

## 134<sup>th</sup> Ohio GA Policy Issues & Priorities

The Schubert Center for Child Studies seeks to ensure that public policy reforms, primarily state and local, reflect an understanding of the principles of child and adolescent development, credible social science research and data, and best practices. The Center works through collaborative partnerships to engage in and shape policy to advance child well-being. Our Center's policy work seeks to reduce structural and racial inequities in child-serving systems and includes efforts in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, K-12 student supports and discipline alternatives, youth interactions with law enforcement, and childhood lead poisoning prevention. Specific state and local policy priorities include the following.

### Child Lead Poisoning Prevention

1. Work with partners to set the Ohio Lead-Free Kids Coalition (OLFKC) policy priorities for public investments focused on primary prevention of lead poisoning (see OLFKC 1-pager), that are informed by families and others directly impacted by lead poisoning, and to build long-term strategies and structures for eliminating childhood lead exposure.
2. Work with partners in the Lead Safe Cleveland Coalition (LSCC) to support the effective implementation of the Cleveland lead safe law and to help elevate the LSCC/Cleveland approach as a model for the state of Ohio.

### Child Welfare

1. Support caring connections, resources and other assistance for youth transitioning out of foster care.
2. Support Family First Prevention Services Act implementation to prioritize prevention services, including kinship support, that protect and keep children out of formal child welfare/foster care system.
3. Support Multi-System Youth efforts to reduce institutionalization (and parental custody relinquishment) of children and increase effective community-based supports for children with multiple needs.

### Education and Student Supports

1. Reduce the use of disciplinary student removal from school and educational opportunities, and increase options for healthy connection, culturally responsive learning/teaching and social and emotional well-being.
2. Increase student wellness supports in schools, including the use of school safety funding, rather than increased policing and hard security measures. Reduce reliance on police in schools.

### Juvenile Justice

1. Work with partners to advance policies and practices that are developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, and racially-equitable, and explicitly eliminate the adultification and criminalization of childhood, especially for Black and Brown children; this includes transfer to adult systems and excessive sentencing.
2. Advance policies and practices that effectively divert children and youth from the criminal justice system and provide community-based, positive youth development and healing supports.
3. Reduce the overuse of detention locally and incarceration of children through the Ohio Department of Youth Services and work with local and state juvenile justice systems to hold systems accountable and to foster youth access to trauma-informed, educational, recreational, family, and health and emotional supports.

### Police-Youth Interactions

1. Seek the adoption of developmentally appropriate, trauma-informed, racially-equitable policies and practices concerning police interactions with children and youth as part of the ongoing reform of the Cleveland Division of Police, and as part of the statewide police standards.