

# Children's Defense Fund

## 40+ Years of Vigilance

March 2018



Since 1973, the Children's Defense Fund has convened and participated in many coalitions and worked with numerous organizations, policymakers and community networks to help build bipartisan support in enacting laws and policies that have helped millions of children escape poverty and receive needed health care, nutrition, Head Start and Early Head Start, child care, education, special education, family support services, adoption assistance, protections for children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and protection from gun violence. Children do not come in pieces and need a comprehensive quality continuum of care from birth to adulthood. Through careful research, public education, policy development, implementation and monitoring, and grassroots organizing we have tried to help build a national house, where every child is healthy, safe and educated, room by room.

### Effects of Over 40 Years of Vigilance and Coalition Work

- **1974**  
***Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act***  
***Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act***  
***Buckley Amendment to Protect Privacy of School Records***
- **1975**  
***Education for All Handicapped Children Act***
- **1980**  
***Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act***
- **1981**  
Expansion of ***Child Care Tax Credit***
- **1982**  
***Medicaid*** extends coverage to children with disabilities requiring institutional care but living at home
- **1984**  
***Medicaid*** expansion requires coverage for all children under age five and first time pregnant women who meet Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) eligibility standards  
***Child Support Enforcement Amendments***
- **1985**  
***Medicaid*** expansion reaches all pregnant women who meet AFDC eligibility standards
- **1986**  
***Medicaid*** expansion gives states the option to cover pregnant women and young children in families with low income  
Expansion of ***Earned Income Tax Credit***  
***Foster Care Independent Living Program***
- **1987**  
***Medicaid*** expansion gives states the option to cover pregnant women and children under age one in families with incomes up to 185 percent of federal poverty level  
Expansion of ***Earned Income Tax Credit***

- **1988**  
**Medicaid** expansion requires states to phase in coverage for all pregnant women and infants in families at or below 100 percent of federal poverty level  
**Family Support Act** provides additional federal support for state education, training and employment efforts for AFDC families and guaranteed child care for participating parents  
Expansion of **Fair Housing Act** prohibits discrimination against families with children and pregnant women
- **1989**  
**Medicaid** expansion requires coverage for pregnant women and children under age six in families with income at or below 133 percent of federal poverty level  
Expansion of **Medicaid Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment Program** covers additional diagnostic and treatment services for children
- **1990**  
**Act for Better Child Care** establishes the Child Care and Development Block Grant  
**Medicaid** expansion phases in coverage of children ages six through eighteen in families with incomes at or below 100 percent of federal poverty level  
Expansion of **Earned Income Tax Credit**  
**Americans with Disabilities Act**  
**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act** strengthens and renames the **Education for All Handicapped Children Act**
- **1992**  
**Children's Mental Health Services Program**  
**Family Unification Program** provides housing vouchers to help children return home or avoid placement in foster care
- **1993**  
**Vaccines for Children Program**  
Expansion of **Earned Income Tax Credit**  
**Family Preservation and Support Services Program**  
**Family and Medical Leave Act**
- **1994**  
Reauthorizes and improves quality of **Head Start**  
**Child Welfare Demonstration Waiver Program**
- **1996**  
Strengthens **Child Support Enforcement Programs** with improved enforcement tools
- **1997**  
**State Children's Health Insurance Program** allows states to cover children in families with incomes below 200 percent of federal poverty level  
**Adoption and Safe Families Act**
- **1998**  
**Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act** adds protections for minority children
- **1999**  
**Foster Care Independence Act**
- **2001**  
Expands and makes **Child Tax Credit** partially refundable  
**Earned Income Tax Credit** becomes refundable  
**Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit** expands  
**Family Unification Program** expands to 18-year-olds aging out of foster care

- **2002**  
**Food Stamp Reauthorization Act** is strengthened for families  
**Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments** provide education and training vouchers to youths aging out of foster care  
**Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act** protects against confinement of juveniles with adults
- **2003**  
**Adoption Promotion Act** increases incentives for adoption of older children in foster care
- **2004**  
Strengthens **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**
- **2006**  
**Child and Family Services Improvement Act** strengthens and targets funds for rehabilitation of methamphetamine and other drug abuse
- **2007**  
**Head Start Program** continues with quality improvements and **Early Head Start** expands  
**College Cost Reduction and Access Act** increases Pell Grants and redirects federal funds from student loan firms to aid to students and college graduates
- **2008**  
**Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act**  
**Second Chance Act** assists incarcerated juveniles and adults returning home  
**Mental Health Parity** eliminates discrimination in the treatment of children and adults
- **2009**  
**Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization Act**  
**The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act** makes new investments in early childhood, education, nutrition, Medicaid, employment and training, and other programs and tax credits including earned income and child tax credits
- **2010**  
**Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act** covers 32 million uninsured Americans and 95 percent of all children with health coverage and includes the **Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program**  
**Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act**
- **2011**  
**Child Welfare Services Improvement and Innovation Act**
- **2013**  
**Uninterrupted Scholars Act** assists child welfare agencies to access educational records to promote educational stability and success for children in foster care
- **2014**  
**Child Care and Development Block Grant Act** reauthorizes child care subsidies for low-income working families and improves the health, safety and quality of child care  
**Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act** promotes better outcomes for children in foster care and prevents them from being victims of sex trafficking
- **2015**  
**Children's Health Insurance Program** and **Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program** extended for two years  
**Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit** and **American Opportunity Tax Credit** improvements made permanent  
**Every Student Succeeds Act** reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, with new protections for students in foster care and homeless students

- **2018**

***Family First Prevention Services Act*** helps keep children at imminent risk of foster care safely with their families and, if foster care becomes necessary, promotes the children's placement in family foster care or a qualified residential treatment program appropriate to their special needs

***Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)*** funding extended for 10 years

***Child Care and Development Block Grant*** funding increased by \$5.6 billion over two years to improve the quality of and access to child care

***Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program*** funding extended for five years