

MINNESOTA CHILDREN'S CABINET 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

DRIVING IMPACT ACROSS SECTORS AND AGENCIES

The Minnesota Children's Cabinet drives action-focused shared governance and cross-agency collaboration to support Minnesota's children and families. It convenes the Governor's Children's Cabinet, a senior leadership team, an external advisory council, and various cross-agency workgroups and action teams focused on priority areas.

This year's highlighted accomplishments demonstrate bold action in engagement and connection building, program implementation, and policy-making—all focused on driving systemic change and accountability for children, youth, and families across Minnesota.

Cross-Agency and Cross-Sector Collaboration

- **One Minnesota Goals:** Led action teams for child care, housing stability, mental health, and food security, advancing cross-sector collaboration and infusing results-based accountability in state agencies.
- **IT Innovation:** Through the Children's Cabinet IT Innovation Funds, awarded funds to six cross agency IT projects, including using GIS technology to evaluate and inform services, support text communication to families to improve service coordination, enhance tools and manuals to improve and streamline processes for state and county-level administration of child support, and improve Child Tax Credit participation.
- **Early Care and Education (ECE) Wage Scale Project:** Partnered with four agencies to create a new ECE wage scale and competencies report, recognizing historically low compensation for the ECE workforce and establishing specific recommendations for change.
- **Preschool Development Grant:** Partnered with a cross-agency team to secure \$24 million in total federal funding through 2027 to support, accelerate, and coordinate early childhood initiatives. Attended the Preschool Development Grant Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Summit to build best practices for improving mental health outcomes for children under 5 across Minnesota and to learn from other states.
- **Children's Mental Health and Well-Being:** Re-launched a cross-agency action team to address the urgent and evolving mental health needs of young people in Minnesota and to respond to external and urgent complex needs in the community. Supported Children's Justice Initiative's Subcommittee recommendations released to improve systems for youth mental health.
- **Pregnancy Health and Substance Use Task Force:** Co-chaired cross-sector task force to develop [recommendations for pregnant mothers with substance use disorders](#) resulting in a published report for the Task Force on Pregnancy Health and Substance Use Disorders - MN Dept. of Health.



Program Implementation Support & Leadership

- **Children and Families Investment:** Streamlined collaboration to implement [2023 legislative investments](#) and developed a [children and families policy package for 2024](#), resulting in child-focused investments and policy changes.
- **Department of Children, Youth, and Families:** Supported the launch of the new cabinet-level agency that brings together supports for families, including programs serving children from infants and toddlers to older youth.
- **Child Tax Credit Outreach:** Coordinated cross-agency collaboration and outreach for the new Minnesota Child Tax Credit that was claimed for the first time for Tax Year 2023. Resulted in \$1,242 in average nation-leading Child Tax Credit received by households with more than 451,700 total qualifying children.
- **Summer EBT Implementation:** Supported cross-agency (DCYF, MDE, and Minnesota IT Services) implementation of a permanent federal Summer EBT program that provided more than \$56 million in summer grocery buying benefits to 470,000 children when school was out for the summer.
- **Increasing ECE Workforce Compensation:** Partnered with DCYF to implement the nation-leading Great Start Compensation Support Payments that provided nearly \$142 million to eligible child care providers between October 2023 and September 2024 and distributed \$1 million in Preschool Development Grant funding in wages to 226 eligible child care providers through a pay equity pilot, paying on average \$9 per hour more than current wages.

Collaborative Outputs

- **MN StoryCollective:** The Children's Cabinet is part of the management team for this effort, which collected more than 1,000 stories, engaged 200+ community members, and influenced state policies through diverse voices and media campaigns.
- **Early Childhood Connector:** Engaged 2,675 subscribers through quarterly newsletters and reached others through quarterly calls, building a strong network for early educators.
- **Minnesota Children's Fiscal Map:** Established a fiscal data collection process and sought internal and external feedback to create an updated fiscal map visual tool that adds FY22-23 biennial expenditure data, enabling better comparison over time of state spending on children and youth. The new tool is planned to be released in early 2025.
- **Resources for Coordinating Services Across Agencies:** In collaboration with the Attorney General's Office, created resources for state and local agencies to support understanding and awareness of the legal frameworks and requirements to share data to better coordinate services and make it easier for families to access programs for which they're eligible.
- **ECE Workforce Report:** Co-developed a report highlighting career pathways and support for the ECE workforce.
- **Philanthropy Dialogue:** Brought together more than 20 leading organizations in a multi-part convening to connect philanthropic efforts with state initiatives for community impact and effectiveness, in partnership with DCYF.
- **Education:** In addition to speaking engagements across the state, community engagement, and responsive service delivery, the Children's Cabinet initiated a learning series aimed at educating the state workforce about programs and services that benefit Minnesota families. The series to date has included more than 25 sessions with an attendance of more than 50 employees per session.