

# The Kid Angle

*Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children*

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## Opportunity knocks: VP should revive her Children's Agenda

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While the House of Representatives gets itself settled, we turn our attention to the Executive branch. The midterms bestowed the tiniest bit of flexibility on Vice President Kamala Harris by (mostly) relieving her of her duty as Senate tie-breaker-in-chief. We're hoping the VP uses this new freedom to revive some of her earlier good ideas. At the top of our list? Her [Children's Agenda](#).

When Harris ran for president, she championed a comprehensive policy that set the standard for what a children's agenda should look like. Among its many important components, Harris' plan pledged to:

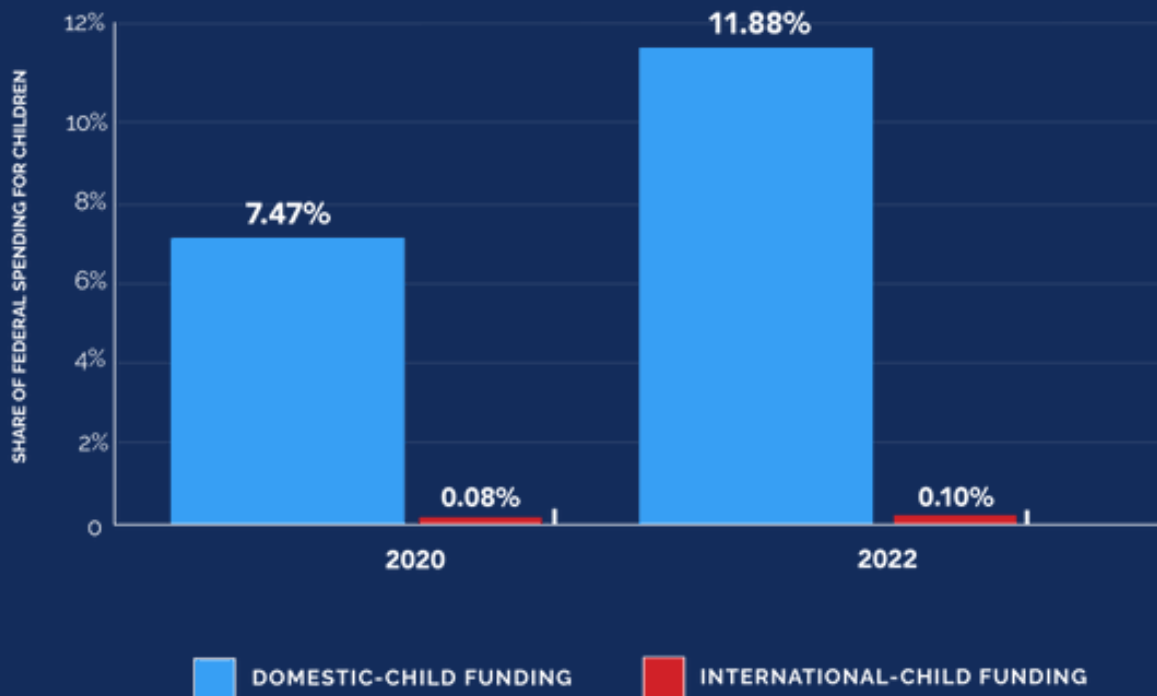
- Cut child poverty by 50%
- Issue an Executive Order to [end child poverty](#)
- Ensure every child has [access to health care](#)
- Establish a mandatory review of [how the President's budget and actual federal spending impact children](#)
- Fight for a fair and just immigration system that [protects children and keeps families together](#)

The Biden-Harris Administration made large strides toward a few of these: The **American Rescue Plan cut child poverty by nearly 50%** and Build Back Better would have extended that progress. Pandemic-era policies [increased the number of children with health insurance by more than 750,000](#). The **Administration reversed the dramatic Trump-era decline** in investments in children, pushing federal spending on children from an all-time low of 7.47% of the federal budget in 2020 [to an historic 11.88% in 2022](#).

Congress's failure to protect and extend these and other advances already has begun to roll back progress for children.

It's been said that divided government — [when handled skillfully](#) — can offer an opportunity to reach bipartisan (read: "lasting") solutions. We urge the Vice President to make her [Children's Agenda](#) the basis for widely supported initiatives that would improve the lives of children in 2023. An easy start would be to create a standing [Children's Cabinet](#) meeting with the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Education, Interior, Agriculture and other agencies to ensure better coordination of policies that impact kids. From there, policy makers could work their way to other issues, such as establishing a [child poverty reduction target](#), creating [child impact statements](#), establishing a ["best interests of the child" standard](#) for all legislation and making other strides to protect our country's 72 million children. The time — and opportunity — is now.

# THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 2020 AND 2022 WAS **GAME-CHANGING** FOR CHILDREN



SOURCE: Children's Budget 2022



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