

HOW CAN YOUR COMMUNITY GET DEDICATED FUNDING FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES?



A Summary

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**FUNDING THE
NEXT GENERATION**

PRE-CAMPAIGN WORK

Planning, coalition building, leadership development, research and public education can be funded by foundations and tax-exempt donations.

Why is there never money to do the things we know our community's kids and families need?
Stop the handwringing — It doesn't have to be this way

START SOMEPLACE SIMPLE – JUST DO IT!

No one will do it for you.

- Convene a meeting of your allies in children, youth and family services – and start learning about the possibilities and potential of a dedicated local funding stream.

ASSESS YOUR COMMUNITY'S POTENTIAL – BUILD ON IT!

- What is the status of planning for the service delivery system?
- Is there a cross-sector children's services network? What is its capacity?
- Is there a credible convening organization to launch the work?
- Where is the support for kids in the local political and civic culture?
- Is there any way to fund the initial staff work to get started?

CAVEATS:

- Getting a local dedicated funding stream is a marathon, not a sprint.
- The journey is not a linear process.
- **Passing a measure by the voters is essential to ensuring stability and sustainability. Year-by-year budget battles will not.**

CONVENE A CORE TEAM – TAKE MARGART MEADE TO HEART

TIP: Your team will expand into a broad network over time, but initial progress happens with a dedicated core who are motivated, have skills and credibility, and most importantly, will do the work.

Structure and leadership of the team will evolve with needs and circumstances. Will your team initially be comprised of leaders both inside and outside government? Or an outside-government coalition or advocacy group? Or an elected official? All are possible.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has..."

– Margaret Meade

REMEMBER
Staff support
for your team is
essential.

BUILD AND MAKE YOUR CASE

Publish reports.
Speak throughout the community.
Media, Media, Media

Data on problems	Children's Budget	Identify gaps
Poverty	Analyze current spending on kids	Waiting lists
Health and mental health	Compare prevention vs. late intervention	Under-served populations
Education	Partner with fiscal staff in city/county	Quality improvements needed
Violence and safety		Neglected neighborhoods

IDEA
Advocate to your legislative body to pass a Children's Budget resolution

ESTABLISH YOUR PRIORITIES AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

CONSIDER: Greatest public support –
Greatest need and impact – Potential opposition

WANTED: Creative mix of political shrewdness, opportunity, data

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

- meetings, surveys, presentations
- Parents and youth
 - Civic and advocacy organizations
 - Elected officials – local, state and federal representatives
 - Children's service providers

MAKE KEY DECISIONS

- What do you want to fund?
- How much money is needed?
- City or county level?
- New funding stream or reallocation of existing dollars?
- How to place on ballot? Signatures or Legislative body?
- Which ballot?

POLLING CAN HELP

- Identifies public's priorities
- Helps overcome internal turf disputes about what to fund
- Builds political momentum (hint: kids poll really well)
- Costs - \$15,000 - \$35,000 – lots of variation

IDEA
Create a Children's Bill of Rights to rally community support and lay groundwork for a measure.

CRAFT A MEASURE NEGOTIATE HARD TO GET WHAT'S BEST FOR KIDS.

Decide:

FUNDING SOURCE

- Set-aside of existing revenue
- New tax – sales, property, parcel, soda, hotel, business, etc.
- New fee

FIND THE SWEET SPOT

Between need and political reality.

Example: Alliance with law enforcement on a violence prevention measure.

STRUCTURE OF FUND

- Governance and administration
- Accountability and evaluation
- Eligible services for funding
- **Methods to prevent supplantation**

TIP: Children's Fund – name the fund in your measure, using the word "children"

YOU FRAME THE ISSUE!

EXPAND THE BASE

Conduct a power analysis.

Organize, Organize, Organize – Numbers count!

Involve youth and parents. Recruit volunteers.

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

- Non-profit children's service providers
- Political champion
- Health and human service professionals
- Long-time donors and allies of children's services
- Advocates

CONVINCING MESSAGES

- **Problem** – Children in crisis
- **Solution** – Resources to support strong start
- **Action needed** – Place measure on ballot

HINTS:

- Emphasize shared values.
- Focus on collective, social responsibility.
- Emphasize benefits of prevention – economic and personal.
- Share program successes and individual transformation stories.

BEYOND THE USUAL SUSPECTS TO A BROAD COALITION

- Labor
- Faith Community
- Business leaders
- Neighborhood associations
- Civic organizations
- Senior citizen groups
- Civil rights and social justice groups
- Grassroots organizing groups
- Law enforcement

**STRONG
MESSENGERS**
teachers, nurses,
police, trusted leaders,
pediatricians,
parents, youth

ONCE MEASURE IS ON THE BALLOT, ALL WORK IS CONSIDERED POLITICAL AND LOBBYING

No foundation funding.
No non-profit tax exemptions.

THE CAMPAIGN IS UNDERWAY!

GET ON THE BALLOT

Signature drive or Vote by City or County legislative body

GETTING ON THE BALLOT: A HUGE MILESTONE

Celebrate

Major opportunity for visibility and community-building.

- Establish a bank account and FPPC Committee.
- Fundraise for a campaign.
- Garner political support and endorsements for the ballot measure.
- Poll to determine strategy and messages.
- Communicate with voters.
- Outreach, outreach, outreach.
- Get out the vote!

RESULT: A CHILDREN'S FUND

Finally - A focus on prevention.

New resources to support

- Preschool
- After-school
- Homeless services
- Tutoring
- Childcare
- Youth jobs
- And more...whatever your community prioritizes

IMPORTANT
Develop a campaign strategy.
Hire a campaign consultant.

A strengthened children's constituency

A political win that can leverage future wins

Better outcomes for children, youth and families

***"A budget is
a moral document."***

– Martin Luther King, Jr.



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