

## How Local Governments Can Use ARPA Funds to Support Children & Families

### School-based Mental Health

Few school systems in North Carolina have the funding they need for adequate levels of school social workers, nurses, counselors, and psychologists. These important school professionals can help our children get the mental health support they need. While ARPA funds are “one time” funds, this funding can be used to jump start an expansion of school personnel, and pay for the first 2-3 years for new positions.

**DECISION-MAKERS:** County Commissioners and school board members.

### Community Education / Navigators

While the expanded federal Child Tax Credit is a game-changer for millions, there are thousands of NC families who are eligible but are not receiving these funds because they do not typically file taxes.

In addition, thousands of renters are eligible for emergency rental & utilities assistance to prevent eviction, but are not yet receiving aid. Only about 16% of North Carolina's COVID-related emergency rental funds have been utilized as of August 1, 2021.

Cities and counties can use ARPA funds to make sure low-income residents know about these assistance programs. Temporary outreach workers can reach targeted communities with higher concentrations of very low-income families, similar similar to the model used for Census outreach.

**DECISION-MAKERS:** County commissioners and city council members.

### Hazard Pay & Wage Supplements for Child Care Workers

Child care workers are underpaid, with average wages of less than \$12/hour. Low wages are one of the primary factors driving the shortage in child care workers in our state – which in turn makes child care harder for everyone to find and afford. While the state is providing stabilization grants to help keep child care centers open, local governments can help by making funds available for hazard pay or other wage supplements for local child care workers. Boosting wages can help overcome the shortage of teachers in child care & early education.

**DECISION-MAKERS:** City council members, county commissioners

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#### For more information

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## Affordable Housing

One-time ARPA funds can boost local efforts to fight homelessness. ARPA funds could be used to purchase land, fund construction, supplement ongoing affordable housing programs, or hire additional staff to administer programs.

**DECISION-MAKERS:** City Council members, county commissioners, potentially school boards.

## Safe Housing

Healthy homes projects address environmental hazards in homes of families with low incomes and/or young children in the home. Local ARPA funds can be used for projects that can include removing lead-based paint, mold, asbestos, and more.

**DECISION-MAKERS:** County commissioners, city council members.

Find more resources to help you advocate for ARPA funding with your local government: [ncchild.org/arpa](https://ncchild.org/arpa)