

children at Risk

Priorities for the 2025 Texas Legislature

Prepare Young Adults and Enhance the Texas Workforce

- Increase fiscal transparency by requiring data reporting on government workforce spending and activities for young Texans (16-24).
- Maximize taxpayer dollars and require local workforce development boards to include opportunity youth and young adults (ages 16-24) in strategic plans and reporting.
- Allow for better preparation for workforce needs by requiring notification to workforce officials when large-scale subsidized job creation occurs.

Protect Human Trafficking Survivors and Increase Penalties for Traffickers

- Empower district and county attorneys to collect penalty fees in Chapter 455 actions they bring against alleged illicit massage businesses.
- Expand orders of nondisclosure for human trafficking survivors to include additional nonviolent offenses committed while a victim was being trafficked and remove barriers to use.
- Ensure children vulnerable to human trafficking are identified by intervening state agencies as early as possible.
- Ensure that first responders and medical assistants can recognize the signs of human trafficking and report that information to the appropriate authorities.
- Criminalize the distribution of AI generated child sex abuse material (CSAM) and its use in grooming or sextorting children.

Invest in Quality Early Education and Public Education: Ensure All Children Are Ready for School, College and Careers.

Child Care

Improving Child Care and Pre-K Within Existing Resources:

- Reduce administrative obstacles to develop public-private Pre-K partnerships with a focus on charter schools to expand pre-kindergarten offered by private child care providers.
- Prioritize income eligible child care employees for child care scholarships for their own children.
- Create franchise tax incentives for businesses that support child care for low-income working Texas families.

Address Child Care Deserts, Waiting Lists, and Staffing Shortages:

- Target persistent Child Care Deserts by allowing local workforce boards flexibility to reimburse Texas Rising Star child care providers at the state's established rates.

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- Serve 10,000 more low-income children of already eligible working parents with child care scholarships to help reduce the waitlist and assist more parents to work (estimated cost: \$190 million for biennium).

Public Education

- Allocate funding to appropriately and equitably support all public school students.
- Create a statutory definition of chronic absenteeism, include chronic absenteeism in the “at-risk” category for state funding, and require TEA to report data.
- Continue to invest in Pre-K Partnerships between school districts and private child care providers and alleviate barriers that prevent public-private partnerships.
- Ensure accountability and transparency for education saving accounts if passed. Ensure children living in low-income families are prioritized to participate in education savings accounts.
- Ensure quality virtual learning is accessible to vulnerable students (such as human trafficking survivors) unable to attend public school in-person

Invest in Programs and Strategies that Improve Children’s Physical, Mental and Social Development

Health

- Protect current requirements for immunizations, including requirements for public school entry.
- Ensure Texas has a functional system to help parents to quickly enroll eligible children in CHIP and Medicaid.
- Ensure sufficient funding for critical health programs like Medicaid, CHIP, Healthy Texas Women, Family Planning Program, DSHS Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee, and DSHS Texas AIM initiative.

Mental Health

- Increase access to school-based behavioral services so more districts can participate, and more students can receive services.
- Set minimum required mental health counselor to student ratios in public schools.

Food Access

- Implement 6-month automated eligibility check for SNAP certification and alleviate HHSC’s workload challenges.
- Reduce child hunger by implementing the Summer EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) program.