



State of Connecticut  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Commission on Children



**Two Dozen Years of Landmark Policy, Proven Practice, and Return on Investment**

## Some of the initiatives undertaken by the Commission on Children since its founding in 1985

### **The Children's Stock Portfolio**

The Commission analyzes children's policies and writes a Children's Stock Portfolio highlighting state prevention programs and policies that produce a substantial return on investment and excellent child outcomes.

### **Plan for Kids with Coach Calhoun**

The Commission partners with Coach Jim Calhoun on the Playbook for Prevention: The Winning Gameplan for Kids and Connecticut. Focused on prevention. The Playbook is a free "best seller," distributed in the thousands.

### **Reading – The Key Ingredient**

The Commission guides legislation to create a Reading Panel which determines the skills and knowledge needed to teach reading effectively. The Commission brings in \$3 million from Congress to create reading academies. The Commission works with the National Institute of Child Development and Haskins Laboratories to create a proven training model for schools.

### **Finding Federal Dollars**

The Commission locates funding opportunities that brings federal dollars to Connecticut, including: the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Contingency Fund, valued at \$53 million; the Food Stamp Employment Training (FSET) 50/50 match fund, valued at \$2.5 million; and Medicaid payment for home visitation, valued at \$7 million.

### **Bring Parents to the Policy Table**

The Commission develops a family civics initiative that teaches parents how to lead for children. The Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) is in 16 cities and towns and replicated in other states. Graduates invest more than 1.5 million volunteer hours for children. Parent SEE (Parent Supporting Education Excellence) is in 9 towns.

### **Prevention – A Pound of Cure**

The National Crime Prevention Council selects the Commission to guide Connecticut on prevention policy. Resulting from this, state leaders seek to shift 10 percent of the state budget from crisis to prevention.

### **Trusting Parents as Partners**

Connecticut is the first state in the nation to establish a trust for parent engagement on the community level. Quality parent engagement is defined to include diversity, proven leadership training and civic tools. Philanthropy partners and matches state dollars.

### **Bring Back the Fathers**

The Commission promotes the positive role of the father in the life of the child. The Commission works to develop a Fatherhood Initiative funded through Congressional dollars.

### **First Words, First Steps**

A comprehensive plan is written to ensure that every child is born in good health, that the family functions and nurtures its new arrival. Harvard University rates this infant toddler report as the most comprehensive and useful of its kind in the nation.

### **Poverty Reduction**

The Commission leads on landmark policy to reduce child poverty by 50 percent within ten years. A Child Poverty and Prevention Council is charged with specific benchmarks and outcome measures to track progress.

### **Vaccinate: Your Baby's Best Shot**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) honors Connecticut for reaching hard-to-reach children and for ranking in the top five states in vaccination rates for 12 consecutive years. The Commission is credited as a key innovator in this success, recognized for outreach to vulnerable populations.

### **Move to Health – Child Obesity**

The Commission educates on the costs of obesity, coordinates information among ten state agencies, and connects school and health leaders to obesity prevention strategies that work. Forums yield policy and recommendations for communities and the state.

### **Get the Lead Out**

The Commission supports legislation to eradicate lead poisoning in children and assist property owners to remediate lead hazards. New laws include: universal screening for elevated blood levels in one- and two-year-olds; and lead standards in children's toys.

### **School Readiness**

The Commission creates an early childhood plan and template for school readiness law. The school readiness law is a comprehensive system of preschool for three- and four-year-olds with quality standards, community councils, pooled cross-agency funds, financing for building expansion, provider accreditation and regional training.

### **Safety and Learning**

The Commission leads on anti-bullying strategies to ensure every child learns without fear. Model programs are started and dollars raised to match state investments in safe schools. An after school network is established to ensure learning and safety in non-school hours. Disney and Mott foundations partner on this effort.

### **Homeland Security and Children**

The Commission works with children on 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, making Connecticut the only state to involve children annually in issues concerning natural and unnatural disasters. Landmark legislation is written to ensure that disaster plans include planning for children. A committee on children and crisis within Connecticut's Homeland Security Office is established.

**For more information, call the Commission at (860) 240-0290 or visit [www.cga.ct.gov/coc](http://www.cga.ct.gov/coc).**