

The Children's Agenda

Smart Choices. Bold Voices.

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Spring e-update 2016

Dear Advocate,

Here's the latest news and items of interest from The Children's Agenda. We also invite you to visit [our website](#) and let us know how we're doing. We'd love to hear from you!

To support local children, we need help from all levels of government—local, state, and federal. Across the country, public officials, business leaders, law enforcement officials and others agree that investing in the early years is one of the wisest steps we can take as a country. But despite all this agreement, getting increased funding for these important programs will not be easy. That's why it is so important for Congress to hear from us all—the people on the ground working and advocating for children and families.

Nationwide and locally, the children's advocacy community—including The Children's Agenda—are requesting increases of \$1.2 billion in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), \$435 million for Head Start and Early Head Start, \$35 million for Preschool Grants, \$45 million for Grants for Infants and Families, and \$100 million for Preschool Development Grants.

Please take a few minutes to make three calls—one to your Congressperson and one to each of your Senators—before they move forward with the funding priorities in early June.

Unfortunately, we know what will happen if we are not successful in gaining more political support. Funding will fall short. Wait lists will get longer. Parents will struggle to get back to work without access to child care. Children will lose out without the early learning experiences that they need.

Please just take a minute to call your Members of Congress to urge them to ensure more children get the early learning opportunities they need to succeed.

Here's how you can help:

1. Call the switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask to connect to one of your Members of Congress.
2. Once connected, tell the person who answers: "My name is _____ and I am a



Upcoming Events

[Public Event: Great Schools for All](#)

Thursday, June 9

[RCSD Board Meeting](#)

Thursday, June 23

In the News

[Raising awareness about mental illness in children](#)

News 13 WHAM

[Diverse schools? Survey shows the public may be ready](#)

City Newspaper

[Survey shows support for inter-district magnet schools](#)

Democrat & Chronicle

[Rochester among 30 named as 'Playful City'](#)

TWC News

[Teen birthrate hits all-time low, led by 50 percent decline among Hispanics and Blacks](#)

The Washington Post

Announcements

[Rochester's Child 25th Anniversary](#)

constituent. I urge the Senator/Representative to support increased investments in early learning in the upcoming appropriations bill."

3. Repeats steps 1 and 2 (3 times total).



For more information about appropriations requests, please check out this [coalition sign-on letter](#).

ROC the Future Benchmarks



On May 10, ROC the Future (RTF) conveners participated in a Benchmark Action Planning Session facilitated by Teri O'Brien from [Strive Together](#) and also attended by Tammy Duncley from SUNY Albany's Cradle to Career office. RTF is a community-wide cradle to career framework designed to improve academic achievement for Rochester's children by utilizing Strive Together's data-driven framework to guide its efforts. The Benchmark Action Planning Session helped to expand leadership's understanding of the Strive Together model, and demonstrate ways in which leaders can enhance their own individual action to improve children's outcomes.

Spring into Summer Meals Fest



Rachel Pickering, The Children's Agenda (center) with [HealthiKids](#) at Frontier Field

The Spring into Summer: Summer Meals Fest was held on May 14 at Frontier Field. The Summer Meals Partnership of Rochester organized the event as a way to increase participation in the Summer Meals Initiative. Although more than 8 in 10 children qualify for free lunch during the school

The Children's Agenda would like to congratulate Rochester's Child on 25 years of service. Rochester's Child, established in 1991, promotes the very best early care and education for our community's most vulnerable children. We are proud to call Rochester's Child one of our greatest allies in the protection, care, and uplift of children.

Jessica Lewis, ROC the Future Communications Specialist, receives award



On Thursday, May 26th, Jessica was awarded the Outstanding Service Award for her commitment and loyal service to students and parents of the Urban-Suburban program. Jessica began as the Community Liaison in 2012 before going onto become the Communications Specialist until 2015. Jessica is a proud graduate of the Urban-Suburban program via the West Irondequoit Central School District.

year, only about 25% participate in Summer Meals. The Partnership hopes to increase participation by at least 20%. To learn more, visit www.summermealsroc.org.

PLTI Alum opens R-Center Spray Park



On May 24, PLTI (Parent Leadership Training Institute) alum Toyin Anderson's dream of opening a local spray park came true. An official ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at 75 Grover Street in the city of Rochester where the new Roxie Ann Sinkler Recreation Center is now located. Mayor Lovely Warren, Council President Loretta Scott, and other city leaders who contributed to the project, gathered for the occasion. "Toyin has been the community advocate for this project," Mayor Warren said. The R-Center spray park is open Monday through Friday from 2:30 PM until 9:30 PM. [Learn more](#) about the new spray park and sign-up for an EZ RecPass.

TCA welcomes new staff



L-R Cassidy Putney, Advocacy Coordinator, and Celeste Barkley, Lead Organizer

Celeste Barkley, Lead Organizer, is responsible for organizing and executing a multi-year, multi-pronged grassroots advocacy campaign to improve children's social and emotional health in our region. Celeste will facilitate the leadership of parents and professionals to create and drive advocacy efforts and organize large-scale public education and direct action events...[Read more](#)

Cassidy Putney, Advocacy Coordinator, will provide administrative support, program coordination, and communications for both the social and emotional health advocacy and the Healthy Weight Leadership Council...[Read more](#)



Jessica Lewis, ROC the Future Communications Specialist

Jessica Lewis, Communications Specialist, will lead ROC the Future's communications initiatives by developing and executing comprehensive,

integrated communications for funders, conveners, networks, community based organizations, and parents...[Read more](#)

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

The Children's Agenda does not accept any government funding, and none of our work is possible without the generous support of private individuals, foundations, businesses and others. Our sincerest thanks go out to the following for their donations since our last update:

Vincent J. Esposito; Ruth Freeman; Brigit Hurley and Jeff Young; Robert and Ellen Kimbrough; Patricia Larson; The Max and Marian Farash Charitable Foundation; Peace of Christ Parish.

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