

2014 | Policy Priorities

End Preventable Child Deaths

HUNDREDS OF KANSAS CHILDREN die every year at a rate that is higher than the national average. Many of the lives lost could have been prevented with targeted interventions. Unfortunately, an outdated Kansas statute prohibits data that already is collected from being used for research and public health purposes. Increasing access to information and records from the State Child Death Review Board would shed light on the risk factors facing Kansas children. This change would cost taxpayers nothing yet would make our state a safer place to grow up.

Establish Registered Dental Practitioners

A GAP IN THE DENTAL WORKFORCE leaves 95 of Kansas' 105 counties without enough dental providers. The Registered Dental Practitioner model (House Bill 2157/Senate Bill 197) is a cost-effective and business-minded solution to this problem. By utilizing RDPs, we can grow businesses, ensure that all Kansans have access to regular dental care and save money. Mid-level providers have already helped address the medical workforce shortage, and RDPs will do the same for the dental work force.

Preserve the Children's Initiatives Fund

NEARLY A DECADE AGO, Kansas legislators made a commitment to our state's future prosperity by establishing the Children's Initiatives Fund. CIF dollars support quality early learning programs that are making a difference in the lives of our youngest citizens and in the livelihood of our state. By keeping our commitment to early education and ensuring that all of the state's portion of tobacco settlement dollars continue to fund the CIF, we can ensure that today's children will be equipped to lead Kansas toward a more prosperous future.

Promote Early Literacy

THE ABILITY TO READ IS A CRUCIAL STEP in overall learning and school success. Studies show that children who do not read at grade level by the third grade are significantly more likely to drop out of school before graduation. This negatively impacts their future earning potential among other challenges. By improving early literacy experiences for children from birth to age 8, we will increase the number of children reading at grade level by third grade and graduating from high school.

Protect Resources for Children in Poverty

THE NUMBER OF KANSAS CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY has grown to nearly one in four, and yet fewer poor families are accessing programs intended to meet their basic needs. Temporary Assistance for Families helps families obtain necessities like food and shelter. The Earned Income Tax Credit lifts more children out of poverty than any other program. The Kansas Child Care Assistance Program allows more parents to remain in the workforce. Maintaining these supports is critical to mitigating the impact of poverty on children and breaking the cycle of poverty.

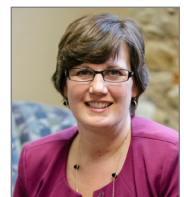
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