



## 2017 Policy Agenda

### **End the Unfair Prosecution of Youth as Adults for Minor Crimes**

NC Child supports the recommendation of the NC Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice to “raise the age” of juvenile jurisdiction from 16- to 18-years-old with noted exceptions. This will improve public safety, save the state money, and help young people have a brighter and more productive future.

### **Protecting Health Coverage for Children**

North Carolina’s health insurance rate for children has hit an all-time high with 96% insured. NC Child supports improving access to high quality health services for children. Specifically, NC Child:

- Supports an implementation strategy for the 1115 waiver to ensure that children and pregnant women continue to have access to critical preventative care and care management services;
- Opposes changes at the federal level that would have a negative impact on children’s health insurance coverage, including the block granting of Medicaid and repealing the ACA without simultaneously passing a suitable replacement.

### **Prevent Youth Suicide\***

NC Child supports increasing our efforts to prevent the growing problem of youth suicide by strengthening the ability of schools to identify dangerous situations and to intervene effectively. Specifically, we support:

- Mandatory suicide prevention training for school staff;
- Increasing access to school nurses who are often on the “front lines” with crisis situations;
- Adding a School Social Work Consultant position to the Department of Public Instruction; and
- Staffing for an interagency suicide prevention team.

### **Reduce Infant Mortality\***

North Carolina’s infant mortality rates are stagnant after two decades of steady progress. NC Child supports efforts to ensure perinatal and infant health, including funding for:

- The Infant Safe Sleep Program;
- The Text4Baby mobile application; and
- The You Quit Two Quit Perinatal Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program.

### **Increase Investment in North Carolina’s Early Childhood Education System**

The 2,000 days between the time child is born and enters kindergarten is when his or her brain architecture is forming, creating the foundation for all future learning. Because high quality early care and education help children achieve greater success in school and in life, NC Child supports:

- Additional investments in child care subsidies and NC Pre-K in order to reduce waiting lists; and
- Increasing early educator standards and pay to ensure a high quality workforce.

### **Improve the North Carolina Child Welfare System**

North Carolina’s child welfare system faces major challenges in keeping children safe and helping them recover from trauma. NC Child supports legislation to address multiple systemic shortcomings in the child welfare system, including:

- The lack of accurate, statewide data;
- Inadequate training, excessive caseloads, and high turnover for child welfare workers; and
- The lack of standardized practice across counties.

*\*Child Fatality Task Force Legislative Agenda Item*