



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 Review for 2019

Birth to Three Strategic Initiative

- **PASSED** – SB602/HB796: Authorize counties to create local maternal mortality review teams to better prevent maternal deaths and reduce racial disparities for black mothers.
- **PASSED** – SB 356/HB 583: Require the State Maternal Mortality Review Program to include data on racial disparities in their annual report.
- **PASSED** – SB406/HB520: Mandate an annual \$100,000 appropriation for care coordination for young children and their families.

Child Welfare

- **PASSED** – SB1043: Ensure Maryland is ready to opt into the federal Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), making Maryland eligible to receive critical funding for foster youth with a focus on improving residential facilities.
- **PASSED** – SB125/HB100: Include \$500,000 in the FY2020 budget for homeless youth that must be spent to implement the Ending Youth Homelessness Act.
- **PASSED** – SB541/HB486: Establish stronger employment criteria for prospective school employees in an effort to prevent child sexual abuse.
- **PASSED** – HB911: Create a workgroup to study the right to shelter and supportive services for unaccompanied minors. The workgroup is tasked with identifying the unique needs of unaccompanied homeless youth and identifying barriers, resources, and solutions to better serve those needs. ACY will continue our work as a member of the workgroup.

Education

- **PASSED** – The legislature moved critical school funding bills, although more work remains to ensure adequate, equitable funding for **all** students:
 - SB1030: The Blueprint for Maryland's Future allocates hundreds of millions in new funding to local school systems to begin implementing the recommendations of the Kirwan Commission
 - SB661: Defines Community Schools in Maryland; details the baseline components of and process for establishing a Community School.
- **PASSED** – Progress was made advancing fair discipline practices and reducing police presence in schools:
 - HB725: Requires MSDE to provide training and technical assistance to county boards of education regarding the use of restorative approaches to school discipline, defines the purpose of restorative approaches as preventive and proactive, and defines that disciplinary measures should be rehabilitative, restorative, and educational.
 - HB704: Ensure that school discipline and Department of Juvenile Services data be included in the Maryland Longitudinal Data System.
 - Successfully blocked efforts to arm school police or school resource officers. **(HB31, HB1373, SB884)**

- **WORK CONTINUES** – More work is needed to create schools that are trauma-informed, fully utilize restorative practices, and adequately track disparity gaps school discipline:
 - HB1229: Establish the Restorative Schools Fund with \$3 million to support the implementation of restorative practices.
 - HB950: Require MSDE to collect and publicly report school discipline data with a more stringent definition of disproportional suspensions by subgroup.
 - HB439: Prevent School Resource Officer involvement in routine school discipline.
 - SB223/HB256: Require MSDE to develop trauma-informed guidelines so county boards of education can more effectively implement trauma-informed approaches.

Health

- **PASSED** – Ensure children have access to quality health care and are protected from known toxic substances:
 - SB802/HB814: Preserve affordable health care in Maryland by creating a Maryland health insurance option.
 - SB759/HB768: Protect Marylanders from unnecessarily high costs for prescription drugs.
 - HB1233: Ensure greater protections for children exposed to lead paint by lowering the thresholds for action and expanding who is notified of exposure.
 - SB895/HB1169: Raise the age to access tobacco products, including related products such as vaping and juuling, to 21.
- **WORK CONTINUES** – More work remains to improve access to health care for youth, including expanding dental care and school based health centers:
 - SB431/HB309: Create a task force to study barriers to access to dental care and report on policy solutions.
 - HB681: Increase funding for school based health centers to provide care for youth in their communities.

Youth Justice

- **PASSED** – SB856/HB606: Create a Youth Justice Reform Council to recommend policy reforms to improve outcomes for youth involved in the justice system.
- **PASSED** – HB659: Protect very young children who are charged with juvenile offenses by limiting the State’s ability to place them in prison-like detention
- **WORK CONTINUES** – Bills to ensure youth initially charged as adults but tried as juveniles are not permanently branded by those adult charges nearly passed this session but did not make it across the finish line in time:
 - SB833/HB977: Ensure the automatic expungement of adult charges for youth when their crimes are waived to juvenile court.
 - SB452/HB11: Shield the names and personal information of youth charged as adults.
- **WORK CONTINUES** – Key reforms to rehabilitate youth and close disparity gaps in our justice system did not advance this year:
 - SB899/HB581: Ensure young people have a limited, purposeful juvenile probation that is consistent with their rehabilitative needs.
 - SB401/HB495: Provide an additional opportunity for young people to have their cases informally adjusted by the court, at the request of any party.
 - HB1016: Require a robust race equity analysis for proposed legislation and regulations, to help close the disparities in outcomes for children of color across Maryland.

Economic Sufficiency

- **PASSED** – SB218/HB338: Expand funding into the holiday months for families of children who would have had meals provided at school.
- **PASSED** – SB125/HB100: Fully fund the state matching grant program for local governments and nonprofits to engage in *Get Out the Count* efforts in the 2020 census. Although the funding has been provided, the real work must now begin as local jurisdictions and the state prepare to #CountAllKids in 2020.
- **WORK CONTINUES** – SB500/HB341: Establish a paid leave program to provide new parents, or other caregivers, time to care.