

Brain science matters. To change the odds for our most vulnerable children, youth, and families, preventing trauma by stabilizing families and strengthening the ability of communities to support them must be a state priority. We can and must fight for public policies and investments that promote the healthy growth of young minds:

## **Afterschool and Summer Learning**

High quality expanded learning programs are a concrete support for parents who need their kids to be cared for after school. They also help young people better see their own strengths and build on their own successes and leadership potential, bolstering their socio-emotional competence.

*Michigan provides no state funds for direct support of high-quality afterschool programs.*

## **Abuse and Neglect Prevention Services**

Since 2005, Michigan has seen a 41 percent increase in children living in families investigated for child maltreatment. Too often, investigated cases involved Michigan's youngest residents.

*Since 2000, abuse and neglect prevention funding has fallen behind the need for services.*

## **Early On Michigan**

*Early On* provides intervention services to families with infants & toddlers with developmental delays or who are at risk of acquiring one, working closely with parents, often in the home, to discuss child development and build strategies to negotiate their child's developmental needs.

*Michigan provides far too few state funds to provide adequate service for all eligible young children.*

## **Evidence-Based Home Visiting**

Evidence-based home visiting programs support healthy development and prevent child abuse and neglect for Michigan's most challenged families with young children, improving positive birth and life outcomes, and cutting substantiated claims in at-risk families by as much as a half.

*Only a fraction of eligible families with young children actually receive services. Michigan must increase state support for voluntary home visiting services.*

## **High-Quality, Affordable Child Care**

High quality child care helps children build the foundation to learn soft skills and protect against poverty-related risk factors, and is a concrete support for parents who may have to leave for work or an emergency, allowing them to stay connected with important social circles.

*In Michigan, family income eligibility for child care support ranks near the bottom nationally, and one-third of families who are already eligible for support receive none.*

## **Taxes That Work for Children, Youth, and Families**

Michigan's child poverty rate in 2015 was 22%, an increase of 34% since 2005. Our tax system does not work for children and those who care for them. The EITC, in addition to other tax credits like child care tax credits, could make a struggling family has the resources to make it through a crisis.

*A fully refundable Michigan Child Tax Credit, expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, and credits that support workforce participation would provide concrete resources for families in times of need.*

## **Physical, Mental, and Behavioral Health Care**

Families with health care borrow less for medical costs, freeing up resources for times of need. Mental and behavioral care are especially important supports for families at-risk of abuse and neglect or substance use, and for children and youth involved with foster care or juvenile justice.

*Stronger physical and behavioral health services, including for substance use and domestic violence, would provide concrete support to families and nurture their socio-emotional competencies.*

## **Integrated Student Supports**

School counselors, social workers, and health services give students the skills and resources they need to be more engaged in their communities and build trusting relationships, helping them tackle any barriers to their health, well-being and chances for educational success.

*Michigan provides insufficient funds to guarantee integrated student supports for every school.*

## **Robust Foster Care Services**

All young people face barriers to independence as they move into adulthood – most young adults are dependent on their parents until their late 20's. When young people leave foster care, many have not had the kind of experiences that will help in their transition. Coordinated education, health, and human services for youth aging out of care can lead to educational and work success, bolster their physical, mental and behavioral health, and connect them with social supports.

*The state carries a unique responsibility to fully invest in their transition into adulthood.*

## **Runaway and Homeless Youth Services**

Homelessness is one of the most traumatic things a child or youth can experience. Too many youth find themselves alone without support, sometimes fleeing bad situations, sometimes identified by schools and others as needing some stability and assistance.

*In Michigan, funding for support for homeless youth has increased just once since 2001.*

Learn more at [michiganschildren.org](http://michiganschildren.org)