

Annual REPORT

20
24

Building blocks to a better North Carolina.





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A LETTER FROM *Our Team*



Dear child advocates,

It's our mission to advocate for policies that improve the lives of all North Carolina children. This means that we will continue to work towards solutions that strengthen Medicaid services and whole-health outcomes for children and families. It means that we are addressing early childhood education and the youth mental health crisis, while actively campaigning for interventions that help strengthen family economic security.

We are doing this by engaging with advocates and leaders in all 100 counties across North Carolina, conducting research on key issues, and collaborating with lawmakers and decision-makers to ensure that policies that improve child health and well-being cross the finish line. In 2024, we launched the first statewide cohort of our Youth Advocacy Council, added two additional hubs to our Child Advocacy Network, and we co-hosted the inaugural State of the Child Summit. **We couldn't be prouder of our work this year, and we can't wait for you to read more about it in this report.**

And as proud as we are, there's still work to be done.

We know that 41% of North Carolina children live in low-income households; the majority of our third graders aren't reading at grade level; and 18% of our high school students have seriously considered suicide in the last year. **We can change this.**

We are committed to building a North Carolina where every child can grow up to reach their full potential – and it's because of the dedication of our staff, the strategic leadership of our Board of Directors, our partnerships across the state, and your support that our mission has never been more achievable than it is right now.

With your continued support, we will make North Carolina the best state to live in for children and families.

Yours in service,



PATRICIA BEIER
Current Board Chair



MANJU KARKARE
Incoming Board Chair



ERICA PALMER SMITH
Executive Director





Child Health

We recognize that physical health, mental health, oral health, and social and environmental health all play a part in the overall health and well-being of children—and our team leads initiatives aimed at substantively addressing each of these areas.

ORAL HEALTH ACCESS

In North Carolina, all 100 counties have been designated as Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas, meaning many residents struggle to access oral health care.

1 IN 5 KINDERGARTENERS HAVE UNTREATED TOOTH DECAY

2024 Listening Tour

We traveled to 20 counties across North Carolina, meeting with parents, dental providers, county health departments, and other health practitioners to gain insight into challenges to oral health access and delivery.

Happy, Healthy Smiles

The report includes stories and data collected by members of NC Child's Parent Advisory Council and is a reference guide for policymakers, clinicians, and funders interested in improving systems of care to address pediatric oral health.

THE EARLYWELL INITIATIVE

Formed in partnership with the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF), our EarlyWell Initiative works with parents, families, health practitioners, community organizations, and decision makers to advance public policies that improve the landscape around infant and child mental health in North Carolina.

Family Leaders

This year, we expanded our parent and caregiver-led team to share their lived experiences and provide insight and feedback on policy proposals and action steps.



and Well-Being



MEDICAID ADVOCACY

Thanks to Medicaid Expansion, more than 500,000 adults in North Carolina now have access to care, changing the lives of thousands of their children for the better.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

We partner with parents and caregivers from across the state whose children rely on Medicaid for their health care. PAC members work with Medicaid administrators and other public health officials and administrators to advocate for solutions to improve health outcomes for children.



Youth Mental

In North Carolina, 39% of high school students and 32% of middle school students report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. Among youth ages 10 to 18, suicide is the second leading cause of death.

“In the past few weeks, students have filled classrooms all across North Carolina...despite the excitement for the year ahead, there is one giant elephant in the room: youth mental health. While this isn’t a new issue, its prevalence has only grown in past years. More young people are experiencing anxiety, depression, and stress—all exacerbated by the lasting impacts of the global pandemic, unrealistic standards set by social media, and political division.”

-Ayse Ermis, Youth Advocacy Council Member

YOUTH ADVOCACY COUNCIL

This year, NC Child relaunched our Youth Advocacy Council (YAC) with the specific aim of engaging high school students across the state in advocacy efforts around addressing the youth mental health crisis. Throughout the year, YAC members met with NC Child staff, legislators, and other public officials to share their perspectives, and advocate for solutions to improve outcomes for their communities and classmates. YAC members participated in civic and volunteer opportunities, with some members serving as panelists and keynote speakers at the 2024 State of the Child Summit.



Health

MENTAL HEALTH MAPPING FOCUS GROUPS

Our team met with teachers, school administrators, and mental health professionals in districts with varying levels of need across North Carolina to gain an understanding of what supports were available and how different school systems used their resources to address mental health in their schools. Findings from these focus groups are being used to develop a school-based mental health resource dashboard and to inform future advocacy efforts around expanding access to critical mental health supports in schools across the state.



MAKING
CARING
COMMON
PROJECT

YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

NC Child partnered with the Making Caring Common project at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education to conduct three focus groups with teens to assess their perspectives on the topics of loneliness, isolation, and mental health.

"If you're a young person in North Carolina, never forget that your voice and your health matters. Talk to your local lawmakers or educators. Start conversations with your peers. Every action counts, no matter how small."

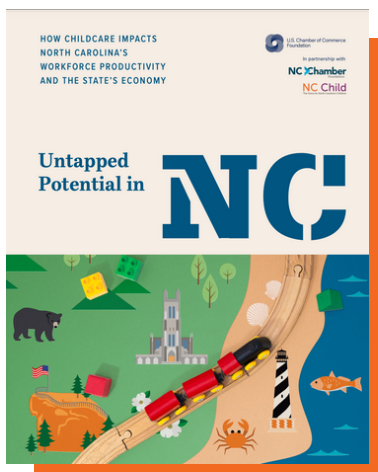
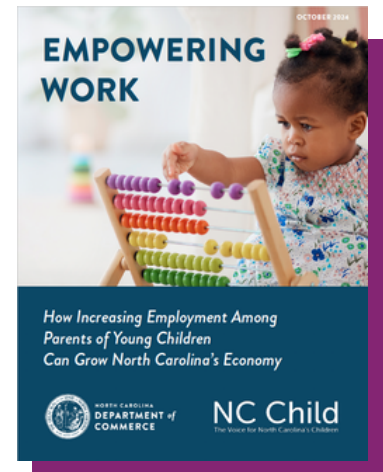
-Ayse Ermis, Youth Advocacy Council Member

Early Childhood Education

The first 2,000 days of a child's life have a huge impact on their short- and long-term health and development. NC Child collaborated with public and private partners, community organizations, and Chambers of Commerce across the state to build support for policy interventions to stabilize our early childhood education system and give children and parents the best opportunity to thrive.

EMPOWERING WORK: HOW INCREASING EMPLOYMENT AMONG PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN CAN GROW NORTH CAROLINA'S ECONOMY

In partnership with the North Carolina Department of Commerce, we published a report detailing the impacts of the child care crisis on North Carolina's workforce and economy. The Empowering Work report also outlines key public policy interventions that can build a more sustainable early childhood education system, as well as solutions employers can implement to support working families.



UNTAPPED POTENTIAL IN NC: HOW CHILD CARE IMPACTS NORTH CAROLINA'S WORKFORCE PRODUCTIVITY AND THE STATE'S ECONOMY

In partnership with the U.S. Chamber Foundation and NC Chamber Foundation, NC Child published a report detailing the direct financial impact of the child care crisis, in addition to the scale of child care-related workforce disruptions.

County Data Cards

Our signature data publications are routinely cited in news coverage, included in community needs assessments, and referenced by health professionals, educators, and child- and family-serving organizations across the state.

We present data in five crucial areas of children's well-being: birth outcomes, family economic security, safety, health and wellness, and education across all 100 counties.



“NC Child has done a remarkable job interacting with key legislators. They keep us updated on critical issues important to our kids and their parents.

The insight they provide is invaluable.”

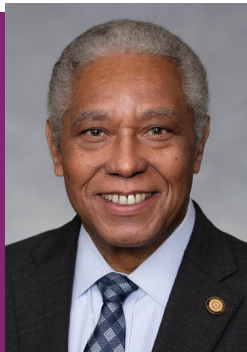
-Rep. Donny Lambeth (R), District 75



“My experience working with NC Child this session, as always, has been incredibly rewarding.

Their work with us in the legislature has had a profound impact on policymaking, and our collaboration has moved the needle on key priorities for North Carolina’s children and families.”

-Sen. Dan Blue (D), District 14



Field Day



NC Child's inaugural Field Day, hosted in partnership with Raleigh Parks, brought together more than 700 attendees for a day designed to celebrate kids and to remember what it's like to be one.

The day was packed full of free activities for kids of all ages and abilities, all while providing a space for families to bond, create new memories, and have fun together!



State of the Child Summit

In partnership with the North Carolina Institute of Medicine, NC Child hosted our first annual State of the Child Summit at Marbles Kids Museum in downtown Raleigh on April 30, 2024.

The Summit brought together more than 250 lawmakers, parents and caregivers, health professionals, and representatives from the business community, state and local governments, and other child-serving organizations.

The inaugural event featured more than 35 speakers who led thoughtful and engaging conversations around maternal health, youth mental health, early childhood education, family economic security, and oral health.

Our attendees heard from NC Child Youth Advocacy Council members, as well as 11-year-old Macon County advocate Gracie Parker, who shared her experience losing access to mental health resources at her elementary school.


PRESENTED BY



**NC CHILD TAKES A
NONPARTISAN APPROACH.**

**POLICY IS HOW WE
ENACT THE CHANGE.**





2023-24 Partners, Sponsors, and Funders

MacKenzie Scott	Vaya Health
Annie E. Casey Foundation	Trillium Health Resources
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation	UnitedHealthcare Community Plan
CareQuest Institute for Oral Health	CCR Consulting
Community Catalyst	Crossnore Communities for Children
The Duke Endowment	North Carolina Alliance for Health
Georgetown University	Acadia Healthcare Children's Behavioral Solutions
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation	Smart Start
Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust	School Meals for All NC
The David and Lucille Packard Foundation	Positive Childhood Alliance North Carolina
Alliance for Early Success	Raleigh Parks
ChildTrust Foundation	WakeMed Children's Hospital
Hopewell Fund	BSN Sports
National Low Income Housing Coalition	Wegmans
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation	All-American Cross Country Camp
Center for Child and Family Health	J-NOTT-GTT Corp
Dogwood Health Trust	Alamance Chamber of Commerce
Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation	Center for Rural Strategies
TowneBank	The Nest Schools
Novant Health	Nutritionally Yours LLC
Google	Sodoma Law
John Rex Endowment	HopeStar Foundation
WellCare	Trusted Parents
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina	Moore & Van Allen
Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority	FloQast
Carolina Complete Health	NC Healthcare Financial Management Association
AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina	Healthy Blue of North Carolina
Foundation for Health Leadership & Innovation	North Carolina Foundation for Public School Children
North Carolina Public Health Association	North Carolina Academy of Family Physicians
RLF Communications	First Presbyterian Church Wilmington
Loftis Partners	North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation
North Carolina Pediatric Society	NC Partnership for Children

2023 Financials

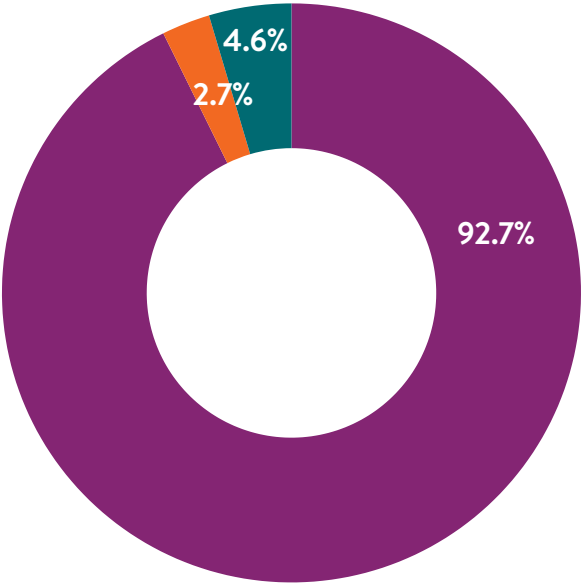
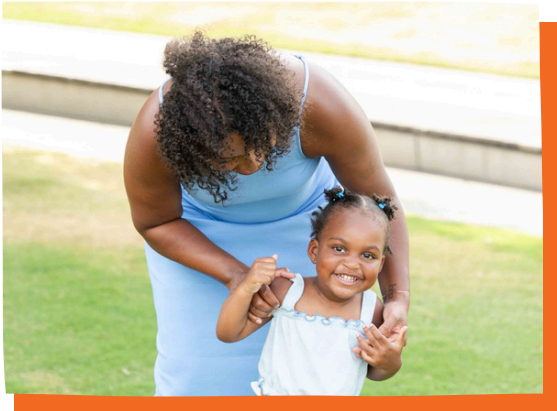


NET ASSETS: \$5,178,208

TOTAL REVENUE

GRANTS & FOUNDATION SUPPORT	\$4,403,800
INDIVIDUAL & CORPORATE GIVING	\$128,800
OTHER INCOME	\$218,930

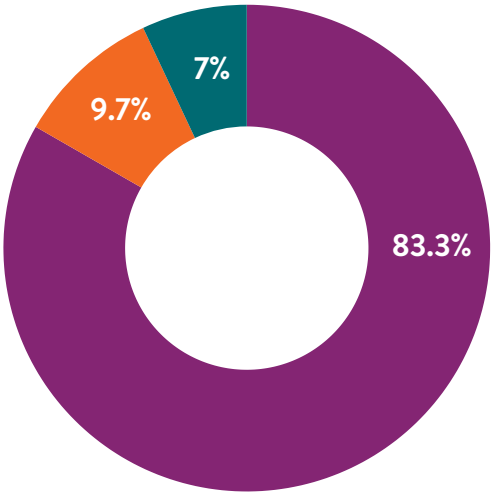
	\$4,751,530



TOTAL EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES	\$1,780,393
FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT	\$206,931
GENERAL & ADMINISTRATIVE	\$150,291

	\$2,137,615





Board of Directors

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MANJU KARKARE

Incoming Board Chair
Nutritionally Yours

PEG O'CONNELL

Secretary/Governance Chair
Safe Kids NC Steering Committee

JOSH DAVIS

Treasurer
Aspida

Members

DR. VALERIE ANDERSON

Emily Krzyzewski Center

EDWARD BROOKS

Assistant Attorney for Robeson County

CASEY COOPER

Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority

AMANDA DOLE

Moore & Van Allen

TERRY VAN DUYN

Former NC State Senator

DR. ELEANOR GREENE

Healthcare for All NC

CRAIG HORN

Former NC State Representative, North
Carolina Board of Education Corps, Board
of Governors

VELVA JENKINS

YWCA Lower Cape Fear

SALLY LOFTIS

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DR. KIMBERLY MONTEZ

Wake Forest University School of
Medicine

CHRIS PATERSON

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