

September 8, 2023

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Bldg.
200 Independence Ave., SW
Washington D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra:

On behalf of organizations working to improve the lives of children, we are writing to thank you for your leadership and to inquire about actions regarding the future of the Children's Interagency Coordinating Council that is housed within the Office of the Secretary, Health and Human Services (HHS).

We applaud the work undertaken thus far by HHS to establish the council, such as hiring of temporary staff members. We would appreciate an update on more recent progress made to get the work of the council underway, such as steps taken to meaningfully engage senior staff in other federal agencies as well as outside stakeholders such as children's advocates and young people.

In addition, we feel strongly that the work of the Children's Interagency Coordinating Council continues far into the future and that efforts are made to ultimately transform the Council into a permanent entity at HHS. To that end, we urge that funding for this council continues beyond what was allocated by Congress in FY 2023 and which was also included in your department's FY 2024 budget request. We ask that resources from the Secretary's fund are made available annually to bolster the ongoing work of this council and ensure it can undertake the important work necessary to help support the healthy development and well-being of all children.

We thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of our children and stand ready to support your efforts to foster greater collaboration and transparency on child policy across federal agencies.

Sincerely,

First Focus on Children
Amal Alliance
Association of Children's Residential & Community services (ACRC)
Autism Society of America
Child Labor Coalition
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund

Children's Health Fund
Committee for Children
Congressional Research Institute on Social Work Policy
Education for All Coalition
Families USA
Family Centered Treatment Foundation
Family Focused Treatment Association
FLAP-Farmworker and Landscaper Advocacy Project
Futures Without Violence
Global Campaign for Education-US
Healthy Teen Network
Heartland Alliance International
Kids Impact Initiative
Mental Health America
MENTOR
The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health/Got Transition
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association of Counsel for Children
National Association of Counties (NACo)
National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
National Association of School Nurses
National Child Care Association
National Consumers League
National Diaper Bank Network
National Homelessness Law Center
National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives
National Women's Law Center
OMEP-USA
Organizations Concerned About Rural Education
ParentsTogether Action
Phoenix Zones Initiative
Prevent Blindness
Prevent Child Abuse America
RESULTS
Save the Children
School-Based Health Alliance
SchoolHouse Connection
Together for Girls
UNICEF USA
Young Center for Immigrant Children's Rights
ZERO TO THREE