

February 23, 2021

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris:

Children are and will always be the future of our nation. However, children, youth and families are in a time of crisis across the nation as the health, economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic take root. This crisis arises on top of the glaring disparities that have existed in many communities for centuries. We are at a unique crossroads, presented with an opportunity to rebuild better systems and create more prosperous futures for ALL of our nation's children with an eye toward promoting long-term racial, ethnic and socioeconomic equity.

**To realize this opportunity and reimagine our systems for optimal health, well-being and development, we, the undersigned, respectfully request the establishment of a White House Office on Children and Youth and a White House Conference on Children and Youth to elevate the needs of children, youth and their families in your Administration.**

Out of this crisis must come leadership to secure a prosperous future for the next generation. Establishing a White House Office on Children and Youth would bring sustained attention to research and policy recommendations, enhance alignment and coordination of federal programs and investments, and ultimately set our country on a trajectory of wellbeing, prosperity and thriving for the future. The Office would liaise with the President, Vice President, Cabinet Secretaries and Congress to ensure that addressing the unique needs of children is a regular consideration in policy decisions. It would also develop and advance a National Children's Strategy and all-of-government Children's Budget that would set forth an aspirational yet achievable vision, including the related outcomes goals and metrics, to make measurable progress toward rebuilding systems for children.

Furthermore, since 1909, White House Conferences on Children have led to action within and beyond the government sector, including the growth of adoption agencies, Administrative action to strengthen the Amber Alert system and greater awareness of research on early brain development that informed subsequent policy and resource allocations. Given the enormous stressors on children and families compounded by the pandemic, there is a powerful opportunity for another Conference to spur collective action across the public, nonprofit and private sectors.

Due to the pandemic and economic recession, children and youth across the country have experienced rising rates of poverty, hunger and homelessness. Due to school closures, children are experiencing significant learning loss and mental health challenges. Rates for vaccinations,

primary and preventive services among children in Medicaid and CHIP have steeply declined. Child care capacity in the United States could be cut in half, which is expected to exacerbate existing disparities in child care availability across racial and socioeconomic communities. In the wake of these major challenges, the Office and Conference should focus on how to reduce child poverty, reduce health and educational disparities, and achieve equitable outcomes for children and youth to ensure they can enter child care, early education and school healthy and ready to learn.

A coordinated entity to address children's needs, along with a high-level leader charged with advancing an agenda for children is not a novel concept. Across the country, Republican and

## **National Organizations**

The 100th Meridian

18by.vote

Access Montessori

ADHD Symptoms Clinic

Adolescents and Children Together for Health (ACT for Health)

Afterschool Alliance

Agenda for Children

AIDS Alliance for Women, Infants, Children, Youth & Families

Alchemist Foundation

All Our Kin

Alliance for a Healthier Generation

Alliance for Excellent Education

Alliance for Strong Families and Communities

The Amend Group for Psychological, Educational, and Gifted Services

American Art Therapy Association

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work

American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

American Association of Suicidology

American Camp Association

American Diversity Group

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

American Psychological Association

America's Promise Alliance





Family Connects International

Family Voices

First Five Years Fund

Foster Advocates

Foster America

Foster Care to Success

Founder Craft

FPWA

Friends of the Children

Funding the Next Generation

Futures Without Violence

Genesis Health Consulting

Girls Inc.

Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice

Green & Healthy Homes Initiative

Guiding Bright

Healthy Families America

Healthy Schools Campaign

Help Me Grow National Center, Connecticut Children's Medical Center

Hogg Foundation for Mental Health

Holt International

Ignite Afterschool

InnerCity Struggle

Inseparable

Institute for Juvenile Research



National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of Social Workers - Association of Schools of Social Work National



National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association

National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives

National Summer Learning Association

National Superintendents Roundtable

National Women's Law Center

NEA Foundation

ParentChild+

Parents as Teachers National Center

Partners for Our Children

Partnership for Children & Youth

Partnership for Resilience

PolicyLink

Prevent Blindness

Prevent Child Abuse America

Prevention Institute

PRIME Center for Health Equity, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

Psychology Consultation Specialists

Public Citizens for Children and Youth

Reach Out and Read

Ready for School, Ready for Life

Redstone Global Center for Prevention and Wellness

ResourceFull Consulting, LLC

Save the Children Action Network

Scholarship America

School-Based Health Alliance

Search Institute

Society of Behavioral Medicine

Society of Pediatric Psychology

Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine

Youthprise

ZERO TO THREE

**State and Local Organizations**

Advocate Children's Hospital

Akron Children's Hospital

Allendale Association

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

Arden Shore Child and Family Services

Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence

Arkansas Children's Hospital

Association of Illinois Montessori Schools

Blank Children's Hospital - UnityPoint Health

Blue Shield of California Foundation

Boston Children's Hospital

Boston College Center for Optimized Student Support

Brazelton Touchpoints Center

California AfterSchool Network

The California Children's Trust

CareerSource Central Florida

Ceres Community Project

Children's Alliance of Kentucky

Children's Health Alliance of Wisconsin

Children's Home & Aid

Children's Home Society of North Carolina





Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS

Latino Coalition for a Healthy CA

Little City Foundation

The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford

Lutheran Child & Family Services of IL

Maine Children's Alliance

Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Maryland Out of School Time Network

Maryland State Family Child Care Association

Massachusetts Citizens for Children - "MassKids"

MassGeneral Hospital for Children

Mental Health America of Georgia

The MetroHealth System

Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board

Minnesota Montessori Network

Mississippi Center for Advanced Medicine

Missouri AfterSchool Network

Missouri KidsFirst

MnAEYC-MnSACA (Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children - Minnesota School-Age Care Alliance)

Montessori Association of North Carolina

Montessori Works, Delaware

MSU Denver's Early Family Literacy Program

Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

MUSC Health / Medical Univ of South Carolina

National Autism Association NY Metro Chapter

Nationwide Children's Hospital

NC Center for Afterschool Programs

NC Child

New England Center for OCD and Anxiety, Boston

New Hampshire Afterschool Network

New Haven Children's Ideal Learning District (NH ChILD)

NJSACC: Statewide Afterschool Network

Northeast Kingdom Community Action

Nutrition Policy Institute, University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Ohio Afterschool Network

Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy

Oregon Child Abuse Solutions

OregonASK

Pediatric Physicians' Organization at Boston Children's Hospital

Pennsylvania School Age Child Care Alliance

Prevent Child Abuse Alabama

Prevent Child Abuse Arizona

Prevent Child Abuse NC

Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

Primary Children's Hospital

The Primary School

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

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SouthSide Early

St. Joseph's Childre

St. Louis Children's H

Stanford Montessori Scho

Tennessee Justice Center

Tufts Children's Hospital

Turner Psychological & Consulting Service

UNITE-LA

UniteWMontessori Schools of Indiana (UMUniM



Voices for Georgia's Children

Wake Forest School of Medicine and Brenner Children's Hospital

West Orange Healthcare District

Wisconsin Child Care Administrators Association

Wolfson Children's Hospital

Wyoming Afterschool Alliance

Yamhill Community Care

### **Individuals**

**Kristy Benoit Allen**, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Tennessee - Knoxville

**Yemele Ayala**, MBA, Senior Director, School Support Services, ASPIRA Inc. of Pennsylvania

**Billie Jo Bakeberg**, Director and President of South Dakota School Age Care Alliance

**Richard P. Barth**, PhD, MSW, Professor and Chair, Executive Committee of the Grand Challenges for Social Work, University of Maryland School of Social Work

**Lauren Bauer**, PhD, Fellow in Economic Studies, The Brookings Institution

**William R. Beardslee**, MD, Director, Baer Prevention Initiatives, Department of Psychiatry, Boston Children's Hospital

**Harolyn M.E. Belcher**, M.D., M.H.S., Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Director of the Office for Health, Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity, Kennedy Krieger Institute; Professor of Pediatrics, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, (Joint Appointment) Department of Mental Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

**Michele Berk**, Assistant Professor, Stanford University School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

**Christina Bethell**, PhD, MBA, Director, Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative; Professor, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University

**Allison Blake**, MSW, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, Child and Family Agency of SECT; former Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Children and Families

**Dale A. Blyth**, PhD, Professor Emeritus in the College of Education & Human Development at the University of Minnesota

**Oliver Brooks, MD, Immediate Past President, National Medical Association**

**Charles Bruner, Ph.D., Integrated Care for Kids --**



**Russell S. Kirby**, PhD, MS, FACE, Faculty Lead for Population Health Science, Distinguished University Professor, College of Public Health, University of South Florida

**Wendy Klierer**, PhD, Professor of Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University

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**Sherry Lachman**, Executive Director, Foster America; former Domestic Policy Advisor to Vice President Biden; former Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Department of Education

**Lisa A. Lauxman**, PhD, M.B.A., Consultant, former Director, Division Youth and 4-H, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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**Melanie Muenzer**, University Administrator, Community College Board Member, former Deputy Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Education

**Cynthia Newman**, MSW, LCSW, Regional Director, Mid-Jersey Regional Early Intervention Collaborative

**Tanya M. Nichols**, Ph.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist, University of Mississippi

**Dorie Turner Nolt**, consultant, former Press Secretary and Senior Communications Advisor at the U.S. Department of Education

**Jennifer Park**, Ph.D., Chief Operating Officer and Early Learning Principal, Lastinger Center for Learning, College of Education, University of Florida

**John O. Parker**, Vice President of the Board of Trustees, Charles H. Hood Foundation; Founder and Managing Director, Springhood Ventures

**Trenee Parker**, Director of the Division of Family Services, State of Delaware

**Stephen Patrick**, MD, MPH, MS, FAAP, Director, Center for Child Health Policy, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Health Policy, Division of Neonatology, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

**James M. Perrin**, MD, John C. Robinson Distinguished Chair in Pediatrics, MassGeneral Hospital for Children; Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School

**Cheryl Polk**, PhD, Licensed Clinical Psychologist in CA & MI; Chief Program Officer, Safe & Sound; former President, HighScope Educational Research Foundation; former Board Member, ZERO TO THREE; former Executive Director, The Lisa and John Pritzker Family Fund

**Joshua Pollack**, Executive Director of Special Projects, Stockton Unified School District; Former Special Assistant to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education

**Nuri Reyes**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, University of Colorado

**Richard W. Riley**, Partner, Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP; former U.S. Secretary of Education (1993-2001); former Governor of South Carolina (1979-87)

**Soledad Roybal**, Director of Partnerships and Development, Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc.; former Senior Advisor and White House Liaison, U.S. Department of State

**Carlos Santos**, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Social Welfare, University of California Los Angeles

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**Robert Sege**, MD, PhD, Director

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