

Proposal for 2026 Children's Legislative Agenda
For Consideration by Fall Forum Delegates on October 16, 2025
Presented for Recommendation to OICA Board of Directors

I - ECONOMIC WELL BEING

- Improve programs for affordable housing to improve family stability, reduce homelessness, reduce chronic absenteeism, and less evictions.
- Expand paid family leave programs.
- Increase reimbursement for both kinship caregivers and non-kinship foster parents, to ease burden on foster families and encourage more foster families. (Archer/K. Thompsen - HB 2030)
- Improve the access to affordable, quality childcare for all areas of the state.
- Enhance the child tax credit to improve the state's level of child and family poverty. Make state child tax credit refundable, add inflation index, add young child bonus, add reasonable income phase out. (Nice, Senate Interim Study 25-064)
- Enhanced job training for teens who are neither in school nor working.
- Supporting the Oklahoma Child and Adolescent Survivor Initiative (OCASI) - fostering healing of kids impacted by intimate partner violence related homicide and near-lethal violence. Initiative to battle Oklahoma ACE's crisis.
- Proactive outreach by school counselors at a certain number of absences to battle chronic absenteeism.

II - EDUCATION

- Establish/expand quality afterschool programs for all grades that are designed to provide grade-appropriate activities and non-sport extracurricular activities for upper grades.
- Require trauma-based education in college curriculums and in professional development requirements. The training is to include training on Preventative and Compensatory Experiences (PACEs).

- Establish and fully fund reading improvement programs based upon the successful models found in Ohio, Indiana, and Mississippi.
- Prohibit, to the greatest degree possible, emergency teacher certifications and adjunct faculty for Pre-K, Kindergarten, and elementary grade teachers.
- Start free Pre-K for 3 year olds.
- Re-affirm educators' training on who to call to report neglect or abuse versus referring families for resources.

III - HEALTH

- Provide for access to prescription lockboxes to prevent accidental or malicious access to dangerous prescription medications by children or others who should not have access to them.
- Mandate child safe approach to THC gummies through packaging, lock bags, or per item dosages.
- Expand the "Food as Medicine Act" to allow food to be covered by Medicaid for people with chronic diseases and mental health concerns.
- Establish a dental therapist program in communities experiencing a shortage of dental to help families and address dental workforce shortages in rural areas.
- Increase awareness of fentanyl/synthetic opioid overdose.
- Prohibit smoking marijuana, tobacco, or vaping in a motor vehicle while in the presence of a minor. (Stanley/Roe - SB 23)
- Expand human trafficking mitigation and victims' services to western Oklahoma.
- Improve awareness to combat the lack of prenatal or neonatal resources in rural communities and border areas of the state.
- Comprehensive financial education for every high school student.

- Fund SNAP state administrative costs to keep program whole.

IV - FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

- Create child protection courts (based on Texas model) to provide consistent training and case handling for judges and speed up decisions on child dispositions.
(Williams House Interim Study 25-110)
- Create protections and compensation for minors in monetized online content.
(McCane House Interim Study 25-042)
- Increase use of GPS tracking for VPO enforcement by changing statute change from “convictions” to “findings of guilt.” (Coleman Interim Study 25-23)
- More training for required reporters in schools on poverty vs. neglect to reduce the number of reports based solely on financial issues rather than active neglect.
- Eliminating the requirement for a jury trial for termination of parental rights, creating a different review, either by judge or administrative process.
- Funding for sustaining family resource centers to increase family services such as resource referral, transportation, and other services, especially for supervised visitation programs to increase accessibility for non-custodial parents.
- Improve nutrition programs to improve access to fresh fruits and vegetables in food deserts. Accepting federal summer food programs for children
- Establish minimum age for court jurisdiction over youth.
- Increase pre-arrest community support programs for parents and youth to keep children and youth from entering the juvenile justice system.
- Prohibit negligent firearm storage to promote safe storage of guns and to prevent accidental access to guns by children or adults without permission.