

# PRIORITIZE CHILDREN'S HEALTH

## 2026 Federal Asks



*When it comes to health care, children aren't just little adults. The same is true of children's hospitals, which have very different needs than adult hospitals. As Congress and the administration develop health care policies in 2026, we encourage you to prioritize and consider the unique needs of children and the children's hospitals that serve them. Here are specific actions you can take.*

### PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN MEDICAID

- Protect Medicaid from policies that would negatively impact access to care for children, including mitigating the impact of H.R. 1 implementation particularly, as it relates to state-directed payments and provider tax changes.
- Prevent remaining DSH cuts from moving forward.
- Ensure all children's hospitals can participate in Medicaid hospital at home programs.



### ELEVATE HEALTHY KIDS

- Oppose site-neutral policies, including eliminating "facility fees" or other policies that reduce support for and negatively impact pediatric care.
- Protect the 340B program from changes that could impede children's hospitals ability to serve Medicaid and underinsured pediatric patients.
- Protect and invest in medical research programs that save and improve children's lives.
- Ensure robust appropriations for programs that advance children's health and sustain pediatric providers.
- Prioritize policies that improve children's health.



### BOOST THE PEDIATRIC WORKFORCE

- Fund the Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education program at \$1.02 billion in FY27 to expand the number of pediatricians and pediatric specialists.
- Increase resources for the pediatric workforce through Medicaid.
- Ensure the Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program has robust funding and works as intended to boost the number of pediatric physicians.
- Make sure federal scholarship and loan repayment programs support the broader pediatric workforce.
- Oppose policies that limit the pediatric workforce, like visa and loan restrictions.
- Adequately fund the Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection program.



### ADDRESS THE YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

- Strengthen mental health investment in Medicaid and workforce development.
- Pass the bipartisan EARLY Minds Act (S.779/H.R.1735) to enable states to better invest in prevention and early intervention services for kids and adults.
- Invest in community-based systems of care.
- Bolster services for children with higher acuity mental health conditions.
- Expand youth-focused mental health crisis services and suicide prevention.
- Permanently extend and enhance telehealth flexibilities.
- Improve implementation of the mental health parity law.



*To learn more about these topics and our work, visit [ChildrensHospitals.org/advocacy](https://ChildrensHospitals.org/advocacy).*