2016 Update

Vision: A Michigan where all children have an equitable opportunity to thrive from cradle to career

Mission: Michigan’s Children is the only statewide independent voice working to ensure that public policies are made in the best interest of children from cradle to career.

Policy Priorities: To mitigate the discouraging and unacceptable gaps that begin early and persist over a lifetime, Michigan’s Children has a specific focus on policy priorities that reduce disparities in child and family outcomes. These include:

- Improving school readiness by increasing investments prenatally through age three that support infants, toddlers and their parents.
- Improving career and college readiness by building student success through school/community linkages, including supports for expanded learning opportunities, attendance promotion and discipline alternatives; and expanding investments in programs that support multiple pathways and chances for educational success.
- Ensuring that Michigan is caring for its most vulnerable children and families – those at risk of becoming or already involved in child protective services, foster and juvenile justice systems – and connecting them to family support services as well as successful education and workforce pathways.
- Building better support for two-generation strategies that help children thrive while their parents move ahead.

Values:
- Equitable opportunity for all children
- Independent, non-partisanship
- Focus on prevention
- Community engagement
- Aligned and collective action

Value Proposition: The only independent, non-partisan advocacy organization working to close equity gaps for children cradle to career and their families through policy change.

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**Public Policies & Programs that Reduce Disparities in Child Outcomes**

Objectives:
- Catalyze support from elected and appointed officials
- Build public will and action to influence policymakers

**Organizational Sustainability**

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**Strategies**

- Data, Information & Policy Analysis
  - Maintain expert knowledge of state budget and policies, and positive child outcomes
  - Monitor evidence-based and promising program practices
  - Assess policy impact, identify policy solutions and strategies

- Strategic Communications/Education
  - Produce and disseminate nonpartisan information on the impact of state and federal budgets, policies and programs on child and family outcomes using print, broadcast and social media

- Mobilization & Community Engagement
  - Create and support a group of influential champions (grassroots) to support policy and program change
  - Identify, engage and educate a targeted group of community advocates (grassroots)
  - Build and mobilize e-advocacy network
  - Identify, assess, assemble and leverage strategic collaborative/collective action opportunities

- Direct Legislative & Administrative Advocacy
  - Develop relationships with elected and appointed officials and their key staff
  - Educate and influence targeted state and federal policymakers and key staff through data information and testimony
  - Connect champions (grassroots) and community advocates (grassroots) to influential decision-makers on priorities issues

- Effective Organization Management
  - Build effective leadership at CEO and Board levels
  - Adopt a sustainable business model
  - Strengthen internal systems and practices (financial management, external communications, strategic planning, staff development)

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**Goals**

**Objectives**

- Build public will and action to influence policymakers

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**Organizational Sustainability**

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**Improved Public Policies and Programs**

Increased influence from elected and appointed officials as evidenced by:
- Increased requests from policymakers and other influential stakeholders for support and engagement
- Increased consideration/enactment of public policies aligned with policy agenda
- Recognized leadership role in convening/coordinating advocacy partners on priority issues
- Stronger relationships between decision-makers and key partners

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**Strengthened Base of Support**

- Maintain expert knowledge of state budget and policies, and positive child outcomes
- Demonstrated understanding of MC and our priority issues by federal, state, and local partners; funders; and other stakeholders
- Increased advocacy by champions and community leaders as evidenced by: increased understanding of budget and policy process and how to engage in advocacy; more and stronger relationships with community-based partners in key districts; increased e-advocacy contacts in key districts; increased media coverage to advance key public policy agenda items; increased engagement of social media followers in advocacy activity

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**Strengthened Organizational Capacity**

- Board and CEO effectiveness
- Effective internal systems and practices
- Achievement of annual fund development goals
- Increased diversity of staff and board

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**Michigan’s Children Strategic Framework**