ABOUT US
NCSL’s Human Services Program, also known as the Children and Families Program, has a long history of working on key children, youth and family issues. Current projects include child care and early education, child welfare, child support, and welfare and poverty. We have also done extensive work on fatherhood and marriage initiatives and youth development.
Children and Families program staff work with legislators, legislative staff, other state officials and stakeholders by:

- Writing publications on key state issues, including policy briefs, longer reports and magazine articles.
- Sponsoring sessions at NCSL’s national meetings on key policy issues and innovative state policies.
- Tracking legislative action and providing summaries and analysis of state legislative trends.
- Convening national meetings to provide in-depth information on specific topics and promote peer learning.
- Providing intensive consulting services to state legislators and staff.

ISSUES WE COVER

Child Support and Family Law
Policy Areas of Focus:

- Child Support Enforcement
- Family-Centered Services
- Work-Oriented Child Support Programs
- Child Custody and Visitation
- Military Parent Custody and Visitation
- License Restrictions for Failure to Pay
- Marriage and Divorce
- Same-Sex Marriage
- Domestic Violence

Child Welfare
Policy Areas of Focus:

- Foster Care
- Kinship Care
- Adoption and Permanency
- Services for Older Youth
- Indian Child Welfare Act
- Title IV-E Waivers (Federal Funding)

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- Mandatory Reporting
- Child Maltreatment

Early Care and Education

Policy Areas of Focus:
- Child Care (subsidy, access and quality)
- Prekindergarten
- Parent support/Engagement
- Early Childhood Literacy
- Kindergarten Readiness Assessments
- Home Visiting
- Early Childhood Workforce
- Finance Strategies
- Early Childhood Data
- Governance Structures

Welfare and Poverty

Policy Areas of Focus:
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- SNAP/Food Stamps
- Career Pathways and Job Training
- Housing and Homelessness

Federal Human Services Issues

NCSL tracks and represents state legislatures’ interests to the federal government on human services issues through NCSL’s Health and Human Services Standing Committee. Staff in NCSL’s Washington, D.C., office provide you with the latest information on actions by Congress and the administration.

REPORTS & RESOURCES

Bill Tracking Databases:
- Child Support and Family Law Legislation
- Child Welfare Legislative Enactments
- Early Education and Child Care Bill Tracking

Recent Publications:
- Substance Abuse and Child Welfare Resources
- Incarceration and Child Support
- 2014 CCDBG Reauthorization Act: Implications and Opportunities for State Legislatures
- Restrictions on the Use of Public Assistance Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Cards

Newsletters:
- Child Support Digest
- Child Welfare Legislative Policy Network Newsletter
- Early Care and Education E-update

Customized Training and Technical Assistance

Contact NCSL staff for information about our work on children and families and human service issues or to arrange for customized technical assistance in your state, which can include briefings on state policy trends, in-depth research and meeting facilitation.