



2019 Legislative Agenda

Expand Access to Affordable Health Insurance

More than 200,000 North Carolinians cannot see a doctor when they need one, because they earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, but too little to qualify for federal support to purchase private health insurance. This puts a strain on families and our economy. Children thrive when their parents and caregivers are healthy. That's why NC Child supports using available federal funding to expand access to affordable, quality health insurance for parents and other North Carolinians.

Early Childhood Education

Access to strong early childhood programs is critical for North Carolina's working families. It provides children with the social and emotional skills they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn. It also provides parents with the ability to keep their jobs. Voters across the political spectrum overwhelmingly support increased access to high-quality early childhood education programs. NC Child recommends increasing funding for child care subsidies to expand access to high-quality, affordable child care.

'Raise the Age' Funding

In 2017, lawmakers passed historic 'Raise the Age' legislation to keep communities safer, keep kids out of adult jails, and help youth get their lives back on track when they get caught up in the justice system. In 2019, lawmakers must allocate sufficient funding as recommended by the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee to implement this law. This includes funding for community programs, DPS staff positions, court staff, and operating costs.

Census Funding

More than \$16 billion in federal funding depends on an accurate census count in North Carolina. Those funds are used for core programs including roads, first responders, school lunch, foster care, early education, and a host of other valuable programs. Unfortunately, 73,000 North Carolina children are in 'hard-to-count' neighborhoods, which means that they could fall through the cracks without a state-level strategy. NC Child recommends that legislators allocate funding for 2020 Census outreach activities, and to ensure that all children are counted.

Suicide Prevention

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth between the ages of 10 and 17 in North Carolina. According to the 2017 North Carolina Youth Risk Behavior survey, nearly 1 in 12 North Carolina high school students surveyed reported attempting suicide - and that number is 1 in 4 among lesbian, gay, and bisexual students. Yet suicide is preventable. North Carolina can equip public and charter school educators in the fight against suicide by guaranteeing K-12 educators get evidence-informed training on suicide prevention.