Tribes to lead their own fiscal mapping, and finalizing a Tribal Fiscal Data Sharing Agreement template for local and federal partners.

To read past impact reports and see our progress toward our current impact goals, visit our [impact page](#).

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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.



[childrensfundingproject.org](https://www.childrensfundingproject.org)



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