



BIG VOICES for Little Kids

Groundwork Ohio's Advocacy Day

Key Priorities

We cannot secure a strong future for Ohio without prioritizing the needs of our youngest Ohioans and the families who care for them.

While Ohio has made progress in fostering a policy landscape that supports children and their families, there is still significant room for improvement. On the heels of an unprecedented pandemic that has had far-reaching, negative impacts on the health and well-being of Ohio's children and their families, it is more critical now than ever to lay a strong foundation for our young children and their families.

Our budget priorities to improve early learning and health outcomes for young children and their families include:

- ✓ Increasing access to child care for working Ohioans with low incomes to support the healthy development of children and improve parental workforce participation.
- ✓ Investing in the actual cost of child care that supports a fairly compensated and competitive professional workforce.
- ✓ Building capacity for child care for infants and toddlers.
- ✓ Expanding access to and better connecting families with critical resources that improve the health of mothers and babies.
- ✓ Improving Medicaid coverage and quality to meet the unique needs of mothers and babies.



Issue briefs for each of these priorities are available at GroundworkOhio.org/agenda



The State of Young Children

Portage County

7,197

children under 5 years old¹

19.7%

of children under 5 years old are living in poverty²

432

Children are accessing Publicly-Funded Child Care (PFCC)³ (as of July, 2022)

\$14,189

Estimated 2022 yearly price for infant center-based care⁵

33%

of PFCC programs earned a high-quality rating⁴ (as of July, 2022)

17.1%

of family median income was spent on childcare in 2018⁶

91

Children are accessing public preschool through Early Childhood Education grants (2022)⁷

57

Children five years & younger are in state custody⁸ (as of Jan. 1, 2022)

601

Babies born who are covered by Medicaid (2019)⁹

43%

of kindergartners are demonstrating readiness (2021-22)¹¹

62

Pregnant women & families served by Help Me Grow home visiting (2022)¹⁰

28%

of economically-disadvantaged kindergartners are demonstrating readiness (2021-22)¹²

1. U.S. Census Bureau (2019)

2. U.S. Census Bureau (2019)

3. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Data Production, July 2022

4. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Data Production, July 2022

5. National Database of Childcare Prices 2016-2018, Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor

6. National Database of Childcare Prices 2016-2018, Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor

7. Ohio Department of Education (2022)

8. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Data Portal (January 1, 2022)

9. Report on Pregnant Woman, Infants and Children SFY 2020, Ohio Department of Medicaid (July 19, 2021)

10. Ohio Department of Health Data Production, February 2023

11. Ohio Department of Education (2022)

12. Ohio Department of Education (2022)



Learn More at GroundworkOhio.org