



Advocates for Children and Youth improves the lives and experiences of Maryland's children and youth by advancing policies and programs across multiple issue areas that tackle racial disparities and improve outcomes to ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Legislative Priorities for 2019

Birth to Three Strategic Initiative

- Authorize counties to create local maternal mortality review teams to better prevent maternal deaths and reduce racial disparities for black mothers.
- Ensure adequate and equitable funding for early childhood programs including Maryland's **Thrive by Three** fund for care coordination.

Child Welfare

- Advocate for funding in the Governor's FY 2020 budget to implement the Ending Youth Homelessness Act.
- Establish stronger employment criteria for prospective school employees in an effort to prevent child sexual abuse.
- Create a right to shelter for unaccompanied homeless youth under 18, including a right to contract for housing if not emancipated.

Education

- Advocate for adequate and equitable funding for Maryland public schools with a specific focus on ensuring that funding for education prioritizes racial equity.
- Support legislation that promotes fair discipline practices in schools, and advocate against expanding the police presence in schools.
- Support legislation that creates trauma-informed schools in an effort to maximize student success.

Health

- Monitor and support state efforts to fix or backfill federal programs including the ACA and CHIP.
- Increase funding for school based health centers to provide care for youth in their communities.

Youth Justice

- Ensure the automatic expungement of adult charges for youth when their crimes are waived to juvenile court.
- Shield the names and personal information of youth charged as adults.
- Support youth justice reforms that include the reduction of racial disparities and prioritizes racial equity in its approach and implementation

Economic Sufficiency

- Advocate for full funding for critical programs such as Maryland Meals for Achievement, alternative breakfast programs and meals for after school programming that ensure no student is hungry at school. Support efforts to expand meal programs to the summer months.
- Establish a parental and family leave program available to all employees in Maryland.

Holistic Reforms

- Fully fund the state matching grant program for local governments and nonprofits to engage in **Get Out the Count** efforts in the 2020 census.

- Require a robust race equity analysis for proposed legislation and regulations, to help close the disparities in outcomes for children of color across Maryland.