

Children, Families, and Communities Program

Children's Health Strategy Brief

The Children, Families, and Communities Program strives to ensure that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Our grantmaking strategies address two interrelated and fundamental needs that must be met for children to thrive: health and education. The Children's Health strategy work began in 2003 with the goal to ensure that all children receive appropriate health care by creating nationwide systems to provide access to health insurance for all children. While much progress has been made, the Foundation continues to work actively on strong implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that secures health insurance coverage for children and their families in ways that expand families' access to quality health care; and develops strong linkages between child health, development, and early learning experiences.

The Challenge

The foundation for a child's health, development, and well-being is set in the early years and then shaped in subsequent years through access to age appropriate, quality health care, and other services. Covering parents with health insurance also makes it more likely that their children are insured, receive preventive services, and have continuity of care in their formative years.

While health insurance coverage is crucial for families seeking appropriate care, the ACA and states' progress in early learning also opens the door in connecting parents, caregivers, health and early learning providers, and other social services to ensure children are meeting health and developmental milestones – key precursors to children's early learning experiences.

Our Strategy

Our children's health strategy builds upon the last decade of progress in covering children and families. We will continue to invest in our state-to-state to national *Insuring America's Children: States Leading the Way (IAC)* strategy that focuses on building policy and communications capacity, leadership development, and implementing innovative and workable access solutions for children and families.

We aim to secure at least 95% coverage for the nation's children and improve access to quality health care for three million children and eight million parents by:

- Building and sustaining state-based organizations to expand coverage for children and their parents and ensure implementation of the ACA meets the needs of children and families.
- Expanding networked capacity between national and state organizations focused on ACA implementation.
- Tracking and investing in emerging innovation and transformative solutions that improve access to and coordination of services for children and families.

As the ACA is being implemented, we will also actively explore and identify state and/or local policies, systems, and programs that connect health, development, and early learning services. We will continue fostering collaboration among public, philanthropic, community-based, and private sector partners to work toward these goals.

Our Approach

Policy Advocacy

We seek to support advocacy, consumer and parent engagement, and strategic communications around children's coverage and families' access to care at the state and local levels.

Technical Assistance

We will continue to provide policy and communication support and strategic counsel to each of our state grantees, and also inform, seed, and support improvements in child and family coverage and access to care in other states and at the federal level.

We will also provide policy and peer-to-peer technical assistance to state child health program administrators and policymakers in states that are working to improve existing programs for children and families.

Continuous Improvement and Learning

With implementation varying in states, we will engage in a multi-state monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan to measure what's working or not working as implementation activity unfolds. We will capture information and insights from key state implementers and grantees, and create feedback loops to help facilitate continuous systems and program improvements.

Cross-System Linkages

We will also work to foster engagement between state-level health and early learning systems, providing technical assistance on ways for states and localities to link both systems, and support mechanisms for knowledge diffusion.

Where We Work

Our work spans the federal and state levels, including additional investments to support ACA implementation for California's children and families.

We may also consider some locally-based solutions that demonstrate best practices as well as organizations that seek to improve child and family health, as appropriate.

Goals

Our work in children's health will ensure that:

- States, including the eleven in the IAC strategy, make strong, measurable progress in children's coverage and families' access to care under the ACA, including development of effective policies and programs for children and families.
- Federal financing for Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and other aspects of the ACA are protected.
- Market and program innovations are catalyzed and evaluated to increase access to quality health care for children and families.
- New models of care coordination and systems linkages are documented, evaluated, and where determined effective, disseminated at the state and national levels.

What We Don't Fund

The Foundation does not fund projects that influence specific legislation or ballot measures. We also typically do not fund direct service programs (i.e., community health centers or hospitals) or research unrelated to specific needs identified by program staff in consultation with grantees in the field.

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation is a private foundation. We accept grant proposals only for charitable, educational, or scientific purposes, primarily from tax-exempt, charitable organizations. We do not provide funding for projects that benefit specific individuals or that serve religious purposes.

To Learn More

We encourage you to carefully review the guidelines and geographic limitations for your area of interest. To find information about current and previous grants, visit our [Grant Database](#).