



Tennessee Commission on Children & Youth's FY2027-28 Budget Recommendations



- Appropriate state funds to offset the new federal SNAP cost-sharing requirements, ensuring eligible Tennesseans retain access to benefits.
- Support the Tennessee Housing Development Agency's efforts to expand and preserve affordable housing supply, prioritizing the regions and household types where the gap is greatest for families with children.
- Make clearing the SmartSteps waitlist the top educational priority for the upcoming fiscal year and pursue all available funding mechanisms while maintaining existing services.
- Appropriate funds to the Commission on Children and Youth to conduct a Misalignment Index study of Tennessee's child care system, examining the gap between the care families need and want and what is currently available.
- Support increased access to free school meals for Tennessee students.
- Assess options to strengthen pediatric primary and specialty care access, including recruitment incentives and reimbursement rate adjustments.
- Appropriate funds to expand co-located pediatric and behavioral health care models, allowing families to access physical and mental health services in a single visit.
- Create a formalized partnership between Tennessee Department of Children's Services and the Department of Correction to track long-term recidivism outcomes for juvenile justice placements through deidentified data sharing with a public annual report.
- Establish a Department of Children's Services public dashboard, with metrics and timelines set by statute, to support transparency and accountability.
- Establish a single portal for the public to identify and access available state grant opportunities.