



# Children's Defense Fund–Ohio

A strong, effective, independent voice for *all* children

## Beyond Thoughts and Prayers

March 2018



### Welcome Tracy Nájera to CDF-Ohio

We are pleased to announce that Tracy Nájera, Ph.D, MPA, joined CDF-Ohio on March 5<sup>th</sup> as Executive Director.

Tracy began her career with CDF-Ohio as a Research Fellow. She went on to work in the Ohio Office of Budget and Management, during which she served as Section Chief for Education, managing policy and budget priorities spanning early childhood education through workforce development. Tracy joined the team at Battelle for Kids serving as Senior Director of the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative where she managed a \$54 million 5-year federal grant to improve education outcomes in rural school districts. However,

Tracy found a way to once again work with CDF-Ohio while at BFK by supporting the development and release of the 2016 report *Ohio's Appalachian Children at a Crossroads: A Roadmap for Action*. Most recently, Tracy was a Senior Consultant for Education First Consulting, a national firm working with schools, states and foundations with a focus on improving college and career readiness for all students, particularly low income students and students of color. Tracy brings a long-standing commitment to improving the lives of children and their families to her new role. Please join us in welcoming her to CDF-Ohio.

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### Protect Children, Not Guns

Last month, unspeakable violence stole the lives of 17 people—precious children and school staff of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Gun violence is robbing children throughout our state of safety, innocence, emotional and physical wellbeing, and, ultimately, life. This latest tragedy represents one of 14 school shootings already reported in 2018. So many children's lives lost, families in pain, and communities traumatized - ***it's time to move beyond "thoughts and prayers."***



Our children demand protection from gun violence and their voices and activism are fueling growing momentum across state governments and at the federal level. Congress is currently debating at least seven different measures. Florida's [Governor Scott recently signed legislation](#) raising the minimum age to purchase a firearm from 18 to 21 and imposing a three-day waiting period on gun purchases while providing new funding for mental health counselors and law enforcement. Though the legislation includes promising steps in the right direction, a troubling provision

for certain school personnel to carry guns in schools remains in the signed legislation. Our schools need fewer guns – not more.

**The question at hand - What will Ohio do protect our children and communities from violence?** Last November and in response to the mass shooting in Las Vegas, [Governor Kasich convened an eight-member bipartisan gun policy group](#) to propose a package of common-sense measures to reform Ohio's gun laws. Two weeks ago, the [Governor proposed six measures](#) that will be introduced as a policy package for the general assembly's consideration and includes the following recommendations:

1. Using courts and new legal protections to keep firearms from potentially dangerous people.
2. Prohibiting domestic violence offenders and individuals with a protection order filed against them from obtaining firearms.
3. Ensuring timely and accurate information updates to close gaps in the background check system.
4. Prohibiting straw firearm purchases for third parties—matching federal law.
5. Prohibiting the sale of armor-piercing ammunition.
6. Outlawing the sale of bump stocks and other accessories.

These proposals give us hope that we can make meaningful progress to protect our children, and they represent steps in the right direction. Further, ***we are encouraged by Governor Kasich's recent [comments and support for common-sense gun policy reforms](#).*** The lives and loss of those 17 people and the nation's collective loss in the sense of safety in our schools has made a lasting imprint on our families & communities. ***It's time to make a lasting imprint on our public policy.***

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## The 2017 County Fact Sheets are Here!

Are you a researcher looking for data on child well-being in our counties? A county administrator seeking information on child Medicaid enrollment? A local chamber of commerce looking for a snapshot of education outcomes in your area? Check out our new [Ohio KIDS COUNT 2017 Fact Sheets](#) full of county-specific data on demographics, economics, education, health, and safety. Interested in more in-depth data insights? Check out the [KIDS COUNT Data Center](#), a premier source of data on children and families with tables, trend graphs, side-by-side state or county comparisons, and much more.

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## Children's Defense Fund-Ohio's 2018 Advocacy Day

Join Children's Defense Fund-Ohio, this May, for our upcoming Advocacy Day. Our Advocacy Day is a critical opportunity to place the needs of Ohio's children and families before key decision-makers in the Ohio legislature. A host of policy and legislative decisions are made each day—decisions that affect the safety of our neighborhoods, the quality of our schools, the availability of high-quality healthcare, and equality of opportunity for all Ohio children.

Our children need a voice. Yours. Children can't vote or lobby for themselves. That is why it is important for advocates, youth, providers, and families to join us at the Statehouse, meet with their legislators and their staff, share their experiences, and encourage our state's leaders to invest in Ohio's future—our children.

Watch for upcoming details about this event.



**SAVE THE DATE**

**Friday, September 14, 2018**

### **Beat the Odds® Legacy Event**

Please join us in September as we showcase the accomplishments, adventures and challenges of our Beat the Odds alumni. We're so proud of this 'group of 25', originally recognized for their ability to *Beat the Odds* of their early circumstances, who now are forging amazing paths as they maneuver through college, graduate school and early careers. Hear the continuation of their stories, learn of the hardships they've encountered and overcome, and commit with us that no one should EVER give up on a child.

They're beating the odds. Help us improve the odds.

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### **Aisha Allen joins CDF-Ohio Advisory Board**

We welcome Aisha Allen to the Children's Defense Fund-Ohio Advisory Board. A human resource executive, Aisha has worked with numerous central Ohio Fortune 500 companies, including Nationwide and Cardinal Health, specializing in training, sales coaching and organizational effectiveness. Aisha sees her work with CDF-Ohio as a way to be more impactful in the community and sees as an opportunity the local and national platform that the Children's Defense Fund impacts. Aisha currently serves as Director, Change Management Programs for OhioHealth and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Women's Fund of Central Ohio.

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### **Put Your Faith Into Action**

Welcome home! Every July hundreds of child advocates from across the country hear these words as they gather at [the annual Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute for Child Advocacy Ministry](#) (The Proctor Institute). The Proctor Institute is hosted at the [CDF Haley Farm in Clinton Tennessee](#) from July 16-20, 2018. [Register now](#) for CDF's Proctor Institute, "Realizing Dr. King's Vision for Every Child: Ending Child Poverty."

Join us for an unforgettable week of preaching, teaching, workshops, singing, strategizing and building the movement for children. We will build skills and share success stories in dismantling the Cradle to Prison Pipeline®, ending child poverty, and improving the lives of children in our communities. We will renew our spirits, refocus our vision, and strengthen the movement for all children in America!



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