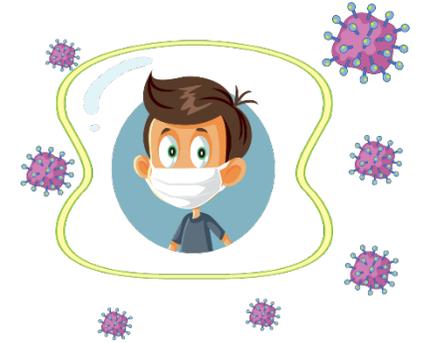


# From Covid Chaos to Caring for Our Children 2021 Legislative Update & Virtual Roadshow



## WELCOME

While we wait to get started, please place your name and your organization into the Zoom Chat.

This will serve as our sign-in sheet for this event.

# We Remember...

Those whom we lost.

Those with whom we grieve.

Those who suffered and who suffer  
still.

More than 10,000 Louisiana  
residents have died and more than  
440,000 have been infected with  
the Covid-19 virus.



# Regional Meeting Overview

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## Covid's Impact on Our Children

- Housing
- Access to Food
- The Digital Divide: Access for Families
- Health Insurance Access
- Maternal Mortality
- Childcare

Looking Back at Legislature 2020 and Forward to 2021

Family First

Safe Haven Video

# 40.7%

*“Had such [**eviction and utility disconnection**] policies been in place across all counties (i.e., adopted as federal policy) from early March 2020 through the end of November 2020, our estimated counterfactuals show that policies that limit evictions could have **reduced COVID-19 infections by 14.2% and deaths by 40.7%.**”*

*Jowers, Timmins, Bhavsar, Hu, and Marshall  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, 2021*

# Real Families...

Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center contact:

Maxwell Ciardullo, Director of Policy and Communications

[mciardullo@lafairhousing.org](mailto:mciardullo@lafairhousing.org) or 504.708.8172

## Zachary mother calls on Legislature to take action following her eviction: 'Hardest time of my life'

BY PAUL COBLER | STAFF WRITER JAN 30, 2021 - 6:00 AM 3 min to read



From left, Arielle Butler puts shoes on her children, Ali Butler, 3, and Aiden Butler, 4, before they go outside to play at the home they are renting, Thursday, January 28, 2021, in Zachary, La. [Buy Now](#)

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# Food Security & Children in Louisiana

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- Before COVID-19, nearly **ONE in FOUR** Louisiana children lived in households that couldn't afford consistent access to nutritious meals.
- More than **25% of children** live in families earning wages below the poverty line (\$25,750 for a family of four in 2019).
- Food insecurity has only increased in the state since the pandemic mostly because most children access food through schools, childcare centers, and after-school programs.
- As schools were closing and we went through summer feeding, a group of concerned advocates worked for legislative and procedural changes to impact how we feed children in Louisiana.
- In March, the Partnership received word that the Pew Charitable Trust will be giving us \$85,000 to address school food policy in Louisiana. The Louisiana Department of Education will receive an additional \$50,000 through this grant to support these efforts to increase access to food for children.

# Food Security & Children in Louisiana

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- The Louisiana Budget Project in conjunction with Feeding Louisiana recently released a report called [\*Summer Meals for Healthy Kids\*](#) that details pro-active steps that state policy makers can make to increase access to food.
- Local communities will also have an important part of this work by helping highlight which children need increased access and supporting organizations that provide food to children.
- Currently, three agencies work on some piece of the feeding children policy: Louisiana Department of Education (LDE), Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH).
- If you identify food access issues in your community, please reach out to us so that we can connect your organization with feeding partners or help you access resources to make feeding children possible as part of your normal activities.

# The Digital Divide: Access for Families

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- Louisiana ranks 33<sup>rd</sup> in state broadband access
- Only 75% of Louisiana's population lives in an area with access to wired broadband.
- Only 56.5% of Louisiana's population has access to wired low-price broadband.
- Telemedicine and Virtual School require Broadband
- Broadband deserts:
  - 17 parishes have 50% or less broadband coverage
  - 15 parishes have between 50% and 75% broadband coverage
  - Only 32 parishes have better than 75% broadband coverage

# Broadband Deserts: 50% Broadband or Less

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Allen Parish: 24.7%	LaSalle Parish: 6.5%
Avoyelles Parish: 40.0%	Richland Parish: 46.9%
Beauregard Parish: 44%	Sabine Parish: 39.4%
Bienville Parish: 37.6%	St. Helena Parish: 32%
Cameron Parish: 0.4%	Tensas Parish: 4.7%
Catahoula Parish: 1.1%	Union Parish: 38.3%
Evangeline Parish: 36.5%	West Carroll Parish: 45.4%
Grant Parish: 34.8%	Winn Parish: 50.1%
Jackson Parish: 9.1%	

For more information go to: <https://broadbandnow.com/Louisiana>

# Children's Access to Health Insurance

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- After reaching a historic low in 2017, the rate and number of uninsured children in Louisiana has increased to 4.4% in 2019.
- Children living in households with incomes below 255% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), the cutoff for Louisiana's CHIP program, accounted for roughly 59% of uninsured children in 2019.
- An additional 22% of uninsured children lived in households making between 250% and 399% of the FPL and would have been eligible for subsidized coverage on the federally-facilitated health insurance exchange.
- Many children in Louisiana are not taking advantage of free or affordable coverage options.
- LDH has examined federal and state policy changes and other factors that have contributed to the child uninsured rate as directed by Senate Resolution (SR) No. 49 of the 2020 Second Extraordinary Session and included recommendations for possible changes that might reduce uninsured rates.

# Maternal Mortality By the Numbers

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- Louisiana has one of the highest maternal death rates in the country with Black and Brown women experiencing pregnancy-related death at three times the rates of White women
- Louisiana is one of eight states who received an “F” on the March of Dimes Report Card
- More than half of Louisiana births are covered by Medicaid
- Medicaid women are more at risk for maternal morbidity and mortality according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists with 70% of women identifying with a health issue after delivery
- Two-thirds of pregnancy-associated mortality is between 43 days to one year after the end of pregnancy
- For every one maternal death, there are 70 maternal women who experience morbidity events which are illnesses or disabilities that can shorten their life expectancy
- According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) the cost of each severe maternal morbidity event is upwards of \$11,000
- In just one Louisiana hospital (Woman’s Hospital) the annual cost of Medicaid readmissions for postpartum health issues was over \$870,000 in 2020.

# Maternal Mortality Impacts Families

**Maternal Mortality is Expensive. Not just the measurable resource costs, but the immeasurable cost to families and the trauma experienced by young children who lose their mothers.**

## **Factors that Contribute to Maternal Mortality/Morbidity:**

- Lack of access to preventive medical care prior to getting pregnant (Insurance does not equal access).
- Institutional biases in the medical profession against black and brown women that can lead to misdiagnosis and delayed diagnosis. These biases cut across economic groups.
- Domestic violence causing mental stress and physical strain on mothers, and in many cases death of the mother (Louisiana leads the nation in Domestic Violence).
- Safe and healthy housing free from environmental toxins and climate controlled to prevent high blood pressure and other co-morbidities.
- Safe and reliable transportation to work, doctor's appointments, and to access healthy food. Timely transportation is an issue in areas where road congestion and/or distance to travel require more time.
- Environmental issues such as air quality and water quality that contribute to health conditions that increase the risk of maternal mortality.

# Maternal Mortality Policy Priorities

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- ***Pregnant Workers Fairness:*** Creating workplace protections for pregnant and lactating mothers.
- ***Medicaid Expansion to 12-months Postpartum:*** ARPA policy change that allows states to make expansion via a state plan amendment and not through the waiver process.
- ***Domestic Violence Protections:*** Strengthening domestic violence legal protections, expanding them to intimate partners, and including emotional abuse/isolation as part of domestic violence.

# Finding The Path Forward: .....

## A Sustainable Plan for Early Care and Education

### The Facts:



Louisiana ranks last out of 50 states for family wellbeing during the pandemic, with 50% struggling to pay bills and 25% not having enough to eat.



Most child care businesses operated on razor-thin financial margins before the pandemic, and yet high-quality child care is still unaffordable for most families



Only 40% of kindergarteners in Louisiana arrive at school meeting critical benchmarks.



Louisiana's economy loses \$1.3 billion every year due to child care breakdowns.



Teacher pay averages \$9.13 per hour and turnover is high, leading to reduced quality experiences for children.



Families rely on child care for parents to go to work, school, job training, or look for new work, especially during a pandemic



The child care sector lost a collective \$245 million between March 2020 and January 2021, due to the effects of the pandemic.



Child care costs almost as much as public college tuition in Louisiana, and is the biggest budget expense for most families with young children.



Only 15% of at-risk Louisiana children aged birth to three can currently access a publicly funded child care program



Two-thirds of Louisiana children have both parents or their single parent in the workforce.



# Early Care & Education Impacted by Covid-19

- The child care sector lost a collective \$245 million between March 2020 and January 2021 due to the effects of the pandemic.
- Child care businesses ran on razor-thin margins BEFORE Covid. Shutdowns and limits on class size had incredible impact.
- Child care workforce was already difficult to maintain and unemployment provisions created additional challenges to maintaining the workforce during the pandemic.

# Finding The Path Forward: .....

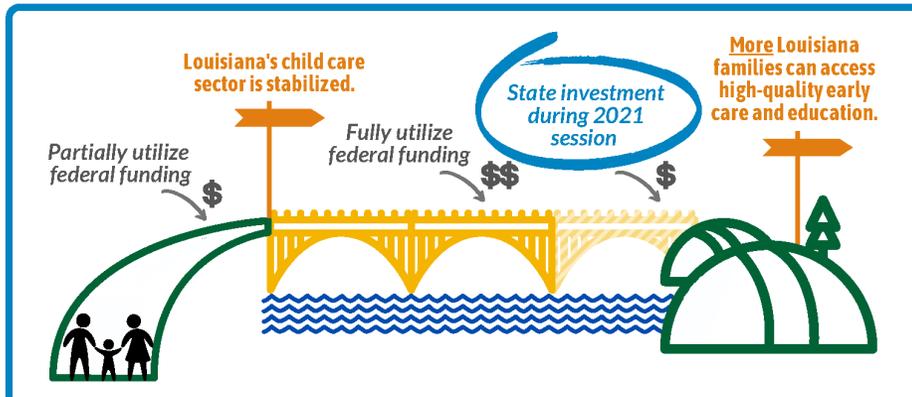
## A Sustainable Plan for Early Care and Education

### Creating a Sustainable Solution:

The federal government has provided Louisiana with a significant amount of aid related to child care. Most of those funds are targeted at stabilizing the struggling child care industry to maintain child care capacity for parents who need it to work.

Some federal funding, however, is flexible enough to use to immediately expand access to quality early care and education for families who desperately need it. The problem? This funding is one-time and must be spent over the next three years, meaning the state cannot rely on it in the same way as other federal funding programs that can be counted on annually.

Louisiana children, parents, and businesses need policymakers to find the path forward during the 2021 fiscal session.



By identifying an ongoing state funding source for early care and education, Louisiana can help more families have a safe, quality place to send their children while parents work, and provide our recovering businesses with a reliable workforce, and best leverage one-time federal relief funds.



# Additional Funding Needed

- Federal funds injected into the industry have merely stopped the hemorrhage.
- Additional state investment is needed during the 2021 Fiscal Session.
- Ultimately the state will have to find innovative ways to fund early care and education at both the state and local level as well as innovate the way services are provided to ensure that more families can have access to high-quality early care and education.

# 2020 Session(s) By The Numbers

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Three sessions, two with limited “calls”

Regular Session: 1,389 Total Bills: 871 House Bills and 518 Senate Bills

1<sup>st</sup> Extraordinary (ES): 101 Total Bills: 72 House Bills and 29 Senate Bills (subject to the “call” of the session, bills can only be introduced if they fall under “called” items)

2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary (ES): 178 Total Bills: 101 House Bills and 77 Senate Bills (also subject to the “call” of the session, bills can only be introduced if they fall under “called” items)

8 Constitutional Amendments made it through the process; 60 were filed

685 Resolutions & Study Requests

**468 Acts signed into law.**

**House had 58 Legislative Days, Senate had 60 Legislative Days**

# Legislative Session 2021

## April 12 – June 10

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*Fiscal Session: Each legislator is limited to 5 non-fiscal bills*

*Taxes & Spending Reforms are On the Table*

*Pre-filing ends on Friday, April 2, 2021 at 5PM.*

*For members, we will provide real-time updates via our Website link, for non-members we will publish our complete bill watch list the Monday after Easter.*

# Legislative Session 2021

## Bills We Know About Already

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- *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act*
- *P-EBT Information Sharing Extension*
- *Study Resolution on Home Visiting*
- *Pink Tax Exemption*
- *Minimum Wage*
- *Mandatory Kindergarten*
- *School Discipline/Juvenile Justice*
- *Adoption Legislation*
- *Literacy*

# Swinging For the Fences Funding: \$66 Million

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- *\$35M for Family First Prevention Services Act Implementation*
- *\$10M for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Infrastructure*
- *\$1M for CASA, FINS, LAPEN, & PCAL Reboot*
- *\$20M for School-based Health Records System & Upkeep*

*These funds ARE IN ADDITION TO the \$86M being requested for Early Care and Education*

# Capitol Days

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**Wednesday, April 14, Black Maternal Health Day (Virtual)**

**Thursday, April 22, Child Abuse Prevention Day (Virtual)**

**Tuesday, April 27, CASA Day**

**Tuesday, May 4, Children's Day/Children's Health Day**

**Wednesday, May 5, Louisiana Anti-Hunger Day**

**Tuesday, May 18, Early Education Day**



**FEEDING  
LOUISIANA**

**May 5th**  
**10 am CST**

JOIN FOOD BANKS, COMMUNITY PARTNERS, ADVOCATES & LEGISLATORS FROM AROUND LOUISIANA FOR A VIRTUAL RALLY TO CALL ATTENTION TO LOUISIANA'S HUNGER CRISIS.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**LOUISIANA  
ANTI-HUNGER  
DAY**

ERIN@FEEDINGLOUISIANA.ORG

RSVP Here: <http://bit.ly/LAantihunger2021>

# Capitol Days

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# Upcoming Meetings of Interest

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**Children's Cabinet:**

**Tuesday, April 6, 10:30 AM (Virtual)**

**Children's Cabinet Advisory Board:**

**Tuesday, April 13, 9:00AM (Virtual)**

# Family First Prevention Services Act



# Family First Prevention Services Act

## What does Family First mean?

- ✓ Preventive services and support to strengthen the family and help children remain safely at home
- ✓ Improving the well-being of children in foster care by prioritizing family placements rather than group care settings
- ✓ Enhancing the quality of care for residential treatment programs



# Who Will It Serve?

- Children at risk for entering or re-entering foster care
- A child whose family has substance abuse issues
- Siblings of children in foster care who live at home
- A child with psychological or behavioral health needs whose parent/caretaker needs additional support
- Parenting or pregnant youth who are in foster care or have recently exited care
- A child living with a relative or kin caregivers

# What Services Can Be Provided?

Trauma-informed and evidence-based preventive services can include:

- Mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment and prevention services
- In-home, skill-based parenting programs
- Kinship navigator programs

# Family-Like Placements

Emphasis on family-like placement settings:

- Family and kinship foster homes
- Placements for pregnant or parenting youth
- Supervised independent living for youth
- Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) for youth with treatment needs
- High-quality residential placements and supportive services for victims of sex trafficking



# Work Underway

## Family First Prevention Services Act:

- Reinforces DCFS's mission of keeping children safe and strengthening families
- Dovetails with work already underway through primary prevention programs like My Community Cares, Kinship Navigator, Workforce Development Prevention Team model

*DCFS is currently facilitating workgroups to support early intervention and supports to at-risk families through identified services to prevent entry into foster care*

- *Implementation will be incremental*

# How to Help

Statewide collaboration with community partners and individuals with lived experience is essential to keeping families together.



DCFS welcomes input on how to attain the goal of strengthening families in Louisiana.

- Visit [www.dcfs.la.gov/familyfirst](http://www.dcfs.la.gov/familyfirst) for updates
- Email [FamilyFirst.DCFS@LA.gov](mailto:FamilyFirst.DCFS@LA.gov) with specific inquiries

# Resources

## Louisiana Partnership for Children & Families

- Children's Corner Email/Platform for Children

## Louisiana Budget Project

- Daily Dime/Presentations on Tax Reform/Fact Sheets

## Agenda for Children

- Kids Count

## United Way

- 211 and ALICE Report

## • Louisiana Policy Institute for Children

- Updated policy on the impact of early care and education

## • The Power Coalition for Equity & Justice

- Resources and tools for community organizing and engagement

## • Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center

- Resources for families in need of housing and housing protection



**For more information, contact:**

**Louisiana Partnership for Children & Families**

Susan East Nelson, Executive Director

[www.louisianapartnership.org](http://www.louisianapartnership.org)

exec@louisianapartnership.org

225-229-2498 (cell)

These slides and handouts:

<http://www.louisianapartnership.org/VirtualRoadshow/>