

TheChildren'sAgenda

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Dear Advocate,

The new year is just a few days away! With that, we'd like to thank you once again for continuing to be a voice for vulnerable children in Monroe County and staying informed of opportunities to advocate for change in our community. We could not do this work without you. Here is a recap of this year's accomplishments, including highlights of stories and events that have had major impact. Check out The Children's Agenda's Year in Review.

1. New York Raises the Age



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Upcoming Events

[Hard Facts Community Workshop](#)

Thursday, January 11 & Friday, January 12

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

Saturday, January 13

[RCSD Attendance Blitz](#)

Thursday, January 18

[RIT's Expressions of King's Legacy](#)

Thursday, January 25

In the News

[Monroe County 2018 Budget Boosts Spending on Job Creation, Child Protection](#)

Democrat & Chronicle

[Dinolfo's Budget: Too Good to Be True?](#)

City Newspaper

[Connections: Understanding the Earned Income Tax Credit](#)

WXXI News

[Rochester Poverty, Child Poverty Rates on Slight Decline](#)

WXXI News

[How to Help Kids Face Trauma](#)

Contemporary Pediatrics

Contact Us

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This year, working together with many partner organizations, The Children's Agenda were instrumental in helping pass historic [Raise the Age](#) legislation. Like so many others, we were touched by the story of [Kalief Browder](#), though more than 20,000 16- and 17-year-old youth in New York state —disproportionately African American and Hispanic—are wrongly subjected to the adult criminal justice system every year. Youth charged with non-violent offenses are treated as adults, though science tells us that the rational part of the human brain isn't fully developed until age 25. With the help of supporters like you, The Children's Agenda became a leader in the [Children's Defense Fund NY's](#) Raise the Age campaign beginning in 2013. We've advocated directly with legislators and staff—both locally and in Albany—including visits with New York State delegation members and multiple phone conversations with legislative staff. On April 8th, New York passed the strongest measures to raise the age. This is a significant break in the school-to-prison pipeline. Parents must be notified whenever a 16- or 17-year-old is arrested and questioning must take place in an age-appropriate setting with parents present. All 16- or 17-year-olds who commit misdemeanors will be diverted to Family Court where the focus is on rehabilitation rather than punishment. Once the law is fully implemented, youth under age 18 will no longer be held in adult facilities or County jails... [read more](#)

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2. TCA Launches RCSD Budget Analysis



On June 15th, The Children's Agenda announced the launch of a new project to analyze the annual \$920M [Rochester City School District \(RCSD\)](#) budget. The initiative, which serves to help increase public transparency, awareness and accountability, is generously supported by a grant from the [William and Sheila Konar Foundation](#). The Children's Agenda will work with RCSD and community partners to help identify policy, program, expenditure, and funding strategies to assist in maximizing opportunities with the highest likelihood of contributing to students' achievement in school and life. The analysis of the RCSD budget, to be released in 2018, builds on TCA's expertise as an evidence-based watchdog over the public sector's impact on children's issues, thirteen years after the group issued its first analysis of Monroe County's annual budget. Some of the organization's recommendations on city, county and state budgets have successfully resulted in major improvements in policies, programs and practices affecting children.

3. Expansion of Early Childhood Initiatives



On July 10th, [Governor Cuomo announced \\$4.75M to expand three early childhood initiatives](#) in Rochester. The two-year funding from the [NYS Upstate Revitalization Initiative](#) is for expansion of early childhood supports in the focus neighborhoods (EMMA, Beechwood and Marketview Heights). The funding will cover an additional 115 parents and children in the trilogy of evidence-based home visitation programs ([Building](#)

[Healthy Children](#), [Nurse Family Partnership](#) and [Parents as Teachers](#)), an additional 300 - 400 four and three year-olds in summer learning programs, and 300 additional child care slots for children of low-income working families. This is a huge victory for kids locally, and the first time that we're aware of significant economic development dollars being used to support families in poverty with early childhood supports.

4. County's 8-Point Plan to Address Child Abuse and Neglect



In the wake of staggering increases in child abuse and neglect reports in Monroe County (more than 10,000 expected this year, or an average of 27 per day), The Children's Agenda played a lead role over the past two years with our partners in the faith, medical and social work communities advocating for additional CPS caseworkers and strengthening retention to right-size the ratio of cases to workers to the 12:1 standard (it has averaged closer to 29:1). In October, the County Executive announced an 8-point plan that includes 30 additional positions and increased salaries for CPS caseworkers. For the first time in five years, Monroe County is making a meaningful increase of [\\$1.7 million in funding for programs](#) that help prevent child abuse and neglect. Prevention through evidence-based programs has always been the signature focus of our advocacy efforts for children, consistently (and persistently) over many years now. Monroe County has also adopted a new "Children and Families" section of its proposed 2018 budget, similar to the

“children’s impact statement” for which The Children’s Agenda has long advocated... [read more](#)

Did you know?

The Children's Agenda's research, community partnerships and advocacy work is fully independent of government funding and children's services. We rely entirely on private donations from foundations, businesses, organizations and individuals like you.

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