

# CREATING LOCAL DEDICATED FUNDING STREAMS FOR KIDS

A Guide to Planning a Local Initiative to Fund  
Services for Children, Youth and their Families



**BY MARGARET BRODKIN, FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR**



**FUNDING THE  
NEXT GENERATION**

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THIS GUIDE IS PRODUCED BY *FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION*, the nation's first and only initiative to support communities in developing local ballot measures that create dedicated funding streams for children, youth and their families.

*Funding the Next Generation* was founded in 2013. Its work grew out of the lessons learned in San Francisco's budget and electoral work to expand funding for children's services. Since its founding, the initiative has worked with over a dozen communities in California to develop revenue streams, engaged hundreds throughout California in learning about dedicated funds, and has researched and prepared documents and tools that provide basic information for those interested in sustainable revenue streams. Funding the Next Generation is expanding its reach beyond California to work with cities and counties throughout the country. SF State University, School of Health and Social Sciences is the sponsor of the initiative. Funders have included The California Endowment, the S. H. Cowell Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, the Rosenberg Foundation and the Sierra Health Foundation.

For more information about the initiative and how to receive support: [www.fundingthenextgeneration.org](http://www.fundingthenextgeneration.org)

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# WHY WE CAN WIN FOR KIDS



Dear Colleagues,

## **I founded *Funding the Next Generation* in 2013**

to inspire the diverse constituency that cares about the future of children to use the electoral process

to create local, dedicated public funding streams that support opportunities for children, youth and their families. As an advocate, administrator, social worker and activist on behalf of children for over four decades, I have attended hundreds of meetings with colleagues, parents, youth and other allies to figure out how to improve outcomes for kids. Too often the meetings end in frustration about the money needed to do the good things families are asking for – services that everyone around the table agrees are absolutely essential to providing equitable chances for all children, such as child care and preschool, quality health and mental health services, educational enrichment, career preparation and early job experiences, afterschool programs, youth leadership opportunities, and family resource centers.

**My concern has been that while we all agree we need stable funding, we work on solutions to everything but that.** We talk about best practices, inequity, coordination, quality of care, and the needs of kids who were most neglected. We do plenty of handwringing, but do not take a lot of action to change how resources in our communities are allocated. Much of our collective energy goes into dividing the “pie” rather than enlarging it. In many cases, we haven’t had the skills, the confidence or vision to do what is needed. We resort to the most short-term and insufficient remedy to getting the money needed – writing one more grant.

## **Potential for success greater than ever before**

What I have learned is that doing the work of getting stable funding streams at the local level is not only gratifying because we see the fruits of our labors almost immediately, but local work also has the greatest potential for success as policies and political realities evolve.

- Policy-making is increasingly being pushed to the local level, where trust in government is greatest and where innovation is most likely to flourish.
- The public is more likely to support new resources controlled at the local level where specific and locally defined needs can be met.
- The local level is where strong constituencies are built, which can ultimately lead to changes in national policies.
- We have a growing number of allies who recognize that an investment in children is essential to the future of our nation, ranging from economists, to demographers, to the military.
- Many cities and counties are experiencing the beginning of an economic recovery. People are already in line with plans for the increases in resources. It is essential that children and families get their share.
- Enough local communities are embarking on these efforts to create a critical mass that can help support your efforts.

**Kids are a winning issue.** Pollsters are telling us that perhaps the one issue that brings together our polarized political environment is the agreement that investing in children must be a higher priority. **WE MUST CAPTURE THE MOMENT.** We must learn to use the electoral process to garner increased and stable funding for kids. This Guide is intended to help you do just that.

In solidarity and hope for the future,

Margaret Brodtkin  
Founder and Director  
Funding the Next Generation

I take to heart the quote attributed to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. “A budget is a moral document.” That is why the fight to spend our resources to lift people up, rather than punish and oppress is so important. And why that has become my personal mission, and why I want the readers of this Guide to develop the skills and passion to take on the challenge of getting dedicated public funding streams – and particularly to take it on in their own communities – on behalf of the next generation.

## ABOUT THE GUIDE

This guide reflects lessons from over three decades of work in San Francisco to build stable funding that brings a greater level of equity, quality, and access to our service delivery system. There is a special focus on what we have learned in the past two years involving and educating dozens of communities around the state about creating local ballot measures. While the Guide highlights what can be done in California, it is relevant to communities around the country – as the process of creating new revenue streams has more similarities than differences from community to community.

**Creating a dedicated local revenue stream is not a linear process, nor is there a one-size-fits-all prescription for success.** You will pick and choose from the ideas presented in the following pages. Every community is different and every action plan will look different. You may decide to start with a poll and move on to develop an expenditure plan for a fund. You may decide to start building a base and finding a political champion. The strategy that will be compelling in a small rural community may not be the same as one in a large city. You may be at the beginning of the journey, or you may find that you are actually mid-way through and didn't even realize it. All of these factors will affect your game plan.

**Three major strands of work.** The strands of work described in this Guide are 1. Developing and making the case, 2. Crafting a plan and a revenue measure, and 3. Organizing the community and ultimately the campaign. These strands of work must be addressed simultaneously and are interwoven – each one impacting the other. The following chapters all contain pieces of these overall strands.

### TERMS USED IN THE GUIDE:

**Coalition** – We use the word “coalition” throughout to refer to the entity that is steering the work. In many cases, it will be a coalition of organizations. In some cases it could be a single organization that works with others but is ultimately the one responsible. Or it could be a committee or some grouping either more or less formal than a coalition.

**Children's Services** - This Guide is about funding for services for children, youth and their families. Sometimes the word “children” is used for simplicity, but it is intended to cover young people of all ages, applying also to transitional age youth – as well as their families. Each community will make decisions about the target age group and/or populations various dedicated funds should support – whether it is for “preschool for all,” community schools, or services for children and youth ages 0 - 24.

**About School funding** - While this Guide has many ideas that are totally relevant to campaigns for school bonds and parcel taxes to support schools, the primary focus is on services other than schools. School bonds and parcel taxes are now frequent and common, whereas funding measures for other services are rarely tried.

**A how-to Guide is always a work-in-progress.** Hence, this one will live in the virtual universe, and will be revised as important new lessons are learned and new ideas are developed.

So, please share your feedback, as well as ideas for the next version – send us an e-mail at:

[margaret@fundingthenextgeneration.org](mailto:margaret@fundingthenextgeneration.org)

# PART I. FUNDAMENTALS

## CONTENT

- ① Benefits of a local, dedicated fund for children's services
- ② Guiding principles
- ③ At the outset: A tool to rate your assets and challenges
- ④ A word about foundations





# 1 Benefits of Local Dedicated Funding for Children's Services

**A stable local revenue stream that can only be spent on services for children and is put in place through the electoral process can be transformative for a community.** The benefits reach far beyond the expected expansion of services. Each community can target funds in a way that best meets its needs – because, by definition, the funds are designed for local discretion.

- **New services, new populations** – New funding streams allow communities to reduce waiting lists for services like childcare and youth jobs, and place services in additional neighborhoods that haven't previously had the clout to attract support. New funding also results in expanded services to high-need populations, such as homeless families, LGBT youth, transitional-age youth and children with disabilities.
- **Prevention** – Most existing public funding focuses primarily on intervention once problems have arisen in the lives of children, youth and families. Local discretionary dollars provide the flexibility to fund preventive services such as parenting, after-school, and restorative justice.
- **Innovation and flexibility** – A new revenue stream can allow communities to experiment with innovative models of care, such as school-based health centers and alternatives to detention. Or a new local funding stream can help fill in gaps that can rarely be filled with state or federal funding, such as enhancing wages for childcare workers, community arts programs and recreation opportunities to girls.
- **Non-profit sector** – So far, the Children's Funds around the country have focused on providing resources to community-based non-profit organizations, and have therefore strengthened and stabilized the non-profit sector, which often provides the most cost-effective essential services. This has allowed non-profits to improve planning from year-to-year and put increased focus on services as opposed to fund-raising.
- **Accountability, coordination and capacity-building** – A new funding stream can create the incentive and the resources to develop an infrastructure that oversees children's services – facilitating inter-agency collaboration, creating tools for evaluation, putting in place community-wide planning mechanisms, and implementing training programs for service providers. This significantly improves quality.
- **Leveraging other resources** – Discretionary local funds can provide a platform to attract other funding – whether it is at the systems level allowing communities to pay the match for federal or state funds, or at the agency level, documenting credibility to other funders or providing seed funding.
- **Empowering a constituency** – When a revenue measure has been approved by a majority of the electorate, there is suddenly a group that has a stake in seeing that funds are used appropriately, and also a group that has gained political power from getting a measure passed. This creates the momentum and experience needed for ongoing victories for children, youth and their families.
- **Outcomes** – Outcomes of the Children's Funds around the country have been demonstrated in three ways: 1. The impact of individual programs, such as school-based clinics that have demonstrated an increase in school attendance, or preschool that has improved kindergarten readiness; 2. The impact on general health and welfare, such as reductions in juvenile crime and childhood obesity; and 3. Self-reporting from parents and youth about the impact of programs on their lives, which has been overwhelmingly positive.

## 2 Guiding Principles

As you use this Guide, there are some important things to remember about the process of creating a local dedicated, public revenue stream for children's services – guiding principles and lessons that will be the foundation of your planning and your approach to the journey ahead:

### LESSONS FROM LARRY TRAMUTOLA PRESENTED AT FIRST STATE CONVENING OF *FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION*.

- Don't wait for someone to solve your problem. Work for what you believe in and what you are passionate about.
- Think locally. Everything is local. How will what you do affect local children? Be creative.
- Don't give up. Make progress every day. The difference between winning and losing is often the work you do day by day.
- Reach out beyond your circle of friends and supporters. Build a network of people who are willing to work. People power must be visible.
- Keep things simple. Don't overreach. We can't solve all the problems, but we can solve some.
- Don't be afraid to lose. The only people who lose are those that either don't try or give up.
- Enjoy the process. Enjoy the fight. Celebrate success
- Be mindful that it is about the NEXT generation, not our own jobs, our own careers, or our own pensions.

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- **Organizing, community building, and changing the civic culture** are at the heart of the work. Of course, it's important to understand revenue options and create credible funding plans (and that will be addressed in this Guide), but that will not be the core of your efforts. You are building a strong and effective constituency for children. Furthermore, it is political work – not partisan, but political. Political is not a dirty word – it is the essential work of living in a democracy.

- **This is a marathon – not a sprint.** San Francisco has been working for 25 years to develop a local stable resource base for children and youth services – and it's still not done. A funding base is a quilt of strategies – there is not one single solution. SF has two separate "carve-out" children's funds – one for general children's services and one for preschool and academic enrichment. It has panoply of taxes, fees, and mitigations, and advocates in the city will continue to work for more, as in the recent soda tax campaign. In fact, the soda tax didn't win on the first try in San Francisco, reflecting another reason that this work is a marathon: Success is not assured; it often requires multiple tries. There are numerous examples of measures that pass the second, third and even fourth time around.

- **Take the initiative.** The biggest "takeaway" from the work that we have done in San Francisco and now around the state is that nothing will happen unless someone or some group takes the initiative to make it happen. It is important to remember the absolute truth of the Margaret Meade quote that we are all so fond of reciting: ***Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.*** It requires a core of "true believers" who take risks and persist.





**Many skills and strategies are required.** You will not have all the skills needed, but you can develop them, and you can recruit to the cause those who have them. In San Francisco, child care workers had no idea that they could become a powerful political constituency in the city. But over time, they developed the organizing, negotiating, media, public speaking and research skills needed to bring millions into the city coffers for expanded slots, higher wages, and quality improvements.

**Getting started is often hard.** This is a big hump, and there is no one right way to start the journey. If you wait for the perfect time and circumstances, you will never do it. Many groups have started by convening a meeting, workshop, or conference on dedicated funds for children, inviting key stakeholders and potential allies to learn and begin the discussion. *Funding the Next Generation* can attend such a meeting to present information on what we have learned. Others start with some of the early steps described in this Guide (such as mapping funding for children or developing a community Bill of Rights for Children) without the explicit goal of creating a dedicated revenue stream.

**Hit the ground running, and don't stop.** One reality is that the schedule for budget processes and elections are set by the government, and they can't be moved just because you may need more time to complete your work. It is essential to keep a steady pace.

**HEADS UP:** The only thing we can predict about the work of getting your community to vote for a dedicated fund for children's services is that it is unpredictable. You will not be able to anticipate exactly where you will land, and it will probably be different from where you expected. And like every other complicated endeavor, all kinds of problems will crop up – an ally becomes an opponent, you learn your

well thought-out revenue idea is actually not legal, your media event backfires, no one shows up at your hearing, and on and on. The only thing we can say is: solve the problem as well as possible, and don't let it deter you from moving forward.


### IT'S LEGAL FOR NON-PROFITS TO DO POLITICAL WORK!

Many non-profits are reluctant to do this work. They incorrectly believe that it is too political – and not allowed. Actually, non-profits can be political; they just can't be partisan in their politics. Much of the work described in this Guide is advocacy, not lobbying. Advocacy is a general term for activities that seek to bring about social change. But non-profits can also lobby. Lobbying refers specifically to advocacy efforts to influence proposed or pending legislation. Furthermore, once something becomes a ballot initiative and the lobbying rules do apply, non-profits can spend up to 20% of their resources on ballot initiatives, which are considered by the IRS to be Direct Lobbying as opposed to Grassroots Lobbying.

The best resource for information on all this is the Alliance for Justice, and its initiative Bolder Advocacy. [www.bolderadvocacy.org](http://www.bolderadvocacy.org). The section specifically related to ballot initiatives is: [bolderadvocacy.org/navigate-the-rules/ballot-measures](http://bolderadvocacy.org/navigate-the-rules/ballot-measures). You can also look specifically at the resources on California, for example [bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Californias\\_ballot\\_measure\\_disclosure\\_and\\_nonprofits.pdf](http://bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Californias_ballot_measure_disclosure_and_nonprofits.pdf)

# 3 Rate Your Assets and Challenges at the Outset

It will help you map your next steps.

DO YOU HAVE....?	RATE 1 - 10
Status of Planning for the Service System	
Comprehensive assessment of needs, expenditures, and gaps in services.	
Community-wide goals and outcomes for children, youth and families.	
Agreement by core stakeholders about priorities for increased funding.	
Capacity of Network and Leadership	
Network/coalition that works together across multiple areas of children's services and has overcome turf issues.	
Convening entity (organization, network or coalition) with credibility and capacity to organize meetings in early phase of work, and which can work with diverse sectors and partners.	
Willingness and independence to speak out openly about unmet needs and funding options.	
Network members or partners beyond children's service providers, such as a large membership organization or organizing group, parent groups, youth, faith, and labor.	
History of collaboration to increase local budgets for children's services.	
Members who are politically engaged and have credibility with elected officials and community.	
Funders to support early work, e.g. staff support.	
Political and Civic Culture	
Civic culture that supports children, e.g. business, media, and service organizations.	
Political leaders who have prioritized children and are current or potential allies.	
Successful ballot measures that have funded education, children or human services.	
Base of private funding and volunteers who support children's services.	
History of success in "winning-over" opponents of public funding for kids.	
TENACITY, PASSION, HUMOR 	



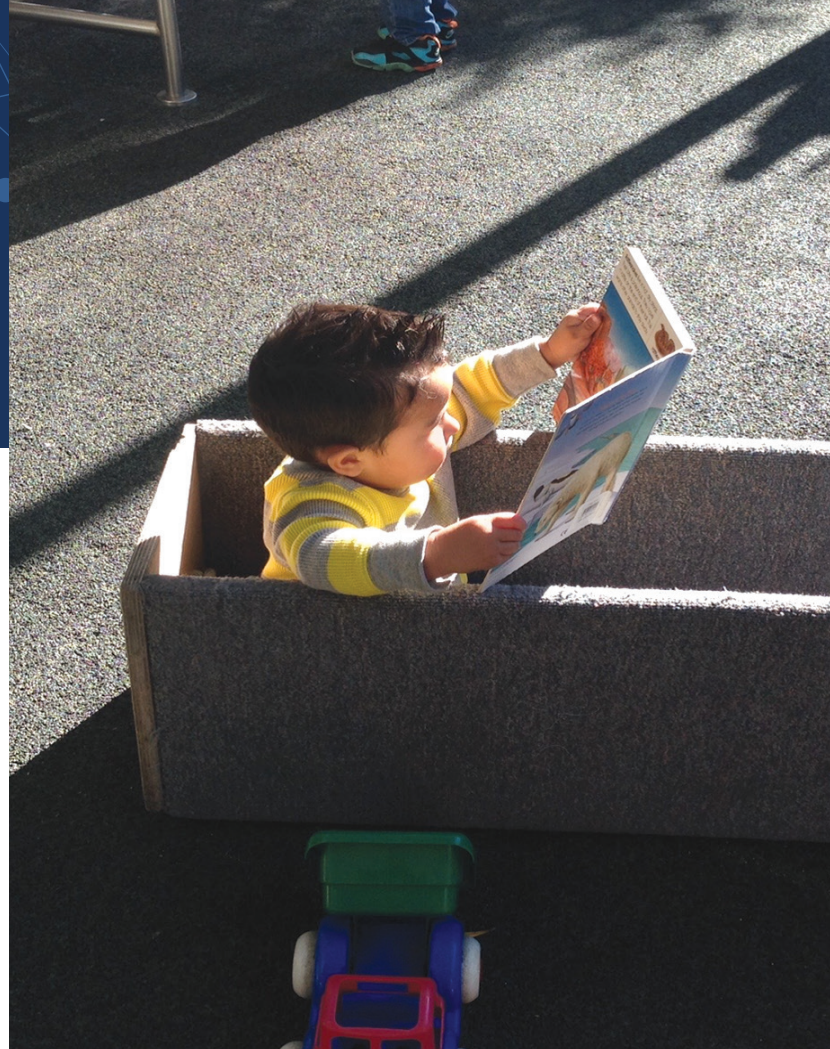
## 4 A Word About Foundations

While foundations will not fund political campaigns, they can fund the pre-campaign work – all the activities that take place before a measure actually gets on the ballot, or before a signature drive to place a measure on the ballot begins. The following activities can be funded by foundations:

- Analyzing the community's fiscal resources for children
- Building community coalitions
- Developing a community consensus about needs and priorities
- Educating the public about services for children
- Developing youth and parent leadership
- Assessing policy and revenue options
- Underwriting initial polls about public opinion

The above activities are the core of the work prior to a political campaign, and they require significant staff support.

We believe that this is just the type of work that is very well suited to the role of foundations – seeding innovative policy development that will lead to stable, sustainable funding. Community foundations should be particularly receptive to requests for funds for local level work. It is difficult to put together the early funding for the work, so it is your job to make the case to your local foundations – often the most likely sources of funding for pre-campaign activities.





# PART II.

## WHAT IS A LOCAL PUBLIC DEDICATED FUNDING STREAM

### CONTENT

- ⑤ Definitions
- ⑥ Examples of funds around the nation
- ⑦ Basics of California's Taxing Law
  - Criteria for a city or county-level measure
- ⑧ Local government revenue options for services for children



# 5 Definitions

**Public** – Funding allocated by a public governmental entity – as opposed to foundations, corporations or individuals. While these other entities can benefit from the groundwork done to create a public fund and having a public fund allows them greater flexibility and options, public funding itself is allocated in a transparent way by elected officials, and is therefore subject to a different level of accountability to the community than private funding.

**Local** – Local governmental entities that control funds are cities, counties, school districts (county and regional) and sometimes special taxing districts created for specific or multi-jurisdictional purposes, such as control of water. This Guide focuses on cities and counties, the source of most local funding decisions regarding children's services.

**Dedicated** – Funding that is legally mandated to be spent on something specific, in this case on meeting the needs of children, youth and families. Within this parameter, the

dedicated purpose can be as broad or narrow as the community desires – from sports programs, to preschool, to all services for young people ages 0 – 24.

**Funding** – Money, specifically an increase in money available for services to children, youth and their families.

**Stream** – This is a key part of the definition, and refers to an ongoing source of funding, as opposed to a one-shot budget item that may or may not be in place year after year. Most of the time legally mandated funding streams are put in place by the electorate and locked into a city or county charter or code. They are usually put in place for finite amounts of time (sun-setting within 5 – 20 years). Sunsets are important, especially the first time a measure is put on the ballot. They assure the electorate that there will be an opportunity to assess outcomes and determine whether the measure should be reauthorized.

## WHY CREATING A BALLOT MEASURE MATTERS

In 1998, the Board of Supervisors of Arizona's Pima County (which includes Tucson) passed a measure setting aside 1% of the General Fund for children's programs. It was done quickly and without much fanfare after a similar idea lost at the city council level in Tucson. As long as a child advocate chaired the oversight committee, all went well - for about a decade. Now, the child advocate behind the measure describes it as having "evaporated." What seemed like the easy way to establish a funding stream at the

outset by simply passing an ordinance through the legislative body (as opposed to a voter-driven change to the county code), turned out not to create the steady revenue initially envisioned by advocates and the former members of the Board of Supervisors. As elected officials changed and advocates retired, the original ordinance, always opposed by county administrators who felt their control had been limited, was ignored and the 1% got absorbed into the general fund.

# 6 Examples of Dedicated Funds for Children

**SAN FRANCISCO CHILDREN AND YOUTH FUND: California's first and the nation's largest public local dedicated fund for services for young people.** The San Francisco fund was initially passed in 1991. It was placed on the ballot through petition of the voters, with 68,000 signatures, when elected officials failed to support the idea. It passed by 54%. It was reauthorized in 2000 and then again in 2015 – both times by 74% of the vote, and both times placed on the ballot unanimously by the Board of Supervisors. What a difference a decade of success made!

## Major elements of the measure:

- The Fund is created by a mandated 4% set-aside of the local property tax, an amount that increased with each reauthorization, having started at 2.5%.
- It serves ages 0-24, again expanding from its initial age range of 0-17.
- Services allowed to be funded are: Affordable child care and early education; Recreation, cultural and after-school programs, including arts programs; Health services, including prevention, education, and behavioral and mental health services, and pre-natal services to pregnant women; Training, employment and job placement; Youth empowerment and leadership development; Youth violence prevention programs; Youth tutoring and educational enrichment programs; and Family and parent support services.
- The Fund is managed by a Department of Children, Youth and Their Families – under the administration of the Mayor.
- An oversight body for the Fund is composed of 11 members, including youth and parents, who are appointed by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors.
- Using the Fund to supplant existing funding of children's services is prohibited. The prohibition is ensured through the creation of a legally mandated Children and Youth Baseline Budget, requiring the City to maintain the level of funding of children's services that existed prior to the passage of the Fund. This is an essential part of the success of the Fund.
- The City is required to implement a 5-year cycle of needs assessments and planning to determine priorities for the Fund. Requirements for transparency, public engagement and coordination with other services are integrated into the 5-year process.
- The creation of concrete outcomes for the services funded, and the evaluation of these outcomes is required.

**2015 level of funding – \$65 Million; \$75 Million by 2017; \$86 Million by 2019**

## Information and analysis of the San Francisco Children and Youth Fund

- [www.dcyf.org](http://www.dcyf.org) (for the agency that manages the fund)
- "From Sandboxes to Ballot Boxes: San Francisco's Landmark Campaign to Fund Children's Services" by Margaret Brodtkin <http://fundingthenextgeneration.org/nextgenwp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Sandboxes-to-Ballot-Boxes-San-Franciscos-Landmark-campaign-to-Fund-Childrens-Services-by-Margaret-Brodtkin.pdf>
- The legislative language and other materials on the fund can be found under San Francisco's Children's Fund, a model for the nation at [www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources/](http://www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources/)





## OTHER DEDICATED FUNDS AROUND THE COUNTRY

### Three major funds on the West coast (in addition to San Francisco)

- Oakland Fund for Children and Youth – [www.ofcy.org](http://www.ofcy.org)  
(approximately \$12 M annually)
- Portland Children's Levy – [www.portlandchildrenslevy.org](http://www.portlandchildrenslevy.org)  
(approximately \$10 M annually)
- Families and Education Levy of Seattle – [www.seattle.gov/education/about-us/about-the-levy](http://www.seattle.gov/education/about-us/about-the-levy)  
(approximately \$34 M annually)

### 8 Special Taxing Districts in Florida

Florida is unique in the country and the home of the oldest dedicated revenue stream for children, created in 1946 in Pinellas County, with the leadership of the Judge of the Juvenile Court. The judge successfully advocated that the state legislature pass legislation enabling the creation of a special taxing district for Pinellas to create a Juvenile Welfare Board to raise taxes and provide services with a focus on preventing juvenile crime. In 1986, the State legislature expanded the legislation, allowing all counties the authority to create what are now called Children's Services Councils with independent authority to raise taxes if voted on by the county electorate. 8 Counties now have passed this independent taxing authority, including Palm Beach and Broward Counties. The Councils operate outside county governments and are, in effect, their own governments with governing bodies defined by the state legislation and appointed by the Governor.

- For information on Palm Beach – [www.cscpbpc.org](http://www.cscpbpc.org)  
(approximately \$102 M annually from the tax)
- For the Broward County story – [www.teachmorelovemore.org/docs/TheChildrensTrustBook.pdf](http://www.teachmorelovemore.org/docs/TheChildrensTrustBook.pdf)  
(approximately \$100 M annually)

### Special Funds approved by voters for specific purposes, such as:

- San Antonio's Pre-K 4 San Antonio – sales tax for preschool – [www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio.aspx](http://www.sanantonio.gov/Pre-K4SanAntonio.aspx)
- Little Rock's Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Initiative (crime prevention programs created by a sales tax) – [www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/communityprograms/substanceabuse.aspx](http://www.littlerock.org/citydepartments/communityprograms/substanceabuse.aspx)
- Missouri's Community Mental Health Act – 8 counties in Missouri have raised over \$100 M by passing property taxes that were enabled by state legislation in 1992 giving them authority to create special taxing districts for mental health services.
- 3 small counties in Ohio (Allen, Auglaize and Hardin) – property tax for evidence-based mental health program – [www.cmhnetwork.org/news/ohio-counties-pass-levy-that-protects-children-against-lifetime-risk-of-mental-illnesses](http://www.cmhnetwork.org/news/ohio-counties-pass-levy-that-protects-children-against-lifetime-risk-of-mental-illnesses)
- San Francisco's Public Education Enrichment Fund – set aside of general fund for (preschool for all and arts, music, sports, libraries and support services in the schools) \$82 Million - 2016  
– [www.sfusd.edu/en/about-sfusd/voter-initiatives/public-education-enrichment-fund.html](http://www.sfusd.edu/en/about-sfusd/voter-initiatives/public-education-enrichment-fund.html)  
– <http://www.first5sf.org/programs/preschool-all>
- King County in the state of Washington passed a property tax in November, 2015, to fund "Best Starts for Kids," an initiative to support prevention and early intervention for children, youth, families and communities. The tax will yield \$65 M per year.  
– [www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/initiatives/best-starts-for-kids.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/constantine/initiatives/best-starts-for-kids.aspx)

**NOTE:** There are a variety of large and small state-level funding mechanisms in place, as well as local voluntary measures (such as donations on tax bills). The purpose of this Guide is to address local mandated measures that have been put in place by a vote of the electorate.



## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NATION'S DEDICATED CHILDREN'S FUNDS FOR GENERAL SERVICES\*

- Money for the Funds is generated by property taxes, carve-outs of general funds, or sales taxes.
- The amount of the Funds range from about \$15 to \$80 per resident.
- The focus is on prevention and early intervention. Areas funded are early childhood, out of school time, school support services, youth development, and social services.
- Primary recipients of funding are non-profit agencies.
- Governing and oversight bodies controlling the Funds are appointed by local government officials and are comprised of a mix of public and private sector community representatives.
- Needs assessments, planning processes, outcome frameworks, and program evaluations are implemented as a part of the funding strategy, usually through an arm of government (e.g. an office) established to administer the Funds.
- The Funds have created a hub of child advocacy, collaboration among service providers, and planning for the cities and counties where they operate.
- The Funds are strongly supported by the public. When renewed (they all have sunsets), they generally pass by approximately 75% of the vote. They have strengthened the constituency for children.

Outcomes reported by the Funds include:

- Reduction in community violence.
- Improved academic performance and school attendance.
- High levels of parent and participant satisfaction.
- Greater % of kindergarteners entering school ready to learn.
- Improvements in child health indicators.

\*Not all funds have all of these characteristics.

## IN A NUTSHELL

There are only two ways to generate new public dollars for children:

1. Create new revenue streams – California communities are working on sales and parcel taxes, but other revenue strategies are possible. Taxes and fees are a critical source of revenue for government.
2. Require children's services get a fair share of existing revenue (called a "set-aside" or "carve-out"). Both children's funds in California have used this strategy

Don't be deterred by the obvious political challenges of both possibilities. It CAN be done.





# 7 Basics of California Taxing Law

**NOTE:** The following two sections (7 and 8) are specifically about California revenue options. However, many of the basic concepts are also relevant to cities and counties around the country.

## OVERVIEW:

Since “Prop 13,” California has made it hard to raise revenue through taxes and fees. In most cases, new revenue streams for a specific purpose require a 2/3 vote by the electorate. Mandating a “carve out” of existing budgets requires only a majority vote. Despite the challenges, there are opportunities to raise revenue at the local level. They are described on the chart on pages 18 and 19, and explained in greater detail in a white paper at: [fundingthenextgeneration.org/nextgenwp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Local-Level-Funding-by-Orrick.pdf](https://fundingthenextgeneration.org/nextgenwp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Local-Level-Funding-by-Orrick.pdf). The chart and the white paper linked here were prepared specifically for Funding the Next Generation by the law firm Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP.

- **Constraints on raising local revenue:** The State has exclusive power to tax and regulate certain items, such as personal and corporate income and the sale of alcohol and cigarettes. In addition local communities cannot impose new or expanded property taxes based on the value of the property (called ad valorem taxes).
- **General and Special taxes:** New revenues can generally be either General (money that can be used for any purpose by the governing body) or Special (money that can be used for a single purpose, such as children’s services). Taxes and fees that provide revenue for General purposes only require a majority vote in most cases. Taxes and fees that provide revenue for Specific purposes require a 2/3 vote.
- **Charter vs. General Law** – Some of the laws governing elections and revenue are made by the state; others are made at the local level. However, if a city or county does not have its own charter (like a constitution), it is called a General Law jurisdiction and state laws and regulations apply. To find out if your county is a General Law or Charter, check: [ballotpedia.org/Counties in California](http://ballotpedia.org/Counties_in_California)

- **Getting on the ballot** – As will be discussed in Part VII of this Guide, there are two legal ways to get on a ballot in California. A revenue measure can be placed on the ballot by a legislative body or by petition of the voters, accomplished through a signature-gathering campaign.

**Criteria for a city or county-level measure** – Both cities and counties have taxing authority and the ability to pass fees – although cities have a few more options than counties (see chart below), such as the ability to levy business license fees (including a soda tax). In addition to legal constraints, factors determining whether to create a revenue measure at a city or county level include:

- **Services to be funded** – Generally health and social services are provided at the county level, whereas recreation and crime prevention programs are often provided at the city level. Other services, such as after-school are mixed. Because the First 5 policy-making infrastructure is at the county level, early care and education are most often seen as county responsibilities. Often cities are taking on job training programs, affiliated with alliances with a local business community. Both levels of government collaborate in providing services with school districts.
- **Target population** – Funding streams intended to serve the highest need populations may vary depending on the location of that population. In some cases, the high need population is in a city. In other cases, it is in the most rural parts of a county or evenly dispersed within the county.
- **Political feasibility** – Urban areas tend to be more supportive of new funding, especially for services to high need populations, and therefore it may be more practical to target a city funding stream, or start in a city with a particularly responsive electorate, with the ultimate plan of moving to other cities in the county. In addition, many California counties are extremely large, and therefore it is easier to mount a campaign in a single city, where organizing and outreach is more feasible.



# 8 Local Government Revenue Options for Services for Children

The chart below was prepared by Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP in September 2013 to introduce children's advocates to the basic rules about revenue options that could apply to funding children's services in California. The information was not intended as legal advice, but as a general introduction. Note that there are numerous proposals under discussion in the state legislature to modify tax policies, with the possibility that important changes will be on the November, 2016 ballot.

Local Funding Sources	Legislative Body Approval Needed to Place on Ballot	Voter Approval Needed to Pass	Limits on Amount of Revenue That Can be Raised
<b>City or County General Taxes</b> These are revenues used for general governmental purposes. There is no obligation to use these revenues in a specific manner.	Two-thirds	Majority of voters voting on measure	See "Common Types of General or Special Taxes"
<b>City or County Special Taxes</b> These are revenues used for specific purposes, even if tax is placed in a general fund. The revenues must be used for the voter-approved purpose and no other purpose.	Majority (unless for charter cities, and the charter provides otherwise) Two-thirds for add-on sales taxes	Two-thirds of voters voting for the measure	See "Common Types of General or Special Taxes" or "Common Types of Special Taxes"

## NOTE:

Elections for general taxes must be consolidated with a regularly scheduled general election for members of the city council or board of supervisors, except in cases of emergency declared by a unanimous vote of the city council or board of supervisors. Proposition 26, approved by California voters in 2010, limited the definition of non-taxes to exclude some funding measures that local governments had previously considered to be fees or charges, which did not require voter approval.

See link on p. 17 for details regarding the above chart in a more complete white paper prepared by Orrick on California revenue options for children's services.

Local Funding Sources	Legislative Body Approval Needed to Place on Ballot	Voter Approval Needed to Pass	Limits on Amount of Revenue That Can be Raised
<b>Common Types of General or Special Taxes</b>	See p. 18 depending on whether tax is a general or special tax	See p. 18 depending on whether the tax is a general or special tax	
■ Utility User Tax			No limit
■ Transient Occupancy Tax			No limit
■ Add-on Sales Taxes			Combined (city and county) 2%
■ Business License Taxes (includes soda taxes and rental car taxes)			Must fairly reflect the proportion of the taxed activity actually conducted within the taxing jurisdiction
■ Documentary Transfer Taxes			There are limits
■ Admission Taxes			No limit

<b>Common Types of Special Taxes</b>			
■ Parcel taxes	Majority	Two-thirds of voters voting on measure	No limit
■ Mello-Roos Taxes for Services	Majority	Two-thirds of landowners or registered voters, as applicable, voting on the measure	Rate and methods must have reasonable basis
■ Public Library Special taxes	Majority	Two-thirds of voters voting on the measure	Based on benefit to property or another reasonable basis

<b>Non-Taxes</b>			
■ Property assessments	Majority	Majority of affected property owners that submit ballots; voters weighted by assessment liability	Must conform to Article XIID of the CA. Constitution
■ Property related fees or charges (gas and electric service not considered property-related)	Majority	Two-thirds of voters voting on the measure or majority of affected property owners voting on measure (fees or charges for sewer, water and refuse collection do not need voter approval but are subject to majority protest)	Must conform to Article XIID of the CA Constitution
■ Some fees or charges, such as nuisance abatement	Majority	None	Must conform to Article XIIC of the CA Constitution

# PART III.

## DEVELOPING THE CASE FOR A DEDICATED FUNDING STREAM

### CONTENT

- ⑨ Documenting the need
- ⑩ 10. Follow the money
  - Guidelines for understanding local budgets
  - Understanding the budget process
  - Tips for budget advocacy
- ⑪ Creating a Children's Budget





# 9 Documenting the Need

Many communities have had years of collecting data and documenting the needs of its children, youth and families. If this is the case, your job is to synthesize what you have and start communicating it to decision-makers, allies, potential volunteers and the general public.

Most of the information you need is readily available – it is collected by the state, various local public agencies, and other advocacy groups. For Californians, two great data bases can give you much of what you need: [www.kidsdata.org](http://www.kidsdata.org) and the county-level report cards done by Children Now. You will probably need to have children's data on the following issues to make a compelling case – and be seen as people who do their homework:

- Demographics
- Income/poverty
- Education/school readiness and success
- Health and mental health indicators
- Homelessness
- Crime and safety
- Child abuse and neglect and foster care
- Employment

Whenever possible, complement simple data about problems with information about effectiveness, gaps, and trends, as well as improvements and new services needed. For instance, data about the youth unemployment rate can be accompanied by the number of youth who apply for, but don't get into a summer jobs program. Other possibilities:

- Number of children on waiting lists in critical areas, such as child care and preschool, or pregnant teens waiting to get into the county's only teen parent program, or youth with substance abuse problems on waiting lists for mental health services.

- Low % of children in need who receive services, such as % of school age children whose parents work who are in a quality afterschool program, or % of homeless children who receive educational support services.
- Indicators of poor access to needed care, such as over-use of emergency rooms or % of youth leaving juvenile justice system without support.
- Inadequate number of facilities, such as only one city in the county having a family resource center or a recreation program for children with disabilities, or only one middle school having a quality afterschool program, or the % of children who fail vision screening.

**TIP:** Sometimes it is effective to use a community crisis, such as a widely publicized child abuse case or an act of violence to highlight unmet needs and the lack of early intervention services.

## KEEP IT SIMPLE

The hardest, but most important part of making the case for a revenue measure is synthesizing information into a compelling sound bite or "elevator speech."

### The biggest mistake folks make are:

1. Spending too much time collecting information and too little time spreading the word, and
2. Sharing too much information with people who will never read it. Bookshelves are filled with expensively produced unread volumes with titles such as "The Well Being of Our Children." The ultimate product – a campaign brochure – will be read in less than a minute. As you comb through data and budgets (necessary to do your homework for some policymakers), remember that ultimately it will be 5 key "facts" that will sell the measure.

# 10 Follow the Money

## TIPS ON BUDGET ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

- Budget advocates for kids must learn to play **political hardball** to compete with other interests, such as law enforcement.
- **Kids and parents** often make their own best sales pitch for budget increases in services they need.
- Hold elected officials accountable. **Issue report cards** on their support for funding for kids. **Honor** elected officials who supported your budget requests.
- Pay attention to the budget format and process, and advocate for **transparency and clarity**. You can make as much change doing that, as getting more money, and many folks will thank you.
- Make a strong case about **cost-effectiveness**. The numbers are on the side of investing in kids.
- Don't be afraid to **ask for help**. Find a former budget staffer who can explain things you don't understand.
- **Numbers count!** The more people who call elected officials, attend hearings or send letters – the better.
- Find **inside-government champions** or trusted informers. Often they want change as much as you do.
- **Showing up is half the battle**. Very few people attend most budget hearings. Become a regular.
- If need be, start simple – just **prevent budget cuts**. Then move on to advocating for budget augmentations
- The **media** can be a microphone – use it.
- **Drama** can help – and creative advocacy strategies get the attention you need. Babies create a powerful visual impact to remind policy-makers what your “ask” is really about.
- Reports don't change decisions. **Political muscle** does.
- Build a **coalition** of diverse supporters.
- **Be specific** about what you want – know exactly what it will cost and how much needs to be added to the budget.
- **Be that group that never goes away!**

Understanding the current state of funding for the services you want your measure to cover can be very important – some think it is essential, although there are those who use very little hard data about current funding and are still able to make the case with anecdotes, data about needs, and by relying on a community's general understanding that the need exists.

In fact, unlike San Francisco, Oakland didn't analyze the city's expenditures for children before passing the Oakland Fund for Children and Youth. Nevertheless, while you may choose to bypass the budget advocacy phase of work, we recommend understanding your local budget – at least enough to be able to answer hard questions from policymakers to document the need for additional money.

## GUIDELINES FOR UNDERSTANDING LOCAL BUDGETS AND ENGAGING IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

**You may begin your journey toward a local dedicated funding stream by becoming involved in the budget process** – especially if your coalition has not been involved before. Not only do you better understand the fiscal landscape for children and develop credibility, but you are very likely to have victories. In San Francisco, a Children's Budget Coalition spent 4 years of vigorous budget advocacy before turning to a ballot campaign to create an ongoing dedicated fund. What is likely is that you

## BUDGET TRANSMITTAL LETTER: A TROVE OF INFORMATION

Most City or County proposed budgets start with a letter from the chief executive (e.g. Mayor, Chief Administrative Officer) when the budget is submitted to the legislative body for review and approval. This usually happens late in May or early June. This letter is invaluable to your understanding of the budget, and may be all that you need to read. It contains the major budget decisions (what has been added or eliminated from the budget), and the “big picture” budget policies. Even if you are not studying the budget, the letter often contains valuable information about demographics, historical trends, the economy of the community, comparisons with other communities, etc. You will be surprised by what you can find. It may help you shortcut other research.

**We recommend that you read the letter.**

will ultimately come to the conclusion that the only way to achieve an adequate amount of resources that are stable from year to year is to have an institutionalized funding stream – and the only way to do that is to place a measure on the ballot.

For lessons learned from San Francisco’s budget advocacy read: “On Becoming a Budget Champion for Children” by Margaret Brodtkin [fundingthenextgeneration.org/nextgenwp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ON-BECOMING-A-BUDGET-CHAMPION-FOR-CHILDREN1.pdf](https://fundingthenextgeneration.org/nextgenwp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ON-BECOMING-A-BUDGET-CHAMPION-FOR-CHILDREN1.pdf)

Also note the “Tips” in the sidebar on p. 22. as well as the criteria for advocating for additions to the budget on p. 25

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR LOCAL BUDGET

Regardless of whether you want to get involved in your local budget process, it is important to understand your local budget.

### Basic budget vocabulary and structure

All relevant budget information will be found on your city or county’s website. This will likely include the current budget, as well as past budgets. Gone are the days when you had to go to the county seat to stand at a counter and study documents.

**Which document to review** – There are two major financial documents: a proposed budget and a final appropriations ordinance. Use the proposed budget – although not final, it will not change much (and will include final numbers from the previous year) and will be much more accessible than the appropriations ordinance, which is primarily numbers and hard to understand.

## WEIRD USE OF WORDS IN A BUDGET YOU MAY WANT TO UNDERSTAND:

**Sources and Uses** – For your purposes, this just means revenue and expenditures.

**Funds** – This is the word used for groupings of expenditures. There are Governmental Funds and Other Funds. *Governmental Funds* generally come in 4 types: *General*, *Special Revenue* (money that is tracked for a single use), *Capital Projects*, and *Debt Service*.

For most of your purposes, you will care only about the *General Fund*. This is where the city or county tax dollars and operational expenditures for most city departments are (such as Health or Recreation). It is also where the discretionary dollars are - although not all General Fund uses are discretionary. You will care most about the General Fund discretionary dollars. Unfortunately, most budgets don’t specify which dollars are discretionary. You have to dig to get that – usually directly from departments or city/county finance and budget officers.

The “*Other Funds*” come in 2 main types - *Internal Service* (which are the service categories that support city departments like IT) and *Enterprise* (which are the functions of government run like business activities, which charge for services and usually support themselves, like an airport). You may also have some *Special Taxing Districts* that are tracked separately. Generally these “Other Funds” are not the target of interest to children’s advocates. However, the city or county functions that they cover could be ideal places for [youth internships](#), and in some cases, the development of [on-site child care centers](#).





**Fund Balance/Reserves** – This will be a part of every budget and is what it says – what is carried over from the previous year or what will be carried over to the next year (depending where it is in the budget document.) Usually communities will have a Fund Balance, which is good fiscal practice. However, if the Fund Balance is over 15% of the budget, you should question it. It could be a place to negotiate for additional expenditures for kids.

**Departments and Programs** – These are what they appear to be – Department are like Social Services; programs are subdivisions like Food Stamps

**Functions** – Departments are categorized by function, such as Public Protection, Health and Social Welfare, Culture and Recreation, and Public Works/Transportation/Commerce.

**Characters/Objects** – “Character” is the word used for big categories of funding (such as salaries and benefits), and “objects” is the word used for subdivisions of funding (such as Workers Compensation).

**Schedules** – The California Controller requires counties to report funding information on 10 forms called “schedules.” The ones that may be of interest to you are: Schedule 1, an All Funds Summary; Schedule 5, a Sources Summary by Fund; and Schedule 8, a Uses Summary by Fund.

**TIP: It is very important not to get lost in too much detail.** Most of the hundreds of pages in the budget document will not be relevant to your understanding. Look for summaries and charts with the big picture. And note that the budget document repeats the same basic information in a variety of forms.

If you are still having trouble, you are not alone. Generally the way that child advocates want to understand information is by specific program. Budgets aren’t done by program, except large categories of programs. That’s where the problem is, and why creating a resource map of children’s services is a challenge. It is the rationale for developing a Children’s Budget (see p. 26)

### **The Potential of Realignment for Children’s Advocates –**

In 2011, the State of California “realigned” what are called “protective services” and “behavioral health” thus giving counties control of funding that had previously been controlled by the state. This creates a huge opportunity for advocacy at the local level, an opportunity further expanded by the fact that these dollars are increasing faster than predicted. This could be an opportunity to place greater emphasis on prevention, and to design programs to meet specific local needs. However, it should be noted that so far most of this money gets swallowed up in public agencies for late intervention, so it becomes an argument for dedicated funding for prevention.

Reed Connell of Social Change Partners, LLC and a consultant to *Funding the Next Generation* has become an expert in realignment policy and advocacy. His articles and blogs are on his website at: [www.socialchangepartners.com/news/?category=Realignment](http://www.socialchangepartners.com/news/?category=Realignment)

**NOTE:** The terms used in this section are those used in California. Other states or communities may use slightly different terms for the same concepts.

## THE BUDGET PROCESS

The most important thing to know about the budget process is that it is a **year-round process**. Even as one year's budget is being approved by the legislative body, administrators are preparing the following year's budget. Once public hearings begin (normally in June) many of the opportunities for input are long past. Most communities adhere to the following calendar and **it is important to seize opportunities for input in every segment of time:**

October - December – Legislative bodies set budget priorities and Departments receive instructions defining budget parameters, such as funding they will have available. You can start commenting, advocating and participating during this time.

January – March – Behind-closed-doors, departments and the executive branch negotiate (sometimes vigorously) to develop preliminary budgets. Sometimes there are public hearings at the department level on the budget. If there are no department hearings, advocate for them.

April – May – The lead fiscal officer submits a final report on fiscal status of county or city. The executive branch develops its budget proposal. This is the time for behind-the-scenes negotiations with county or city executives.

June - July – The executive branch submits its proposed budget to City Councils or Boards of Supervisors – the first point the budget becomes public. Legislative bodies conduct public hearings on the budget, and approve the budget in late June or early July. Never let a budget hearing pass without pushing a children's agenda.



## FIGHT FOR ADDITIONS TO YOUR COMMUNITY'S BUDGET THAT:

- Improve lives of children, youth and families
- Feel important to the general public
- Unify your coalition
- Can rally a mass of supporters
- Can engage young people and parents
- Are a responsibility of local government
- Have a potential funding source
- Have potential to save money – down the line
- Help build your organizational capacity and momentum for next campaign
- **Are big enough to matter but small enough to win.**

**NOTE:** There are a number of guides to local budget processes that can expand on the information in this Guide, such as the guides to city, county and school district funding that have been produced by the Advancement Project – [www.advancementprojectca.org/?q=ap-ca-equity-in-public-funds](http://www.advancementprojectca.org/?q=ap-ca-equity-in-public-funds)

# 11 Creating a Children's Budget

**What is a Children's Budget?** This phrase has been used to mean everything from a fiscal mapping of a community's funding for children, to a comprehensive set of budget proposals that includes specific programs, costs, cost-benefits, outcomes, and potential revenue sources.

You can use the name and concept in whatever way works to meet your goals. In this Guide, we will use the term "Children's Budget" to mean a document that maps and analyzes selected expenditures for children.

## **Definition of children's services for a Children's Budget**

Before beginning a fiscal mapping process you will need a definition of children's services. You may define them, or the portion of services you are targeting (such as preschool), any way you think would be most useful. To avoid ambiguity and pitfalls in definitions, we recommend the following definition:

- Services explicitly targeted to children (e.g. child care) and to families when eligibility is dependent on the presence of children in the family (e.g. parenting classes).
- Not services where children benefit as part of a larger class or general public (e.g. fire, street cleaning)

### **TIP: A CHILDREN'S BUDGET IS A GREAT PLACE TO START IN SOME COMMUNITIES**

In many conservative communities, the idea of mapping current resources is very appealing and non-threatening. In itself it has value (see "Benefits"); but it also provides an entry point for important stakeholders, including elected officials and foundation leaders, who are not ready to talk about ballot measures or funding battles, but very much want documentation of resource needs.

- Portion of services explicitly for children when part of a broader service for the general public (e.g. pediatric services in emergency rooms, children's swim class in public pools)

## **Benefits of a "fiscal map" of children's services**

- Provides documentation of need for additional resources
- Provides necessary information to ensure current level of services are maintained and not cut
- Helps align spending priorities, improve coordination of services, and maximize funding opportunities
- Helps identify gaps and evaluate the balance of expenditures
- Leads to well-informed decision-making by government officials
- Builds knowledge and confidence of children's advocates who are involved

## **Strategic decisions to make before fiscal mapping begins**

- What agencies and levels of government should be included in the analysis?
- How frequently should the Children's Budget be created – one-time or annual updates?
- Who produces and publishes the results – government, community coalition, advocates?
- Who will do the work of collecting the information?
- Form of data collection – survey, document review, reports by agencies?
- Level of detail – agency level, program level, numbers served, etc.

## **Recommendations:**

- Make this a joint project of community stakeholders and government.
- Begin with a resolution by the Board of Supervisors or City Council calling for the creation of a Children's Budget and for county or city budget officials to develop the budget. (see p.28, 34 and 35 for examples)



**A Children's Budget Advisory Committee** will lend expertise, ensure buy-in of public agencies that must provide the primary data, and ensure greater support for the conclusions and recommendations.

- Have the resolution establish the goals, guidelines, and areas to be investigated by the budget mapping process.
- Appoint a leader of the process with credibility and technical expertise – can be head fiscal officer, elected official, neutral community agency, or county/city manager
- Have the process overseen by an advisory board of government agency personnel AND community service providers and advocates.
- Have the resolution require a deadline and a follow-up reporting to the Board or Council and the public.
- Start with the idea of a one-time “budget” that can later be institutionalized into the county or city budget process.

#### **Where to look – agencies that spend money for kids (partial list)**

County level departments or agencies

- Health
- Human services/Social services/Welfare
- First 5
- Criminal Justice – sheriff, probation, juvenile detention, juvenile court
- Housing
- Workforce, Private Industry Councils

City level department or agencies

- Recreation and Parks
- Libraries and cultural institutions
- Law enforcement and criminal justice
- Community and economic development
- Mayor's office
- Homeless services
- Immigrant services

#### **What to analyze**

Possibilities include:

- Prevention vs. late intervention
- Expenditure by agency
- Expenditure by function

### **THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE OF THUMB: DECIDE FIRST WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW**

Possibilities include:

- Are children getting their fair share of community resources?
- Is there an equitable allocation of resources that allows all children, particularly children of color, access to services?
- Do you need more discretionary dollars to meet important goals?
- Could you improve lives and save money with a greater up-front investment in prevention?
- Where are the glaring gaps in services? Or skewed funding appropriations?
- Are there large expenditures with limited accountability and transparency?
- Have children been losing ground over time? Do changes in investments match changes in need and demographics?
- Are there best practices that are working and should be expanded?

- Expenditure by funding source
- Expenditure by desired outcome
- Year to year comparisons
- Portion of overall budget spent on kids
- Comparative unit costs
- Discretionary vs. non-discretionary or categorical (Discretionary revenues are those that can be used for any legitimate government purpose – as opposed to those that can only be used for a very specific purpose. Most general tax revenues are discretionary.)
- Specific service areas or populations
- Comparisons to other counties/cities

**WARNING:** Don't make the work too complicated. Gather ONLY information that you need to take action.

**FINAL NOTE:** All this work is worth the effort ONLY if it is used as part of a communication strategy that targets decision-makers, potential allies and volunteers, and the general public. A typical pitfall is producing information that sits on a shelf.

**RESOLUTION OF THE DEL NORTE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
ENDORING A BILL OF RIGHTS AND CHILDREN'S BUDGET  
4/14/2015**

WHEREAS, a "Bill of Rights for Children and Youth" is a public declaration of support for the rights of children and youth to certain fundamental protections and opportunities, including safety, well-being, education, quality of life and a voice in those matters affecting them; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Del Norte adopted Resolution No. 99-083 "**A Resolution Establishing A Policy Of Commitment To The Agenda and Principles Of A Prosperous, Safe and Healthy Community**" that established and adopted 10 goals, one of which was to Empower Our Community By Affirming Safe and Healthy Children, Families and Individuals; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Del Norte adopted year 2007 "The Year of the Child" and again in 2013 in conjunction with California State Association of Counties; and

WHEREAS, these declarations represent support for the rights of all children and youth by the Board of Supervisors when making budgetary decisions in the allocation of funds; and

WHEREAS, during the annual county budget process the County will develop a Children's Budget that specifies source and funding allocated to children's programs; and

WHEREAS, it is important to understand purpose, the budget should specify if the program targets prevention, intervention or treatment; and

WHEREAS, the County will collaborate on the development of a Children's Budget, with organizations and individuals who are not traditionally considered part of the behavioral and public health delivery system but are providers and or stakeholders in multi-faceted community-based and family based programs; and

WHEREAS, prevention services reduce risk and increase protective factors that foster resilience which in turn reduces the high cost of intervention and treatment, every effort should be made to provide funding and programs that strengthen families and build resilience in children;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors will develop a Children's Budget as part of its annual budget process with a focus on funding prevention activities, programs and services and that the County's community partners and stakeholders will have ample opportunity to provide input in the preparation of the Children's Budget.

# PART IV.

## DECIDING WHAT TO FUND

### CONTENT

- ⑫ A Children's Bill of Rights can lay the groundwork.
- ⑬ From general principles to a concrete funding agenda
- ⑭ The power of polling





# 12 A Children's Bill of Rights Can Lay The Groundwork.

The decision about what to fund must be a mix of your research, community outreach, consensus-building and the political art of figuring out what the public will support.

It is not as simple as it sounds, and you may end up with a somewhat different answer than you thought you would. Or you may know from the outset what you want to fund, and not want to waste time engaged in a lengthy process.

The ideas described below are suggestions – not prescriptions. There are lots of variations on how to decide what to fund in your measure.

It often helps if there are some already agreed-upon principles and priorities among stakeholders, even better if there is an “official” policy regarding local government’s commitment to the well being of children. Many communities, including San Francisco, have approached this by adopting something they call a “children’s agenda” or a children’s “Bill of Rights.” San Francisco’s 10 point children’s agenda passed by the Board of Supervisors and signed by the Mayor articulated what children were entitled to, and included Affordable Housing for Families, High Quality Education, Plentiful Resources for Childcare, Accessible Health Care, and a Rehabilitative Juvenile Justice System. The Bill of Rights or Agenda is often developed by a group of stakeholders, particularly service providers. The process can take a few months or a year – depending on the extent to which it is used as an organizing and outreach tool. And like much of the work described in this Guide, other work can be done simultaneously. The “bill of rights/agenda” can be taken to groups throughout the community for endorsement, thus fostering a discussion about needs and generating a list of dozens of endorsers. Or it can be taken to the policymaking body (either a City Council or a Board of Supervisors) by an organized group of stakeholders with a request for formal

adoption after a much shorter period of time. Regardless of the timing and level of community involvement, it should be developed with a purpose in mind.

## **Use the Bill of Rights as a powerful tool.**

### **What can it accomplish?**

- Engage many sectors of the children’s constituency in a common activity – helping overcome turf issues and developing common goals
- Demonstrate broad community support for common values and goals
- Educate policymakers and community members about the needs of children
- Develop a base of support for next steps in a campaign to garner resources
- Create a record of policy commitments to children to be used as the platform for future action.

**TIP:** Never miss an opportunity to organize, engage more people in the work, and demonstrate widespread concern about children. A meeting of a City Council or Board of Supervisors about a Bill or Rights is such an opportunity – even when passage of an item is assured. Elected officials who look out on a sea of people remember that even more than they remember the content of the discussion.

**NOTE:** For an example of a Bill of Rights, see p. 31. Some communities, like Napa, have tied the approval of a Bill of Rights to the request for a Children’s Budget (see resolution on p. 34 and 35).

## THE CHILDREN'S BILL OF RIGHTS FOR SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

One of our greatest hopes as a community is that our children grow up with healthy minds, bodies and spirits that enable them to maximize their potential. As endorsers of the Children's Bill of Rights, we collectively pledge to work together toward this vision. May we, together, demonstrate daily that our youth are our highest priority, as evidenced by collective commitment of time, money, sustained effort and unified support. May we cultivate our understanding of child development and use it to nurture, guide, challenge, and encourage them along their many paths.

As the children and youth of San Luis Obispo County, may we each....

1. Live in a stable, comfortable home surrounded by parents, family and other caring adults who nurture us throughout childhood.
2. Eat healthy and plentiful meals every day.
3. Have the basics for our daily life - clothing, transportation, and supplies for school, outside interests, and activities.
4. Be and feel safe everywhere we go.
5. Enjoy daily physical activity and time outdoors.
6. Visit a doctor, dentist or counselor when needed to help us stay physically and mentally healthy.
7. Learn and master ideas and skills in and out of school that inspire us, help us understand and be ready for our place in the world.
8. Explore a variety of experiences that illuminate the world's natural beauty, richness and human creativity – arts, nature, culture, music.
9. Make and keep healthy relationships with friends.
10. Know that adults and peers listen, respect and support us as individuals while we grow – our diverse cultures, backgrounds, circumstances, talents, sparks, and passions.
11. Have opportunities to contribute in meaningful ways to our community by voicing our ideas, sharing in decisions and offering service to others.
12. Be encouraged to dream big, to grow through challenge and mistakes, and to always live with hope and aspiration.

# 13 From General Principles to a Concrete Funding Agenda

Translating general agreement on principles into a concrete funding agenda is often a difficult process. We find it easy to agree in the abstract, but when it comes to talking about how specific amounts of money will be spent, it gets much harder.

## What strategies are communities using?

1. **Assessing gaps** – If you have conducted a needs assessment and analyzed current allocations, no doubt some gaps in services are more glaring than others. This can be a good place to start, but it is far from the end of the process, since there are so many gaps.
2. **Polling** – There is much information that can be gained from polling, including what specific services the public will most support. Communities have used polling results to help pick the services that will be funded through a ballot measure. This not only increases the chances of success, but it can help settle internal turf disputes within a coalition about what should be funded through the measure.
3. **Consensus of the leadership coalition** – Most groups intending to spearhead a funding measure develop a process for coming to a consensus about priorities. You have probably participated in these types of processes. They can take

anywhere from a day to a year. A group that has worked together for a while and is building on a strong foundation of collective priority setting can achieve consensus in a day-long “summit” with breakout sessions, facilitated decision making, and neutral consultants to provide sufficient preparation and follow-up. Some groups need six months to a year to accomplish the level of research and outreach they desire. Some things to think about:

- Clarity and rationale about whether meetings are open or “by invitation only.” There are legitimate reasons to decide either way, and probably some combination of both works best
- How professional facilitation can help. These conversations can become tense since they usually require giving up some long-held priorities and making tough compromises.
- Imposing stringent time limits. These are topics that could be discussed forever, so it is best to decide at the outset the time parameters, to facilitate moving on to the next step.

4. **Community outreach to key stakeholders** – It is important to engage the community at some stage of the process of developing the funding priorities. Of course, there are places that have already developed an agenda through various types of community engagement and outreach. The final proposal will be stronger as you hear different perspectives, and the process will vastly increase the level of community buy-in that will be critical as you move forward. Some strategies for gathering input include:

- Presentations to community groups and committees for input and support
- Tabling in high traffic places in the community, such as supermarkets
- Surveys through local businesses, community meetings, newspapers, and schools
- Enlisting feedback through social media, particularly helpful in getting input from young people

## MARIN COUNTY EXPENDITURE SUMMARY FOR PROPOSED SALES TAX

### Allocation percentages

- Access to Quality Preschool Education – 50% - 60%
- Access to Affordable Child Care – 20% - 25%
- Access to Comprehensive Healthcare – 15% - 20%
- Access to Extended Learning/Afterschool Opportunities for Children in Grades K – 2 – 10%





### Other considerations in deciding what to fund in your measure:

**Level of specificity?** People raise the question: Shall we create a general purpose fund with broad goals, such as the San Francisco Children and Youth Fund, or a fund for special populations or services, such as the Public Education and Enrichment Fund which supports arts and music in the schools, and universal preschool, also in San Francisco. Both can work.

**Creative mix of shrewdness, opportunity and data** - In most instances, decisions about what to seek funding for result from the answers to a combination of the questions raised in this section. In the end, this is not an objective process, but is based on subjective judgments and instinct – a mix of political shrewdness, objective data, and opportunity.

For instance, the calculation to create a Preschool-for-All measure may not only be based on the compelling research about the outcomes of quality preschool on school readiness. It could also be based on the public appeal of young children, the availability of parent volunteers who are motivated to work on the campaign, local publicity on the benefits of preschool, and the fact that the leading elected official behind the campaign has preschool children.

**On Being Realistic** – It's other people's money – Since passing a measure is challenging, it is important to be able to document the need and the rationale for the amount of money being pursued. It is a mistake to ask for more money than is required to meet a compelling need.

5. Practical and political considerations in making your final decisions. The selection of what you want to fund is an art as well as a science. It may seem a bit cynical, but the following considerations can be as important as the research about needs and gaps.

- Is there a group of advocates invested in the specific services with the ability and motivation to take on leadership of a campaign?
- Is there a readily available pool of volunteers sufficiently interested in the services to be “ground troops” for a campaign?
- Is there potential for raising money for a campaign to fund these services?
- Do the services to be funded address a problem that has received public attention?
- Do the recipients of the services have widespread public appeal?
- Is there a high possibility of either winning over the opposition to more public funding or at least neutralizing the opposition?
- Can a credible case be made for saving money by funding the services?



## **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RESOLUTION ADOPTING A NAPA COUNTY CHILDREN’S BILL OF RIGHTS AND A CHILDREN’S BUDGET**

Whereas a committee representing Napa County’s business, education, government, law enforcement and nonprofit sectors collaborated to create the Napa County Children’s Bill of Rights;

Whereas Funding the Next Generation Napa was founded as an extension of the committee with the goal of establishing a sustainable public funding stream to support the tenets of the Napa County Children’s Bill of Rights;

Whereas the Funding the Next Generation Napa Committee has adopted the Napa County Children’s Bill of Rights to provide the guidance needed for all County and local agencies, parents, guardians and private entities to foster the needs and healthy development of all children, youth, and families in Napa County;

Whereas the Napa County Board of Supervisors and the citizens of Napa County desire that every child and youth should have the opportunities set forth in the Napa County Children’s Bill of Rights;

Whereas many of our children and youth face significant challenges, such as limited access to preschool, obesity, substance abuse, access to health care and other adverse childhood experiences;

Whereas in order to position our County to best address the aforementioned challenges, and maximize opportunities for our children, we must have a thorough understanding of the current level of services and resources available for them;

Whereas the potential benefits of better understanding the resources spent and the services available to our children could be: improvements in service coordination, the ability to maximize new funding opportunities, improved alignment of spending priorities, and the identification of gaps in services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Napa County Board of Supervisors adopts the Napa County Children’s Bill of Rights as a guideline for all County and local agencies, parents, guardians and private entities; and with the adoption of this resolution supports and encourages all County and local agencies to adopt, publicize, and incorporate the Children’s Bill of Rights into programs and policies for the benefit of our youth.

**(Continued next page)**

**(Continued from previous page)**

BE IT RESOLVED, that we invest in all children and youth so that:

- They are raised in an environment that is peaceful, supportive and secure and meets all their basic needs (nutritious food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, childcare).
- They have healthy attachments to parents, guardians or caregivers who nurture and love them from birth.
- They enjoy healthful and plentiful meals daily and partake in physical activity and time outdoors.
- They have access to healthcare to maintain optimum physical, mental and dental health.
- They have access to quality education that promotes future success in school, career and life.
- They voice opinions in matters of interest to them, develop their leadership capacity and engage in their community.
- They feel supported by the larger community and maintain a sense of hope for the future.
- They are encouraged to explore and express their innate curiosity and creativity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of Napa County requests the County Executive Officer and the department heads of Health and Human Services, Probation, Child Support Services, the Napa County Sheriff's Office and the County Library to participate in an accounting of the current resources for children and youth, ages 0 through 17, and that this accounting will be a foundation of what will be known as the Funding the Next Generation Napa Children's Budget for Napa County;

That the County Executive Officer works collaboratively with Funding the Generation Napa, the county's network of community-based service providers and other involved constituents in developing this Children's Budget;

That the Napa County contribution to the Children's Budget include the services funded, the program expenditures for each service, the target population for the services, the level of funding for prevention and intervention, goals for which expenditures are allocated, the source of the funding being allocated, and funding allocated solely to the city of Napa;

That the request for the Napa County Children's budget be presented to the Board and to the public by timing to be determined.



# 14 The Power of Polling

One major factor in determining what you want to fund, as well as what funding mechanism and what messages to use, is polling. We are discussing polling in this section of the Guide, although the value of polling is also important to decisions about communication (Part V) and drafting the measure (Part VI).

The following information was taken liberally from materials developed by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3), one of the nation's leading opinion research firms, consultants to *Funding the Next Generation* and pollsters for several counties and cities in our learning network.

[www.fm3research.com](http://www.fm3research.com)

**What is opinion research?** Opinion research refers to the use of “carefully-designed methodologies to accurately identify and understand beliefs, attitudes and expectations among members of the public, in this case, voters.” FM3

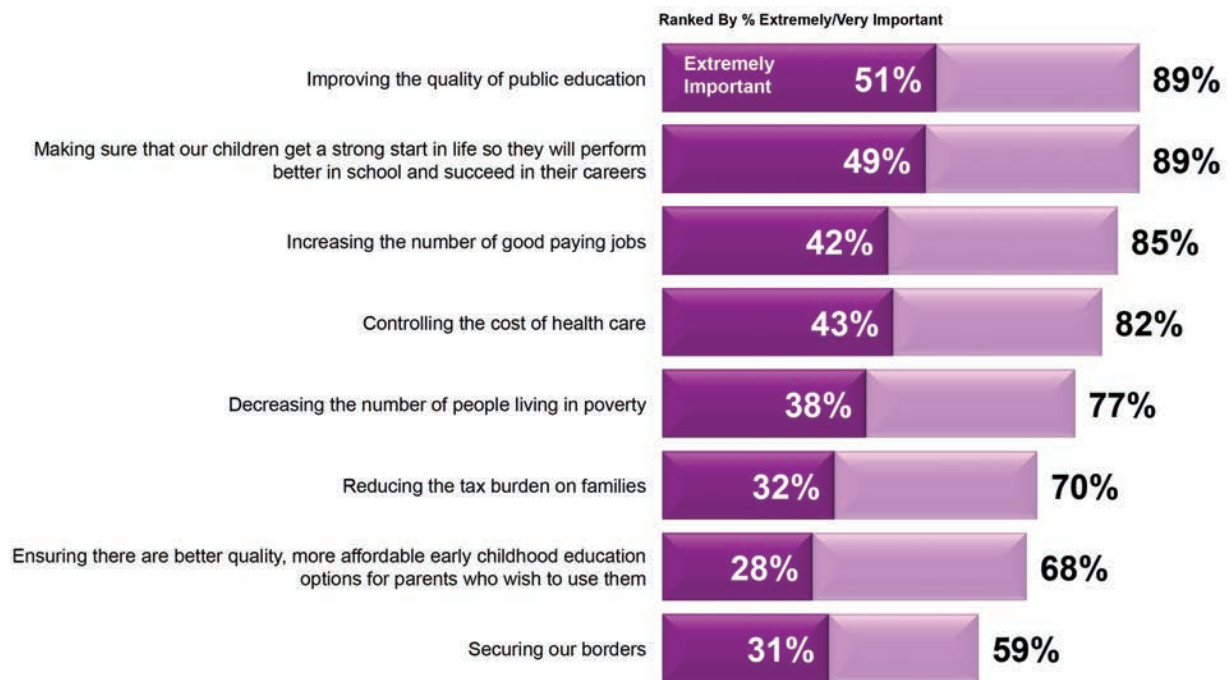
There are two types of opinion research: quantitative (which seeks to specify the degree to which certain attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors are shared among a given population) and qualitative (which seeks to explore the reasons why those beliefs are held). Quantitative research typically involves surveys conducted either over the phone or the Internet; qualitative research can involve in-depth one-on-one interviews or focus groups. Both methods allow you to get beyond your anecdotal information about public attitudes, or information that you have gathered in less scientific ways like tabling in front of supermarkets, or information that has come from a very loud and small group that dominates the discussion, but does not represent the opinions of the broader public.

Opinion research is conducted by professionals and is not something you can do on your own. It is valuable, but not cheap – and therefore you will want to use it sparingly and strategically when you have limited budgets. It is considered a scientific and impartial way of collecting information (within a small and definable margin of sampling error) and therefore carries a different level of credibility than other kinds of information. Samples are taken randomly, and they can focus on whatever section of the population (such as likely voters) you think would be valuable. A typical poll involves phone interviews averaging 10 to 20 minutes in length with between 400 and 800 randomly selected respondents.

Ideally you may want to do two polls: a feasibility poll early in your process to determine the feasibility and content of your measure, and a baseline poll after the measure has been developed to inform the strategy of a campaign around things like messaging and targeting. The key benefit a poll provides once a campaign is underway is to ensure the efficient

**Polling is an important tool** that you very likely will want to use at one or more critical junctures in your journey to get a dedicated funding stream for children to pass in your community. A poll can play a particularly important role in developing a children's measure, because unlike many other causes, children issues almost invariably poll extremely well. That gives you uniquely valuable leverage – particularly early on with decision-makers. When children's issues polled extremely well in Solano County, elected officials took the fledgling campaign for a children's fund much more seriously – the campaign gained a level of credibility that could not be gained any other way, and certainly more quickly than any other way.

## American voters view ensuring children get a strong start and good education as most important way to help the middle class.



*Now thinking about some different issues that some people say would help to strengthen our country's middle class. Please tell me how important you think each one would be in helping to achieve that goal. Is it extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not that important.*

allocation of resources. Poll-driven messaging and targeting helps to ensure you hit the right voters with the right message right away – and do not waste time communicating with voters who are unlikely to be persuaded, or using messages that are ineffective.

Some campaigns may conduct very short tracking polls in the final weeks before the election, to assess how public opinion has shifted over the course of a campaign and to make any final “course-corrections” for the campaign.

While it may be desirable to also do qualitative research, specifically focus groups, that strategy should probably be reserved when it is absolutely essential to probe more deeply into complex issues or reactions to materials developed. On a limited budget, it is best to fund a solid initial survey first – and additional opinion research as needed and as resources are available.

### What specifically can you learn from a poll for a children’s measure?

- How much do voters care about children’s issues?
- Do they feel there is adequate funding for children’s issues?
- What specific children’s services are most important to voters?
- How do voters rate spending on children’s services compared to other things?
- What funding mechanisms do voters prefer and how much will they pay?
- What messages and messengers are most effective?
- Who are the measure’s supporters and opponents and swing voters?
- How vulnerable are you to opposition messages?

### A GOOD IDEA

Have the poll paid for by a public entity, but reserve a few sensitive questions to be paid for by a private entity. The answers to the sensitive questions won’t have to be released publicly.

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN DECIDING WHETHER TO DO A POLL:

By Dave Metz, FM3 Research

- What is it that you want to learn by doing a poll? What is it that you don't know about public opinion that you would like to find out? What decisions might you be able to make if you knew the answers?
- Is there any existing polling you can find and review - which might either prevent you from having to develop your own poll, or at least allow you to build on (and not repeat) past efforts?
- What can you learn from successful polling that has been done in other jurisdictions? Are there questions or approaches that yielded valuable insights elsewhere that you can integrate?
- Would the poll be for external use (sharing with external decision-makers who could give you money, endorse, or vote to put your measure on the ballot) or for internal use (helping your coalition to make decisions about whether to move forward, how to write the measure, or how to plan for a campaign)?
- If you are comfortable with all of the findings being public, is there a public agency that could fund the polling effort?
- Designing and reviewing the findings of polls can be a great way to unify a coalition and build consensus on a strategic approach - are there partners you should invite into the polling design process in order to strengthen relationships and resolve potential disagreements?
- How can the poll help you with a "Plan B?" You want an investment in research to provide multiple and lasting benefits - if the poll shows a ballot measure isn't viable, are you asking other questions that may show you another path forward, or at least give you helpful insights on messaging and communications?

### Other questions about opinion research

- **Who pays and who sees the results?** – Sometimes a public agency such as a First 5 Commission pays for the poll. Sometimes a private donor or a foundation will pay. When a public agency pays, the results are public. This can be a challenge since you may not want your opponents or those you are trying to influence to see all of the results. When the poll is paid for by a private entity you have more freedom to ask tough questions (like how effective opposing arguments are). Polling information is very powerful. You will want to share results only with your innermost campaign team. You will want to be very strategic about what you share with the public and the media (if anything) and make sure there is a clear strategy for doing so. For instance, sharing positive results can be very persuasive and create momentum for your efforts. Sharing which opposing arguments work best may not be so useful.
- **How long does it take?** – Compared to some other strategies, a poll can be done relatively quickly. From beginning (working with a pollster to develop a survey) to the end (analyzing the results), it can take from 4 – 6 weeks.
- **What is in a typical poll?** – A poll will include general questions so you know who the respondents are and can analyze information by type of respondent. You can test a ballot question specifically and broader issues related to the proposal. Often a poll will test pro arguments and con arguments and then test how hearing all the arguments influences the respondent.
- **What will it cost?** – The cost depends on the number polled and the length of the poll. A typical city or county in California could spend from \$15,000 - \$35,000.
- **How do you pick a pollster** – You will want to ask various pollsters for proposals so you can compare. You will consider cost, experience in your community, experience on issues related to children and funding, thoroughness of the proposal, how well the pollster communicates with you (this is a partnership, remember), references and reputation. A pollster with a sterling reputation will give you the most credibility with the results. In the end, you will rely on your instincts and go with the person or firm you trust and feel comfortable with.

**A good polling example** in preparation for a children's fund campaign in Solano County:

[www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources/](http://www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources/)

See Solano County Issues Poll under Early organizing from around the state.

**WHY POLLING IS SO POWERFUL:** Consider the results from a poll conducted in 2015 by Hart Research and Public Opinion Strategies on page 37.



# PART V.

## DRAFTING A MEASURE

### CONTENT

- ⑮ What revenue option is best for you?
- ⑯ Creative ideas about revenue options
- ⑰ Elements of a strong revenue measure
- ⑱ Tips for drafting
- ⑲ Summary of decisions to make in developing a measure



# 15 What Revenue Option Is Best for You?

## CAUTION:

Do not make this your first decision.

In most cases, you will not know what the best revenue option is for your city or county until you have completed much of the work described in this Guide – the evaluation of needs, the community outreach, and the coalition and consensus-building. But know the options and the general lay of the land so that you are not surprised at the end when you discover the often-tough decisions you have to make. Inevitably you are looking for the sweet spot between what you need and what is politically feasible. You will want to think big and be ambitious, without being foolhardy.

**NOTE:** The complete list of revenue options in California are on pages 18 and 19 and are also listed on page 46.

**Progressive vs. regressive** – A progressive tax is one where those with the most pay the most, such as a graduated income tax. A regressive tax, such as a sales tax, impacts everyone equally so that people with less money feel it the most. Unfortunately, California law does not allow for local income taxes, which can be the most progressive form of taxation, or for ad valorem (based on value) property taxes. So, any option you pick will most likely be regressive in some way. Some strategies to modify this are to structure a parcel tax so parcels that are larger or have commercial use are charged more, or to create fees on more lucrative businesses or items, or impose a tax (such as a hotel tax) that primarily impacts visitors. Just know that every possibility will have legitimate arguments against it. You are aiming for the greater good – not perfection. If you can't accept that reality, you will be endlessly stalled.

## HERE ARE SOME CRITERIA FOR YOUR DECISION AS YOU CONTEMPLATE YOUR OPTIONS.

You could make a grid with the revenue options you are considering on one side and the following list on the other. Your decision will be based on a creative analysis of the sweet spot between your goals and reality.

- Results of a poll
- Amount of money you need
- Opinions of elected officials – You need to know what they think but recognize that they will be more cautious and conservative than you. It's your job to push the envelope.
- Political clout of supporters of the strategy – e.g. do you have support of law enforcement or of unions which can expand your options with their political clout
- Political clout of opponents to the strategy – e.g. will a soda tax amass more opposition than a sales tax?
- Strength of the constituency for a specific option, including capacity to raise money and recruit volunteers
- Legalities – What of your ideas is actually legal? e.g. Has your city or county already reached its sales tax limit?
- Creative fees or taxes related to unique characteristics of your community – e.g. fees on tickets to a sports stadium
- Political history of revenue measures in your community
- Status of local budget and fiscal prognosis
- Public attitudes and civic culture related to children
- Popularity of what you want to fund



## PROS AND CONS – REVENUE VS. SET-ASIDE

An early decision you will have to make is whether to propose a “set-aside” or a new revenue stream such as a sales or parcel tax. Consider the pros and cons below and note the arguments made on behalf of “set asides:”

TYPE OF FUNDING MECHANISM	PROS	CONS
New revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Creates additional revenue for communities with too few resources and which have been through many years of budget cuts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Requires a difficult-to-reach 2/3 voting margin, particularly with strong anti-tax sentiments in the community (see “advisory measure” in next section for an alternative idea)</li> <li>■ Built-in opposition from groups with potential to lose revenue as a result of the tax (such as hotels, businesses, property owners)</li> </ul>
Carve-out/set-aside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Requires only majority of vote to pass</li> <li>■ Electorate generally supports set-asides for popular causes.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Public supports argument that the set-aside will force policymakers to make best use of existing resources and that investment in children saves money over time.</li> <li>□ Public supports the premise that children should be a fiscal priority and get their fair share – especially when local revenues are increasing.</li> <li>□ Public supports the idea of “tying the hands” of their elected officials so voters have more control. The idea of “ballot box budgeting” which opponents claim is bad government is popular with the general public, especially for causes they believe are underfunded.</li> <li>□ Public supports the idea that children are everyone’s interest – not “special interests” as opponents claim.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inevitable backlash from other interest groups and organizations that fear they will lose funding as a result of more funds going to children. The arguments made by law enforcement are particularly compelling to the public.</li> <li>■ Opposition by many elected officials because they believe that it “ties their hands” in the budgeting process, limiting their flexibility to meet community needs and setting a bad precedent</li> </ul>



# 16 Creative Ideas About Revenue Options

California's constraints on raising revenue have led to some creative strategies – and certainly not all possibilities have been tried. We encourage those interested in new revenue streams to be as creative as possible. Here are some ideas that communities have developed:

- **Alliances to prevent violence** – Oakland found a way to create a balance between prevention and law-enforcement, creating a parking surcharge and parcel tax where half of the revenue went to increase the police force, and half went to prevention programs for youth. This avoided a turf and philosophical struggle.
- **Advisory measures or expenditure plans that accompany a general tax** – Because a special tax is so hard to pass with a 2/3 vote, some have put an advisory measure on the ballot that accompanies a general tax. The advisory measure can say that the funds, or part of the funds generated by the tax, will go to children's services. The governing body would not be legally required to abide by the advisory measure, but could be politically compelled. This strategy calls for a lot of post-election advocacy. But it could be followed in a future election with a set-aside if the advisory measure is not followed. Some experts recommend against advisory measures in that they confuse the voters. Another possibility is to have the legislative body adopt an "Expenditure Plan" for children's services prior to the vote on the general tax.
- **Taxing possibilities of marijuana** – The legalization of marijuana offers taxing possibilities. Several cities passed taxes on marijuana dispensaries, something that could become a lot more lucrative once legal use is spread beyond medical use. So far while none of these taxes has been a special tax, they have generally passed by large enough margins to pass a special tax. One community where a lot of marijuana is grown indoors has even found a way to "tax" illegal use, by creating a very high electricity utility tax for residents that exceed 600% of an "established Baseline Allowance."
- **Fees on developers** – Finding a way to charge the people making money in a community is probably more palatable to the electorate than other types of taxes and fees – particularly when the money is going to be spent on a need in some ways created by those paying the fee. San Francisco placed a fee on office development to go into a fund for child care centers.
- **Targeted business license fees with potential social benefits** – Business License Fees can be levied by cities (counties can only levy these fees on unincorporated parts of the county), and would be particularly effective when the community sees a connection between the tax and the things that would be funded. Some communities are starting to consider soda taxes (after the successful measure in Berkeley) that would fund recreation or health education. Some possibilities to research include taxes on bottled water or cell phones. One community is putting a tax on card rooms that would fund youth programs. Admission fees are similar. Possibilities include fees on high price sporting or other tickets that would fund recreation for low-income youth.
- **Set-aside of revenue increases** – In order to avoid new taxes, and cuts in existing services, one community is considering a measure that would set aside funds every year for children's services, but only from the increases in the county's general funds. The fund would increase gradually over a several year period. This is a plausible strategy in a community where revenue is projected to increase. Furthermore, existing budget items would remain untouched since funds would come only from revenue increases. It has the added advantage of requiring only a majority vote to pass, since it is not a new tax.

# 17 Elements of a Strong Revenue Measure

## Basic criteria for an effective measure:

- Provides sufficient resources to meet the goals of the measure
- Addresses a priority community need and resource gap
- Ensures the funding is predictable and sustainable
- Protects current levels of funding from cuts so new funds do not supplant existing funds
- Ensures accountability and evaluation
- Builds in transparency in decision-making regarding funding allocations
- Balances flexibility in use of funds with assurance that funds are targeted as intended
- Requires a strong community voice in implementation, including parents and youth
- Mandates a planning process that engages all stakeholders and develops a coherent approach to the expenditure of funds
- Ensures new funding is aligned with existing funding

**Who will write the measure?** The role of your Coalition in drafting a measure will vary depending on how the process of laying the groundwork has evolved, the desires of the elected officials who are championing the measure, and the protocols and laws of the city or county. A typical process will likely involve back and forth discussions and negotiations between the Coalition and the legislative body or executive and the city or county attorney. Ultimately it will be the attorney who will draft the final measure – unless you plan to conduct a signature drive to place the measure on the ballot, in which case you will be responsible for drafting the entire piece of legislation and creating a petition. We can't say this too often: you must find an attorney who totally understands the laws of your city or county to help you. However, it is optimal to have the Coalition decide what it wants the content of the measure to be. This becomes the starting point. A general framework for a measure on pages 44 will help you identify the issues you need to address. See the legislative language of the SF Children's Fund for examples. Go to: [www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources/](http://www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources/) and scroll down to San Francisco's Children's Fund, a model for the nation. You will see the legislative language.

## TIPS:

When working with elected officials on your measure:

- Have your Coalition develop the first draft, if possible. It doesn't have to be legally perfect, but it puts you in the driver's seat.
- If possible, find a volunteer attorney who has had experience in local government or who is knowledgeable about the city or county codes to assist you.
- Keep the drafting committee small. This is a case when too many cooks make the task impossible.
- Have a small and diverse group of readers who can spot problems and provide advice to the drafting committee about how the problems can be avoided.

# A TOOL TO DEVELOP THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF YOUR MEASURE

## RATIONALE FOR MEASURE

Most legislative measures include a set of “findings” or initial statements about the need and the history that led to the need for legislation.

## TITLE OF ORDINANCE

e.g. Fund for Children and Youth (should include word “child”)

## PURPOSE AND GOALS

This can be a compelling statement of general principles, as well as overall goals to improve the well being of children. This can include a commitment to prevention, civic participation, best practices, the need for collaboration, accountability, etc.

## FUND

- Name of fund to be established (should include word “child”)
- Funding mechanism – e.g. type of tax, fee, carve-out
- Amount of funding
- Duration of fund – when it will sunset, or whether it will be permanent
- Assurance that unspent funds can be carried over from year to year

## SERVICES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

- List and short definition of specific services that can be funded
- Ages of children and youth that can be served – also definition of children’s services, e.g. when services are specifically for children, as opposed to when children are served incidentally or part of a larger population that includes adults
- Definitions of allowable services to families – if applicable, and avoiding allowing funding for general adult services
- List of services that cannot be funded – e.g. law enforcement, mandated matching funds that would be spent regardless of new money, capital expenses, etc. – name expenses that could occur that are not consistent with goals of fund
- Agencies eligible to apply for funds – location, non-profits and public agencies (could have a specific % for non-profits), other specifications

## PREVENT SUPPLANTING EXISTING FUNDING WITH NEW FUNDS

- Requirement that current levels of funding for children’s services be maintained. This can be labeled a “baseline budget” and can be calculated by a budget office or controller after the measure passes. Details of a method to implement this are in the San Francisco Children and Youth Fund legislation and a memo describing how the goals of a baseline can be accomplished – [www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources](http://www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources) (under San Francisco Children’s Fund: A Model for the Nation)
- Strong statement about goal of funding new services, and not using funds to supplant local discretionary funding

## OVERSIGHT

- Body that will oversee fund – new or existing
- Power of body – continuum of advisory to decision-making
- Appointment power to oversight body – administrator, legislative body, other – or some combination
- Number of seats, terms, reimbursements, conflict-of-interest requirements
- Composition and background requirements for members – e.g. areas of expertise, consumers, youth parents, geographic diversity
- Functions and responsibilities
- Staffing
- Requirements about public meetings, communication and transparency

## ADMINISTRATION

- Entity in government that will administer the Fund or be responsible for determining what entity will administer the Fund. Could have an intermediary organization (new or existing) that will be contracted by government to administer the Fund
- One option: Creation of an “office for children and/or youth” through the legislation, which then requires a detailed section of the legislation addressing the organizational structure, governance, cost, goals and staffing. **Note:** We recommend against this unless you think that this is a necessary part of the measure. The public generally does not like creating new arms of the bureaucracy, and a new department is something you can negotiate outside the electoral process with elected officials and administrators.
- Contracting process – funding cycle, selection process
- Requirements about data collection
- Cap on administrative costs – may or may not be included
- Role of city council or board of supervisors in final oversight and approval of funding

## PLANNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Requirement regarding evaluation of services funded and overall functioning and outcome of the funding process
- Strategy for determining what needs should be prioritized – e.g. required needs assessment, including communication to public, civic participation, review process, approval process
- Strategy for determining what specific services should be funded – e.g. mandating a services allocation plan, including definition of plan, review and approval process of plan.
- Strategy for ensuring public involvement in planning and oversight
- Policy regarding annual or bi-annual written public report on the Fund

## DETAILS OF TAX OR OTHER FEE OR CARVE-OUT

- SEVERABILITY – if one section is invalid, does not invalidate whole measure



# 18 Tips for Drafting

- Name the Fund and the Ordinance – Make sure the names send your message, and include the word “children.” These are the words that will appear in a ballot handbook. It doesn’t matter how legally sound the measure is if children get lost in legal jargon.
- Funds must have a sunset – The Fund should be in effect long enough to accomplish something (e.g. 5 years minimum), but short enough to convince the public that there will be a chance to evaluate and rescind if need be.
- Make sure the names of the services to be funded are in words the public can understand – no jargon.
- Preventing supplantation is essential. There is no point in having a new funding stream if new funds are merely used to replace existing funds. It is best to find a way to specifically operationalize this requirement – rather than just state it. (See the San Francisco measure for the idea of a Baseline Budget which will prevent cuts in existing services – [www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources](http://www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources) under San Francisco Children's Fund: A Model for the Nation). Current levels of funding for children’s services can be calculated by the city or county controller after the measure passes, with the mandate that funding does not go below the level calculated, or that it remains a consistent percent of the overall budget.
- Name the seats on the oversight body with as many characteristics you believe are necessary to trust the appointments. If you want to assure a youth voice, non-profit representation, a high level of expertise in certain fields, put that in the language.
- Put in as many mechanisms to avoid the politicization of the fund as possible. Giving an oversight body the power to approve funding and not leaving it entirely to a political body will help. One strategy is to have the elected body that approves the city or county budget be allowed to only approve the Fund’s annual allocation as a package, rather than allow changes in line items. Oakland does that.
- Think of all the ways the intent of the measure can be circumvented, and then build in protections to avoid them.
- If you want to make sure the fund is used for non-profits and not gobbled up entirely by public agencies, either put a percentage on the amount going to non-profits, or put the intent to prioritize non-profits in the language. Also require public agencies to apply for funding like everyone else.
- Avoid the appearance of creating too much new bureaucracy – keep it simple, with assurances that money will go to services.
- Although tricky, consider putting a cap on administration – the public likes it because it ensures that funds will not be sucked into the bureaucracy and will instead be used for direct services, but it can tie the hands of those implementing the Fund. There is no right answer. Circumstances will differ.
- Put in specific mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability – e.g. required public hearings and evaluations.

# 19 Summary of Decisions to Make in Creating a Revenue Measure

## Decision 1

### WHAT DO YOU WANT TO FUND?

## Decision 2

### HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU NEED?

## Decision 3

### WHAT LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT DO YOU WANT TO TARGET?

## Decision 4

### NEW RESOURCES VS. REALLOCATION OF RESOURCES/SET-ASIDE

Reallocation of existing resources, also known as a “set-aside” or “carve-out,” can be established by an election, which typically would require only a simple majority of votes, compared to dedication of a new revenue stream to children, youth and family services, which in most cases would require a 2/3 voter approval. The argument supporting reallocation is: children deserve a fair share of current and/or future resources. The argument is reinforced when there are positive economic projections. The disadvantage of this approach is that in many localities existing community needs are not being met, and so existing funds or anticipated revenue increases may be fully absorbed by existing departments and services.

### IF NEW REVENUE:

## Decision 5

### TYPE OF NEW RESOURCES

- Taxes – Most new revenue streams for operating programs and services (if they are not a set-aside) are created through a tax requiring voter approval. The taxes described under Decision 6 can be special or general taxes.

- Other special taxes (Mello-Roos and Parcel) – always require 2/3 vote
- Assessments, charges, and fees – Many new or increased fees must be voted on by the electorate. Proposition 26 recently limited those that require only a governing body vote.
  - Nuisance abatement fees
  - Business license fees
  - Admissions fees

### IF TAX:

## Decision 6

### TYPE OF TAX

- Add-on Sales – imposed on the retail price of a purchase/ total rate in a county cannot exceed 2%
- Hotel (TOT – Transient Occupancy Tax) – no legal limit, highest in state is 14.5%
- Nuisance, abatement, mitigation – taxes for health, safety, public protection
- Utility – taxes on utilities, including gas, electric, telecommunications (can include cell phones or cable)
- Business license tax – based on gross receipts or # of employees – no legal limit
- Soda tax is a type of business license tax and can only be levied at the city level or, if levied at the county level, for only the unincorporated areas.
- Other – e.g. Property transfer, Admissions
- Mello-Roos taxes – A special district is created and taxes on property in that district approved. There are some services that can be funded through this approach, such as cultural institutions and recreation services. This approach has not been used to fund children’s services, but it could be.
- Parcel – a tax on each property parcel - per parcel, per room, or per square footage; but not based on the value of the parcel.

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Decision 7

## **GENERAL VS. SPECIAL TAX**

A general tax requires a simple majority; a special tax targeted to a specific purpose (like children's services) requires a 2/3 vote. A general tax goes into the general fund, can be used for general governmental purposes, and is not required to be used for a specific purpose. Some localities have accompanied a general tax with a parallel measure advising elected officials on how the general tax revenue should be spent or an Expenditure Plan created by the legislative body prior to the measure being put on the ballot. Even with such advisory measures, however, the locality would not be obligated to use general tax proceeds for the preferred purpose.

Decision 8

## **TAX RATE**

There are legal limits to the taxing authority of counties and cities, and to some tax rates. For instance, the add-on sales tax rates have a ceiling. Otherwise rates must be proposed considering the balance between funding needs and projected voter willingness to approve.

## **FOR ALL TYPES OF FUNDING**

Decision 9

## **LEGISLATION VS. BALLOT**

### **IF LEGISLATION:**

There are ways to increase local public funds for children, youth and families without going to the ballot. The most common is getting new funding or funding set-asides incorporated into an annual city or county budget. Most often, it takes organized advocacy efforts to get new budget allocations or set-asides. Budget augmentations can result in the reallocation of existing funding or allocations or set-asides of new revenue; and opportunities are best in times when there is new revenue available. New funding opportunities can also result from the legislative body imposing special fees, fines, service charges, admissions, rents, etc. – but only as long as they are Prop 26 compliant. The disadvantage of using the legislative process to get new funding is that the new funds or set-asides can be reversed, and do not provide an institutionalized revenue stream. This can be a first step, but we recommend following-up with a ballot measure.

### **IF BALLOT:**

Decision 10

## **VOTER INITIATIVE VS. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS/CITY COUNCIL**

Measures can be placed on the ballot by elected officials, or by petition of the voters (i.e. a signature campaign). Localities should be consulted to confirm the applicable rules about petitions - number of signatures needed, petition format, number of days allowed to gather signatures, etc. The number of signatures required varies by jurisdiction but is generally a percentage (ranging from 5% to 25%) of voters registered or voting in the last Gubernatorial or Mayoral election. A signature campaign can be done by volunteers or paid signature gatherers, or a combination. Generally, local initiative campaigns do far better than statewide initiatives. The majority of cities and counties in California have used the initiative process, although not for children's services, except San Francisco and Oakland.

Decision 11

## **WHICH ELECTION?**

A lot of political analysis goes into deciding which election is best to place something on the ballot. Generally, the elections with the highest turnout provide better results for service-oriented issues. For certain initiatives, there is also the option of petitioning for a special election, although that requires far more petition signatures. These elections have lower turnouts, but can be an advantage when only sympathetic voters cast ballots. Generally taxes must be on the ballot at the same time as the local governing body elections.

# PART VI.

## BUILDING POWER AND MOMENTUM

### CONTENT

- ②0 Developing an organization that can win
- ②1 Who leads?  
Government insiders, community outsiders, or both
- ②2 Power Analysis
- ②3 Communicating your message to the public
- ②4 Taking the initiative to frame your campaign





# 20 Developing an Organization That Can Win

**The Evolution of an Organization** – Remember Margaret Meade’s quote: *Never doubt that a **small** group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.*

Most likely you will begin this journey with a small group of the most interested and enthusiastic individuals and organizations about the idea of a dedicated funding stream. Maybe it will be representatives of only 5 organizations. Over 1 – 2 years (it could take longer), you will build this into a strong, diverse network with hundreds of members that will be the “go-to” voice for funding for children, youth and families.

## You need a convening organization

An essential requirement for starting this journey is having an organization that will step up and convene at least the early phase of work. You will make little progress until you have such an organization, often referred to as a “backbone” organization. This organization will be the recipient of funds, the employer of the staff, the manager and conveyor of information, the facilitator, and the first public “face” of the work in that its name will probably be on materials – so it must be an organization with community credibility. It is probably best, but not necessary, for it to be a non-profit organization, as public agencies very quickly find themselves with conflicts of interest and legal limitations. It is also best for it to be a non-profit that is highly regarded by a wide diversity of players, has the capacity and motivation to play the convening role, and has positive relationship with most of its peers. Turf battles are inevitable in this work; it is best not to start with a lot of them.

**Who’s on the ground floor?** Some organizations that have been in the small group that initiated the effort to get a dedicated funding stream in California communities are: First 5’s, youth programs, Parent Voices, community foundations, child care resource and referral agencies, YMCAs, community centers, arts

EXAMPLE OF HOW THE ORGANIZATION WILL EVOLVE	
At the outset – small group of “dedicated committed citizens” – the true believers	At the end – large network of hundreds or more
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Non-profit service provider</li> <li>■ Advocate</li> <li>■ Community foundation</li> <li>■ Political champion</li> <li>■ Public agency leader</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Youth</li> <li>■ Parents</li> <li>■ Grassroots organizing groups</li> <li>■ Pediatricians</li> <li>■ Business leaders</li> <li>■ Unions</li> <li>■ Faith community</li> <li>■ Senior Citizen groups</li> <li>■ Foundations</li> <li>■ Neighborhood associations</li> <li>■ Education organizations</li> <li>■ Civil rights and social justice groups</li> <li>■ Professional associations</li> <li>■ Health and disability rights groups</li> <li>■ League of Women Voters and other civic organizations</li> <li>■ And more...</li> </ul>

## ROLE OF YOUTH

Voices of young people can be powerful and persuasive.

- Create a youth advisory committee at the outset to provide perspectives and develop the youth roles for the campaign
- Create a youth speakers bureau.
- Have youth design campaign materials like door-hangers.
- Organize a youth-led GOTV campaign for ages 18 – 24 (a sympathetic segment of the electorate with LOW voter turnout)
- Schedule regular youth precinct walks.
- Ensure youth have a major role in building the funding agenda.
- Create space for youth to tell their stories and share impact of successful programs.

organizations, child abuse prevention planning councils, United Way, family resource centers, and youth employment programs. Sometimes representatives of public agencies, such as a health department or social services department, are involved at the beginning – sometimes not. Sometimes an elected official or officials who are champions of the idea are on the ground floor. You may be lucky enough to have some high-powered retired electeds or leaders on your initial team. Or you may be fortunate enough in your community to already have a “go-to” coalition, such as a Building Healthy Communities hub or a Promise Neighborhood initiative that decides to take on the challenge.

**The role of youth** – Because this work is about young people, it will be important to engage young people themselves in the work – and do it early on in the process. This not only adds an essential perspective, but it can provide some of the most powerful voices to persuade community members to support the goals of the measure. Young people have energy and enthusiasm, and they can talk very personally about the value of services. Furthermore, engaging in a political process can be a life-changing experience for a young person. As can be seen from the list of possible roles for youth, involvement is not only a unique opportunity to build skills and play a special role in the community, but it can inspire new possibilities for the future. There are examples of youth leaders of a campaign moving on to playing roles in government, and even running for office themselves.

**Role of schools** – This Guide focuses on children’s services other than schools. Yet schools are the primary children’s institutions in any community, so policies and programs that benefit children are totally relevant to their success in school. The “**Community School**” vision can therefore be core to the vision of a dedicated funding stream for children’s services. In San Francisco, for instance, the Children and Youth Fund supports a host of school-based programs, including health services in schools, afterschool programs, and parent education. Also, Preschool-for-all measures are integrally related to schools. Part of the early work of building a coalition is to reach out to school advocates, so the idea of a measure to support children’s services is not seen as competition for school funding (a common fear), but is seen as complementary. PTA’s, teachers unions, Superintendents, and School Board members are all logical endorsers, even leaders, of a campaign for funding children’s services. Get them on board early.

**Broadening the coalition** – Expanding your coalition into a large network is a gradual process and happens in phases as key pieces of work get accomplished. Each group will make different decision about when to continue outreach and bring more organizations and individuals into the circle. Ultimately there can be well over 100 individuals and organizations that see themselves as part of the network – depending on the size of the community. Usually the wisest course is to start with the most enthusiastic allies, and build incrementally. Times for expansion can include:

- When there has been formal approval of a children’s budget
- When a decision has been made about the funding mechanism for the measure
- When a measure is drafted and about to be made public
- When a vote has been taken to put a measure on the ballot

Maintain the Drumbeat

## **BUILDING POLITICAL CAPITAL AND CREDIBILITY**

**Numbers Count** – Never miss a chance to have large groups show up at hearings, send postcards of support, or attend demonstrations and rallies.

**Relationships matter** – They create access - providing the opportunity to make the case to everyone from potential donors to elected officials. Bring on partners with a wide circle of friends and constituents.

**Success begets Success** – Everyone loves a winner, so it is important to celebrate successes, even very small ones, cementing the idea that you are on the path to victory. If you have excellent polling numbers (which you will), share the good ones widely

**Powerful allies and champions can create momentum and turn the tide** - They bring visibility, win over supporters, and dampen opposition.

**The media is a microphone** – Never EVER miss a chance to share goals and good news with the media – or social media. It creates the momentum you need.

### **BE EVERYWHERE!**

The idea is to build and build until your people are everywhere. No one in the community should be able to avoid knowing SOMEONE who wants to see more funding for kids.

One problem often encountered is limiting the inner circle to the usual suspects – the safe allies, most often children’s service providers. While these are the people best suited to the early stage of the work, others with more political connections, broader community bases, different kinds of community credibility, fundraising capability and more authentic and representative voices will be needed and bring essential new skills and perspectives. It is often hard for service providers to remember that they are insiders – who don’t see the world the way typical voters and recipients of services do. In the end, while the needs of providers must be strongly considered, it is the needs of the families and the perceptions of the voters that must prevail.

As your coalition evolves, it can be challenging to keep from moving backwards as new people come on board and everyone wants to “catch up.” Our advice is to orient newcomers on the side and keep moving forward.

**Level of formality** – Some coalitions, even small ones, start early on with a formal MOU about the purpose of the coalition, ground rules and responsibilities. Other times, when folks have worked together for a long time, it may not be necessary. An in-between option is having coalition partners formally sign on to the goals of the coalition in order to be seen as official members. As the work gets more complicated, as well as more visible, it may be necessary to change the ground-rules and level of formality. Much of the time you are working with representatives of agencies or

organizations, who must then seek approval from boards or bosses before voting on major aspects of the work. While there are lots of possible ways to do business, it is important to make clear transparent guidelines about structure and decision-making and make sure that everyone involved knows how the group will plan and implement its work.

**Recruiting and training volunteers** – As with many major endeavors, an effort to pass a measure will need lots of volunteers. In fact, success will likely depend on the involvement of enthusiastic volunteers. It is important to build the recruitment, training and nurturing of volunteers into the work plan and make this a part of the work early on. Children’s measures have natural built-in volunteers, including parents, youth and service providers. Great opportunities for volunteers include: participating in a speaker’s bureau, registering voters, tabling, and door-to-door canvassing. A single training on goals and skills can often be sufficient for many of the tasks needed – much of which are related to community outreach. A strong volunteer force not only brings the ability to accomplish many tasks, but it brings community credibility and many new creative ideas for communicating the message.

# 21 Who Leads? Government Insiders, Community Outsiders, or Both

Children's Fund campaigns have been waged successfully as strictly outside government efforts – led by community advocates – such as San Francisco's Children's Amendment campaign.

They have also been spearheaded by an elected official who drafts the legislation, negotiates with peers and is the public voice and spirit of the campaign - such as was done in Portland through a City Council member. And there are many combinations and nuanced strategies that involve leadership from both inside and outside. There is no right way to decide how to do this – and often the decision will be made for you depending on the specific circumstances in your community. One of the goals of Funding the Next Generation is to be able to determine which strategy works best – and under what circumstances.

Whatever the permutation of your leadership, it is important to understand the unique roles of those inside and outside the system so you can put them into your calculation as you consider the right combination of an inside-outside strategy:

- **Elected officials** can play a variety of roles in getting a dedicated funding measure passed, and there are pros and cons to the different roles. In some instances (as described above), it is an elected official champion who takes the lead, drafts legislation, and then reaches out to seek the support of the key stakeholders in the community. More often, an elected official who is a champion will be one of the people

at the table (but not necessarily the lead), and perform tasks such as advocating with her peers, introducing a Children's Budget resolution, helping with fundraising, providing strategic advice, and being a spokesperson. This person will likely be the one to introduce the formal legislation to place your measure on the ballot. At the other end of the spectrum are situations when elected officials are all either neutral or opposed. This dynamic is very different from having an elected champion or champions, and it becomes the job of the coalition to use every persuasive and political tactic to inspire the enthusiastic support of elected officials. As described previously, when the elected body is opposed to your measure, in California you can put it on the ballot through a petition of the voters.

Dilemmas around the involvement of elected officials are two-fold. 1. Sometimes when politicians have a seat at the table, they expect to run the show. While that is one way to go, very often the group will not want that to happen. Negotiations about the role of the politician can be touchy. 2. Politicians are often competitive, jealous of each other,

## EXAMPLES OF ADVANTAGES OF INSIDE AND OUTSIDE STRATEGIES

We are working with a strong community organization that intends to reject partnership overtures from elected officials so that it can draft its own measure exactly as it thinks best and will put it on the ballot by petition of the voters – no interference from politicians wanted. On the other hand, a President of the County Board of Supervisors is spearheading another effort - with strong support from a public/private community coalition. In this case, it is only the fact that there is a powerful elected champion that gives the measure the legs to be credible and move forward.





Nothing is without challenges, and all of the issues about roles can be addressed. It just requires trust, planning and awareness – and the recognition that some players may not feel they want to stick with the process throughout.

or even hostile toward some of their allies. If you are seen as the ally of one, it could turn others against your cause. There is no one right way to address these issues – just BEWARE. Sometimes it works to reach out to the President of a council or board, therefore not picking and choosing among equals, but treating the President like the representative of the whole body. Other times there is general agreement that one person on a public body is the designated “children’s person,” and you can avoid the choice about who to approach.

■ **Public agencies** – Like elected officials, public agencies can play a variety of roles. Often department heads and program managers are at the table when meetings are first convened. It is to their benefit to get more funding for services, and they are some of the best-informed people in the community about unmet needs. While it may be valuable to have them at the table early on, they are not likely to stay key players as the work becomes more political and more about organizing the community. They are accountable to elected officials and usually limited in the kind of activity they feel comfortable being engaged in. However, they may become your best inside-the-system allies, quietly providing information and making persuasive arguments to their political bosses. Also, some enthusiastic public agency directors have covered the cost of early stages of the work – particularly research about needs and gaps in the service delivery system.

■ **Community based organizations (CBO’s)** – CBO’s are the organizations most likely to be in early leadership positions, be the convening organizations, and often be the core of the constituency that will lead the campaign forward. As stated in other sections, they have the

latitude to engage in non-partisan political activity, and have a great deal of expertise on children’s issues, as well as the motivation to get more resources into the system. As the effort continues, it is important to expand beyond the CBO network, but it is still likely that service providers will remain the heart and soul of the campaign. Therefore, it is important to be alerted to three issues:

1. That service providers need a lot of coaching and nudging to get over natural tendencies to be too timid in the face of political opposition, or simply not skilled in the art of lobbying, negotiation, organizing, mobilizing, and political communication. Of course, this can be overcome, but it takes acknowledging the challenge and doing the work to address it.
2. That service providers can easily find themselves in a conflicted situation – especially when the politics of managing the effort get dicey, and the measure meets with resistance from elected officials and/or public agency funders, and providers fear their agency’s funding could be compromised. That is why it is important to work in coalition, so one agency doesn’t bear the brunt of the push-back, and to have a convening entity, if possible, that is either used to political activity or does not depend on public money for its budget. It is also why it is so important to have a growing network of parents and youth play a central role.
3. CBO’s are naturally, and rightly, concerned about the specific services they perform, and are most often involved to make sure that their piece of the pie gets larger. At some point, decisions need to be made about what should be funded, and this leads to inevitable tussles within the coalition. That is why early steps need to involve creating a consensus about priorities.

## 22 Power Analysis

*It is important to have a strategy about the most useful allies, the potential opposition, and those best and least positioned to influence public opinion and public officials.*

Many groups interested in social change do what they call a “power analysis” or a “stakeholder analysis.” Most do it intuitively and informally based on the knowledge of the coalition members. Others conduct a more formal process. In either case, it is simply a way of assessing who has the strongest and weakest allegiance to the cause, compared to who has the strongest and weakest sway with decision-makers – whether the decision-makers are the elected body that can put a measure on the ballot or the electorate, which will vote. Some groups have developed grids to facilitate the analysis. One idea for doing a stakeholder analysis is on p. 55. The important thing is to have the analysis inform the various steps in the process – such as who gets invited to join the coalition, attend a meeting with elected officials, or speak at a rally.

**Neutralizing the opposition** – This is an important part of any strategic plan to get funding for kids, and there is no easy recipe for doing it. Often it takes the form of having potential opponents benefit from your work – as in a measure that addresses violence prevention by funding youth programs and more police in equal parts. Or neutralizing opponents could mean excluding them from having to pay for the fund, as in low-income exemptions from various taxes. These strategies are developed through conversations and negotiations that can occur as a measure is drafted. Other ways of neutralizing the opposition are to intimidate them a bit with polling numbers and positive publicity. This happened in San Francisco early on with the Chamber of Commerce that had initially opposed the Children’s Fund, but was silenced after a major national newspaper, *The New*



*York Times*, portrayed the measure in a positive light (and opponents in a negative light). Sometimes the polling is so strong that when it is shared with opponents, they feel it is not worthwhile to publicly oppose and be against what so many people want. There are even times when simple persuasion actually works. This is often the case when cost-benefit arguments are used, such as data showing the long-term effectiveness of preschool. It also happens when unexpected allies join the team – such as a military leader, or a well-known fiscal conservative, or a large landowner in the community. Hence, the importance of finding those “unusual bedfellows.” The organization Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is a good example of this strategy.



## HOW TO DO A STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

By Sheldon Gen, PhD., Assoc. Professor, SFSU, Public Administration

Getting your proposal adopted involves a political process with many competing interests. A stakeholder analysis is a useful way to understand those interests and plan a campaign that accounts for them.

1. List the people and organizations with an opinion on your proposal. These will include active stakeholders who have already taken a stand, as well as latent ones you expect to be engaged later. Be sure to include your own organization. Each of the other stakeholders will usually fall under one of these categories:
  - **Allies.** These stakeholders are expected to support your proposal, and are potential partners in your campaign (e.g., First 5).
  - **Competitors.** These stakeholders aren't necessarily opposed to helping children, but they are competing for the same limited funds (e.g., other local government services, like fire and law enforcement) and might prioritize their needs above children's.
  - **Opposition.** Who could be against children? Well, perhaps no one, but there are certainly people who might oppose a new tax or dedicated funding streams. Think of taxpayer interest groups or those seeking less government intervention.
2. Research each stakeholder on your list, and carefully describe their position on your proposal. Talk with these stakeholders to understand their motives.
  - What do they want as an outcome of your proposal? Are they for it, or against it?
  - How strongly do they feel about their position? Why?
3. What leverage does each have to influence the outcome of your proposal? Leverage is the advantage they have in campaigns. This could include money, membership size, connections with local leaders, expertise in the topic, public trust and perception, etc.
  - Will they use that leverage to influence the outcome? Just because they have leverage doesn't mean they'll use it on your issue. All stakeholders have to "choose their fights." Their willingness to engage in this fight is based upon how strongly they feel about their position.
4. Strategically plan to overcome competitors and opposition. With the resulting political landscape mapped out, identify the partnerships, leverages, and messages you'll need to develop to win.
  - What coalitions might be formed with allies?
  - Do you or your coalition have the right leverages to win? If not, how can you gain those leverages?
  - What opposition do you expect to face, and how can you counter their messages and efforts?



# 23 Communicating Your Message to the Public

How well you tell the story will be a major factor in determining your success. Communication strategies begin early on and are necessary throughout the process – starting with making the case about the needs and ending with convincing voters to support a funding measure.

There is much that has been written on communication and media, so we will only scratch the surface with a few hints. The information below draws liberally from the work of the Berkeley Media Studies Group. But it is just a tidbit from their work. They have produced wonderful materials that are targeted specifically to communicating about public policy change. They also do trainings around the country. It would definitely be worth your while to peruse their website, order their training series “Communicating for Change,” and consider bringing them in to train you and your volunteers.

[www.bmsg.org](http://www.bmsg.org) Their great workbook on messaging:  
[http://archive.calendow.org/uploadedFiles/about/HEA\\_CFC\\_Man03.pdf](http://archive.calendow.org/uploadedFiles/about/HEA_CFC_Man03.pdf)

**Start with the basics** – You cannot develop a communication strategy without a plan for a policy change. It is surprising how many want to start with a slogan or a poster before thinking through the three basic elements of a message:

**What’s wrong?** – Statement of concern

**Why does it matter?** – Value dimension

**What should be done?** – Policy objective

## STRONG MESSENGERS FOR A CHILDREN’S CAMPAIGN

- Pediatricians
- Youth
- Police officers
- Child care workers
- Business leaders
- Experts in child development and children’s policy
- Parents
- Respected celebrities
- Teachers and principals
- Popular elected officials
- Well-known civic leaders

### Example:

**What’s wrong?** – Too many children in our county are growing up without access to medical care or without a safe, nurturing environment to develop into healthy independent adults.

**Why does it matter?** – We are a community that takes care of our own. Our community’s children cannot realize their full potential when they don’t have the support they need and deserve.

**What should be done?** – This April, the Board of Supervisors should support our most valuable resource, our children, by placing a measure on the ballot to create the Fund for Children.

## TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MESSAGES TO CHANGE PUBLIC POLICIES

- Focus on community and societal responsibility to create an environment where everyone can reach his/her full potential. Avoid framing issues in terms of individual responsibility or blame (sadly the default positioning of our culture).
- Present concrete solutions.
- Give specific examples. NO JARGON.
- Use “social math” – a way to express data using dramatic comparisons (see p. 58).
- Emphasize shared values – speak from the heart.
- Keep it positive – give hope.
- Don’t raise red flags. Let the person you are talking to raise the opposing argument, don’t do it for them.
- Stay on message.

## THERE ARE MANY VEHICLES FOR COMMUNICATION

Possibilities include:

- Brochures
- Press events
- Signs
- Letters to Editor
- Radio and TV ads
- Newspaper ads
- Video
- Social media
- Websites
- Meetings with editorial boards
- TV/radio interview shows
- Mailings
- Buttons
- E-mail
- Speaking engagements
- Phone banks



# 24

## Taking the Initiative to Frame Your Campaign

### NAMES CONVEY THE MESSAGE

For many people, the only thing they will learn about your efforts is a name and a slogan, and these will be the words that will be repeated over and over. It is important to name the fund you want to create so that it contains the word “kids” or “children” and the name of your community, like Solano Fund for Children. The name of your campaign is also important. Most want to keep it simple, and use names like “Yes on Kids” or “Kids First” or “Strong Start” again with the name of the community in the title. You may also want a tag line that you repeat over and over to convey your message, like “Invest in Our Youth.” Names allow you to take the initiative in framing your issue.

### ANSWERING HARD QUESTIONS

Pivot to say what you need to say. Don’t argue.

***It’s the parents’ responsibility to help their kids.*** Yes that’s true, but parents need help too. That’s why we’re proposing to expand child care so parents will be able to provide a safe environment for their children and support their families. We all benefit in the long run when children grow into productive adults.

***Government wastes money.*** Through this measure, we want to make sure that government uses our resources more wisely. That’s why we are proposing to invest in prevention, which will save money in the long run. And why we are building in mandated audits and evaluations, and a citizen oversight committee.

***I pay enough taxes.*** Tips on talking about taxes (from Public Works): [www.publicworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Public-Works-Tax-Day-and-Tax-Freedom-Day.pdf](http://www.publicworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Public-Works-Tax-Day-and-Tax-Freedom-Day.pdf)

**We need to change the way we talk about taxes, from this:** Taxes are a necessary evil. Everyone should pay taxes because everyone uses government services. Wealthier taxpayers should pay more because they can afford to do so.

**To this:** Public systems such as schools and clinics are essential to creating a high quality life for everyone in our community. These public structures are made possible by our tax dollars. Because we all benefit we each need to carry our share of the tax load. Those with high incomes have benefitted the most from opportunities made possible by good schools and good public systems. That’s why we should all contribute. (from Public Works white paper linked previously)

### A GREAT LESSON IN FRAMING

We learned an early lesson in framing during the first Children’s Fund campaign. We made buttons on a button machine in our office (get one – they’re fun):



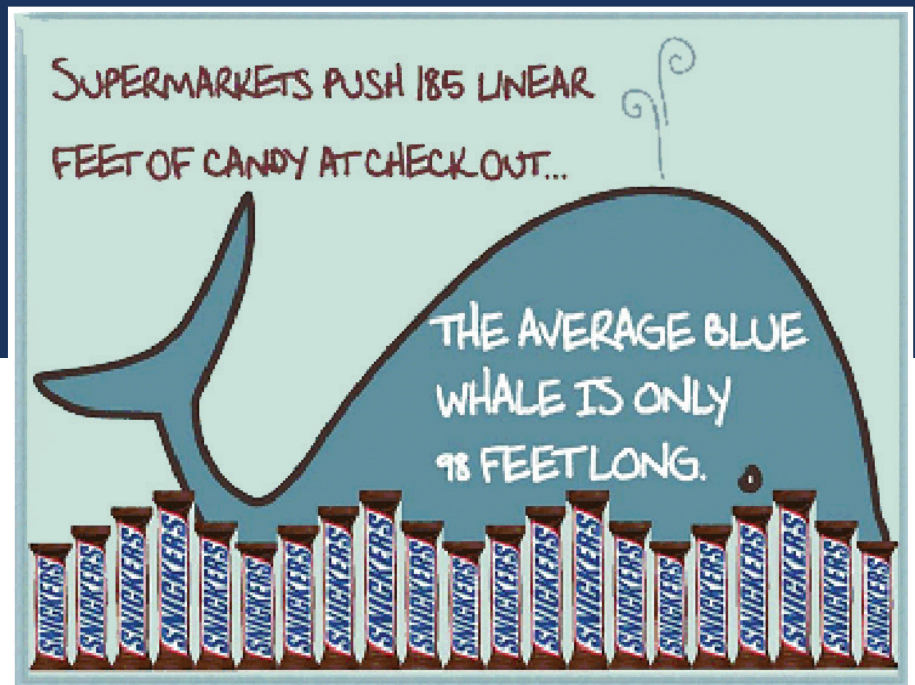
They were crude and amateurish – to say the least. But no one had yet heard of our campaign (we were just delivering the signatures to put it on the ballot) – and what we were doing without realizing it was framing the campaign as the “I ♥ kids” campaign – Daring anyone to mount the “I ~~♥~~ kids” campaign.

## USE THE POWER OF SOCIAL MATH

"Social math" means making statistics come to life with vivid comparisons.

For example:

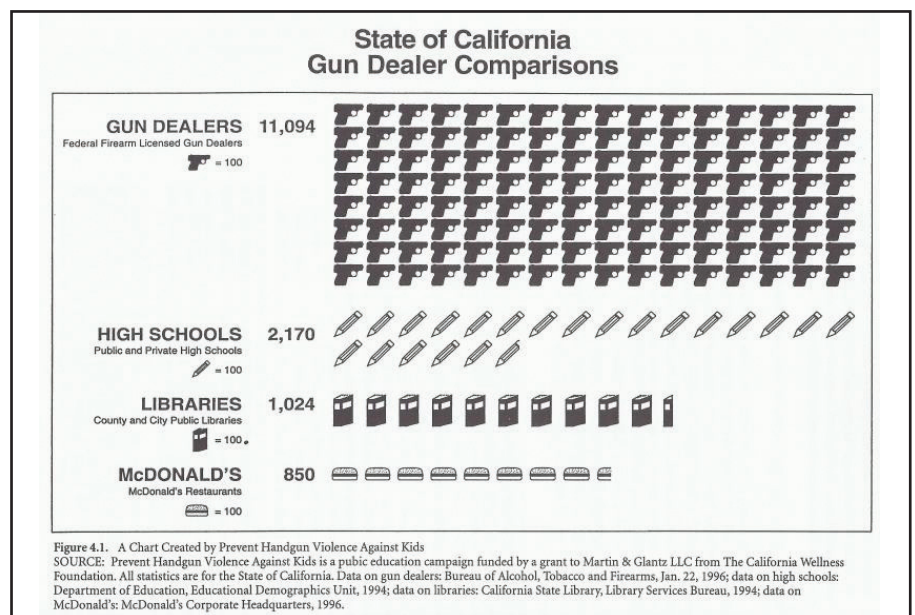
- "The kids in our county who are on waiting lists for child care would fill two entire elementary schools." This could be expressed visually, but it is also powerful when expressed verbally.
- Juxtaposing candy in supermarket line with length of a blue whale, from the Center for Science in the Public Interest.
- Education vs. incarceration from the Justice Policy Institute.
- Gun dealers vs. high schools from the Prevent Handgun Violence Against Kids.



## THE MAJOR MESSAGES OF THE SUCCESSFUL SAN FRANCISCO CAMPAIGN FOR A CHILDREN'S FUND

- Our children face a serious crisis.
- Investing in children is cost-effective – an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
- Children's services can transform lives.
- Children can't vote – only YOU can vote for children.
- "For these are all our children... We will all profit by, or pay for, whatever they become."  
– James Baldwin

An example or some short data points followed each message.



# PART VII.

## PREPARING TO LAUNCH

### CONTENT

- 25 Getting on the ballot
- 26 Preparing for a campaign





# 25 Getting on the Ballot

## There are two ways in California to place a measure on the ballot:

- A vote by the legislative body – either the Board of Supervisors or the City Council
- Petition of the voters

It is essential to understand how these two processes work. The best thing you can do is go to your Registrar of Voters and get as much information as possible. We recommend making the staff in the Registrar's office your new best friends. The City or County website will also have answers. You should study the chart on pages 18 and 19 and the accompanying white paper referenced on page 17. While each community may have different protocols and procedures, the process of getting a measure on the ballot will probably involve multiple hearings and lots of negotiations. This is a time where the organization you have built can make it or break it.

The process of drafting a measure and getting the vote to place it on the ballot can go on for weeks – or even months. And the outcome is often determined by the skill and strength of the Coalition promoting the measure. It will usually entail many meetings with elected officials. Bring people who are known to influence the official, as well as those who can answer every possible technical question. Leave written materials. Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up. In the end, you want assurance of an elected official's vote to place a measure on the ballot. It will help to have a very knowledgeable, respected and tactful-but-tough point person for your Coalition during this process.

During this period the drumbeat continues – press events, rallies, meetings with editorial boards, continued outreach for endorsements.

**Know when to compromise** – this is an art. There are no rules, except to know that compromise is part of the political process. And gamesmanship counts. Demands for compromise can include everything from the amount of the tax or set-aside, to control of the funding process, to appointments to the oversight body.

The actual vote to put something on the ballot is a BIG DEAL. No matter what the outcome of the election is, you have experienced success. You have created a great opportunity for the public to learn about and take action on important issues. An election campaign is possibly the best vehicle there is for organizing and public education.

## CELEBRATE THE MILESTONE – BIG TIME

Getting a measure placed on the ballot is a major accomplishment and a milestone of your efforts. It is the launching pad of the next phase of the work – and should be as visibly celebrated as possible. Thank the elected officials who made it possible, and tell the public how important the measure is and how strongly the community supports it. This is a major opportunity for both a press event and a community-building event. Make sure that there is a large crowd when a final vote is taken to put the measure on the ballot.



## USING THE PETITION PROCESS CAN BE EXCITING

The highlight of the first San Francisco campaign for a Children's Fund was submitting 68,000 signatures to the Registrar of Voters – after elected officials had turned down the group's request to have them put it on the ballot. The measure was written exactly as advocates desired.

And after a several month signature gathering effort, the petitions were brought to City Hall in little red wagons pulled by adorable children. It was a never-to-forget spectacle that finally grabbed the attention of the previously uninterested local press. And then advocates learned the political lesson of a lifetime: By the end of the day, every local elected official but one had requested to be listed as an endorser on the first official literature of the campaign!

**When the people lead, the leaders will follow.**



**Petition of the Voters** – The only two Children's Funds in California were placed on the ballot through a signature campaign by the voters – San Francisco being the first. Most of the time signature campaigns are done when the legislative body will not place a measure the community desires on the ballot. But sometimes it is a choice by a campaign, since it is a powerful tool for engaging the public and asserting the independence of the campaign. It also assures that the measure is exactly what you want it to be – no compromises necessary.

However, signature campaigns are tough. The number of signatures required can depend on the specific rules of the city or county, and whether it is a charter or general law county. The rules are extremely detailed, and the measure and even the format of the petition must comply with many details. A frequent requirement is that the number of signatures depends on voter turnout of the most recent

gubernatorial election, and that percent is often 10%. However, if you are considering this strategy, check early the exact requirement in your community and with the type of measure you are proposing. It is essential to carry out this strategy after learning all the facts from the Registrar of Voters and, if at all possible, in consultation with a knowledgeable lawyer and campaign expert.

It is also important to know that collecting signatures, while fun and empowering, is also tough and tedious. Children's advocates may not be ready for the rigor of such an effort. That is why most signature campaigns rely heavily on paid signature gatherers. Finding a reliable company that gathers signatures is important, and you should get recommendations from people you trust who have used these services. But unlike many other issues, the public is usually eager to sign a petition related to children – so not a lot of convincing is necessary.

## 26 Preparing for a Campaign

A formal political campaign starts when a measure is placed on the ballot. We hope that this Guide will get you to a point where that can happen. In many ways the preliminary work described in the Guide is the most important (and most time-consuming) part. It lays the groundwork for a successful campaign.

While this is not a Guide to running a political campaign, there are several more essential preliminary steps to be taken before a formal campaign starts, which will position you well for the final lap.

- **Gather information** – There is basic information you will want to gather before the campaign begins – about the electorate and about previous ballot measures. You will want to know how many people vote, how many people will vote in the election when you will be on the ballot and exactly how many votes you will need to win. The number of votes needed will drive much of your decision-making. Campaign consultant, Larry Tramutola, exhorts his clients to memorize that number, repeat it often, and keep it in your head at all times. He also notes that in many situations you will probably be the only person or people in the room who know that number, which will help impress others, particularly the elected officials who may be needed to put a measure on the ballot. It is also important to do your research on how other revenue and kids measures have fared in your community in recent elections. That too will guide your decision-making.
- **Set up appropriate accounts and committees** – You will need to set up a committee with the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) and establish a bank account. You can do this early on – which allows you to start raising

funds for the campaign. And don't worry – the name of the campaign and description of the measure can be easily modified. This is not difficult, but it is technical. Fortunately there is a detailed, step-by-step guide: [fundingthenextgeneration.org/nextgenwp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Ballot-Measure-Committee-Set-up-Instructions.pdf](https://fundingthenextgeneration.org/nextgenwp/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Ballot-Measure-Committee-Set-up-Instructions.pdf). The guide was developed by expert lawyers (The Sutton Law Firm) for *Funding the Next Generation* and should be followed exactly.

One misconception is that you will need to establish a 501 C-4 to proceed. This is not true. By registering your committee with the FPPC, you are, in effect, doing that. There are concrete advantages to taking these two steps, but also political advantages. By having an "official" committee and bank account, you are creating momentum, and people will start taking you more seriously.

**Note:** Establishing a committee involves some regular reporting, so you may want to spend a small amount on an experienced treasurer to do the work.

- **Create your campaign working group** – Don't wait until the campaign starts to put together what will be the campaign working group – with emphasis on the "working" part. This is when you may even have a group that is parallel to your initial group. Or your initial group may morph into this group. While the network of supporters must remain large, the actual working group may be no more than 10 to 15 members. It should represent a variety of stakeholders and people who come to take responsibility for various kinds of tasks, rather than simply give advice and tell you what to do.



- **Money, money, money** – Fundraising needs to start as early as possible – long before your measure is officially on the ballot. The most important committee you will form will be your fundraising or finance committee, and you may form this well before the campaign working group. The fundraising group will be the foundation of your campaign. They must be people who will actually solicit money, make connections, contribute lists, and make donations themselves. Ideally they should represent connections to the community with resources, such as individuals, businesses, or civic organizations. Money is important for two reasons: 1. You will need it for all of the things required in a campaign, and 2. It will give you lots of leverage as you negotiate with other interests and elected officials to get the measure you want on the ballot, as close to the version you want as possible.

Local political consultants can help you with an estimate of what a campaign in your city or county can cost. Items in a budget can include mailing, a campaign consultant, polling, slate cards, materials to hand out, advertising, and grassroots outreach. The amount of money you need will depend to a great extent on how many votes you need to get, the level of support you have and whether there is opposition. It will help to have an approximation of the range of a possible budget early on, and keep that goal in mind throughout. The initial “asks” will be from close allies. Elected officials who support you can be particularly helpful – tapping their donors and providing mailing lists. The potential return on investment is a powerful case to funders – along with the fact that it is a one-time “ask.” It is time to apply everything you have ever learned about fundraising with individual donors.

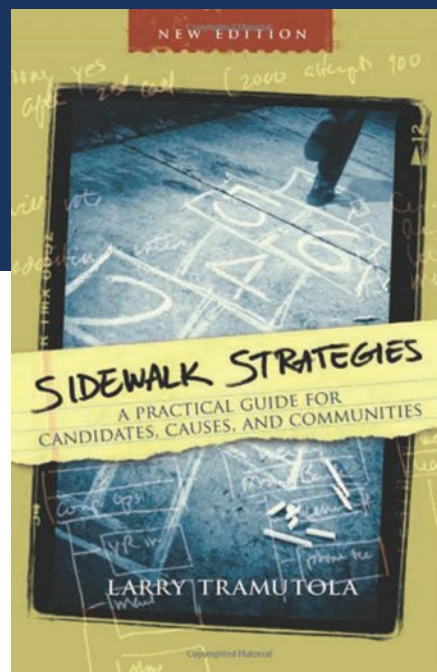
- **Chairs** – At some point, your campaign or coalition will become publicly known. That might be the time to select an official and public chair or chairs – a person or people whose names will be on every piece of material, who will bring immediate attention and credibility. Ideally you want people who have the passion and ability to do work, but also people whose names and allegiance to the cause will bring new allies, fend off opposition and help raise dollars. Who the chairs should be will vary enormously by community. As the campaign progresses, you might then add honorary co-chairs representing many stakeholders and segments of the community.
- **Ready your volunteers** – A strong corps of volunteers is probably what will determine the outcome of your election, so it’s important to start early to develop the troops. As stated in other parts of this Guide, your campaign needs to be primarily an organizing effort. Volunteers are your base. Start with the workforce of the children’s field (which is a lot of people) and the parents and youth who benefit from the services that will be funded. Not only will they be the core of the campaign, but it can be a transformative experience for them. If folks feel invested in the early stages of the work, they will be even more invested as you get closer to an election. A volunteer force is one thing you may have that others don’t have – so it is important to capitalize on that.

- **Know what else is on the ballot** – Sometimes people forget that their measure will not be the only one on the ballot, and that must be a consideration in determining the best election. Sometimes another measure will create too much confusion, or will reach the taxing limit of the city or county. That might push you to pick an earlier ballot, or a later ballot. However, it is important to realize that there will NEVER be a time when there is nothing else on the ballot, and most likely given California’s constraints on raising revenue, there will be other revenue measures on the ballot. Don’t despair – more than one measure can win. Professional political people can help you sort this out.

- **Which election?** A professional political consultant will help you figure out which election is most advantageous. Generally, funding measures for public interest causes are more likely to pass in large turnout elections – particularly a presidential election. This is because more progressive voters turn out in greater numbers during those elections. On the other hand, there have been cases of funding measures passing in low turn-out elections, the strategy being to keep the measure below the radar screen and quietly target your sympathetic voters with phone and other outreach methods. It is important to know that new revenue measures can only be on a ballot when there is also an election of the legislative body.

### Seek professional help

The campaign for your measure is in many ways like any other campaign. It entails organizational endorsements, direct mail, courting the press and a strong and flexible defense. There are people who mount campaigns for a living. And in most cases, you will need a political consultant



and his/her team as the campaign begins. It is important to pick a consultant who is good for your cause and your community, preferably one with a lot of successful campaigns under his/her belt, and ideally one who has run campaigns related to funding for public services, such as schools and hospitals. Your coalition will want to solicit bids, do interviews, call references, and evaluate track records. With the right help, and all the work you have done to date, you will be on your way.

**Read “Sidewalk Strategies: A Practical Guide for Candidates, Causes and Communities,”** by Larry Tramutola. It is a wonderful manual and can be ordered from Amazon. Tramutola is a consultant to Funding the Next Generation and also one of the most successful campaign consultants in the country in raising revenues for schools and public services. His roots as an organizer for the United Farm Workers are particularly relevant to the kind of campaign that you will need to run.



# ENDNOTE: YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY!

Mounting a ballot measure campaign is an exhilarating adventure. Win or lose it is an opportunity to build the children's movement in your community. *FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION* is a technical assistance effort aimed to help you in a wide variety of ways, from answering a few questions on a phone call, to meeting with your local group, to coaching your leadership, and more. Let us know how you are doing and what support you may need.

[margaret@fundingthenextgeneration.org](mailto:margaret@fundingthenextgeneration.org)



## THE POWER OF ELECTIONS ON KIDS' ISSUES

Creating a forum for people to express their support for children is a very powerful strategy. An election campaign has all of the ingredients to attract children's supporters: it's easy to participate; it sends a loud and effective message to the political establishment; and it provides an opportunity for the public to be educated about the needs of children. For children's advocates, an election is a particularly effective forum, with many built-in opportunities to get the message out. All of the resources that are normally spent finding the vehicle for the message are already there. There are no real arguments that can be made against investing in children when you force the debate into the public – which is what an election does. It changes the place of children's issues on the civic landscape and positions children and their advocates for many future victories.

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## **SPONSOR**

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School of Health and Social Services

## **FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR**

Margaret Brodtkin

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California Network of Family Strengthening Networks  
Children Now  
First 5 Association of California  
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Partnership for Children and Youth  
Prevent Child Abuse California  
Public Administration Program of S. F. State University  
Social Change Partners LLC  
The Children's Partnership  
Youth Leadership Institute

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Dave Metz, FM3 Research  
Larry Tramutola, Tramutola Advisors

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Ed Harrington, Former Controller of San Francisco,  
Former President of the Government Finance  
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## **LEGAL CONSULTATION**

Orrick Public Finance Group  
Sutton Law Firm

## **MARGARET BRODCKIN AND ASSOCIATES' TEAM**

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and Families

Patty Siegel, Founder and Former Executive Director,  
California Child Care Resource and Referral  
Network

Jill Wynns, SF Board of Education, Former President  
California School Board Association

## **OTHER ADVISORS**

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Consultant  
Sandra Taylor, Children and Youth Services Manager,  
City of Oakland  
Andrea Youngdahl, Former Director of Oakland  
Department of Human Services

## **COLLABORATING PARTNERS (NATIONAL)**

National AfterSchool Association  
Forum for Youth Investment  
National Association for the Education of Young  
Children  
Partnership for America's Children

## **FUNDERS**

Current:  
The California Endowment  
S.H. Cowell Foundation  
The San Francisco Foundation

Launch Funders:  
Sierra Health Foundation  
Rosenberg Foundation







# **FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION**

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