

3 million children were lifted out of poverty.

Expanding the Child Tax Credit

In 2021, the Child Tax Credit (CTC) lifted **1 million children under 6 and nearly 2 million children between 6 and 17 out of poverty**, when using the Supplemental Poverty Measure. The expanded CTC, which disproportionately benefitted Black and Hispanic children, covered 23 million children who didn't previously qualify for the full credit. **About 61 million children received 2021's monthly CTC payment.**

Providing Child Care Relief

Child care relief resources of **\$50 billion+ stabilized child care centers** and family child care homes and reduced families' cost of care. These funds kept the child care sector afloat and demonstrated how strong federal investments can make a real difference for families and providers.

Inaugurating Paid Family and Medical Leave & Paid Sick Leave

In 2020, Congress passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, establishing the **first national requirement for paid family and medical leave and paid sick days**.[☑] These provisions were extremely effective in combatting COVID-19, **reducing cases by 400 or more per state per day**.[☑] Yet policymakers allowed both provisions to expire in December 2020.

Using [American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\) funds](#),[☑] states and municipalities created, expanded, or supported paid sick leave, paid family leave, and paid medical leave programs.

Helping Children Facing Hunger

Families used Pandemic EBT funds to make up for the loss of school meals during pandemic school closures. In 2021, the U.S. Department of Agriculture expanded the program to reach children under age 6 in families receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

During the '21-'22 school year, every school was able to provide universal school meals, and nearly all did, providing over 2 billion free meals to students.

Restoring Certainty for Immigrant Children & Families

In [September 2022](#),[☑] the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released its final "public charge" rule, restoring a sense of certainty for immigrants by allowing access to critical assistance like food, health, and housing programs to help families thrive.

The **Biden Administration has dismantled several harmful Trump-era immigration policies that threaten child safety and family unity**. The administration has also introduced policies, such as the new DHS protected areas policy and parental interest directive, which mitigate the harm of interior immigration enforcement on the 5 million+ U.S. children with at least one undocumented parent.

5 million+

U.S. born children have at least one undocumented parent.

Make CTC Expansion Permanent

Despite fueling an unprecedented decline in child poverty, **Congress didn't extend the enhanced CTC in 2022**, and immigrant children with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) remain ineligible for this proven poverty-fighting tool.

Rather than cutting corporate taxes, **Congress should extend the CTC expansions** in any year-end tax package. An improved CTC should include monthly payment delivery, access without regard to immigration status, and full refundability so families with the lowest incomes can access it.

Invest in Child Care

Our economy accrues long-term dividends from investments in an accessible and affordable child care and early education system with **strong wages and benefits for providers**. Congress and the administration **should prioritize robust, sustainable, and transformative child care funding**, which would guarantee child care for most children and families. It would also ensure good jobs for child care workers – disproportionately women of color – who are doing the nation's most important work for deeply inadequate wages. Policymakers have an unprecedented opportunity to transform the chronically fragile child care system in a sustainable and meaningful way.

Pass Paid Leave for All

While a historic step, 2020's **paid family and medical leave and sick leave provisions were temporary and flawed**. Millions of workers in low-wage industries were either excluded due to employer carve-outs or unaware of the program.

All workers must have access to paid leave to protect and care for themselves, their families, and their communities. Congress must pass permanent, national, **comprehensive paid sick days and paid family and medical leave laws**.

Strengthen SNAP & School Meals

Policymakers must improve SNAP to reach all those in need, provide sufficient support, and treat recipients with dignity. Congress should **extend universal school meals** so all children can learn without hunger or being shamed for getting reduced-price meals or owing money.

Create a Pathway to Citizenship

Congress must enact a pathway to citizenship for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, Temporary Protected Status holders, and undocumented immigrants. This would help **reduce child poverty** and provide stability for millions of mixed-status immigrant families who call this country home.

The **Biden Administration should also reverse punitive immigration enforcement** policies, including ending the **racist and dangerous Title 42 policy**, which DHS continues using to expel thousands of vulnerable asylum-seeking children and families.

Pass the *Momnibus*

As the nation's mental health and child care crises expand, policymakers are mostly ignoring key issues like parental mental health needs. Comprehensive bills like the *Momnibus*—a collection of policies to address the Black maternal mortality crisis—would tackle maternal health, mental health, key workforce needs, telehealth, payment structures, and the social determinants of health. In 2023, Congress should pass the *Momnibus* and a comprehensive legislative agenda for parental needs.

Address Postpartum Medicaid Coverage Gap

Congress must **close the Medicaid gap** that has **left 2.2 million people, 59 percent of whom are people of color, without health insurance** and provide consistent **postpartum Medicaid coverage** for all who are pregnant.

