

[Michigan is sending a \\$1,000 ‘thank you’ to early educators. Is it enough?](#)

November 9, 2021 | [Detroit.chalkbeat.org](#)

Many early educators in Michigan will soon receive \$1,000 bonuses, a ‘thank you’ to thousands of workers across the state who stuck with challenging, low-paid, and essential jobs through the scariest days of the pandemic.

Child care providers are welcoming the money, which comes from federal COVID aid, even as they say they are struggling mightily to hire for those same jobs.

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[Report: Mental-Health Needs Climb Among Women, Young Michiganders](#)

November 2, 2021 | [Public News](#)

LANSING, Mich. – Women and young people have faced increased behavioral health challenges since before the pandemic, according to a new report, which assessed the state of well-being for women and children.

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[House of Representatives passes bipartisan bills aimed at child care reform](#)

October 8, 2021 | [Record-eagle.com](#)

TRAVERSE CITY – A package of bills intended to reform how Michigan regulates at-home daycare centers cleared the state House of Representatives on Wednesday.

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[Opinion: Ripple effect of failed child care system is far-reaching: Now, things must change](#)

October 4, 2021 | [Record-eagle.com](#)

When community-based small businesses – whether in-home or center-based – close because a business model doesn’t support them, child care professionals lose work and parents cannot return to work, accept a promotion or advance careers through schooling or training.

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[The Child Tax Credit program helps Michigan families, let’s make it permanent](#)

October 1, 2021 | [Lansingstatejournal.com](#)

*Matt Gillard, guest writer:*

Many of us have come to expect that what goes on in the U.S. Congress has little effect on our daily lives. But that has now changed for almost two million children in nearly one million Michigan families who are receiving monthly payments from the expanded Child Tax Credit (CTC) program.

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### [West Michigan child care providers hopeful with new spending](#)

September 23, 2021 | [Fox17online.com](#)

After reaching a [budget deal](#) this week, lawmakers across Michigan praised the investment in child care and said the \$1.4 billion designated to the issue can address persistent issues in the industry.

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### [How Michigan families will benefit from a \\$1.4 billion investment in child care](#)

September 22, 2021 | [detroit.chalkbeat.org](#)

Tens of thousands more Michigan families soon will have access to subsidized child care. In parts of the state where child care is in short supply, new funds will help open new centers. Existing centers, many of which struggled to stay open during the pandemic, also will get an infusion of stabilization funds.

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### [Opinion: Michigan supports funding for our children's futures](#)

September 21, 2021 | [The Detroit News](#)

As a byproduct of the pandemic, many of us may have spent more time with our children than ever before; at dinner tables, over their shoulders helping with complicated math, explaining why they cannot have sleepovers or go to the movies with their friends. As a result, we know the past 18 months have deeply impacted our children, our neighbors' children, our nieces and nephews and our grandchildren.

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### [What Michiganders Want: Investments in Children | 2021 Mackinac Policy Conference](#)

September 20, 2021 | [Youtube.com](#)

A poll issued by The Skillman Foundation and Michigan's Children finds Michigan residents demand investing in kids be a priority. Across all geographies and demographics, voters expect their dollars to be put to work to help children lead healthy, productive lives. This session will present findings from a statewide poll and what it indicates for policymakers and child advocates.

**Panelists:** Matt Gillard, President and Chief Executive Officer, Michigan's Children  
Celinda Lake, President, Lake Research Partners

**Moderator:** Angelique Power, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Skillman Foundation

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## [Results of Statewide Poll Show Support Towards Increasing Funding For Kids](#)

September 20, 2021 | [9&10news.com](#)

Michigan's Children and the Skillman Foundation unveiled the results of a statewide poll on voter attitudes towards investing in kids at the Mackinac Policy Conference Monday.

The poll found nearly 58% of Michiganders support increasing funding for kids, even if that means raising taxes.

The President and CEO of Michigan's Children, Matt Gillard, says the poll is encouraging, especially that people seem to support addressing the mental health issues they face and the loss of educational opportunities.

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## [Poll: Michigan voters favor investment in children even if taxes increase](#)

September 20, 2021 | [Detroit Chalkbeat.org](#)

Most Michigan voters want more investment in children even if it means higher taxes, according to a new poll.

Respondents most want to see more spending on career exposure, job training, skill building, mental health resources, child care, expanded learning time, and programs to reduce the number of youth in the criminal justice system.

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## [Michigan Voters Demand Greater Investments in Children and Youth, According to New Statewide Opinion Poll Issued by The Skillman Foundation and Michigan's Children](#)

*Public Concerned Children's Needs Not Being Met; Advocates Reveal Results at Detroit Regional Chamber's 2021 Mackinac Policy Conference*

September 20, 2021 | Immediate Release

Nearly two-thirds of Michiganders say they would support increasing public funding for children and youth to counter inequities and the effects of pandemic-related ills, including disrupted learning and impaired mental health (anxiety, depression, ADHD), according to findings of a new poll commissioned by The Skillman Foundation and Michigan's Children.

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## [Advocates push lawmakers to pass funding for children who have aged out of foster care](#)

September 2, 2021 | [Fox47news.com](#)

LANSING, Mich. – Michigan has received millions of dollars in federal money meant to help former foster children but if the state senate doesn't vote to appropriate it before the end of the month some of that money could disappear.

### [Children's rights group calls for all Michigan school boards to issue mask mandates](#)

August 25, 2021 | Michigan Advance

More Michigan school districts and counties have been announcing mask mandates as COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations for children are rising with the spread the highly contagious Delta variant. Kids under 12 are not yet eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

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### [Michigan's Children encourages school boards to require mask wearing](#)

August 25, 2021 | Fox17online.com

LANSING, Mich. – Michigan's Children encourages school boards across the state to require mask wearing as COVID-19 infections continue to spread, the public policy firm tells us.

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### [Michigan's Children Urges School Boards to Do their Job and Protect the Safe Return of Kids to In-Person Classrooms](#)

August 25, 2021 | Immediate Release

As Michigan's 1.4 million schoolchildren return for the start of the 2021-22 school year against a politically charged landscape and rising infections due to the deadly coronavirus, Michigan's Children is urging locally elected School Boards to do their job and act to ensure school safety through effective mask-wearing by students and staff.

### **Childcare presents issues for Michiganders returning to work**

August 11, 2021 | FOX 47 News

In this recent media report from Fox47 in mid-Michigan, Michigan's Children's President & CEO Matt Gillard offers context to the issue. [Find it here.](#)

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### [Leftover child care money gives a boost to cash-strapped Michigan providers](#)

July 27, 2021 | Chalkbeat.org

The \$105 million payout comes from federal funds that weren't spent because of COVID Michigan child care providers who serve low-income communities are set to receive an influx of federal child care dollars that went unused during the pandemic.

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### [Child tax credits are expected to drastically reduce child poverty in Michigan](#)

July 13, 2021 | Fox47news.com

LANSING, Mich. – Eligible Michigan families with children will receive payments directly to their bank accounts starting this week as part of the expanded child tax credit from the federal government, which was prompted by the economic effects of the pandemic.

### [Childcare costs going up](#)

July 12, 2021 | Wilx.com

LANSING, Mich. (WILX) - Childcare costs have nearly doubled in the past year. That's putting a lot of parents in a bind. The issue has led some not to go back to work after the pandemic.

The federal government has approved \$1.4 billion to fund childcare in the state of Michigan. But the state government has yet to distribute the funds, leaving parents and businesses in a tough spot.

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### [Federal Investment Critical for Child Care, State's Recovery \(Michigan's Children\)](#)

July 8, 2021 | Immediate Release

For Michigan families to emerge from the pandemic able to go to work and secure safe and reliable high-quality care for their children, the federal government must step up and significantly invest in our nation's child care system, an essential move in our economic revival, according to Michigan's Children, an independent public policy and advocacy nonprofit working in the best interest of Michigan's children, youth and families.

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### [Whitmer's plan for \\$1.4 billion in COVID aid includes raise for Michigan early educators](#)

June 14, 2021 | Detroit.chalkbeat.org

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer wants to use federal COVID relief funds to overhaul Michigan's child care subsidy and pay bonuses to early educators. The subsidy helps families living in poverty pay for private child care and is the state's largest child care initiative. Providers have long argued that it is badly broken.

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### [Bipartisan Bill Package Would Bolster Child Care Proposals](#)

June 14, 2021 | Gongwer News

Governor Gretchen Whitmer and Republicans in the Legislature on Monday signaled that they have shared priorities in reforming Michigan's child care system, which would see a significant upgrade through the use of federal coronavirus dollars and a legislative package to be announced Tuesday.

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### [Michigan's Children Applauds Governor Whitmer's Use of Federal Funds to Invest in State's Child Care System. It's Needed Help for Children, Families and Michigan's Economy](#)

June 14, 2021 | Immediate Release

Governor's Whitmer' announcement today marks a historic opportunity to truly prioritize the needs of young children and their working parents. For far too long, Michigan has trailed behind other states when it comes to supporting investment in our child care system.

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### [As Budget Talks Continue, Whitmer Urges \\$450M For Preschool Program](#)

June 8, 2021 | Gongwer

EAST LANSING - The latest funding proposal from Governor Gretchen Whitmer as she and the Legislature negotiate a budget for the upcoming fiscal year, as well as how to spend the billions in federal aid the state has received, is to use \$450 million to assure all children eligible for Great Start Readiness Preschool have access to the program.

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### [Whitmer proposal would put 22,000 more Michigan 4-year-olds into free, high-quality preschool](#)

June 8, 2021 | detroit.chalkbeat.org

Michigan's flagship preschool program for 4-year-olds from low-income families would get a \$405 million expansion in the next three years under a new proposal from Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

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### [Michigan's Children is Thrilled with Governor's Announcement to Expand State's Preschool to All Eligible 4 Year Olds](#)

June 8, 2021 | Immediate Release

Michigan's Children vigorously applauds Governor Whitmer's decision today to work toward extending high-quality, affordable early childhood education to all eligible families of 4-year-olds in Michigan. In fact, we're over the moon by this announcement!

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### [Advocates say Michigan should put more money toward adult education](#)

June 3, 2021 | Fox47news.com

LANSING, Mich. – After decades of declining funding for adult education in Michigan, advocates are calling for more money and a change in how the funding is allocated.

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### [Whitmer Calls For End To K-12 Funding Gap](#)

May 27, 2021 | Gongwer.com

The nearly 30-year effort to equalize per pupil funding in K-12 education would finally

reach the finish line under Governor Gretchen Whitmer’s proposal Thursday to use unanticipated revenue growth to boost per pupil funding overall by 4 percent and spend another \$262 million to bring the lower-funded districts up to the same funding level as the higher ones.

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[Whitmer proposes eliminating longtime school funding gap](#)

May 27, 2021 | Fox17online.com

LANSING, Mich. (AP) – Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is proposing to use a budget surplus to finally eliminate a funding gap among K-12 districts, 27 years after Michigan overhauled the financing of public education.

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[Michigan’s Children Supports Governor’s Weighted School Funding Plan and More Dollars for Early On](#)

May 27, 2021 | Immediate Release

Michigan’s Children enthusiastically supports the Governor’s funding strategy for K-12 students as a needed approach to ensure that the individual learning needs of the state’s 1.5 million K-12 students are met so that each can prosper and secure a strong future.

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[Bill to create child abuse offenders registry heads to the Michigan House](#)

May 11, 2021 | Fox 47 news

LANSING, Mich. – Parents don’t always know just who is caring for or spending time with their children.

In 2013, Erica Hammell discovered her 1-year-old son, Wyatt, was being abused by her ex-husband’s girlfriend at the time. She had her suspicions about the woman but did not have access to concrete evidence until Wyatt was rushed to Children’s Hospital of Michigan in Detroit with a massive brain hemorrhage.

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[How advocates say the pandemic exposes need for changes in childcare industry](#)

May 4, 2021 | WXYZ.com

“Once you do the math and what the state pays us, it doesn’t make sense,” said Nina Hodge, who has owned Above and Beyond Learning Childcare Center on the East Side of Detroit.

For more than 15 years, Hodge has owned the center. 95% to 98% of her families rely on state subsidies to pay for it.

[Students share how COVID-19 has impacted their mental health with community leaders, elected officials](#)

April 30, 2021 | Mlive.com

GRAND RAPIDS, MI - More than a dozen students from schools across Grand Rapids spoke Friday about how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their mental during the annual KidSpeak forum.

The Grand Rapids Mayor's Youth Council hosted the 10 a.m. virtual event with Our Community's Children that gave young people the opportunity to speak to a listening panel of elected officials and community leaders. Students also spoke about the toll remote learning and racial injustice has affected their health.

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[Feds Extend Summer Food Assistance to Low-Income Children](#)

April 28, 2021 | Public News Service

LANSING, Mich. - The U.S. Department of Agriculture is throwing a lifeline to students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, by extending the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer program, known as PEBT, through the end of the summer. This means families will continue to get up to \$127 a month on their benefit card to buy groceries.

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[Can Michigan seize a \\$1.4 billion chance to 'transform' its child care system?](#)

April 27, 2021 | Chalkbeat.org

Michigan's child care sector is gearing up for perhaps its highest stakes policy debate ever, with \$1.4 billion in federal coronavirus aid on the line.

Just about everyone involved in caring for Michigan's youngest students agrees the money is badly needed. Shortages of child care slots, meager reimbursement rates paid to providers in low-income communities, and disastrously high teacher turnover all highlight problems with the current system.

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[Speaking for Kids, the Podcast from Michigan's Children, is Live!](#)

April 14, 2021 | Immediate Release

Michigan's Children has launched a new monthly podcast named Speaking for Kids to explore crucial conversations with people making public policy decisions in Lansing and Washington, D.C. - along with the voices of youth and families impacted by them.

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[LONGTIME MICHIGAN'S CHILDREN OFFICIAL HAS DIED](#)

April 1, 2021 | Gongwer

Michele Corey, vice president for programs at Michigan's Children, has died at the age of 53. She had spent more than 20 years with the organization.

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['It's going to be a lifesaver': Here's how the new child tax credit expansion works'](#)

March 19, 2021 | The Michigan Advance

The U.S. federal government has offered a child tax credit since 1997, but advocates have long criticized the program because it is only available to those making enough to file taxes and therefore has been off-limits to families struggling the most financially. Now under the expansion, the overwhelming majority of children will be able to benefit from the tax credit, including 90% of children under the age of 18 in the United States and 92% of children in Michigan.

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[Think Babies Michigan' campaign begins](#)

February 18, 2021 | The Mining Journal

The "Think Babies Michigan" campaign has launched with a \$1.5 million multi-year grant from the Pritzker Children's Initiative to improve prenatal-to-age 3 outcomes for kids in the state.

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[Think Babies Set to Halt Barriers to Low-Income Families](#)

February 17, 2021, | Metroparent.com

Babies in Michigan will have a better start thanks to a grant that helped launch the "Think Babies Michigan" campaign.

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[Podcast, Think Babies Michigan - The Dave Akerly Show](#)

February 18, 2021 | Podcast

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[Think Babies Michigan to Benefit Lower-Income Families](#)

February 17, 2021, | 9 & 10 News

Multiple organizations, hundreds of parents, and state leaders are excited for a new initiative coming to help lower-income families across Michigan.

The "Think Babies Michigan" campaign will use \$1.5 million over three years to increase enrollment and access to high-quality child care, home visiting, and early intervention for families with low income by 50 percent by 2025.

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[Think Babies Michigan Campaign Helps Children Living in Poverty](#)

February 17, 2021, | Fox 2 Detroit

It's called the Think Babies Michigan campaign - \$1.5 million to support babies, toddlers, and their families, especially those that are low income, children living in

poverty, and children of color in Michigan are facing. Those are the biggest obstacles the program wants to change.

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['Think Babies Michigan' Campaign Launches with \\$1.5 Million Multi-year Grant from the Pritzker Children's Initiative to Improve Prenatal-to-Age 3 Outcomes for Kids](#)

February 12, 2021, | Immediate Release

With tens of thousands of Michigan's most vulnerable families left reeling by the global pandemic, a coalition of the state's top child and family advocates will announce on Wednesday, Feb. 17, 2021, at 9 a.m. a new \$1.5 million multi-year national effort led by the Pritzker Children's Initiative to strengthen the state's work to support babies, toddlers and their families, specifically those earning low wages. By nearly every measure, children living in poverty and children of color in Michigan are facing the biggest obstacles for a bright future.

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[Young Michiganders will ask questions to candidates for House of Representatives](#)

October 20, 2020 | FOX47news.com

LANSING, Mich. – Thursday the public will have an opportunity to hear from youths with unique life experiences in a forum that will be streamed via Facebook Live. The youths will ask Candidates for Michigan's House of Representatives questions ahead of the Nov. 3 election.

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[Peckham to host youth-led candidate forum](#)

October 20, 2020 | WLNS.com

LANSING, Mich. (WLNS)- Young people from the Flint and Lansing areas who have faced challenges in their lives will lead a "We Are the Change" candidate forum in six mid-Michigan House races on Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020.

Participants will bring up issues such as bullying, disability rights, gun control, and foster care. The forum is sponsored by Michigan's Children, Peckham Youth Services, the Institute for Educational Leadership, and the Capitol Area College Access Network and will feature eight young people between the ages of 16 and 24 with a range of experiences with disabilities and the justice system.

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['We Are the Change' Youth-Led Candidate Forum in Six House Races is this Thursday](#)

October 19, 2020 | Immediate Release

Young people from the Flint and Lansing areas who have faced challenges in their lives will lead a candidate forum in six mid-Michigan House races on Thursday, Oct. 22, 2020 (4:00-5:30 pm), raising issues such as bullying, disability rights, gun control and foster care.

**[A teen’s perspective: Voting on issues, not party can make all the difference](#)**

**Boaz Overley, Guest Writer**

**October 16, 2020 | Lansing State Journal**

Boaz, a participant in the youth-led candidate forum at Peckham on Thursday, shares an opinion on the elections with the Lansing State Journal.

Voting is a civic duty, is what I got told in school. But now I know how urgent it is. There’s climate change, corporations dumping waste into the environment, healthcare, systemic racism, a world in which people are worried about basic necessities. I’m 19 and this is my first general election.

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**[Kalamazoo youth share concerns, ask questions to Michigan political candidates](#)**

**October 14, 2020 | WKZO.com**

KALAMAZOO, MI (WKZO AM/FM) – Wednesday, several Michigan political candidates joined an online forum hosted by Michigan’s Children, the Kalamazoo Youth Development Network (KYD Network), and the Michigan Center for Youth Justice.

Other participating community organizations in this forum included STREET Afterschool Program, ASK Family Services, Men of Purpose, Communities in School, and El Concilio Kalamazoo.

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**Matt Gillard on @WKZONews Ken Lanphear Show**

**October 14, 2020 | WKZO Radio - 106.9-FM**

KALAMAZOO, Mich. (WKZO) - WKZO News Host Ken Lanphear called today’s Youth-Led Candidate Forum “a very unique opportunity and very important one for kids” in his introduction of guest Matt Gillard. The forum - sponsored by Michigan’s Children, the Kalamazoo Youth Development Network Michigan Center for Youth Justice - and other local based youth-focused organizations was discussed during the morning drive-time show. Listen to the 7-minute interview with Matt click [here](#).

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**[Kzoo youth-led candidate forum to be held Wednesday](#)**

**October 13, 2020 | WoodTV.com**

KALAMAZOO, Mich. (WOOD) – First-time voters and soon-to-be voters in Kalamazoo will have a chance to ask candidates questions Wednesday in a virtual candidate forum.

The teenaged organizers will be talking about a variety of topics including juvenile justice, school services and mental health. The discussion will revolve around the congressional and state races.

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### [Kalamazoo Kids Grill Candidates](#)

October 13, 2020 | WMUK-Radio 102.1-FM

Kalamazoo, Mich. (WMUK Public Radio) - Kids in Kalamazoo will get a chance to ask questions of political candidates on Wednesday October 14. The virtual forum is cosponsored by several state and local groups, including Michigan's Children. Matt Gillard is its president.

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### [Area Youths Lead Candidate Forum in Congressional & House Races Wednesday](#)

October 12, 2020 | Immediate Release

A coalition of state and local youth-serving organizations are bringing Kalamazoo-area youth together in a special forum on Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2020 (4:00-5:30 pm) to engage candidates for Congress and state House on issues they're most concerned about - juvenile justice, afterschool services, school supports and mental health.

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### [In the 2020 general election, cast your vote for equity in education](#)

Matt Gillard and Michele Strasz, guest writers

October 7, 2020 | Lansing State Journal

So many contributors to the current inequity in educational outcomes have been further exposed during the pandemic, coupled with increased attention to how systemic racism contributes.

A group of students who cross issues of race, income and other special needs are students with a diagnosed or undiagnosed disability, whose struggles to access accommodations and the support services needed to be successful in school have only expanded over the past several months.

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### [For this year's election, vote with homeless kids and families in mind](#)

Michele Corey and Angela Parth, guest writers

October 7, 2020 | Livingston Daily

Typically seen as an urban problem, the issue of homelessness and runaway youth challenges rural communities, too. Labeled a silent epidemic with many living in shame, homelessness touches a sizable population of children, youth and families in Michigan.

In the 2017-2018 school year, 14 percent of children attending Michigan's K-12 schools were considered homeless, either because their families became homeless, or they left home on their own, according to the Michigan Network for Youth and Families.

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### [When Federal Funding Shortcomings Hit Home, Students and Families Become Vulnerable](#)

August 21, 2020, | Clare County Review

Matt Gillard joins Thomas Pashak, the Principal of Pioneer High School, and Director

of Pioneer Adult Education to remind decision-makers that In these difficult times, programs that support adult learners deserve additional federal and state support, not less.

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[As pandemic continues, so do child care woes for parents](#)

August 17, 2020, | Detroit Free Press

Like a lot of parents, Anisha Anderson had trouble finding daycare for her son. And so when Anderson reopened her hair salon, she brought 3-year-old Deshaun with her. “He’s a very busy 3-year-old, so I had a hard time trying to cater to him as a mom and remain professional to my clients as a hairstylist,” said Anderson, owner of Beyond Curls in Southfield. “It started to become overwhelming, very fast.”

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[Our recovery must include adult learners in educational priorities for federal relief spending](#)

August 13, 2020, | The Oakland Press

With resurging positive coronavirus cases, including in hotspots here in Michigan, states are walking a fine line to ensure the safety of residents, reopen schools, and support families as they struggle to provide for their children and assist in their learning. The next coronavirus relief package is right now being debated in Washington and just how much support federal negotiators agree to send Michigan to bolster schools and families will have a critical impact on how our people emerge from this crisis.

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[Support must step up for most vulnerable](#)

August 7, 2020, | The Record-Eagle

We hope for the support of our legislators and our community to be able to continue to provide the crisis safety net so vital for the overall health and well-being of our state.

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[Our Take: When federal funding shortcomings hit home, families become vulnerable](#)

July 13, 2020, | Hollandsentinel.com

To say that our reality has changed since the coronavirus outbreak began would be a drastic understatement from advocates who work to close equity gaps and ensure positive outcomes for all our children, youth, and families. A more pressing fact has been the lack of sufficient action from Congress and the White House to meet the needs of this moment, as we plan to return to school.

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[When federal funding shortcomings hit home](#)

July 11, 2020, | Herald Palladium

To say that our reality has changed since the coronavirus outbreak began would be a

drastic understatement from advocates who work to close equity gaps and ensure positive outcomes for all our children, youth, and families.

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[Michigan's Children Applauds Gov. Whitmer's Announcement of 'Child Care Relief Fund' to Assist Providers During the Covid-19 State of Emergency](#)

April 29, 2020, | Press Release

Lansing, Mich. - On Wednesday, April 29, Gov. Whitmer announced the launch of a Child Care Relief Fund to assist child care providers during the Covid-19 pandemic, a move that President and CEO of Michigan's Children, Matt Gillard, applauds.

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[What will it take for Michigan child care centers to survive COVID-19 closures? 'Pay them today.'](#)

March 31, 2020, | Chalkbeat, Detroit

Matt Gillard weighs in with Detroit-area child care providers on the importance of making sure that the fragile service industry isn't further damaged by the current crisis.

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[Rodriguez: 'I slowly began to feel human again...like I mattered,' a homeless youth story](#)

March 4, 2020, | Lansing State Journal

At a glance, you may not think that I am one of the many faces of youth homelessness. I am 19 years old and about a year ago, I became homeless after problems in my home became too emotional and too dangerous for me to stay.

I had nowhere to go, no family or friends to stay with, so I went to a local domestic violence shelter that I heard about through friends at church. I was scared, alone, unsure of what my life would be like.

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[Rivera: 'I didn't like the person I was when I was homeless, 'a youth survivor story](#)

March 4, 2020, | Lansing State Journal

Youth homelessness is not something you bring up in conversation when you're homeless. You may pass a young person with a backpack on the street, and not even know they're homeless. That was me. There were people in my life who didn't know my situation unless I told them, or they guessed.

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[Helping homeless youth requires quick, responsive and local intervention](#)

March 4, 2020, | Lansing State Journal

Over 13,000 youth grades eight and above report being homeless in Michigan in 2018-2019 - an experience that makes the traditional pathway to adulthood incredibly hard. Thankfully, we know how to provide support to young people in crisis if we commit to adequately funding programs that are at the forefront of this critical work.

## [How Michigan shortchanges foster children facing life as adults](#)

January 3, 2020 | Bridgemi.com

Williams' challenges are anything but rare among an estimated [13,000 Michigan children and young adults](#) in foster care – and approximately 900 who “age out” of the system every year, leaving behind its social supports. Disproportionate numbers suffer from a grim parade of mental health issues and poor educational outcomes, a burden advocates say Michigan's safety net fails to fully address.

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## [Guest Commentary: Gillard Please hold applause until state budget supports most vulnerable](#)

December 25, 2019 | Bridgemi.com

If you're within earshot of the closed office doors in and around the state Capitol building, you'll hear the faint roar of applause and self-congratulations from many legislators who have just now reached an agreement on the 2020 state budget.

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## [Anti-Racism Training For Child Welfare Workers Moving The Needle?](#)

September 17, 2019 | MIRSnews.com

The number of black and minority children going into foster care increased more than the number of white children going into foster care in the five years since the state began training workers to combat “institutional racism” within the child welfare system.

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## [Relative Caregivers Coming to State Capitol from Across State, Urging Policy Changes in Child Welfare System](#)

September 17, 2019 | Immediate Release

LANSING, MI - Relative caregivers - including grandparents, aunts and uncles, older siblings, along with the young people they are caring for - will travel from across Michigan to meet with lawmakers and advocate for state policy changes during the [first Annual Relative Care Day](#) at the Capitol on **Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2019**.

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## [Michigan's Children Applauds Governor's Move to Ban Flavored E-Cigarettes](#)

September 4, 2019 | Immediate Release Statement

Michigan's Children applauds Gov. Whitmer's bold action today, banning the sale of flavored e-cigarettes that have become the source of a vexing health problem for youth in Michigan and nationally.

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## [Foster Care Perspectives In the News](#)

August 23, 2019 | Lansing State Journal

Two of the amazing [Legislative Shadowers](#) were able to share their thoughts on the Lansing State Journal Opinion page.

Opinion: [Brina Williams, Don't neglect foster care mental health, help address PTSD in displaced youth](#)

Opinion: [Halley Miller, What youth in foster care want is the same as what others want, a voice](#)

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[Opinion: Michigan should invest in after-school programs](#)

July 4, 2019 | [The Detroit News](#)

Many students who rely on school meals go hungry and parents struggle to focus at work knowing their children are unsupervised. Thousands of these families who have relied on school-based programs are faced with new challenges as the news hits home that after-school programs and their summer school counterparts will close in nearly 40 school sites targeted for at-risk kids from Traverse City to Hamtramck.

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[Young Adults from Foster Care Visit Michigan Legislature Thursday, June 13](#)

June 11, 2019 | [Press Release](#)

*The National Foster Youth Institute's Legislative Shadow Day Looks to Raise Awareness of Child Welfare System*

The Michigan Senate and House of Representatives will welcome 12 former foster youth this week for the Michigan Foster Youth Shadow Day, a unique opportunity for elected officials to hear directly from some of their most resilient yet often overlooked constituents—and a platform for foster youth to share their stories with the rest of the state.

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[Corey: Finding solutions to parental drug misuse requires sharing of stories](#)

May 29, 2019 | [Lansing State Journal](#)

Nationwide, the American Academy of Pediatrics estimates 8.7 million children have a parent who suffers from a substance use disorder leading to higher foster care placements due to abuse and neglect, serious health problems for infants born into substance use, and trauma which left unaddressed could lead to concerns during childhood and adulthood.

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[Children in Michigan are also victimized by opioid abuse](#)

May 24, 2019 | [Bridge Column - Guest Commentary](#)

Nationwide, the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) estimates 8.7 million children have a parent who suffers from a substance use disorder, leading to higher foster care placements due to abuse and neglect, serious health problems for infants born into substance use, and trauma which left unaddressed could lead to concerns during childhood and adulthood, such as school failure, obesity and heart disease, and even substance use in their own lives.

## [Public panel draws input on substance abuse, child neglect solutions](#)

April 26, 2019 | [The State News](#)

[Michigan's Children](#) and the [Children's Trust Fund of Michigan](#) held a public hearing on intersecting solutions to drug abuse, child abuse and neglect in Michigan on April 25 at Lansing's Central United Methodist Church.

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## [Child Abuse up thirty percent in Michigan since 2012](#)

April 24, 2019 | [WLNS.com](#)

LANSING (WLNS) - Child abuse is on the rise in Michigan and not just by a small number. The state has seen a thirty percent increase in abuse and neglect cases.

"That's an alarming statistic. That's not a good thing and Michigan should be concerned about that," President and CEO for Michigan's Children Matt Gillard said. He said there are many factors that lead to child abuse.

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## [Study details welfare of Michigan kids; poverty level decreasing, still a "long way to go"](#)

April 24, 2019 | [Sinclair Broadcast Group](#)

LANSING, Mich. – The health and welfare of children in Michigan was detailed in the 27th annual Kids Count Databook released from the Michigan League for Public Policy and numerous categories showcase need for improvement, organizers said.

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## [Michigan's Children News Release on Abuse & Neglect Hearing on April 25](#)

April 23, 2019 | [Press Release](#)

LANSING, MI – [Michigan's Children](#) and the [Children's Trust Fund](#) of Michigan have teamed up to organize a series of public hearings before the state Citizens Review Panel on Prevention (CRPP) to generate better policies and responses to families suffering from substance disorders leading to the abuse and neglect of children.

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## [Child abuse and neglect numbers are up in Michigan, report finds](#)

April 23, 2019 | [WZZM13.com](#)

LANSING, Mich. - The children of Michigan face some big challenges, from poverty to academic struggles to child abuse. The numbers are in and the Kids Count in Michigan Data Book has been released.

The report, released by the [Michigan League for Public Policy](#), takes a very detailed look at the well-being of children in 82 of the state's 83 counties—Keweenaw County lacks sufficient data. The 2019 book primarily compares data from 2012 to 2017 and focuses on 16 key indicators in four domains: economic security, health and safety, family and community, and education.

## **Michigan Makes Progress Finding Families for Foster Kids**

**April 3, 2019 | Public News Service**

LANSING, Mich. - Michigan is making a big effort to keep foster kids in family settings, with a 9% improvement over a 10-year period, according to a new report.

Michigan is home to almost 12,000 foster children, and researchers from the Annie E. Casey Foundation found the percentage being placed with families increased from 80% in 2007 to 89% in 2017.

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## **Students Speak' Forum in Jackson Spotlights the Need to Expand Adult Ed, Literacy Support and Closing the Skills Gap**

**March 12, 2019 | Press Release**

JACKSON, MI - "Closing the skill gap" has been a bipartisan goal for boosting Michigan's workforce and talent potential in the Snyder Administration in recent years and most recently in Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's first State of the State address.

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## **Gov. Whitmer's 'Weighted' School Funding Plan Met With Support, Skepticism**

**March 7, 2019 | WKAR.com**

Governor Gretchen Whitmer's proposal to boost K-12 education spending by more than \$500 million is getting a mixed reception in Michigan. Educators welcome the idea of extra funding, but GOP lawmakers are wary of approving a big tax hike to pay for the increase.

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## **What Whitmer's budget means for preschoolers in Michigan – and Detroit**

**March 6, 2019 | Chalkbeat.org**

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer campaigned hard on the promise of offering preschool to every Michigan 4-year-old. Now she says it could still happen – just not this year.

Whitmer's first budget proposal does take a step in that direction, opening Michigan's highly regarded free pre-kindergarten program to thousands of additional families while also boosting the state budget for child care.

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## **Gretchen Whitmer has a dramatic plan to send schools more money for needier kids. What you need to know**

**March 4, 2019 | Chalkbeat.org**

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer is set to propose the most dramatic shift in Michigan's school funding formula in years – calling for a weighted system that would pay schools more for low-income and special education students, who are more costly to educate.

Whitmer is also calling for an overall funding increase of \$120 to \$180 more per student, according to an outline of the plan reviewed by Chalkbeat. The big question

is whether the plan from Whitmer, a Democrat, will face opposition from a Republican-controlled Michigan Legislature.

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### **[Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to propose \\$507 million for classroom spending](#)**

**March 4, 2019 | WLNS.com**

LANSING, Mich. (WLNS)- - Over the last 25 years, the funding for Michigan education has been scarce, but Governor Gretchen Whitmer is hoping to help fund K-12 public schools with a new proposal.

Gov. Whitmer is planning to propose a plan tomorrow, that includes \$507 million to help boost K-12 spending. It includes a \$180 per-pupil raise to help fund with special education needs, vocational schooling and low-income communities and students.

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### **[Seeking to Improve Family Stability, Adult Ed Students Speak Out for Expanded Programming on March 11 in Kalamazoo](#)**

**March 4, 2019 | Press Release**

KALAMAZOO, MI - “Closing the skills gap” has been touted by Republicans and Democrats alike as a necessary step for moving Michigan’s economy forward, and recently was cited as a critical goal in Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s first State of the State address.

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### **[Need for Expanded Adult Ed, Literacy and Gov. Whitmer’s Call for ‘Closing the Skills Gap’ Featured in Statewide Education Forums](#)**

**February 18, 2019 | Press Release**

“Closing the skills gap” was a bipartisan goal for boosting Michigan’s workforce and talent potential in the Snyder Administration, and last week Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced it as one of her goals, too, in her first State of the State address.

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### **[Universal pre-K for Detroit? Affordable child care? How Michigan could spend new federal funds](#)**

**February 7, 2019 | Chalkbeat.org**

Advocates for Michigan’s youngest children were thrilled last year when the state received an unexpected windfall: a \$63 million increase in federal child care funds. Then the jockeying began.

Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan quickly identified that money as a way to pay for the universal pre-K system he envisions for Detroit – one that would allow every 4-year-old in the city to attend preschool for free.

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## [State struggles to connect kids aging out of foster care with educational, vocational opportunities](#)

December 13, 2018 | Michigan Radio

A recent national report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation found that Michigan is behind the rest of the country in helping young people move out of the foster care system and onto a successful adult life. In West Virginia, 70 percent of youth transitioning out of foster care got education financial assistance. The national average was 23 percent. Here in Michigan? It was just one percent.

Also, listen [Stateside's conversation with Matt Gillard](#)

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## [Report Finds Foster Kids Shortchanged](#)

November 14, 2018 | NewsTalk 94.9 WSJM

Bobby Dorigo Jones, Policy and Outreach Associate with the nonprofit Michigan's Children, said many young people, especially children of color, get bounced around in foster homes. And that disrupts their relationships with family, friends and counselors - and can make it harder to graduate from high school....

Also seen on [Public News Service](#)

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## [Michigan Has Lowest Rate in the Country for Helping Youth Transition Out of the Foster Care, According to National Report](#)

November 13, 2018 | The Capital City Recap with Jeff Wiggins

Matt Gillard discusses a national foster care study with Jeff Wiggins on "The Capital City Recap" WILS-1320AM in Lansing. The new national report indicates Michigan has far to go to move youths out of the state's foster care system and into a life of self-sufficiency and life success.

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## [Michigan Has Lowest Rate in the Country for Helping Youth Transition Out of the Foster Care, According to National Report](#)

November 13, 2018 | Press Release Statement

A new national report indicates Michigan has far to go to move youths out of the state's foster care system and into a life of self-sufficiency and life success. Foster Youth Transitions, released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, found that Michigan ranks last in the nation for providing education assistance to youth transitioning out of foster care and is similarly positioned in the bottom among states for providing vocational training for youths aging out of foster care.

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## [State launches digital marketing effort to seek child support payments](#)

November 9, 2018 | Capital News Service

Low-income single parents are affected the most by the lack of child support, said Matt Gillard, president and chief executive officer of Michigan's Children, an advocacy group for children. That comes in to play especially among single parents

with young children. “One of the biggest costs of raising a kid is child care,” Gillard said. “It is difficult for two-parent households to pay for high quality childcare and is even more difficult for single parents who are not receiving additional funds through child support.”

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### **Candidates field questions from students during unique Novi forum**

**October 25, 2018 | Hometown Life**

The forum, held in the Novi Middle School auditorium, brought several candidates on stage to field questions asked from students in Novi’s Adult Education program, as well as students from the Huron Valley Schools district, who posed questions to five separate candidates running for office in southwest Oakland County. All the questions were written and asked by students on a variety of topics, including campaigning, education, roads, and infrastructure.

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### **Candidate forum focuses on hardships faced by adult students**

**October 25, 2018 | Lenconnect.com**

A forum focused on the interests and questions of students participating in adult education programs Wednesday gave candidates running in the Nov. 6 midterm election an opportunity to share different perspectives on common political issues.

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### **What happens when youth get a chance to ask politicians the questions?**

**October 25, 2018, | Second Wave Media**

“We know there is huge power in that direct connection between decision-makers and young people for whom their decisions have huge consequences,” Michele Corey, vice president for programs, says from Michigan’s Children’s Lansing office.

“Lots of decisions are made that impact the lives of kids under 18 and their families. They’re also future voters. So if you think about a 16-year-old, it’s not that long in the future before they will be voting.”

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### **Candidate forum the CCE hosted with The New Foster Care and Michigan’s Children**

**October 19, 2018 | Fox 2**

Fox 2 Detroit covered the candidate forum the CCE hosted with The New Foster Care and Michigan’s Children.

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### **Center for Civic Engagement to host Candidate Forum**

**October 17, 2018 | Oakland University News**

The Candidate Forum will feature nearly a dozen political candidates in the Michigan House, Michigan Senate and Governor’s race in attendance. The plan is to talk to the candidates about their stance on issues that face children and foster care families.

## [Political Candidates Face A Different Panel](#)

October 16, 2018 | WSGW Newsradio 790 Bay City

With the general election some three weeks away, candidates for some state offices were taking questions from a different audience. Michigan's Children President and CEO Matt Gillard say it was voters of the future asking the questions. Gillard said there were no 'got yah' questions and the young people had given lots of thought to their questions.

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## Youth Election Viewpoints

October 14, 2018 | Lansing State Journal

[Politicians need to listen to young people more - Marissa Cole](#)

[Young people must get engaged, speak up, vote - Dennis Hammond](#)

Marissa Cole and Dennis Hammond, two young adults who participated in Michigan's Children's 2018 youth-led candidate forum at Lansing Community College, shared their perspectives on the importance of youth voice in the political process with the Lansing State Journal Opinion section.

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## [Matt Gillard Radio Interview on Youth-Led Candidate Forums](#)

October 11, 2018 | Michigan's Big Show Starring Michael Patrick Shiels

Matt Gillard's interview with Michael Patrick Shiels "The Michigan Big Show", WJIM-1240 AM in Lansing and around the state about the forums and the importance of engaging youth and families in the elections.

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## Youth- and Family-Led Candidate Forums

October 9, 2018 | Press Releases

Michigan's Children is hosting a series of forums across the state with families and youth asking questions of political hopefuls in the upcoming November General Elections.

[Statewide Press Release](#)

[Bay Area Press Release](#)

[Capitol Area Press Release](#)

[Oakland Press Release](#)

[Newaygo Area Press Release](#)

[Wyoming Family-Led Press Release](#)

[Novi Family-Led Press Release](#)

[Lenawee Family-Led Press Release](#)

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## [Opinion: Pay Attention to the Michiganders Too Young to Vote](#)

September 26, 2018 | Traverse City Record-Eagle

Matt Gillard writes to candidates in the Grand Traverse Bay Area about the critical issues facing children and families.

## **Census Poverty Data Release**

**September 13, 2018 | Press Release Statement**

Here is a statement from Michigan's Children's President & CEO Matt Gillard that helps put into perspective poverty in Michigan, its impact on children, youth, and families, and why the time is now to encourage state leaders to apply proven strategies to reduce childhood poverty. The release of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 poverty data shows that Michigan's childhood poverty rate fell from 20.7% to 19.7% over the last year, down from a recession-high of 24.9% in 2012 but still significantly above pre-recession levels.

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## **Audit of Child Protective Services finds pattern of failure to meet requirements**

**September 6, 2018 | Michigan Radio**

Michele Corey is with Michigan's Children, a child advocacy group. She said the report highlights the work the state needs to do to better support families and children who come into contact with the child welfare system.

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## **Want My Vote? Pay Attention to Michiganders Too Young to Vote**

**Aug 28, 2018 | Bridge Michigan**

Our state fails many of its youngest citizens. Children advocate Matt Gillard has a list of questions we should ask all politicians this fall.

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## **The WILS Morning Wake-Up w/Dave Akerly**

**Aug 10, 2018 | 1320 WILS**

Matt Gillard discusses a comprehensive study that provides building blocks to reform school funding in Michigan.

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## **Poll: Likely Michigan voters support giving schools more of this**

**Aug 15, 2018 | Detroit Free Press**

Shared | [Manistee News Advocate](#)

"The timing is right now for this to be part of the election dialogue," said Matt Gillard, CEO of Michigan's Children and also a member of the [School Finance Research Collaborative].

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## **Education is essential - but expensive - for Michigan's youngest residents**

**May 24, 2018 | MLive**

Shared | [National Institute for Early Education Research](#)

"Parents across the economic spectrum in Michigan are challenged with childcare costs," said Matt Gillard, President and CEO of Michigan's Children, an advocacy group focusing on the needs of low-income children and families. "Parents want high-quality childcare opportunities for their children when they're at work. Policy makers need to do a better job of prioritizing that."

## [Michigans floundering education system has left its children far behind](#)

May 20, 2018 | MLive

“People can’t afford or don’t have access to quality child care in their communities,” said Matt Gillard, president and CEO of Michigan’s Children, which advocates for services for low-income families. “This is a huge challenge right now.”

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## [Michele Corey on Foster Care](#)

May 19, 2018 | MSU IPPSR

Michele Corey lays out the current state of Michigan’s foster care and child welfare systems and what the state has to do to move forward.

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## [MI Teachers Say Per Pupil Funding Increase Still Falls Short](#)

May 15, 2018 | WKAR

Matt Gillard is president and CEO of the nonprofit group Michigan’s Children. He says while those increases are a positive step, the budgetary process needs change.

“We’re trying to do that in a system that’s based on this concept of, all kids get this X amount, and then we do some adjustment,” he says. “That’s kind of a backwards way to look at it.”

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## [Guest Column: State should spend more to help vulnerable children](#)

May 2, 2018 | Oakland Press

By funding programs that reach the families and children most at-risk of abuse, state lawmakers would not just be committing to short-term investments in public safety, they would be investing in creating stronger communities for generations to come....

According to the group Michigan’s Children, researchers found child maltreatment cost Michigan \$1.8 billion in 2002.

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## [Medicaid Work Requirement Will Hurt Foster Kids, Says Former Foster Kid](#)

May 2, 2018 | Gongwer

Michele Corey, vice president of Michigan’s Children, said Michigan has a huge over-reliance on federal funding for foster care and puts no General Fund monies in itself to handle [prevention].

And too often policy decisions are made on a crisis basis, if there is [a] traumatic incident involving foster children or, for example, the federal lawsuit that attacked the adequacy of Michigan’s system. While changes are made in those situations, those changes do not look at the entire system.

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## [Medicaid Work Requirement Clears Senate Over Dem Objections](#)

April 19, 2018 | Gongwer

Michigan's Children CEO Matthew Gillard said the legislation would have a negative effect on children's health care due to parents not having access to care.

"Not only will children and youth see fewer check-ups, out-of-pocket costs for emergencies may put their families at financial risk. Medicaid enrollees borrow less money for medical costs, a benefit that kids feel when their parents are more able to afford healthful food or safe housing. The bill would also hurt youth who are transitioning out of the foster care system, many of whom negotiate long-term trauma," Mr. Gillard said in a statement.

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### **Medicaid Work Requirements Would Mean Fewer Services for Children**

**April 19, 2018 | Press Statement**

"We know from over two decades of work with children, youth, and families, overwhelming research, as well as common sense, that children who receive regular health care services reap lifelong benefits. When their parents are covered, kids are more likely to see a medical professional for preventive care. When parents can go to the doctor, they're more likely to bring their kids."

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### **UM-Flint hosts inaugural Michigan Early Childhood Policy Summit**

**April 9, 2018 | [news.umflint.edu](http://news.umflint.edu)**

The summit brought together over 200 attendees, including elected officials, education experts, and other leaders in various fields, to explore possibilities for short- and long-term goals for early childhood care and education in the state of Michigan. An aim of the summit was to help facilitate the creation of a statewide Early Childhood Policy Plan.

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### **19 candidates aiming to replace Rick Snyder as Michigan governor**

**Paul Egan, Detroit Free Press**

Published 11:49 a.m. ET Feb. 2, 2018 | Updated 9:46 a.m. ET March 9, 2018

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### **Michigan's governor wants to catch young students before they fall behind**

**February 26, 2018 | [Chalkbeat.org](http://Chalkbeat.org)**

Alesia Jackson noticed her two-year-old son Aaron could only speak about 50 words and wasn't yet forming sentences. As a preschool teacher herself, she knew he was behind.

Now, at 12, Aaron is thriving in middle school and his mother credits the benefits he got from the Early On Michigan program, which provides help for children from birth to three with learning disabilities or delays. Federal money currently pays for that program, but for the first time, Gov. Rick Snyder wants to add \$5 million more in state funds to make it available to more families.

## **Families Urge Lansing to Strengthen Workforce and Literacy Through Adult Education**

**February 9, 2018 | Michigan Chronicle**

Michigan lawmakers, their staff and other public officials will hear stories of resilience and perseverance as parents speak on Michigan's community and adult education system on Thursday, February 15, at 10am. The speakers will share stories of how adult education programs have opened doors to a better life for them and their children. The event is hosted by the Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education (MACAE), working with Michigan's Children, a statewide advocacy organization.

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## **2018 Governor's Budget Press Statement**

**February 7, 2018**

Michigan's Children's statement on Governor Rick Snyder's FY 2018-19 budget recommendation. The proposal includes the first ever statewide appropriation for Early On at \$5 million, a \$240 per pupil K-12 school funding increase, but no increases in public support for child care, abuse and neglect prevention, and foster care.

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## **2018 State of the State Michigan Press Statement**

**January 24, 2018**

Michigan's Children applauds the Governor for highlighting *Early On Michigan*, a critical budget need that has received widespread support by the education and advocacy communities, including in the recently released Special Education Task Force report, and urges an evidence-based approach to allocating any increased K-12 investment, targeted toward practices that assist children and youth and their families facing educational challenges, in order for them to have the greatest impact on student and family learning.

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## **The Ballenger Report interviews Matt Gillard**

**January 19, 2018 | The Ballenger Report "Friday Morning Podcast"**

Matt Gillard speaks to Bill Ballenger and Dennis Denno about Michigan's Children's legislative priorities for 2018.

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## **State must invest in special ed**

**December 18, 2017 | Detroit News**

For the past several years, Michigan's Children has joined with families and practitioners to call for state investment. This month, a recommendation to fix Michigan's indefensible lack of Early On support was put forward from the administration. Lt. Gov. Brian Calley's Special Education Reform task force's recent report called state investment in Early On a top priority strategy to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

## **Supporters Rally in Lansing to Support After School, Outside School Learning Programs**

**September 26, 2017 | Hometown Life**

Educators, parents, and students from across Michigan gathered at the state Capitol in Lansing recently to raise awareness of the need for more critical after-school and summer programs that serve hundreds of thousands of Michigan school children.

As part of the Michigan After-School Partnership, Michigan's Children co-sponsored the event and facilitated opportunities for all participants to connect directly with their legislators.

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## **Parents, Kids, Caregivers Call for Improved Social Services in Michigan**

**August 23, 2017**

With the prospect of federal cuts to programs that fund health care, foster care, and other social services for youth looming, dozens of families gathered at the Judson Center in Royal Oak and at the Children's Center in Detroit to host a group of lawmakers for tours of the centers and a dialogue with families and service providers on the state of social services in Michigan.

"Policymakers need to engage with kids, families, and those who support them," said Matthew Gillard, President & CEO of Michigan's Children. "Their stories provide important feedback about the programs our tax dollars support and can tip off legislators to problems that need addressing."

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## **Michigan's Children and Representative Levin Question President's Budget, Citing Impact on Children**

**June 19, 2017**

As the heat of budget season nears in Congress, Michigan's Children joined Congressman Sander Levin (D-MI-9) along a host of diverse stakeholders to publicize the damaging effect that the President's budget request, released earlier this year, would have on children and low- and middle-income families.

"It is unfathomable and unrealistic to think that the state would be able to make up the cuts" to children's social services, said Matt Gillard, President, and CEO of Michigan's Children.

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## **WCCCD Presents: Community Conversations - The Cost of Child Care**

**June 19, 2017**

Michigan's FY 2017-18 budget contains millions for child care reimbursement subsidies and an eligibility increase, but our state's policies still do not enable parents to access the best options for their children.

“Theoretically, you’re supposed to be able to access a majority of the child care options that are available to you, but it’s very difficult,” said Mina Hong. “For a lot of families, that means they can’t afford to send their child to what most people think of as a high quality child care center.”

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### **Combat adverse childhood experiences in Ingham County**

**April 30, 2017 | Lansing State Journal**

Michigan’s Children has long known that supporting parents with the tools they need to provide a nurturing and safe home builds the foundation for their children’s future success. Supports like home visiting programs and other child abuse prevention programs give parents the tools they need while saving taxpayer dollars.

Child abuse and neglect are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), identified by the CDC as contributing to a variety of poor outcomes including costly future health problems.

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### **WCCCD Presents: Community Conversations - The Foster Care Gap**

**March 2017**

Earlier this year, Michigan’s Children served as resource to this Wayne County Community College District video for child advocates. In this video, Michele Corey and Matt Gillard highlight the impact of trauma on kids in care, how many students fall into the “foster care gap” when they age out of the foster care system, and what community colleges and universities in Michigan are doing to try to close that gap.

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### **Democracy is not a one-way street. Unhappy? Start talking about it.**

**March 24, 2017 | Bridge**

The Center for Michigan released its most recent community conversation report this week, which evidenced some pretty extreme distrust of the public sector and public systems intended to work for the people of Michigan.

We can all agree that our elected officials need help - they need help to earn back our trust, and they need help to make the kinds of decisions that we can be proud of. Let’s commit to helping them, and making things better for children, youth and families in Michigan.

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### **House Committee Tax Cut Proposal Press Statement**

**February 15, 2017**

The move today by the House Tax Policy Committee to report House Bill 4001, a bill that would phase out the state’s personal income tax over the next several decades, is a bad deal for children, youth and families in Michigan. Passage of this tax cut proposal would end the Governor’s promising start to the budget season.

## **Vulnerable Kids Can't Improve Reading If Their Parents Can't Help**

**December 1, 2016 | Bridge**

Michigan has a new third-grade reading policy, intended to ensure that everyone entering the fourth grade is successfully reading at the time when the focus of instruction veers from learning to read to learning content material.

After months of debate surrounding the controversial component over retaining students who can't read before entering fourth grade, bills have been signed by the governor and implementation of the plan is underway. Michigan's ongoing challenge with this important benchmark includes 37 percent of kids unable to read at a basic level and 71 percent not reading proficiently by the end of third grade - statistics that are far worse for students of color and students facing other learning and life challenges.

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## **Report: More MI Children Now Insured**

**October 28, 2016 | News/Talk 94.9 WSJM**

CEO of Michigan's Children Matt Gillard says that's great, but there's still a need to invest in programs that serve the educational, economic, and social needs of families.

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## **Michigan Makes Marked Improvements in Children's Health Coverage**

**October 27, 2016 | Public News Service**

LANSING, Mich. — It's being called a historic milestone: a report released Thursday shows 95 percent of children in the U.S. had health care coverage in 2015, following the largest two-year decline of the uninsured rate on record.

In Michigan, the uninsured rate for kids dropped by 24 percent between 2013 and 2015, according to the analysis from the Georgetown University Center for Children and Families. Matt Gillard, president and CEO at Michigan's Children, said he credits the expansion of the Affordable Care Act in Michigan with the decline.

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## **Ingham Sheriff's race candidates sound of on issues of young offenders**

**October 18, 2016 | WILX.com**

Michigan's Children hosted a youth-led candidate forum last night at the Ingham Family Center focused on powerful questions from young people involved with Ingham County court programs.

We're just three weeks away from the November elections and candidates for Ingham County Sheriff had to answer to some of the youngest people they could serve. They were students who have gone through the juvenile justice system.

## **Ingham Academy youths to pose questions to local candidates**

October 12, 2016 | Fox 47 News

Candidates running for local and state offices will hear from youth enrolled at Ingham Academy during a candidate forum.

The special candidate forum will be held on Oct. 18, and court-ordered youths enrolled at the Ingham Academy will pose questions that are on their mind to those running for State House, Ingham County Prosecutor and Ingham County Sheriff's offices.

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## **Some questions for state rep candidates**

October 12, 2016 | By Robert Burgess - Herold Palladium Opinion Maker Columnist

Thursday evening the League of Women Voters will host forums for candidates running for Michigan state representative for the Michigan 78th and 79th Districts. Kudos to the League for hosting these discussions at Berrien RESA in Berrien Springs. State representatives do not get as much attention as presidential candidates. However, the issues that our legislators in Lansing vote on do impact our day-to-day lives. With that in mind, here are some of the questions that I hope candidates for state representative address.

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## **Educators seek ideas to help homeless students graduate**

October 4, 2016 | Detroit News

Michigan's Children facilitated a series of youth-led workshops at the recent National Dropout Prevention Network conference in Detroit. Prompted by that work, the Detroit News talked with one of our partners, Ozone House, and brought attention to the specific educational needs of young people who have been homeless.

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## **State stands to let \$20M in childcare funding slip away**

October 4, 2016 | The Steve Gruber show (WJIM)

Matt Gillard discusses the loss of more than \$20 million in federal child care subsidies for low-income working families on WJIM's Steve Gruber Show.

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## **The Time is Now for Senate to Pass Family First Prevention Services Act**

September 21, 2016 | The Chronicle of Social Change - The following is a blogger Co-op

For decades, child welfare reform has had strong bipartisan support, even during times when heated partisanship has divided Congress on national matters. Several of Michigan's own U.S Representatives and Senators have been among the most active leaders in shaping improved child welfare policy over that time.

We, and they, should be proud of those efforts. Now, before the end of 2016, Congress has the opportunity to act on a critical bill that would help Michigan expand

its work to keep children safely with their families, preventing the need for foster care.

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### **State stands to let \$20M in child care funding slip away**

**September 19, 2016 | Detroit Free Press**

We all know that families need affordable, high-quality child care. This is true for middle-class families and even more so for low-income families who spend a significantly higher percentage of their income on child care.

Two of three Michigan children have all parents in the workforce, but despite parental efforts to work, child poverty rates are ever increasing. So this is a major issue for our state. That's why scores of family and child care advocates in Michigan and nationally in recent months have been left incredulous - and you should be, too - that Gov. Rick Snyder's administration and the state Legislature are willing to leave \$20.5 million in child care assistance on the table.

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### **Youths complain foster system hinders sibling ties**

**August 10, 2016 | Detroit News**

Michigan's Children sponsored our latest KidSpeak youth forum at Wayne State University. The Detroit News highlighted several of the key take aways from the powerful testimony given by young people.

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### **Nearly half the families of Michigan's child care workers rely on public assistance, report says**

**July 8, 2016 | Mlive.com**

The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California-Berkeley released a report detailing the wages of workers in the child care industry. Preschool teachers earned a median wage of \$13.34 in 2015, down nine percent from five years earlier. Child care workers fare even worse. They have a median wage of \$9.43, down 10 percent during the same period.

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### **Detroit Youth Ask the Questions at Special Candidate Forum for State House Districts on Thursday, July 7**

**June 29, 2016**

Detroit, Mich. - Michigan's Children and The Children's Center will team up to host a candidate forum featuring Detroit youths as the panel of questioners and the state House candidates that want to represent them beginning at 6 p.m. on July 7. The forum is open to the public and takes place at the Center, 79 Alexandrine West in Detroit.

## **Michigan's Children Recognizes Denise Ilitch for Lifetime of Philanthropy, Service to Women and Children of Michigan**

***Business Leader Lauded for Untiring Advocacy Work, Charitable Support***

**May 26, 2016**

Detroit, MI – Michigan's Children, a nonpartisan and nonprofit voice for children and families, will honor Detroit-area business leader and philanthropist Denise Ilitch as its 2016 Honoree at a special Heroes Night celebration at the MGM Grand Casino on June 6, 2016.

“We are so proud to honor Denise Ilitch,” said Michigan's Children Board Chair Kristen McDonald. “She has been an integral part of Detroit's business and philanthropic communities for 30 years as a dedicated business leader, a devoted community servant, a supporter of many charitable causes and a tireless advocate for women and children.”

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## **Finding quality, affordable day care a challenge**

**May 25, 2016 | WoodTV.com**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (WOOD) – While you can't put a price tag on your child's safety, many parents are often forced to choose price over quality when it comes to day care.

“If you're going to pay more you're probably going to be paying the staff of that particular place better. That's the other challenge in this process. What am I willing to pay for is really kind of the question,” explained Mark Jansen, director of child care licensing in Michigan.

Jansen says child care costs vary across the state.

To watch video click [here](#).

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## **Foster Child Bill Of Rights**

**May 16, 2016 | Gongwer News Service**

In his comments on the House Floor encouraging passage of the Assurance of Quality Foster Care Act, Rep. Runestad identified his partnership with Michigan's Children on annual KidSpeak opportunities to hear directly from young people impacted by that system.

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## **Gillard: State funding needed to combat child abuse**

**April 22, 2016 | Lansing State Journal**

On Tuesday, hundreds of parents and child and family advocates gathered at the state Capitol for the Children's Trust Fund-sponsored Prevention Awareness Day. Matt Gillard talks in this editorial about the missing state investment in prevention

services, funded inconsistently in Michigan through private donations and federal funds.

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### [How much money does the state appropriate for programs to prevent child abuse?](#) \$0

**April 20, 2016 | Michigan Radio**

In Lansing every year, there is a day set aside as Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Day. That day was yesterday. So, on the steps of the Capitol, people got up to speak, children from an elementary group sang and dozens of people involved in organizations that work to keep kids safe stood in the rain to show their support. Matt Gillard spoke to Michigan Radio's Dustin Dwyer suggesting that Michigan legislators have not made good on their promises to support children and families.

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### [Child poverty rates rose in Lansing area, group says](#)

**March 22, 2016 | Lansing State Journal**

Lansing, Mich. — The number of children living in poverty in the Lansing area continues to rise along with most of the rest of the state, according to the Michigan League for Public Policy.

Nearly 24 percent of Ingham County children were living in poverty in 2014, up from 21.5 percent in 2006, according the 2016 Kids Count report released Monday by the nonpartisan institute based in Lansing.

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### [Getting Michigan's kids out of poverty](#)

**March 21, 2016 | WILX.com**

Lansing, Mich. (WILX) - Almost one out of every four children in Michigan lives in poverty according to the annual "kids count" report released Monday. That's a 26% increase in the last eight years.

Michigan is getting a failing grade on early childhood care.

"We have way too many kids living in poverty, way too many indicators of child's health and success not being obtained," said Michigan's Children's President Matt Gillard.

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### [Forum: Support needed for grandparents raising kids](#)

**February 13, 2016 | Record Eagle**

For many social and economic reasons, the number of grandparents who are primary caregivers for their grandchildren has risen sharply in recent years and your report has shed a needed spotlight on a timely and critical issue.

Nearly one-third of children in the state's welfare system are placed with grandparents and many others are cared for by grandparents not in the system. Nearing or in retirement, often ill and living on fixed incomes, these caregivers face many challenges. Children whose own parents are dealing with incarceration, drug addiction or mental health issues often arrive on their grandparents' doorsteps suffering from trauma that's difficult to navigate.

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### [Water Contamination Raises Health Concerns for Flint Students](#)

January 25, 2016 | Education Week

Educators in Flint, Mich., have long taught students buffeted by the pressures of poverty and urban blight.

Now, they're facing a new crisis: toxic tap water.

City and school officials are dealing with the fallout of a contaminated-water crisis, after it was discovered several months ago that hundreds of children in the financially strapped city have high levels of lead in their blood, in part because of the state's decision to switch Flint's water supply.

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### [Current State | 1/15/16 | Ep.683](#)

January 15, 2016 | WKAR's Current State

Matt Gillard and Sen. Rick Jones discuss potential benefits in legislation under consideration by state Lawmakers plus more that is needed on WKAR's 'Current State.' Note: Their interview with host Mark Bashore begins 29 minutes into the program.

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### [What Will Happen to Flint's Lead-Poisoned Children?](#)

January 14, 2016 | The Daily Beast

"I love Flint, I am Flint, I do community work in Flint, but if there's one thing that can actually drive me from Michigan right now, it's this water," said Chia Morgan.

Morgan, a social worker and mother of a 3-year-old daughter, has lived in the Flint area her entire life but she may soon leave the state for fear of lead poisoning.

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### ['Devastating' Lead Exposure Could Pose Problems for Flint, Mich., Schools](#)

January 8, 2016 | Education Week

With hundreds, and possibly thousands, of children in Flint, Mich., confirmed to have potentially toxic amounts of lead in their blood, a school district already racked by poverty and poor performance could face yet another challenge.

## [Lead poisoned kids in Flint will need more than apologies, declarations](#)

January 7, 2016 | Mlive.com - The following is a guest column for The Flint Journal. The children of Flint will need more than new declarations of emergency, state-level resignations and public apologies to help reverse the damage that has been done to their young bodies and developing brains. And now is the time for the state to step in with a proven strategy to help the most vulnerable citizens among us.

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## [Letter: Family plight shows need for better safety net](#)

December 26, 2015 | The Detroit News

Re: The Dec. 9 Detroit News story “Homelessness, asthma force family to give up children”: The story of Siretha Lattimore, Dwayne Cole and their son Malik, is unfortunately, not unique in Michigan or throughout the nation. The experiences of this family are all too common in today’s child welfare system.

Malik’s story reads like a Greek tragedy, but it’s an American one. Working full time and barely getting by on \$24,500 per year, losing their home and spending time in shelters, transitional housing, and sleeping in their car, Malik’s family had to make some heartbreaking choices. Many readers may have found it shocking that parents Siretha and Dwayne ultimately had to place their kids in foster care in order for their children to receive the care they needed.

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## [State lawmakers taking up proposed changes to Michigan’s foster care program](#)

December 1, 2015 | Michigan Radio

A state House committee will consider legislation to help foster kids navigate the system.

Among other things, the bills would require a “children’s assurance of quality foster care policy is developed” and that current and former foster children participate in developing the policy.

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## [Michigan Legislature Considers Bills to Remove Youth from Adult Prison](#)

December 1, 2015 | Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency

LANSING, MI - Today, the Michigan Legislature will hear testimony on a package of bills aimed at reducing the number of young people exposed to the dangers of adult jails and prisons. Among the 15 bipartisan sponsors of this legislative package, Representatives Harvey Santana (D-Detroit) and Peter Lucido (R-Shelby Township) are focused on the positive impact that these policy changes would have on public safety and cost-savings.

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## [‘This is Why I’m Doing This’: Adult Students Tell Legislators Improving Their Education Ultimately Helps Their Children](#)

November 18, 2015 | School News Network

Students from the Wyoming Public Schools Adult Education Program were among those who traveled to a Michigan's Children-sponsored FamilySpeak titled, "Building Family Literacy Through Adult Education." Their story appears in this piece carried by the School News Network.

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### [Addressing School Bullying with Michele Corey](#)

November 11, 2015 | The Tony Trupiano Show

Michigan's Children Vice President for Programs Michele Corey tackles the subject of school bullying, discussing remedies such as evidence-based, trauma-informed practices and integrated school services, on this Blog Talk Radio program hosted by Tony Trupiano.

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### [Too many Michigan kids are bullied](#)

November 5, 2015 | The Detroit News

The new Wayne State University report into the fear and victimization that too many Michigan schoolchildren face every year from bullying must serve as a call to action and some shifts in thinking about solutions for policymakers around the state.

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### [Wayne State social work researchers say Michigan schools must do more to reduce bullying](#)

October 23, 2015 | Wayne State University

Wayne State social work researchers this month will present Michigan policymakers, youth advocates, religious leaders and educators with the results of a new study suggesting five-year-old legislation requiring school districts throughout the state to develop and implement anti-bullying policies has not been effective.

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### [Young parents call for adult education investments](#)

October 28, 2015 | WLNS.com

LANSING, MI (WLNS) - Two state policy groups say many young adults have turned the page on their own literacy skills.

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### [Report Shows Bullying Remains Despite Required Policies](#)

October 26, 2015 | Gongwer.com

Michigan law requires school districts to develop policies to combat bullying, but those policies appear to be having little effect, a report released Monday by Wayne State University said.

More than half of students say bullying is still a problem in their schools and have seen someone bullied, the report said.

## [1 in 4 Michigan students faces bullying in schools, report says](#)

October 26, 2015 | [Mlive.com](#)

More than half of Michigan students in a recent survey said bullying is a serious problem in their schools, according to a new report from Wayne State University.

“Bullying can end lives,” said John Austin, state Board of Education president at a press conference Monday morning in Ann Arbor. “It’s an issue we’ve been dealing with for a long time.”

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## [Foster care advocates cite training, funding as top priorities](#)

September 23, 2015 | [WKAR.com](#)

Yesterday, the public policy organization Michigan’s Children held a forum called “Raising the Voices of Caregivers from the Foster Care System” to discuss how to improve the system. Current State speaks with Michele Corey, vice president of programs at Michigan’s Children, and state Rep. Jim Runestad.

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## [Lawmakers meet with group calling for caregiver improvements](#)

September 22, 2015 | [WLNS.com](#)

LANSING, MI (WLNS) - Michigan lawmakers learned more about the state’s foster care system Tuesday and the ways it can be improved for caregivers.

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## [Foster Families Speak Out on Child Welfare System](#)

September 22, 2015 | [Publicnewsservice.org](#)

LANSING, Mich. - It’s welcome news for some of the state’s most vulnerable residents, as advocates for foster children believe the political climate is favorable for making improvements to the child welfare system.

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## [Runestad joins panel to hear from foster parents](#)

September 14, 2015 | [Hometownlife.com](#)

State Rep. Jim Runestad, R-White Lake, will join a collection of other policymakers Sept 22 on a listening panel to hear from the caregivers of children in foster care.

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## [Helping vulnerable children early is key to closing achievement gaps](#)

September 8, 2015 | [Bridge.com](#)

No longer a top tier state for education, Michigan today has larger gaps in student outcomes among its diverse populations than many other states, jettisoning our state to 37th in the nation according to the **National Kids Count project**. These learning gaps start early and persist and grow throughout educational careers without appropriate intervention and support, threatening our state’s future and the futures of thousands of our children.

## **Supporters Stand Up for Earned Income Tax Credit**

**August 19, 2015 | WILX**

Don't touch the Earned Income Tax Credit. That message came today from a group opposing a house bill that would eliminate the credit and put the money toward fixing the roads. The head of the nonprofit Michigan's Children says getting rid of the benefit would hurt families more than it would help the roads.

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## **Michigan EITC coalition encourage lawmakers to avoid including credit in road funding debate**

**August 19, 2015**

A coalition of organizations supporting the state Earned Income Tax Credit today urged lawmakers to maintain support for the state EITC as a popular key tool for fighting poverty, particularly among children.

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## **For foster care kids, bus tickets don't solve transportation woes**

**August 14, 2015 | [stateofopportunity.michiganradio.org](http://stateofopportunity.michiganradio.org)**

Michigan Radio's State of Opportunity series joined Michigan's Children's KidSpeak forum in Detroit last week and produced this report that highlights forum participant Amber Thomas' voice on the issue of transportation and her recommendations.

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## **Improving third-grade reading isn't enough**

**June 16, 2015 | [bridgemi.com](http://bridgemi.com)**

Governor Snyder's Third Grade Reading Workgroup recently released its recommendations to improve Michigan's lagging third-grade reading scores. While almost every other state has seen reading proficiency rise, Michigan's reading proficiency has steadily declined for the past 12 years. This troubling trend is even worse for students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, and students struggling with other big challenges like homelessness - all of whom are falling even more behind in their reading abilities.

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## **One Man Making a Difference**

**May 28, 2015**

LANSING -- Terry Murphy, the immediate past president of the public policy group, Michigan's Children, has been recognized with a national public service award from the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) for his work with at-risk kids in Grand Rapids and Detroit.

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## **Most readers still not convinced on Proposal 1**

**May 2, 2015 | [Detroit Free Press](http://DetroitFreePress.com)**

The election will arrive shortly with long-term implications for schools, families and communities for years to come.

Let's seize the opportunity provided by Proposal 1 to invest in our schools, children and communities by going to the polls Tuesday and urging our friends and neighbors to do the same! This is likely our best chance to fix the roads and continue support for the programs that matter most for our schoolchildren and families in this legislative session.

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### **Gillard: Pass Prop 1, for the children**

**April 28, 2015 | The Detroit News**

While much attention around Proposition 1 has been focused on roads and transportation safety, we've been looking at the prospects of a "yes" vote on the May 5 ballot proposal through the eyes of children and families.

We are both excited by the expectation for additional resources to help children in Michigan, particularly vulnerable children, and scared of what a "no" vote will bring.

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### **Matt Gillard and Michael Foley: Help fight child abuse and neglect**

**April 22, 2015 | Lansing State Journal**

In a perfect world every child would grow up experiencing a happy, healthy childhood, safe from harm, and able to fully realize their potential as adults. But we know we don't live in a perfect world. Thirty years after the start of the national observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month, the rate of childhood abuse and neglect in our state continues to rise.

Why? Increasing economic stresses are one big reason. And there are clear connections between child maltreatment and limited parenting skills, social isolation, domestic violence, untreated substance abuse and behavioral health problems. Worsening childhood poverty rates combined with a troubling trend of competing priorities that have led to a reduction of child abuse and neglect prevention and intervention programs. The result is that too many families hurting, and too many children's futures threatened.

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### **More action needed to improve early literacy (Guest column)**

**April 16, 2015 | Mlive.com**

There's a new spotlight on the long-standing problem of third-grade reading proficiency among Michigan schoolchildren. Gov. Rick Snyder understands we need a well-educated workforce and all children must be literate by the end of third grade. His 2016 budget recommends a comprehensive set of measures to improve early literacy - a key component of academic success and career readiness.

The annual Kids Count in Michigan Data Book closely tracks critical literacy benchmarks. From the Data Book, we know that one-third of Kalamazoo County fourth-graders are not reading proficiently on the state's MEAP test, nor are 43

percent of high school students on the Michigan Merit Exam. The statistics are worse for students of color, from low-income families, and those facing other challenges.

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### **Early learning summit in June could impact Michigan's children**

April 14, 2015 | [Bridgemi.com](http://Bridgemi.com)

Take the realization that young children learn quickest and best – by far – from birth to around age 5. That has led to the creation of pre-kindergarten and early childhood programs all over the country, some private and some publicly funded.

That, in turn, has led to big increases in funding for public early childhood programs, especially here in Michigan, which now leads the nation in increasing public support for our Great Start Readiness Program, which is aimed at poor and vulnerable four-year-olds.

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### **Prop 1 would help Michigan's children**

April 7, 2015 | [Macombdaily.com](http://Macombdaily.com)

A new spotlight has been cast on addressing the long-standing problem of third-grade reading proficiency among Michigan schoolchildren. Gov. Snyder understands we need a well-educated workforce and to get it we must increase the number of children who are literate by the end of third grade. His 2016 budget recommendations include a comprehensive set of measures to improve early literacy - a key component of academic success and career readiness for children here and statewide.

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### **Coalition: More funding needed to help kids reach reading standards**

April 3, 2015 | [Dailytribune.com](http://Dailytribune.com)

Living in temporary housing, not knowing where or when your next meal is coming. These are examples of poverty educators say can stunt a child's educational growth so greatly it could lead to academic futility – and one day, even to their incarceration.

Oakland County remains fifth in the state in regards to child well-being, according to a study by Kids Count in Michigan, which is part of a national effort to gauge children's welfare. The percentage of Michigan children living in poverty, however, has increased dramatically since the recent economic recession.

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### **Our View: Early childhood programs among best investments**

March 29, 2015 | [Holland sentinel.com](http://Holland sentinel.com)

HOLLAND - One of the most encouraging signs on the political landscape in Lansing in the past couple of years has been the growing recognition that it's cheaper to deal with social problems by preventing them before they occur than once they're persistent and entrenched.

Always the numbers guy, Gov. Rick Snyder has increased funding for the state's Great Start Readiness preschool program by \$130 million, recognizing that getting more kids prepared for school will save money by reducing the need for later interventions. And in his proposed 2015-16 budget, the governor includes a broad-ranging \$48 million initiative to improve third-grade reading skills, considered a key predictor of future academic performance. Yet not everyone's on board with that kind of investment for the future – when a state House appropriations subcommittee approved its education budget last week, it included no funds for the third-grade reading initiative.

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### **Muskegon County leaders highlight need for increased third-grade reading proficiency in Gov. Snyder's 2016 budget**

**March 23, 2015 | Muskegon Chronicle**

MUSKEGON - A group of Muskegon County leaders in the fields of education, human services and law enforcement are making a push to increase literacy in the community, particularly in elementary age children.

The leaders came together Monday, March 23 at the MLive Muskegon Chronicle offices in downtown Muskegon, as well as stops in Grand Rapids and Holland, in an effort to recognize a statewide and countywide problem in literacy. The group presented a series of figures and statistics in their respective fields, highlighting education and how it ties into poverty, healthcare, employment and incarceration statistics.

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### **Advocates say economic recovery leaves too many MI children behind**

**February 19, 2015 | WKAR**

Michigan takes a lot of pride in its nickname as the “comeback” state. And after taking a beating during the Great Recession, Michigan is indeed on the upswing. Forecasts say the state should continue to see economic growth and improvements to the unemployment rate in the next two years. But not everyone is feeling the impact of that recovery yet. Among those left behind are the nearly 550,000 Michigan children living in poverty.

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### **Child abuse, neglect rise sharply in Ingham County**

**February 19, 2015 | Lansing State Journal**

LANSING - Ingham County saw a 38 percent rise in child poverty and 82 percent increase in victims of child abuse and neglect since 2006, according to a new report on the well being of children.

The Michigan League for Public Policy's Kids Count Data Book, which looks at the overall well being of children in the state, analyzed change in key categories from 2006 to 2012 or 2013, depending on the category.

### **Foster kids' stories inspire moves to reform**

**February 13, 2015 | Capital News Service**

LANSING - The number of Michigan children in the state's foster care system is at its lowest in almost a decade, but anecdotes from kids within the system have legislators considering bipartisan reform.

About 18 foster children told legislators recently about their experiences in the system, highlighting issues such as sibling separation and limited resources available once they age out of the system.

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### **Testimony taken at KidsSpeak Jan. 26**

**January 21, 2015 | Hometownlife.com**

On average, 12 children from Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties enter the foster care system each day.

For the 13,500 children in foster care in Michigan, of which nearly 40 percent come from greater Detroit, growing up without a permanent home or parents holds unique challenges with lifelong consequences, such as achieving a high school diploma and post-secondary education, teen pregnancy and contacts with the juvenile justice system. These issues, plus a strong focus on educational concerns, will be explored at the annual KidSpeak event 6-8 p.m., Jan. 26. The event will feature real life stories of foster kids and adult foster children.

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### **Foster Teens to Testify at Michigan's Children's KidSpeak Program before Oakland County Board on Jan. 26, 2015**

**January 19, 2015**

PONTIAC -- On average, 12 children from Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties enter the foster care system each day. What are their experiences? How are their lives and futures shaped by their care as wards of the state? What happens when they age out?

For the 13,500 children in foster care in Michigan, of which nearly 40 percent come from Greater Detroit, growing up without a permanent home or parents holds unique challenges with lifelong consequences - among them, achieving a high school diploma and post-secondary education, teen pregnancy and contacts with the juvenile justice system. These issues plus a strong focus on educational concerns will be explored at the annual KidSpeak event featuring real-life stories of foster kids and adult foster children on Jan. 26, 2015 from 6-8 p.m.

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### **To help the lives of Michigan's children, help families**

**November 20, 2014 | Detroit Free Press**

With 1 in 4 Michigan children born into poverty today, too many of our children will face serious obstacles to success. Poor children are more likely to face health

problems, a shortage in basic needs and a lack of educational opportunities. The support of one's family has traditionally been the first and best response across time.

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### **Local teens lead candidate forum**

**October 29, 2014 | Candgnews.com**

MOUNT CLEMENS – Candidates vying for seats in the House and Senate this upcoming general election tackled some of the biggest issues and concerns facing teens today during a Meet the Candidates forum Oct. 21.

Held at Mount Clemens High School and hosted by Teen Talking Truth, a youth advocacy group from CARE of Southeastern Michigan and Michigan's Children, the Youth Voices.

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### **ELECTION: Candidates answer tough questions from teens**

**October 29, 2104 | Sourcenewspapers.com**

On Oct. 21, Teens Talking Truth, a youth advocacy group from CARE of Southeastern Michigan, and Michigan's Children, a statewide advocacy organization focused solely on public policy in the best interest of children from cradle to career, hosted "Youth Voices: Changing Public Policy," an opportunity for candidates to lay out their plans for addressing the most critical issues facing youth and talk about how, if elected, they will work toward better outcomes in local communities. Participants included Steven Bieda, Anthony Forlini, Kenneth Paul Jenkins, Phillip Kurczewski, Marilyn Lane, Peter Lucido and Robert Murphy.

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### **Candidates answer questions from local teens Oct. 21**

**October 17, 2014 | Macomb Daily**

Middle school and high school students, their families and members of the community are invited to a special, youth-hosted meet the candidates night, Oct. 21 at the Mount Clemens High School auditorium. Youth Voices: Changing Public Policy is hosted by Teens Talking Truth, CARE of Southeastern Michigan's youth advocacy group, and Michigan's Children, a statewide advocacy organization specializing in public policy for children and families.

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### **Local Candidates Forum Gives Voices to Youth Issues**

**October 13, 2014 | WKAR**

Matt Gillard, CEO/President of Michigan's Children talks with WKAR's *Current State's* Kevin Lavery about our youth-led candidate forums that Michigan's Children has been hosting across the state. This interview focuses on the candidate forum in

Lansing and includes two young people from Peckham, Incorporated in Lansing who will also be asking tough questions to candidates at the October 13th forum.

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### **Parents Evaluate Public Programs during Michigan's Children FamilySpeak Event at National Black Child Development Institute Conference in Detroit**

**October 13, 2014**

DETROIT - With poverty affecting one in four children born in Michigan - and worse, half of African-American children in the state – public policies are needed to better support the distinctive challenges faced by struggling parents and their children.

Families dealing with homelessness, chronic childhood illnesses, foster and adoptive parents, and others will provide frank testimony on the impact of public programs.

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### **Lansing area high school students to pose questions to area candidates Monday**

**October 11, 2014 | MLive**

Peckham, Inc., the Peace and Prosperity Youth Action Movement and Michigan's Children, a statewide advocacy organization focused on public policy for children, youth and families, will host a candidate forum on Monday, Oct. 13 for state House and Senate hopefuls in the Nov. 4 general election. What sets this candidate forum apart from most is that a diverse group of 7th to 12th grade students from Lansing and Lansing-area high schools (Eastern, Everett, Holt, Waverly and Sexton) will lead the questioning of the candidates.

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### **Children to question candidates Wednesday**

**October 8, 2014 | WZZM13**

GRAND RAPIDS (WZZM) - The candidates running for state House and Senate districts around Grand Rapids appear at a forum Wednesday night, October 8. What is unique is the questioners.

They will be a “diverse group of youth from Grand Rapids Public Schools”, according to the sponsors, LINC Community Revitalization, Inc. and Michigan's Children, a statewide advocacy organization focused on public policy for children, youth and families.

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### **Kalamazoo 'Spotlight' Show Features Matt Gillard**

**September 25, 2014 | Public Media Network**

Kalamazoo-based Public Media Network featured Michigan's Children CEO Matt Gillard's in an extended interview on its “Community Spotlight” series. Gillard

discussed current children's issues, including quality child care and education, support for child care credits, the state's child care subsidy for low-income families, and much more. See the interview with host Harold Beu [here](#). In Kalamazoo, it can be viewed on Charter Channel 187 (AT&T U-Verse Channel 99).

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### **[Our kids' futures hinge on getting out the vote](#)**

**July 31, 2014 | The Detroit News**

Matt Gillard, CEO/President of Michigan's Children, talks about the importance of primary election voting in this opinion piece.

While the stakes are high this season, we also know that most registered voters don't come out in August primaries. To that we say, don't let other people decide who will represent you and your families for the next two and four years.

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### **[Survey: Recession sent Michigan's child poverty up](#)**

**July 21, 2014 | The Detroit News**

More of Michigan's children fell into poverty during the Great Recession, according to the annual Kids Count survey released Tuesday.

The report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation on the well-being of children said 1 in 4 Michigan youngsters was in an impoverished household in 2012, up from 19 percent in 2005. In addition, the number of children living in high-poverty areas rose from 8 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in 2008-12, the survey said.

### **[Children's issues in this year's election](#)**

**July 14, 2014 | WMUK-FM**

LANSING, MI – There's "pocket book," "hot button" and social issues. Then there's the "Sandbox Party." The group is trying to highlight issues related to children before voters head to the polls for the August primary and the general election in November. Michigan's Children CEO Matt Gillard told WMUK's Gordon Evans that the Sandbox Party started about four years ago among advocates for early childhood programs. Gillard says they've expanded that focus on children's issues from "cradle to career."

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### **[Voters urged to head to the polls this August](#)**

**July 7, 2014 | WKZO-AM**

LANSING, MI – Matt Gillard talked to WKZO-AM's Andrew Green about the Sandbox

Party's drive to encourage voters to go to the polls in August when winners in nearly 80 percent of state Legislative districts will be decided. "The way these districts have been drawn, particularly our state legislative districts, the decisions that are made in August are the ones which are relevant," Gillard told WKZO. Listen in!

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### [Not Just for Kids: Sandbox Party offers resources for voters](#)

July 7, 2014 | Public News Service

LANSING, MI – Matt Gillard is spreading the news about the importance of taking an interest in the August primaries, particularly because many races will be decided then. Here, he talks to the Public News Service's Mona Shand about the Sandbox Party's election-year focus. Listen in![/col-full]

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### [Matt Gillard talks about the Michigan Sandbox Party on MIRS Monday Podcast](#)

June 30, 2014 | MIRS Podcast

Matt Gillard, CEO/President of Michigan's Children, talks about education funding and a new party in town – the Michigan Sandbox Party. Also, what kind of marks did the recently signed education funding bill get?

Listen in to this MIRS Monday Podcast and hear Matt discuss why people who care about kids should be involved in selecting candidates for the November run-off. (Matt's talk begins around 11 minutes into the podcast.)

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### [Sandbox Party Joins with Michigan's Children and Focuses on Making Children's Issues Top Priorities](#)

June 25, 2014 | Nightlight

LANSING, MI – With a critical Michigan election season upon us, the Michigan Sandbox Party has joined forces with Michigan's Children to raise awareness and make children and family issues top priorities in state political campaigns.

Michigan's Children is the only statewide, multi-issue advocacy organization focused solely on public policy in the best interest of children, from cradle to career, and their families.

### [Long-time Children's Advocate Embraces New Role](#)

May 7, 2014 | Michigan Nightlight

LANSING, MI – As Matt Gillard takes the helm of Michigan's Children, a statewide,

nonpartisan advocacy group, he plans to move children's issues up the priority list for elected officials.

How would Michigan look if the government prioritized the welfare of children above all else? Matt Gillard is championing that ideal as the recently appointed president and CEO of Michigan's Children, a statewide, nonpartisan children's advocacy organization fighting for strong public policy to protect vulnerable children and to make Michigan an excellent place to raise kids and be a kid.

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### **Well-being of African-Americans in Michigan among worst in nation**

**April 1, 2014 | The Detroit News**

The well-being of African-American children in Michigan is among the worst in the nation, according to a report to be released today.

The Kids Count report found only Mississippi and Wisconsin fared worse than the Wolverine state, based on 12 criteria, including normal birth weights, education of parents and the number of children living at or above poverty. Matt Gillard says the state's performance is disappointing but not surprising.

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### **Child Health & Wellness**

**March 12, 2014 | Michigan NightLight**

Matt Gillard recently shared some of Michigan's Children's strategies to improve children's health with the Michigan Nightlight.

The 2013 national Kids Count data book reports Michigan ranking 31 out of 50 in child well-being. With this shaky foundation, Michigan has some serious work to do in improving child health and wellness outcomes.

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### **County, state officials learn about foster care system from those who lived it**

**February 24, 2014 | The Oakland Press**

Milford resident Dennis Schneider, who was raised through the foster care system, doesn't want sympathy.

"That's not what you want to hear" being a foster kid, said Schneider, 18, an engineering student at Western Michigan University. "What we really need is for the money (for foster care) to be distributed correctly ... need to provide a stable house for the child to grow up, and we need mentors – we need guidance."

Schneider and several former graduates of the foster care system in Oakland County and beyond stood in front of lawmakers and elected officials Monday for the first

KidSpeak event in Oakland, an event geared towards helping shape policy in foster care. The event, sponsored by the Kitsie and Albert Scaglione of Park West Foundation Voices for Michigan's Children, Foster Care Alumni of America-Michigan Chapter, Michigan Youth Opportunity Initiative and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, was a chance for those in the system to share their stories.

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### [Make candidates accountable to vulnerable Michigan children and families](#)

January 22, 2014 | Detroit Free Press

As the election blitz begins in Michigan, amid the stump speeches, attack ads and debates we'll see in upcoming months, it's unlikely you'll hear much about our most pressing issue: the future of children and families in Michigan.

Children and families don't have high-priced lobbyists, superPACs, or nationwide ads. They do have us. And in a democracy, that's still enough to make a real difference. Read Michele's related blog.

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### [Area Resident selected among Riley Institute's 2013-14 class of white Riley-Peterson policy fellows](#)

September 4, 2013 | furman.edu

GREENVILLE, S.C.—Fifteen leaders in the afterschool and expanded learning fields nationwide have been selected as White-Riley-Peterson Policy Fellows as part of a partnership between The Riley Institute at Furman University and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

From September this year until the end of May 2014, fellows will study afterschool and expanded learning policy, and develop state-level policy plans in partnership with their Statewide Afterschool Networks and the national Afterschool Alliance.

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### [Foster youth share experiences, ideas for system reform with policymakers](#)

August 19, 2013 | Today@Wayne

Michigan's Children facilitated a KidSpeak event in Detroit on Monday, August 12 in partnership with the Wayne State College of Law, Wayne State School of Social Work, and the Foster Care Alumni of America - Michigan Chapter. Decision makers heard concerns and recommendations from current and former foster youth working to transition to successful adulthood.

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### [The Great Start Readiness Program is seeing a huge expansion, but is it enough?](#)

July 23, 2013 | Michigan Radio

Senior Policy Associate Mina Hong alongside Scott Menzel, Superintendent of the Washtenaw Intermediate School District, was on Michigan Radio's Stateside with Cynthia Canty to discuss the Great Start Readiness preschool expansion and what's left undone. Specifically, they focus on the need to expand services to young children prenatally through age three and their families to build a comprehensive early childhood system that prepares all children - particularly children of color and from low-income families - to succeed in school and life.

### **Why are Michigan's child abuse/neglect rates so high?**

June 18, 2013 | [bridgemi.com](http://bridgemi.com)

The number of abused and neglected Michigan children rose in recent years, during a period when state spending on abuse and neglect prevention plummeted.

The state's rate of abuse and neglect, below the national average as recently as 2006, is now more than 50 percent higher than the national rate. Michigan now ranks 41st, according to an analysis by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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### **Guest commentary: Preschool funding boost praised, but there's work to do for Michigan's 0-3's**

June 18, 2013 | [bridgemi.com](http://bridgemi.com)

The Legislature recently approved an historic expansion of the Great Start Readiness Program - the state's preschool program for 4-year-olds at risk of being underprepared for kindergarten. This \$65 million increase - a 60 percent expansion of the program - will provide a preschool experience for thousands of children who are currently eligible, but not enrolled in the program. This will be the most significant move that we've seen in recent years to provide support to the 29,000 4-year-olds currently living in Michigan who cannot access GSRP, an unmet need that was uncovered by Bridge Magazine.

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### **Michigan moves into national forefront of preschool funding**

May 30, 2013 | [bridgemi.com](http://bridgemi.com)

Michigan will move from middle of the pack to top of the heap when Gov. Rick Snyder signs off on a massive expansion of state-funded early childhood education in coming days.

The \$65 million increase in funding for the Great Start Readiness Program, allowing at least 10,000 more 4-year-olds to attend high-quality, publicly funded preschool, is the biggest increase in the nation this year and leads an emerging trend to invest in children before kindergarten.

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### **Guest commentary: Michigan leaders recognize the wisdom of investing in preschoolers**

**May 30, 2013 | [bridgemi.com](http://bridgemi.com)**

We tip our hats to Michigan's governor and the Legislature for funding expansion of the state's Great Start Readiness Program. This program offers high-quality preschool to needy families of 4-year-olds.

Culturally and scientifically, evidence abounds that nurturing and investing in children before they reach kindergarten pays extraordinary dividends. For each dollar spent on early education and care, there are \$7 of savings in grade repetition, social welfare and corrections. Expanding pre-K can save \$100 million in special education costs and the high cost of kindergarten repetition. Business leaders - people who think about returns on investment - strongly support public and private investments in the building of talent.

### **State adopts 'nation's largest' expansion of early childhood funding**

**May 30, 2013 | [bridgemi.com](http://bridgemi.com)**

Ten thousand additional Michigan 4-year-olds will be in classrooms next school year, after Republican and Democratic legislators Wednesday passed the largest expansion in early childhood education in the nation.

The \$65 million expansion for the 2013-14 budget year is a major victory for business leaders, educators and children advocates, as well as Gov. Rick Snyder and legislative leaders who believed early childhood education offers a good return on investment. But the biggest winners will be Michigan's low- and moderate-income children, who will now be able to enroll in a program proven to improve test scores and lower drop-out rates.

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### **Expanding preschool is first step in education advance**

**March 7, 2013 | [bridgemi.com](http://bridgemi.com)**

Advocates across the state are rejoicing in Gov. Rick Snyder's proposed \$65 million expansion (\$130 million over two years) for the Great Start Readiness Program-Michigan's public preschool program for 4-year-olds at-risk of being under-prepared for kindergarten. Credit is due to the Center for Michigan and Bridge Magazine for bringing additional public attention to the thousands of eligible children unable to

access GSRP; the Children’s Leadership Council of Michigan for making GSRP expansion a priority; and legislative and administrative champions for putting comprehensive funding proposals in motion.

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### **Child wellness declining in Hillsdale County**

**February 3, 2013 | Hillsdale.net**

LANSING – The overall wellbeing for children in Hillsdale County has worsened according to a report released this week by Kids Count in Michigan. The report states that out of the 82 counties in the state, Hillsdale ranks 61st overall in the study that was conducted using numbers from 2005 to 2011. While the state as a whole saw child poverty increase by 28 percent, Hillsdale County saw the numbers jump by 33 percent.

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### **Ottawa County Ranks Best In Child Well-being, Lake County Worst**

**January 31, 2013 | Gongwer New Service**

The latest Kids Count in Michigan report ranks counties for the first time since its beginning in 1992, and the overall study shows an increase in child poverty and a decrease in children in foster care and teen birth rates.

Kids Count in Michigan is a collaboration between Michigan’s Children and the Michigan League for Public Policy.

Ottawa, Livingston and Clinton Counties were ranked best for child well-being overall and Clare, Roscommon and Lake Counties were ranked worst.

### **Forum: Kids at edge of fiscal cliff**

**December 20, 2012 | Traverse City Record-Eagle**

As the federal “fiscal cliff” approaches, we’re hearing more about how various scenarios would affect politicians, defense contractors, high-income taxpayers, seniors, and other constituencies. But an important group of Michiganders with a lot on the line has been largely ignored: children.

The stakes are immense, because the recession has been hard on children. A recent analysis by the nonpartisan Urban Institute found that nearly 210,000 Michigan children live with an unemployed parent. Compared to 2007, that’s nearly a 27 percent increase – and when you look at kids living with a long-term unemployed parent, the increase is 130 percent.

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