



Dear Advocate,

Thank you for helping us to improve the health, education, and success of our community's children and youth, especially our most vulnerable, in 2016. The Children's Agenda advocates for funding and policy changes that get to the root of problems—-independent of, and impartial toward, any particular service, program, or provider—and your support is key to both our past successes and our future endeavors. In short, we could not have done this work without you. Here's a recap of our accomplishments.

Helped Bring Paid Family Leave to NY



The Children's Agenda collected and delivered thousands of your hand-signed letters to elected officials, facilitated hundreds of online constituent messages, met with legislators and their staff in Albany to voice your concerns, and held public forums, which ultimately led to 32 stories in local media and, of course, passage of the strongest [Paid Family Leave](#) program in the nation. When fully implemented, the new benefit will allow family members to take care of each other (including newborns, newly adopted children, as well as chronically ill, sick or dying family members) for up to 12 weeks at two-thirds pay, without risk of losing their jobs. Scientific evidence shows that the length of time parents spend with new children is extremely important to their lifetime success.



Upcoming Events

[MLK Day Community Events](#)

Monday, January 16

[FAFSA \(Free Application for Federal Student Aid\) Fest](#)

Wednesday, January 18 & Sunday, January 29

[RCSD Attendance Blitz](#)

Thursday, January 19

In the News

[A path out of trouble: how one state supports its teenagers while a neighboring state punishes them](#)

Huffington Post

[Our children cannot do this alone](#)

Democrat & Chronicle

[Children at risk can't wait for help](#)

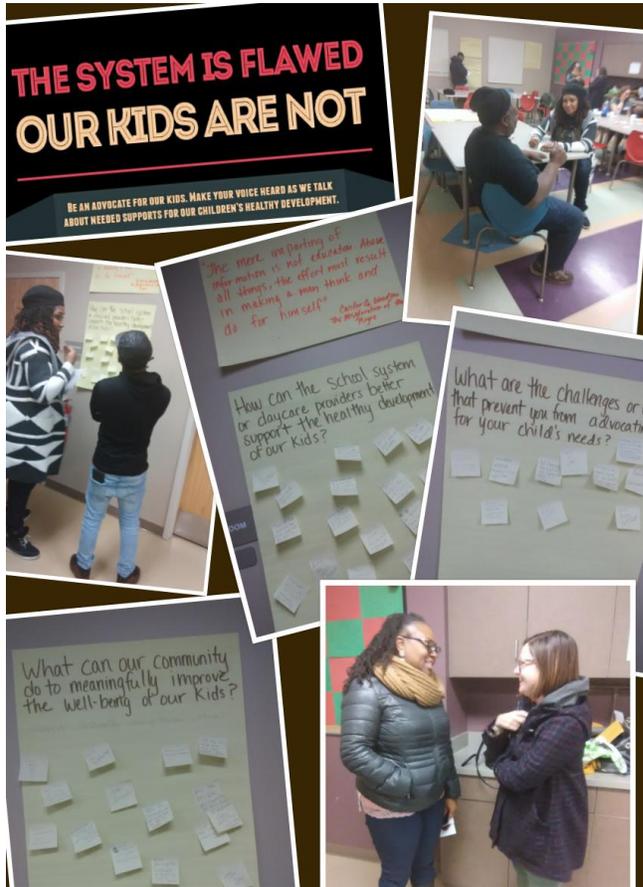
Democrat & Chronicle

[Legislature slated to vote on '17 budget](#)

Rochester Business Journal

Launched a New! Social & Emotional Campaign in Monroe County

Advocates: more child abuse, poverty demand more Monroe County funds
WXXI News



Monroe County reports spike in child neglect
Democrat & Chronicle

Leadership program turns parents into advocates
Democrat & Chronicle



In the U.S., 1 in 5 children have social and emotional health issues though only 20% get the help they need. In Monroe County, 70% of children have had 1 or more ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). Children experience further trauma when these issues are left unaddressed. The Children's Agenda, in partnership with the Greater Rochester Health Foundation, launched a new advocacy campaign by which parents and professionals are organized in an effort to improve the social and emotional health of children in our region. Lead Organizer Celeste Barkley recently held a community forum to learn what parents need most, align advocacy efforts, and inspire action. To learn more or join the movement, contact Advocacy Coordinator Cassidy Putney.

Moved to Improve Healthy Weight in the City of Rochester



In 2013, the [Greater Rochester Health Foundation](#) funded The Children's Agenda's efforts, through a collective impact framework, to reduce childhood obesity in Rochester. The premise of our [Healthy Weight Leadership Council](#), which was modeled after two leading communities (Chicago's '[Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago's Children—CLOCC](#),' and Summerville, Massachusetts' '[Shape Up Summerville](#)' Initiative), was to strengthen existing efforts, drive change, and accelerate impact. Given local data, we know that kids and youth are drinking too much soda and sugary drinks. One of the goals of the Healthy Weight Leadership Council was to improve healthy eating and physical activity in early care and education settings. After three years, and with direct involvement from the Mayor's Office and leadership from all sectors, the Council has proven successful at improving healthy practices and policies in child care by providing professional development trainings and limiting sugar-sweetened beverages in places where children learn, play, and pray.

Helped Advance and Expand Opportunities for High-Quality Early Learning for All

As you've likely seen in national headlines, child care is now more expensive than college tuition.

- On September 7th, local leaders gathered for the Investing in Rochester: Early Childhood Education is Economic Development event. Guest speakers included Rob Grunewald, Economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, and Sandy Parker, former President & CEO of Rochester Business Alliance and TCA Board Member, who presented on the direct link between early childhood education and economic development.



- ROC the Future's collective-impact work to improve outcomes for all children, cradle-to-career, led to reduced chronic absence in the Rochester City School District, completion of more than 600 separate health and developmental screenings for 3 year-olds, and district-wide rollout of evidence-based book distribution, as stated and discussed during the 4th Annual ROC the Future State of Our Children Address and Report Card Release on October 25th. In 2017, ROC the Future will launch Ready Rosie, an early education tool designed to deepen and scale parent engagement efforts by leveraging the power of mobile technology.

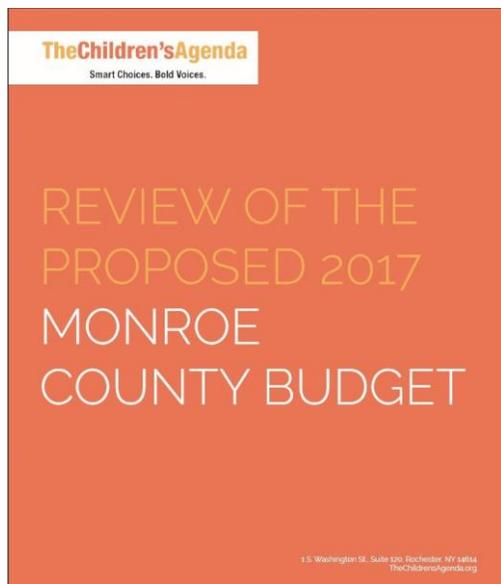


- On November 5th, the Greater Rochester Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) kicked off its 5th Cohort. PLTI facilitates system change for parental involvement with increased utilization of parents in policy and process decisions. Elected officials, including County Legislator Tanya Parmalee Conley and City Council VP Dana Miller, along with PLTI alum, welcomed the new class aboard. Parent engagement is especially important. Students with actively engaged parents are shown to have more positive academic outcomes. Earlier this year, the city of Rochester celebrated the opening of a spray park at the Roxie Ann Sinkler R-Center, an effort led by PLTI parent-leader Toyin Anderson. When families and communities work together, children succeed.



- On December 8th, The Children's Agenda released our Review of the Proposed 2017 Monroe County Budget in which we urged county legislators to adopt "SAFETY FIRST" and "INVEST EARLY" as 2017 priorities. By targeting resources early in

children's lives, we prevent more serious problems and save money. The Children's Agenda's key recommendations included the following: Funding and authorization for caseworker positions to bring CPS caseloads to the recommended ratio; fully reinstate the Safe Harbour program's services that support Monroe County youth who are victims of sex trafficking; increase funding for child care subsidies for low-income working parents, and additional dollars for [Nurse-Family Partnership](#) to enroll more young parents and their children in weekly home visits with a registered nurse until the child turns 2 years old... [read the full report](#).



Visit our website to check out [past reviews](#) of the city, county, and state budgets.

Did you know?

Civil rights activist & writer Shaun King publicly acknowledged The Children's Agenda for our support of, and efforts to, Raise the Age in NY.

As a result, we saw a tremendous increase in social media traffic—2,000+ new followers during the month of December.

Stay Connected

For additional photos and highlights, "Like" us on [Facebook](#) and "Follow" us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).



Don't forget to visit thechildrensagenda.org. Here, you can find out what's happening, review featured articles and media appearances from 2016, and [download e-updates](#).

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

The Children's Agenda does not accept any government funding, and none of our work is possible without the generous support of private individuals, foundations, businesses and others. Our sincerest thanks go out to the following for their donations since our last update:

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