



Children's  
Advocacy  
ALLIANCE



# 2023 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is an honor to lead Nevada's preeminent children's advocacy organization. I began the work on January 9, 2023 - one short month before the legislative session - against the backdrop of an unprecedented budget surplus, a new Republican administration, an established Democratic Legislature, and a state continuing to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

2023 fostered a season of change in the legislative and advocacy world. Nevada welcomed a new Governor, Joe Lombardo, on January 2, 2023. His appointment of former state Senator Ben Kieckhefer as Chief of Staff was met with praise across the political spectrum. Assemblyman Steve Yeager took the helm as Speaker of the Nevada Assembly, Nicole Cannizzaro started her second session as Nevada's first woman Majority Leader, several lawmakers assumed new leadership roles, and freshmen legislators took the place of long-serving, termed-out lawmakers.

The budget surplus created a log-jam in the money committees where advocates with laudable projects and policy changes were in a long queue for consideration. Many of those requests included sustained funding for essential children's programs. Many were bolstered with American Rescue Plan Act funds during the legislative interim that were set to sunset within a few months. Those programs included foster youth transition funds and public health funds that supported home visiting programs, vaccine clinics, and diaper banks.

Despite a divided government, the legislature and Governor were able to come together to pass worthy legislation that had a positive impact on children and families. This included expanding Medicaid coverage for postpartum care ([SB232](#)) and an increased eligibility threshold for pregnant persons ([BA 3158-E367](#)); historic education funding including new investments in pre-kindergarten and early learning programs ([AB400](#)); reforms to juvenile interrogation practices ([AB193](#)); modernizing the Early Childhood Advisory Council ([AB114](#)); secured funding from Medicaid to support access to behavioral health services for children ([SB435](#)), and more.

However, the session was not all positive outcomes for children and families. The legislature chose to advance troubling student discipline policies permitting schools to expel elementary school-aged children ([AB285/AB330](#)).



**HOLLY WELBORN,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

They also declined to advance innovative policies such as the creation of the Office of Early Childhood Systems ([AB113](#)) and the groundbreaking "Baby Bonds" ([AB28](#)) legislation that would have a profound impact on children entering adulthood. State investments in community-based behavioral health services and child care were not enough to meet the need. Likewise, the Governor vetoed a measure to maintain the universal school meals program ([AB319](#)). As Nevada families face a mounting housing crisis, not a single housing stabilization bill was signed into law.

The Children's Advocacy Alliance monitored 214 bills and worked closely with lawmakers to pass five out of six of our proactive legislative priorities. We also opposed legislation that would put Nevada's children and families on the wrong track. This report gives insight into our efforts, summarizes major legislation impacting the health, safety, and well-being of Nevada's children, and sets the stage for our forthcoming efforts to ensure that all Nevada children thrive.

## ABOUT CAA

The Children's Advocacy Alliance is an independent voice for Nevada's children and families. We build consensus around priorities by leveraging our collective strength toward real change in policy and practice to ensure that every child thrives.

Through outreach, educating the public, and strategic policy advocacy we work to advance evidence-based change in four key areas: Health, Child Welfare and Equitable Access, School Readiness, and Economic Well-Being.



# 2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## Health



### SB 232 - Extended Postpartum Coverage

Expands Medicaid coverage to include 12-month eligibility for post-partum care, which is essential for new parents with increased risk of postpartum complications.. Continuous coverage ensures that new parents are able to receive life-saving care improves maternal and infant health outcomes in Nevada.

### Budget Item 3158 -E367

Item included in Governor Lombardo's budget that expands Medicaid eligibility to pregnant individuals with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

## Welfare



### Budget Item 3250

This budget line item maintains additional investment dollars in the Transition from Foster Care budget account. The account assists youth who turn 18 years old while in foster care in Nevada to transition from foster care to economic self-sufficiency

### AB137 - Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

This bill will change the name of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, thereby expanding the range of services available for children and families including access to behavioral healthcare services.

## Education



### AB113 - Office of Early Childhood Systems

This bill would have established the Office of Early Childhood Systems in the Governor's office. The goal of this bill was to mobilize resources, improve coordination, collect data to provide recommendations for future early childhood investments and policy changes to improve outcomes for children and families.

### AB114 - Changes to Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)

Companion bill to AB113 which diversifies the subject-matter expertise of the Early Childhood Advisory Committee beyond early childhood education. Representation on this committee will be expanded to include tribal representatives, parents, healthcare experts, after school program administrators and childcare providers.

## Our Lobbying Team

The Children's Advocacy Alliance is a proud client of Belz & Case Government Affairs. Incorporated in 2000, the Belz & Case team provides a thoughtful tailored approach to governmental affairs. They have strong relationships with both sides of the legislative "aisle" to maximize opportunities for their clients. In support of this commitment, they work diligently to develop and nurture relationships with members of the legislature, both during legislative sessions as well as during the interim between sessions. Several areas of their advocacy work cross over into children's issues.

Ensuring children have access to education and a path to a career they love; ensuring access to mental health care and behavioral health services; supporting healthy outcomes for moms and babies; researching and exposing gaps in children's health through dedicated reports on child welfare; supporting literacy efforts; and ensuring children are safely riding in cars with seatbelts and car seats. In 2019, JK Belz & Associates was successful in amending a bill to include a report on the number of children placed out of state for behavioral health services. This report has helped inform legislators on the need for residential placement and an expanded network of care in our state.

Jeanette Belz



Lea Case



Vanessa Dunn



Elyse Monroy



# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

## **CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**

At CAA we believe it is important parents, caregivers, and families are empowered to see themselves in policy and program development. The Children's Advocacy Ambassador Program provides training opportunities to caregivers and community advocates to foster the development of outreach and engagement skills. We support our ambassadors as they bring their lived experience and expertise, integrate their perspectives, and work toward policy change.

During the legislative session, advocates engaging in the legislative process advised how policies affected their communities and families. Several parent advocates called in, wrote letters, and shared personal stories during hearings relating to our policy priorities. Many legislators took the time to attend ambassador meetings to better understand families' interests and provide an opportunity for ambassadors to ask questions about specific policies.



*CAA Parent Leadership Coordinator Shelley Speck and her son, with Lieutenant Governor Stavros Anthony*



It was great to be back in the building for Children's Week this session! For the past six legislative sessions, CAA has partnered with the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) to bring over 80 non-profit, corporate, philanthropic, and government agencies and organizations to the legislative building. This collective worked to ensure children's issues were a priority for lawmakers. Participants engaged with lawmakers through bill presentations, testified at committee hearings, held 1:1 meetings with their elected officials, and there was even a teddy bear parade!



# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS



The Children's Advocacy Alliance launched the legislative season with a Winter Policy Summit on February 1, 2023 to kick off the legislative session with an introduction to Holly Welborn, our Executive Director, and a review of our priorities.

Each of our policy directors covered what we anticipated would be the issues and legislative actions that would drive our advocacy efforts during the session. We discussed our legislative priorities and also offered an introduction to our legislative bill tracker.

This tool offered up-to-date information about all of the bills being CAA tracked. Our pre-session summit sparked robust conversations with community members about the need to address what we anticipated would be the most relevant issues for children and families. It also offered a clear framework for how communities can become engaged in individual and collective advocacy through testimony, contacting elected officials, and participating in our Child Advocacy Ambassador program.

This summit also gave voice to our legislative champions allowing them to answer questions about the needs of Nevada's children and families as well as highlight portions of their agendas for the session. These leaders included Senator Fabian Doñate, Senator Roberta Lange, Senator Melanie Scheible, Assemblywoman Claire Thomas, and Assemblyman David Orentlicher. CAA was also joined by Dr. Cynthia Osborne from the Prenatal to Three Policy Impact Center at Vanderbilt University to provide information on challenges in prenatal to early childhood populations from a national perspective.

## WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE CALLS

CAA and the Belz & Case team hosted weekly virtual legislative updates for dozens of stakeholders including service providers, educators, healthcare workers, and community advocates. Each week we informed participants about the legislative process, gave updates on the most pressing bills and budget line items impacting Nevada children, made calls to action for priority legislation, and gave space for participants to ask questions and address bills that were most important to them.

*"Thanks to the Children's Advocacy Alliance (CAA), 2023 was our organization's most successful state advocacy session to date. Although the Nevada Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Nevada AAP) has 270 members, most of whom are board-certified pediatricians. The weekly legislative updates from CAA alerted me to bills that I knew my members wanted to provide testimony on enabling me to alert the correct physician advocate in Nevada."*

-Leann D. McAllister, Executive Director,  
Nevada Chapter of the American Academy of  
Pediatrics.

*"CAA's weekly legislative updates are essential to keeping Raise the Future up to date on all child welfare legislation as well as the behind-the-scenes insights that are essential to understanding the ebb and flow of policy making. Raise the Future is grateful for these updates and the wisdom of the CAA team."*

Julie George, Director of Government Affairs,  
Raise the Future

**SCAN FOR OUR  
UPDATED BILL  
TRACKER**



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# HEALTH

## PRENATAL, POSTNATAL, AND INFANT HEALTH

Nevada's majority-women legislature continued to make strides for new parents and babies this legislative session. In a state where nearly 60% of all births in Nevada are Medicaid covered, it is crucial to fund programs that support new parents and babies. CAA and our partner organizations invested considerable time and resources throughout the interim and during the session on efforts to extend coverage for postpartum care and expand Medicaid eligibility to pregnant persons.

[SB232](#) was sponsored by Majority Leader Nicole Cannizzaro and Assemblywoman Michelle Gorelow and extends postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 12-months. More than half of all pregnancy-associated deaths in Nevada occurred between 43 days and one year postpartum, and, until this session, Nevada was one of only 11 states without expanded postpartum coverage.



Senate Majority Leader Nicole Cannizzaro with her newborn son, Cole, inside the Legislature in Carson City on May 24, 2023. (David Calvert/The Nevada Independent)

This life-saving legislation will serve over 18,000 new parents. It passed both houses of the legislature with nearly unanimous support and will go into effect on January 1, 2024. The CAA lobbying team and several other healthcare advocates worked with the previous administration to ensure that expanded Medicaid eligibility for pregnant persons with incomes up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level was in the Governor's budget.

A broad coalition of stakeholders were pleased that Governor Lombardo kept this expansion in his budget revisions and that the legislature approved the budget line item ([BA3158-E367](#)). This budget change will allow more people to access the care they need during pregnancy.

The legislature passed other notable policies benefiting the health of new families. [AB283](#) increases the Medicaid fee for service rate for Doula services to \$1200 per birth to encourage doulas in rural communities to enroll as Medicaid providers. And efforts to expand Nevada home visiting ([See BA3222](#)) and community health worker programs ([SB117](#)) were successful.



Executive Director Holly Welborn, during a press conference with SB232 bill sponsors.



# HEALTH

## DISABILITY, MENTAL, AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CAA actively monitored legislation aimed at addressing Nevada's pressing children's behavioral health crisis. In October of 2022, the Department of Justice (DOJ) issued their legal findings regarding the inadequacy of Nevada's community-based behavioral health supports for children. The DOJ found Nevada to be in violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act as, "[T]he State does not: ensure that key community-based behavioral health services are available; maintain an adequate provider network for those services; connect children with services that could prevent institutional placements; or connect children who enter an institutional setting with community-based services so they can return to the community and remain there successfully.

The State did invest \$43 million of American Rescue Plan Act funds in response to the DOJ's investigation, but those funds were not sustained in the State budget this legislative session. BA3243 contained a request from the Division of Child and Family Services for \$14 million annually to continue community based, wrap-around, and intensive in-home supports established during the pandemic. However, only \$2.9 million was recommended by the Governor and approved by the Legislature. This amount woefully misses the mark.

The most meaningful bill passed this session to address child behavioral health needs was SB435, which imposes a provider tax on private hospitals. A portion of those funds will be set aside for administering this tax at the Department of Health and Human Services. An amendment to SB435 allows any unused portion of the administrative fund, estimated

to be \$15 million total, to be allocated to children's mental health services.

This additional state funding will supplement children's mental health and wraparound care services. The legislature also passed AB37 which authorizes the establishment of the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada. The state hopes it will be a helpful tool for recruitment and retention of providers. AB265 would have established a Statewide Children's Mental Health Consortium to foster more communication and collaboration between rural and urban providers. Unfortunately this bill was vetoed by the Governor. CAA will monitor the implementation of these bills and continue to advocate for more resources and community-based services.

Our lobbying team led efforts to improve the quality of care for children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders. AB137 changes the name of "Fetal Alcohol Syndrome" to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD), which is the first step in expanding the range of services available for children and families. However, there will need to be changes to the definition at the federal level to fully realize the benefits. A companion bill that arose from conversation between our team and legislators, led to the passage of AB422 which creates a pilot program to serve children with FASD and facilitate better service coordination.

CAA also supported AB116 which requires health care providers to provide evidenced-based information to a person pregnant with or who has delivered a child with Down Syndrome. This bill will give much needed support to families who struggle to find resources and navigate Nevada's complex system of care.

## NUTRITION

Approximately 281,000 Nevada families with children are experiencing food insecurity. Food insecurity can lead to poor health and quality of life outcomes including chronic diseases and mental health challenges. Hunger in Nevada was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address this, the state invested American Rescue Plan Act dollars to provide breakfast and lunch to every child in Nevada's public schools – a program known as Universal School Meals. For the first time, Nevadans witnessed the immense, destigmatizing impact providing meals to all students can have. AB319 would have appropriated funds to continue Nevada's Universal School Meals program, but the bill was sadly vetoed. CAA proudly supported and the legislature passed SB341 which makes an appropriation to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada and Three Square to continue providing food to families, but more investment is needed to fight hunger in Nevada.



# CHILD WELFARE AND EQUITABLE ACCESS



## CHILD WELFARE

CAA's child welfare priority this session was to ensure continued funding for youth aging out of the foster care system ([BA3250](#)). During the interim our government affairs team worked to get American Rescue Plan funds into the Transition from Foster Care account to prevent a fiscal cliff for youth aging out of the foster system. Youth were at risk of losing \$200 per month in [Chafee funds](#) on September 30, 2022.

The investment also allows DCFS to include the increased funding in their base budget for the 2023 legislative session. [BA3250](#) made this investment permanent and was approved by the legislature. Lawmakers advanced additional child welfare proposals. [AB444](#) codifies language from the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which was passed in 1978 to combat the history of systemic bias in the child welfare system

The bill requires Nevada state courts to prioritize keeping indigenous children with their families and in their communities.

We also supported bills that: provide an appropriation to Foster Kinship ([AB166](#)); require financial assistance to families who adopt a child with special needs to continue until the child graduates from high school ([AB255](#)); put Nevada on track to implement a statewide Extended Youth Adult Support Services Program ([SB380](#)); requiring children's detention, treatment, or rehabilitation facilities to screen each child to determine whether the child is a victim of commercial sexual exploitation ([AB183](#)); and reduce barriers and waive DMV fees for homeless youth in need of an identification card ([AB135](#)).





# CHILD WELFARE AND EQUITABLE ACCESS

## EQUITY AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative justice and school discipline were a central theme of the 2023 legislative session. During the State of the State address, Governor Lombardo pledged to crack down on incidents of violence in schools. The issue was also a major priority for teachers' unions across the state. Child and racial justice advocates, including CAA, opposed these proposals ([AB285/AB330](#)) over concerns about undoing intentional work to reduce disparities in Nevada disciplinary practices. During the 2021-2022 school year, Black students, who only make up 15% of the student population, made up 40% of school suspension and 79% of student expulsions.



As introduced, both bills would have permitted the expulsion of a student of any age from school in certain circumstances despite there being no in-person educational placements for elementary school-aged children. As enrolled, a child who is at least 8 years old and commits a battery with intent to commit bodily injury must be expelled from Nevada schools.

CAA and our coalition partners worked tirelessly to diminish the harmful impact of the legislation and appreciate the changes that were made to the bills. We are particularly grateful for the requirement that schools track data and that steps are taken to address racial disparities. Yet, the fact remains: the earlier a child is pushed out of the classroom, the more likely they are to fail in the future.

Excluding children from school stigmatizes students, leads to poor academic achievement, increases the likelihood of dropout, increases likelihood of dependence on social systems (e.g welfare), and often leads to involvement with the juvenile and criminal legal systems.

The enactment of policies that support punitive disciplinary practices can force our kids into the juvenile justice system. It is imperative that their rights are protected and we continue to fight for equitable outcomes. Lawmakers advanced several proposals aimed at protecting children in the juvenile justice system. [AB193](#) generally prohibits a police officer or other person from lying or making promises of leniency to a child to elicit a confession during a custodial interrogation. [SB411](#) authorizes juvenile courts to create programs for children with autism spectrum disorder to better address their specific needs. [SB415](#) provides a definitive end date for children placed on probation creating more certainty for their future.

Unfortunately, a bill aimed at correcting a jurisdictional split in interpretation of a 2021 law prohibiting the prosecution of a minor for marijuana possession failed in committee ([AB170](#)). This means children in Washoe County will continue to be prosecuted for possession of the legally permissible amount of liquid cannabis concentrate due to the Washoe County District Attorney's office use of a legal loophole. This is not the practice anywhere else in the state, and it is contrary to the intent of the law. CAA and our partners will continue to fight to end status offenses in Nevada to create more equitable outcomes for all kids.



# SCHOOL READINESS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

## EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development are the leading indicators of school and life success. Many children in Nevada enter kindergarten with significant limitations in these areas.

At CAA we believe school readiness begins during the prenatal period. Aligning Nevada's early childhood systems, improving access to quality child care and education programs, encouraging the use of family supports and home visiting programs, investing in healthcare, and providing economic support for families will ensure that children are prepared to learn and will avoid behavioral and learning issues in the future.

Lawmakers considered several bills aimed at creating a strong start for Nevada's children. Our priority legislation in this area was [AB113](#), which would have established the Office of Early Childhood Systems within the office of the Governor.



This is part of national best practices to elevate the importance of early childhood programs and services to the state executive director level. This governance structure can enhance program delivery, data collection and data sharing. The bill passed its first committee nearly unanimously, but unfortunately died in the Ways and Means Committee.

However, the legislature did pass [AB114](#) which expands and diversifies the membership of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council by adding experts in maternal, child & adolescent health, a representative from the child care and development program, a representative from a public school servicing children in kindergarten through age 3, a representative of a Tribal organization, and at least one parent or guardian of a young child.

The changes to the council ensure a more holistic perspective of the early childhood experience and needs in Nevada. The bill received unanimous approval and was signed into law June 5, 2023.



## EARLY LEARNING

Inadequate child care for infants and young children is now estimated to cost the U.S. \$122 billion annually in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue. In Nevada, annual child care costs for center-based care comprises roughly 38% of a single mother's annual income, and 15% of a married couple's combined annual income.

*Continued on next page*

# SCHOOL READINESS AND CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

## EARLY LEARNING

*Continued from previous page*

Family-based childcare costs comprise roughly 29% of a single mother's annual income and 11% of the annual combined income for a married couple with children. Child care access is a significant workforce and labor issue in Nevada. A [Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation \(GOWINN\)](#) survey found that 94.5% of businesses believe access to childcare would improve their workforce retention, 75.5% believe access would provide better business stability, and 67.8% believe their business would experience more productivity

Although there were some nominal efforts to address these issues this session, the legislature failed to make significant strides toward addressing Nevada's need to expand access to quality, affordable child care programs.

The most significant change was a transfer of \$10million from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families account to the Child Care and Development Fund ([BA 3267](#)). This change will allow families to more easily qualify for child care subsidies and avoid any interruption in their ability to access funds. The change allows more families to access funds than what was previously available, but it does not represent new funding for child care programs.



This was a good first step, but more funding at the state and federal level is necessary to meet the need.

Other efforts included a push to amend [AB314](#) - a bill governing the regulation of home-based businesses by counties, cities and towns - to prevent homeowners associations from prohibiting the operation of home-based child care services. Expanding opportunities for licensed, home-based service providers could have a significant impact on addressing child care "deserts" throughout Nevada. Unfortunately this bill did not survive the first committee deadline. [SB278](#) sought to address some of the workforce issues in the GOWINN report by providing a modified business tax credit for employers who provide financial assistance for child care to their employees, but the bill died in the Senate.

Governor Lombardo's major education bill included an injection of funds for early literacy programs. [AB400](#) allocates [\\$70million](#) to the Nevada Ready pre-K program or to "innovative new program[s]" that support children under 6 years old. CAA appreciates the Governor's commitment to early childhood education programs.

In partnership with the Children's Cabinet and other early childhood systems leaders, we will work with the business community, providers, legislators, local officials, and our federal delegation to ensure we increase the child care workforce, create incentives for employers that offer child care, and push for adequate funding for child care and universal Nevada Ready Pre-K.

“**We recognize the crucial role that early childhood education plays in shaping the future of our state...By prioritizing funding for early learning, we're investing in our children's success and setting them on a path towards a bright future. I'm proud of the Early Childhood Innovative Literacy Program, and I know its significance will be felt for generations to come.**

- Governor Joe Lombardo on  
Literacy Programs



# Strong Start Prenatal-3

Strong Start Nevada is a community outreach campaign aimed at mobilizing parents, educators, advocates, community and business leaders to make quality early childhood experiences a priority in Nevada. The campaign is supported by many state and national partners, each with its unique policy agenda. Children's Advocacy Alliance serves as the backbone organization supporting the work of the coalition. The Strong Start Nevada PN-3 Initiative aims to expand services to low-income infants, toddlers and their families. To achieve this goal, Strong Start Nevada PN-3 coalition uses a coordinated, cross-sector policy agenda to advocate for increased capacity and utilization of:



**Strong Start**  
PRENATAL TO 3

- Maternal and child health programs for birthing people, infants and toddlers;
- Early care and education programs; and
- Individualized family support services

Grounded in equity, the Strong Start PN-3 Coalition aims to increase utilization of early childhood programs and healthcare innovations among families and regions that have been historically underserved.

The following prenatal to 3 bills were championed and monitored by CAA this session:

PN-3 Related Bill Number	Pass or Fail	Health
SB232	✓	Expands postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 days to 12 months of continuous coverage.
Budget Line 2158-E367	✓	Expands the Medicaid eligibility threshold for pregnant people up to 200% of the federal poverty level.
SB117	✓	Allows for Medicaid reimbursement for services provided by Community Health Workers who are supervised by another provider of healthcare.
AB137	✓	Updates the NRS definition for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.
AB283	✓	Increases Medicaid FFS rate for Doula services to \$1200 per birth and encourages doulas in rural communities to enroll as Medicaid programs.
AB265	✗	Would have created a statewide Children's Mental Health Consortium to foster more communication and collaboration between rural and urban mental health providers.
SB419	✗	The Nevada HOPE Act to cover all pregnant persons in NV, regardless of immigration status, effectively ending citizenship discrimination in Medicaid.
<b>Economic Well-Being</b>		
SB341	✓	Makes appropriations to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada and Three Square for \$2 million, effectively allowing them to continue providing food to families in need.
AB376	✓	Provides 8 weeks of paid family leave for state employees. This bill will go into effect on January 1, 2024, and passed with unanimous support.
SB429*	✓	Requires new businesses to offer paid family and medical leave to qualify for certain tax abatements.
AB28	✗	Statewide "Baby Bonds" Program; to financial support children born on Medicaid upon entering adulthood.
SB78	✗	Protections for renters by limiting the fees allowed by landlords; would have benefited working families.
SB426	✗	This bill would have prohibited rent increases and inform on cost-of-living increases.
SB371	✗	This bill would have allowed local governments to implement rent control and affordable housing.
<b>Early Childhood Systems and Early Learning</b>		
AB113	✗	Would have created the Office of Early Childhood Systems within the Office of the Governor.
AB114	✓	Companion bill to AB113. This bill revises the membership of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, defines the early childhood program, and expands the definition of early childhood program to include programs related to mental and behavioral health.
SB278	✗	Created a modified tax credit for employers that provide financial assistance for childcare to their employees.

\* Added to stadium bill



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# Economic Well-Being

Nevada ranks 48th in the nation for promoting the economic well-being of children and families. 33% of children have parents who lack secure employment, 35% are living in households with a high housing cost burden, 19% of Nevada's children live in poverty, and 10% of teens are not in school and not working. Economic instability is a major indicator of future childhood outcomes. Children without stable housing and from low income households are more likely to struggle in school, suffer from physical and mental health conditions, or to be involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Despite these facts, meaningful measures to address the housing crisis and to promote economic stability failed this legislative session.

CAA is a proud member of the Nevada Housing Justice Alliance which backed several bills advancing creative approaches to increase housing access and affordability. Sadly, all of these bills were vetoed by the Governor. [SB78](#) was a tenant protections bill that would have limited application fees, required transparency, and lowered the statute of limitations for suing a tenant for money damages. Nevada is the only state in the country with a summary eviction process that requires the tenant to file an answer first, meaning landlords do not have to file an initial court action to evict someone from their home.



This is a confusing and unfair process that [AB340](#) sought to simplify and improve. [SB335](#) attempted to allow courts to establish eviction diversion programs and would have ensured that vulnerable tenants would remain in their home while their rental assistance was being processed. [SB371](#) would have expressly permitted local governments to implement rent control policies, and [SB426](#) would have required transparency before one's rent is increased and would have prohibited rent increases in certain circumstances.

The legislature failed to advance the groundbreaking and innovative "Baby Bonds" bill ([AB28](#)), which would have required the State Treasurer to establish trust accounts for children to access on their 18th birthday. The initial deposit of \$3200 could potentially result in \$30,000 for the child to use for any purpose in adulthood. Unfortunately, this major stabilizing legislation died in the Senate.

However, there were two great wins for paid family leave this session. [AB376](#), provides 8 weeks of paid leave for state employees. The bill passed with unanimous support and was signed by the Governor. Although vetoed during the regular session, the provisions of [SB429](#) were revived during a special legislative session to fund the A's baseball stadium. As a result, new businesses in Nevada must offer paid family and medical leave to employees before qualifying for certain tax abatements.



# 2023 Children's Champions



CAA would like to recognize the following Children's Champions this session. These lawmakers went above and beyond to consider the impact of policies on Nevada's children and families.



**Shondra Summers Armstrong, Venicia Considine, Erica Mosca, James Ohrenschall** - These legislators remained steadfast in their commitment to educating youth at highest risk for being pushed out of schools by standing against all zero-tolerance legislation ([AB285](#)&[AB330](#)). They leaned on data to support their stance and advocated for the use of evidence-based practices to promote student achievement and wellbeing.



**Claire Thomas** - Assemblywoman Thomas demonstrated her strong resolve and leadership in her stand for children and families this session. She led efforts to improve Nevada's early childhood systems ([AB113](#)&[AB114](#)) and is a vocal advocate for expansion of pre-kindergarten services. She was also an anchor in the fight against zero-tolerance discipline policies (Opposed [AB285](#)&[AB330](#)).

**Majority Leader Nicole Cannizzaro** - Majority Leader Cannizzaro has historically championed legislation that supports the needs of children and families in Nevada. This session she ushered in a bill that expanded Medicaid coverage for postpartum care from from 60 days to 12 months. Prior to this, Nevada was one of only 11 states without extended post-partum coverage.



**Michelle Gorelow** - In addition to Assemblywoman Gorelow's co-sponsorship of Medicaid expansion for postpartum care ([SB232](#)), she was key in legislation ([AB422](#)) to support a pilot program offering services to children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).





# Children's Advocacy ALLIANCE

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