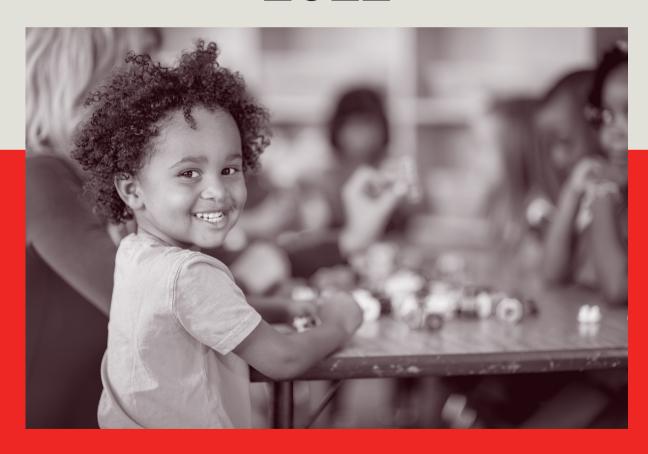


# ANNUAL REPORT

2022



SPEAKING OUT +
DRIVING CHANGE FOR CHILDREN

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# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

DR. BOB SANBORN



2022 was a year of huge growth for CHILDREN AT RISK, both in our work and as an agency!

In addition to our main office in Houston, we are proud to report C@R now has multiple staff members based in North Texas, Central Texas, and El Paso. Having this statewide representation allows us to better respond to local issues while continuing to strengthen our cross-state collaborations to reduce the challenges children face as they grow up.

We were thrilled to merge with Houston A+ Challenge, forging a partnership that will enable us to expand and advance our work to improve K-12 public education. C@R also received a sizable investment to delve deeper into our Early Childhood

Education work over the next three years. This intensified focus on education is a critical part of our new 3-year Strategic Plan launching in the next couple of months.

Our Texas Family Leadership Council (TXFLC) now boasts 100+ members! All members are committed to ensuring that the collective efforts to support Texas families are effective and build the momentum necessary to help our most vulnerable children.

Finally, C@R's wide-reaching work would simply not be possible without the dedication of our donors, board members, collaborators, public officials, researchers, community members, and fellow advocates. Thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of children across Texas!

As we look ahead to 2023 and our Legislative Priorities, we are hopeful about the positive changes to come for Texas children. We hope you will support us by joining our <u>mailing list</u>, signing up for <u>advocacy alerts</u>, attending one of our upcoming <u>events</u>, or helping us with a <u>meaningful gift</u> today!

For Children!

Dr. Bob Sanborn

President & CEO. CHILDREN AT RISK

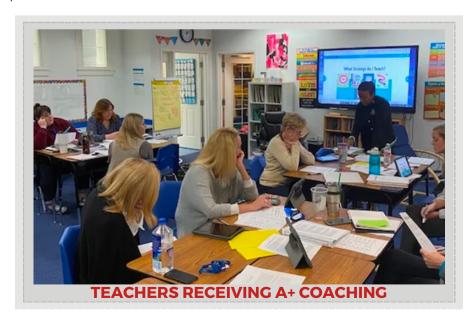
# **EDUCATION**

The majority of students in Texas public schools come from economically disadvantaged communities. CHILDREN AT RISK works to increase access to quality, affordable early education programs and strengthen the K-12 education system to help pull children out of poverty and close opportunity gaps.

### TEXAS A+ CHALLENGE

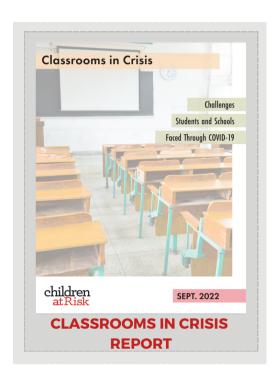
In September, C@R merged with Houston A+ Challenge, a nonprofit that provides direct coaching and capacity-building services to school campuses across the Greater Houston area, leading to smarter classroom teaching and stronger student learning in mathematics and literacy. We see an opportunity to leverage what we know about education and its ability to break the cycle of poverty with A+'s experienced team of coaches who work directly with public school teachers and principals to improve student performance.

Texas's public school system is made up of 1,200 school districts and charter and nearly 5.4 million students are influenced every year by more than 350,000 teachers, according to the Texas Education Agency. Numbers from the same group suggest that less than half of all students are performing at or above grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics. The numbers are even starker for economically disadvantaged students who already have odds stacked against them. A quality education is critical to ensuring children will become adults who will meet the technical demands of a new economy and its workforce. Yet only 1/3 of economically disadvantaged 3rd graders are reading on grade level in Texas. Rooted in research, guided by best practices, and led by a team of in-house experts, A+ Challenge has enhanced public education for approximately 300,000 students across 30 districts in the Greater Houston area. C@R believes we can implement A+ Challenge's unique coaching model at schools across the state, improving access to a quality education for some of the state's most underserved students. We are excited to rebrand the initiative as Texas A+ Challenge as we seek to improve educational outcomes for students across Texas.



# CLASSROOMS IN CRISIS

COVID-19 changed our public education landscape nearly overnight. Thousands of Texas schools and nearly 5.5 million students faced a school year like never before. Schools had to quickly develop tools and resources that would support the pivot to a virtual classroom and had to shift to educating children in crisis. C@R released its Classroom in Crisis report in September 2022 that examines the impact of the pandemic on Texas children using our whole-child approach. This report reviews data across various indicators of academic success including test scores, food insecurity, mental health outcomes, and others. By looking at education, health, well-being, and poverty trends through 2021, the report presents a landscape view of these factors, the disparities across various demographics, and recommendations for how to move forward from the exceptional circumstances we found ourselves in the past two years.





# THE QUEST FOR EQUITY AND QUALITY

Exposure to high-quality child care is the foundation for a child's academic and social-emotional success, especially for children from low-income families. Increasing access to subsidized child care is one of the many strategies used to provide affordable early childhood education (ECE) to children from low-income families. However, increasing access alone is not enough when it comes to early learning. Children need to be in high-quality care to reap the many benefits. In April 2022, C@R published its latest ECE report The Quest for Equity and Quality, examining the experiences of ECE providers with Texas Rising Star (TRS), Texas' quality rating and improvement system for early child care programs, through a race equity lens. The report highlighted the experiences of providers of color to understand potential race equity barriers preventing providers of color from being certified with TRS. C@R partnered with Prairie View A&M University and the University of Houston to conduct a Racial Equity Workforce Survey and held focus groups on TRS participation and racial equity to gain insight into the current Texas landscape. In the report, we offer recommendations and policy solutions to streamline TRS enrollment and participation and create a highquality child care environment for Texas children.

### **TEXAS TOURS**



hosted virtual **Texas Tours** in 10 Texas cities to bring together ECE providers, advocates, and stakeholders to present new data on childcare closures due to the pandemic, and invite participation and advocacy ahead of the 88th Legislative Session. The team met virtually in Dallas, Fort Worth, Lubbock, Midland, Dallas, San Antonio, Houston, Amarillo, El Paso, and Rio Grande Valley.

In April, the C@R Early Childhood Education Team

Then, in October-November, these groups <u>reconvened</u> <u>in person</u> for the first time since 2019! Not only were we able to share C@R's priorities for the upcoming Legislative Session, but we heard critical feedback on the state of Early Childhood Education throughout Texas. The Fall Texas Tour made stops in Amarillo, Austin, Brownsville, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Lubbock, McAllen, Midland/Odessa, and San Antonio. In total, these tours connected over 600 people!

# TEXAS CHILDCARE CLOSURES

In Spring 2022, C@R's ECE team published the Texas Child Care Closure Map, an interactive tool to explore the impact of pandemic closures on child care availability. It was found that Texas lost 21% of child care providers from March 2020 to September 2021. Out of those closed programs during that time, 41% of the providers served infant and toddlers, and 79% of them were child care homes. As a result, Texas had an additional 242 communities become child care deserts. However, only 2.9% of TRS programs and 1.6% of programs that received stabilization grants closed between March 2020 and September 2021, suggesting these programs had protective effects. This data will be crucial as we advocate for additional investments in subsidized child care in the upcoming Legislative Session. On May 19, 2022, C@R Director of



Education, Kim Kofron, provided testimony to the Texas House Committee on International Relations and Economic Development. The testimony shared data on child care closures, highlighting that Texas Rising Star and TWC stabilization grants protected programs from closure. Testimony also focused on the staffing crisis facing the early childhood education workforce: "two-thirds of respondents reported experiencing a staffing shortage that affected their ability to serve families; 52% of those with staffing shortages were forced to serve fewer children while 37% had a longer waiting list."

# **HEALTH**

Every child deserves a healthy start. CHILDREN AT RISK works to positively impact health outcomes for Texas children, with a continued focus on increasing access to basic needs, school food programs, mental health services, and childhood vaccinations, and an expanded focus on maternal health and well-being.

### MATERNAL HEALTH

C@R also hosted its inaugural **Texas** Motherhood Summit to celebrate motherhood and unpack public policies lifting Texas mothers up or bringing them down. The summit offered attendees a deeper look into topics such as prenatal care, child care, and maternal health outcomes, including mental health, and economic justice, as well as how advocates, business leaders, and policymakers can better support mothers. Speakers presented an overwhelming amount of data highlighting the disparities that mothers face in Texas. Special quest State Representative Toni Rose spoke to the importance of healthcare access for mothers and some of the recent steps that Texas has taken to address that.





### **REST & RESILIENCE**

Sleep is an essential ingredient in children's long-term health and development, yet at least 1 in 3 US children are not getting enough. In the most recent National Survey of Children's Health, nearly 35% of children (ages 4 months old to 17 years old) received less than the recommended amount of sleep for adequate rest and development. In March, C@R published **Rest & Resilience: Securing Children's Well-Being Through Sleep**, a report that took a closer look at the factors that contribute to childhood sleep insecurity and its effects on children's well-being. The report provided an overview of the latest research on the importance of sleep for children, as well as new data insights on sleep insecurity risk in Texas, and recommendations for policymakers.

### CHILDHOOD VACCINES



The resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles is of serious concern. These diseases are highly infectious and can cause serious life-long complications, but all of them have an available vaccine that can limit or prevent infection. School vaccine requirements often serve as a safety net for children who have not received their recommended immunizations and serve as protection around Texas children to ensure that they are healthy and ready to learn. Texas trend data shows that immunization rates are decreasing, and exemptions are increasing. In August 2022, C@R and The Immunization Partnership gathered state experts and advocates and **held a discussion** centered on what parents can do to protect their children. It is a parental right to choose what is best for their children, and pediatricians continue to be a trusted source for parents in making those decisions. Pediatricians from across the state emphasized the importance of vaccinations as the best way to protect children against debilitating diseases.

### SCHOOL FOOD RANKINGS

Too many Texas children lack access to quality healthcare and nutrition. Hunger or poor health early in life can cause challenges for children in the classroom and well into adulthood. Every child deserves a healthy start. Across Texas, over 3.7 million students from low-income households qualify for free or reduced-price school meals through federal programs, such as the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. For many of these children, meals eaten at school are the only substantial meals they receive during the day. School districts are critical players in implementing school food programs—yet some districts are doing better than others in providing breakfast, lunch, and after-school meals to students in need. In April, C@R released its 2022 Kroger School Food Rankings report that evaluated how districts across Texas provide meals to low-income area school children by focusing on meal participation rates and after-school meal programs offered in each district. Topranking districts across Texas report nearly 100% of lowincome students as participants in school lunch and breakfast. C@R recognizes the great value these districts are providing to our students, their families, and our state's academic and economic future.



# OPPORTUNITY & RESILIENCY

Every child deserves the chance to grow up in a stable, safe environment, be supported, and develop to their full potential. C@R works to expand equitable opportunity, prevent exploitation, and strengthen the resiliency of the most vulnerable children in Texas.

### OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

Despite a decades-long drop in the opportunity youth population, which decreased from 5.8 million to 4.4 million between 2011 and 2021, the number of opportunity youth rose dramatically during the pandemic to more than 6 million. Opportunity Youth are defined as youth and young adults aged 16-24 who are not employed or enrolled in school. Community leaders are becoming more aware of the issues and missed opportunities around Opportunity Youth (OY) in our region and across the state. Research shows nearly half a million OY in Texas before the pandemic. This number may have doubled at the height of the pandemic due to twin economic and educational shocks. C@R, with the generous support of Wells Fargo, published a report, **Supporting Opportunity Youth for an Inclusive Economy**, that presents the largest issues OY face, what supports are available, and which are needed to ensure a healthy future for them. C@R has also worked closely with the growing OY coalitions in Houston and other cities in Texas to understand what policy changes are needed to support these young people. In the upcoming Legislative Session, C@R will recommend that local workforce boards include an OY section in their strategic plan with specific goals, metrics, and transparent reporting requirements. With the recognition of the unrealized potential for opportunity youth, over the past decade, additional resources have been invested into opportunity youth programs to address education and job training needs. This effort is partially driven by a need to provide a talent shortage solution that is being created by the retirement of the Baby Boomers. With these shifting workforce dynamics, opportunities exist to provide significant support to opportunity youth that will not only benefit them but will also contribute to a diverse and well-trained workforce.



### CYBER PATROLS

CHILDREN AT RISK continues its work to end trafficking in our region and state by reducing demand. This past year, C@R continued to lead its anti-demand CEASE (Cities Empowered Against Sexual Exploitation) Texas coalition. Four quarterly statewide anti-demand coalition meetings were held, convening over 40 statewide partners, including nonprofits, law enforcement, and other anti-trafficking leaders to share best practices, challenges, evidence, and resources for continuous mutual improvement and a more visible



and collaborative approach to reduce demand for commercial sex in Texas. C@R also continued to conduct Cyber Patrols. Our Cyber Patrol volunteers work to disrupt attempted sex purchases made online and counsel the would-be buyers, exposing them to the realities behind commercial sex. From October 2021 to September 2022, 69 Cyber Patrols were conducted statewide, including 9 in Dallas and 28 in Fort Worth, disrupting over 995 attempted sex purchases. C@R also helped to transition the Cyber Patrol teams to independent, self-sustaining groups across the state, supported by the newly formed Statewide Anti-Demand Coalition. A full Steering Committee was recruited, the coalition charter was finalized, new members were added to the member directory, and the resource repository was launched.

### BUYER ACCOUNTABILITY



In January 2022, during Human Trafficking Awareness Month, C@R conducted a Facebook Live roundtable discussion with Dennis Mark, the Task Force Coordinator of the Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance, Lisa Bownds, the Founder & President of Reflection Ministries of Texas, John Nehme, the President & CEO of Allies Against Slavery, and Commander Kevin Turner, the Tarrant County Human Trafficking Task Force Coordinator of the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office. The discussion focused on the importance of **Buyer Accountability** in the wake of House Bill 1540. In addition, a Buyer Accountability Brief and Social Media toolkit were developed and released.

# CHILDREN'S IMMIGRATION NETWORK

An estimated 1 in 3 children living in Texas are considered New American Children, including US citizen children with documented immigrant parents, US citizen children with undocumented immigrant parents, Dreamers, and undocumented minors. The Children's Immigration Network brings together pediatricians, attorneys, and educators, among others to work together to address the needs of immigrant children.

In May, CHILDREN AT RISK hosted 20 guests in Mexico City for a human trafficking and immigration learning tour. The group spent a busy 4 days meeting with local organizations, touring cultural sites, and (of course) enjoying the food! The trip focused on exploring the opportunities for collaboration between non-profit organizations in Mexico and the United States (specifically Texas) to address transnational issues, including meeting with the State Prosecutor for Human Trafficking, Guillermina Cabrera Figueroa, and her team, El Pozo de La Vida, Fundación Freedom, and Otros Dreams En Acción (ODA).





Equity Rapid Roundtable in June, exploring how the immigration movement is part of the racial justice movement, as attacks on immigrants exist in the context of a larger system of racial oppression. Practitioners in the field highlighted the partnerships and creative solutions advocates and providers have implemented to address the unique needs of immigrant and refugee families within this context and outlined how state and national policymakers can support immigrants and refugees in their communities.

Also in June, C@R hosted our third annual **National Immigration Summit** to explore the challenges that immigrant children and their families face. Again convening esteemed advocates from across the nation, this year's program examined child-forward immigration policy, access to basic needs, mental health resources, education, and strategic narrative change.



# **EQUITY & JUSTICE**

CHILDREN AT RISK is committed to viewing all of our work with a race equity lens. Our goal is to improve equity and justice for all Texas children and families and to find solutions for problems that disproportionately affect communities of color. We do this by collecting data to identify inequities, collaborating for community-driven solutions, and advocating for equitable systems.

C@R has also identified diversity, equity, and inclusion as a core organizational value. We believe the power of diversity enriches us all by exposing us to a range of ways to understand and engage with the world, identify challenges, and discover, design, and deliver solutions. CHILDREN AT RISK is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse staff and board, and to honor their experiences, perspectives, and unique identities; and strives to create and maintain working and learning environments that are inclusive, equitable, and welcoming.

The Texas Racial Equity Collaborative (TREC) partnered with Fidelity to host our first annual racial equity summit, **Beyond** the Dream: From Words to Action. The summit included panels of legislators and business leaders from around Texas to discuss the importance of racial equity. Sharon Watkins-Jones, Director of TREC, and Jeri Brooks, founder of One World Consulting, moderated a panel of Texas legislators to discuss their work in the 87th Session and the role racial equity plays in that work. The panel featured Rep. Senfronia Thompson, District 141, Sen. Carol Alvarado, District 6, and Camille Lasin Foster, chief of staff for Sen. Miles District 13.



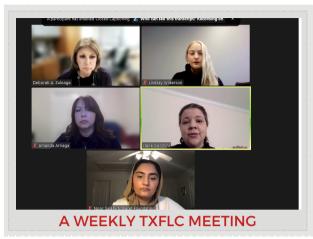


# C@R hosted the second annual <u>State of</u> <u>Black Children Summit: Supporting</u> <u>Black Children from Cradle to Career</u>.

The summit, sponsored by Amazon and Amerigroup, explored the challenges Black children face growing up in Texas and how to best support them from cradle to career. The program included discussions on the economic well-being of Black families, the disproportionalities with school discipline and the juvenile justice system Black children face, and the importance of having Black teachers in the classroom. The program closed with an interview with Dr. Aisha White from the University of Pittsburgh to highlight the benefits of the University of Pittsburgh's Positive Racial Identity Development in Early Education program and how we could replicate that program here in Texas.

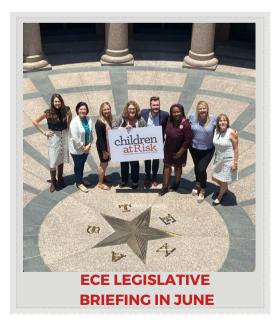
# TEXAS FAMILY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL (TXFLC)

Knowing that Texas nonprofits would need access to information and coordinated support to serve children and families effectively during the COVID-19 crisis, C@R launched the Texas Family Leadership Council (TXFLC) early into the pandemic. Utilizing its trusted relationships with community partners and experience coordinating collective action in previous times of crisis, C@R brought together powerful and diverse voices of child-serving organizations from across Texas for cross-sector collaboration, information sharing, and to develop a united advocacy front. Since its inception, the Council has grown to include 100+ participants. TXFLC membership consists of child and



family-focused organizations, community leaders, and influencers from across the state. TXFLC weekly meetings have hosted state leaders, including legislators and TEA Commissioner Mike Morath, and the following workgroups have also been established: Texas Racial Equity Collaborative, Texas Immigration Network, Public Policy, and Advocacy Workgroup, Health Advisory Workgroup, and the Texas Anti-Poverty Agenda. TXFLC members have supported more than a dozen virtual events, webinars, and press conferences, participated in training opportunities in areas of development and advocacy, and remain committed to ensuring the collective efforts to support Texas families are effective and build the momentum necessary to help our most vulnerable children.

### **2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**



This past year, C@R has also been preparing for the upcoming 88th Texas Legislative Session and has developed a robust agenda centering the whole child. In the coming year, we will be advancing our policy priorities, which include:

- 1. Investing in quality early education and public education to ensure all children are ready for school, college, and careers.
- 2. Investing in programs and strategies that improve children's physical, mental, and social development.
- 3. Protect human trafficking survivors and increase penalties for traffickers.
- 4. Promote policies that increase equity and eliminate systemic racism in Texas.

A more detailed description of these priorities can be found here: **2023 Texas Legislature Priorities** 

# **LEARNING EVENTS**

In 2022, CHILDREN AT RISK hosted 11 free virtual events to engage the public and help them drive change for children. The events aim to share research, unpack pressing policy issues, and highlight diverse community perspectives from across Texas. These events reached nearly 4,000 viewers. Thank you to our many partners and sponsors that made these events a great success.







#### **FEBRUARY**

State of Black Children in Texas: Supporting
Black Children from Cradle to Career explored
the challenges Black children face growing up in
Texas and how to best support them from cradle
to career.

#### **MARCH**

A Fighting Chance: Summit on Basic Needs & Child Success dove into the challenges today's families face in meeting their child's basic needs from access to food, shelter, and even a good night's sleep.

#### APRIL

**150 Miles: Health in the Borderlands** explored the needs, barriers, and best practices surrounding children's health in the US-Mexico border region

#### MAY

<u>Early Childhood Summit: Supporting Today's</u>
<u>Workforce for Tomorrow</u> discussed challenges facing the early childhood workforce and consequences for the entire Texas workforce

#### JUNE

<u>Texas Motherhood Summit</u> celebrated motherhood and unpacked public policies lifting Texas mothers up or bringing them down

# LEARNING EVENTS CONT.

#### JUNE

Immigration Summit: Centering the Needs of Children & Families examined child-forward immigration policy, access to basic needs, mental health resources, education, and strategic narrative change

#### JULY

Full STE(A)M Ahead! Creating Equitable
Pathways to STEM Careers explored the issues
of STEM education, focusing on building a robust
and qualified pipeline of professionals in the
wake of the pandemic

#### **SEPTEMBER**

Education in Transition: Reshaping America's Schools in a Post-Pandemic World featured educators and community leaders working in the field to provide both teachers and students with a high-quality learning experience as schools work to improve and innovate in the wake of the pandemic

#### **OCTOBER**

#### The State of Latinx Children in America

gathered advocates, experts, and organizations from key states to explore what challenges impact Latinx children's well-being and resilience and identified opportunities for creative, community-led solutions

#### **NOVEMBER**

The Children's Legislative Agenda presented a legislative agenda for the 88th Texas Legislative Session. Experts shared research and data along with policy recommendations to improve the lives of children







#### **CHECK OUT OUR 2023 LINEUP OF EVENTS HERE!**

# 2022 CORPORATE & FOUNDATION DONORS

\$500,000+

Pritzker Children's Initiative

Samuels Family Foundation

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

\$100,000 TO \$499,999

Harvey R. Jr. and Patricia W. Houck Foundation

Houston Endowment, Inc.

The Robert & Janice McNair Foundation

\$50,000 TO \$99,999

Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation

Mattress Firm

Partnership for America's Children

National Association for the Education of Young Children

\$25,000 TO \$49,999

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Amazon

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**Greater Houston Community Foundation** 

The Houston 20

Memorial Hermann Community Benefit Corporation

North Texas Community Foundation

The Rawley Foundation

Rockwell Fund, Inc.

\$25,000 TO \$49,999 CONT.

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Shell USA. Inc.

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YourCause, LLC

\$10,000 TO \$24,999

Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation

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#### \$1,000 TO \$4,999 CONT.

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NextGen Real Estate

North Texas Commission

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Pura Medical

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The Sundt Foundation

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Wendell Smith Allstate

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#### **IN-KIND**

The Meadows Foundation

# 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The following financial statements were collected from CHILDREN AT RISK's 2021 Audit Report. C@R was audited by the independent auditor Blazek and Vetterling, which issued an unmodified opinion.

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Revenue			
Contributions	\$2,147,729	Research and Advocacy for Children	\$2,122,087
Government Grants	\$508,971	Management and General	\$356,134
Special Events	\$623,019	General Fundraising	\$596,846
Contract and Program Fees	\$90,210		
Investment Return	\$8,059		
Total	\$3,377,988	Total	\$3,075,067

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Liabilities		Net Assets	
Liabilities	\$128,812	Without Donor Restrictions	\$674,873
Total	\$128,812	With Donor Restrictions	\$1,376,187
		Total Net Assets	\$2,051,060
		Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$2,179,872

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# children at Risk

CHILDREN AT RISK's mission is to serve as a catalyst for change to improve the quality of life for children through strategic research, public policy analysis, education, collaboration, and advocacy.

CHILDREN AT RISK is a research and advocacy nonprofit leading the way in improving the quality of life for Texas's children. CHILDREN AT RISK considers the whole child by tracking issues in children's health, safety, education, and economic security. Committed to action beyond the data, CHILDREN AT RISK drives evidence-based change by speaking out on behalf of children. For more information, visit childrenatrisk.org



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