



# *The Kid Angle*

*Kid-focused news from First Focus on Children*

---

## **A Christmas list for Congress December 15, 2022**

Contact: Michele Kayal, VP Media and Communications,  
[MicheleK@FirstFocus.org](mailto:MicheleK@FirstFocus.org)

---

This is the season of hope. In that spirit, we hope that Congress will finally decide to protect kids.

Throughout 2022, lawmakers had multiple opportunities to make game-changing improvements to the lives of the country's 72 million children. And multiple times they failed. The budget bill making its way through Congress now offers one final opportunity to get this right.

And they really must.

Because the crisis that started with the COVID-19 pandemic is not over for children. More than 7 million — disproportionately Black, Hispanic and other children of color — [risk losing their health coverage](#) at the end of the public health emergency. More than 3 million have already slid back into poverty after the demise of the enhanced Child Tax Credit. Add to this learning loss, the child care crisis and the fact that the pandemic has left its mark on every aspect of our children's lives, and you'll see just how important it is to finally get this right. I was going to make a pun about "finally wrap this up" — like a Christmas present — but these items are not gifts. They are the responsibility of a nation that honors its children and the people who care for them.

### **Here is what a caring nation would include in its FY 2023 budget bill:**

- **Enhanced Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit:** Yeah, broken record. But the fact is that the enhanced CTC and other measures pushed child poverty in this country to its lowest rate ever — a still-appalling 5.2%. **First Focus Campaign for Children** recently led [nearly 300 state and national-level advocates in calling on Congress to prioritize these measures in year-end legislation](#).
- **Substantial increases for early learning and child care:** First Focus Campaign for Children joined other advocates [in October](#) and today in calling on Congress to substantially increase funding for early learning, including [doubling funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant](#).
- **Continued Home Visiting Services:** A bill to reauthorize the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program recently passed the House, but the measure must be included in a year-end package to continue serving families. Created by the Affordable Care Act, MIECHV provides home visits by professionals including nurses, social workers, early childhood educators, and specially trained parents to young families that want coaching on topics including nutrition, safety, positive parenting techniques, and others to help them raise healthy children. The program's current funding allows it to serve less than 5% of eligible families, and we need a reauthorization with increased funding and other important changes to serve more. Doesn't seem like a lot to ask.
- **Permanent funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP):** CHIP is the *only* federal health insurance program that is not permanently funded — creating a hostage situation for children's health care every time it must be renewed. [CHIP helped reduce the uninsured rate from 15% in 1997 to just 5% in 2021](#).
- **Protection for 2 million Dreamers:** More than [200 advocates came to Capitol Hill this week](#) to persuade lawmakers to provide citizenship to 'Dreamer' immigrants who came to the U.S. as children, but many [observers are declaring this measure dead](#). We're including it here anyway. [Because it should be part of the year-end package](#).



First Focus on Children  
1400 I Street NW  
Suite \$50  
Washington, DC 20005  
United States

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, please (Unsubscribing is not supported in previews).