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ADVOCACY EFFORTS

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EXPANDING RESOURCES

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IMPACT BY
THE NUMBERS

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Championing Children in the Mountain State

Annual Report

2024



WEST VIRGINIA CENTER ON
BUDGET & POLICY

Letter from the Executive Director

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS OF THE WVCBP,

The past year reinforced our resolve while making clear the immense work that lies ahead to achieve our mission of an equitable and prosperous West Virginia for all. In 2024, we strengthened existing coalitions and launched new collaborative efforts, as we've learned we can only progress by working together and maintaining a clear, bold proactive vision.

We continued to prioritize co-created research and policy solutions including publishing a report on the high costs to children and families of the juvenile justice system, co-authored with the Midian Leadership Project, and an interactive piece highlighting how the Medicaid program could be more accessible as told through the voices of those on Medicaid, both of which will be highlighted in more depth in this report.

We became the state's KIDS COUNT® partner, allowing us to focus more capacity on gathering credible data and policy recommendations regarding child care, child welfare, and K-12 education, all of which are policy decisions we must get right as a state for the future of our children. Our team helped create our first ever proactive policy agenda for children endorsed by more than 20 organizations as part of the Legislative Action Team for Children and Families, a hopeful and proactive roadmap for policymakers and communities.

2024 was also a year of accountability, where **we highlighted the impacts and opportunity costs of harmful policy decisions made in our state**. The cost of 2023's deep tax cuts became clear in the inability of policymakers to advance a single bill to improve child care access and affordability, despite commitments that it was a top priority. It was also clear in the failure to advance efforts to increase funding for public schools, invest in flood mitigation, and make improvements to infant and maternal health.

With additional tax cuts hitting in 2025, **our accountability efforts to educate policymakers and the public about the importance of well-resourced public institutions and supports for workers and families will continue**.

Our staff and board are endlessly grateful for our organizational and community partners, funders and donors, and supporters who are aligned in our journey to achieve an equitable and prosperous future for all West Virginians.



Kelly Allen

Kelly Allen, Executive Director

MISSION

The WVCBP works to advance public policies that increase opportunity and eliminate inequities through credible and accessible research and community-rooted advocacy.

VISION

A prosperous West Virginia where everyone has a meaningful opportunity to thrive with equitable access to health care, education, jobs, housing, and safe communities.



Together for Public Schools WV Coalition Launch

Public schools are the heart of our communities—they are where our children learn and grow when they are away from us and where we gather with our neighbors to cheer for our local team. After years of disinvestment and attacks, our community

schools need our support more than ever. In 2024, the WVCBP was proud to help launch Together for Public Schools WV, a statewide coalition of more than a dozen organizations standing alongside individuals, parents, teachers, and school staff who believe every child in West Virginia should have access to a high-quality public education and a full array of educational and extracurricular services.

Together, we are building community among parents and school staff, between businesses and schools, and across school districts through conversations, town halls, and listening sessions. Our solidarity will help build a community-rooted plan to ensure all schools have the resources they need to serve their students and families.

| KANAWHA COUNTY 2024 KIDS COUNT Data Book | | |
|---|--------|---------|
| EDUCATION | | |
| Public School Enrollment Total headcount enrollment, 2023-24 | 23,437 | 245,047 |
| Fourth Grade Reading Proficiency Percentage of fourth graders proficient in reading, 2023-24 | 37.8% | 46.6% |
| Eighth Grade Math Proficiency Percentage of eighth graders proficient in math, 2023-24 | 29.5% | 28.7% |
| Graduation Rate 2023 four year cohort | 89.3% | 92.6% |
| Students With Special Needs Percentage of students with a disability, 2023-24 | 19.1% | 19.7% |

Becoming an Official KIDS COUNT® Partner

In 2024, the WVCBP became West Virginia's member of KIDS COUNT®. KIDS COUNT is a national network coordinated by the Annie E. Casey Foundation that provides lawmakers, public

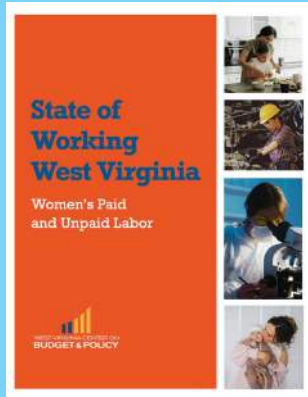
officials, the media, and community members with reliable data, policy recommendations, and tools to advance policies that benefit children. As the West Virginia partner, our team helps compile data and analysis and craft policy solutions to improve the lives of all children in our state.

As part of this project, we released our first KIDS COUNT Data Book with county-level data measuring the well-being of children in all 55 counties.

Growth of Our Child Advocacy Efforts

OUR MAJOR PUBLICATIONS

**Medicaid in the Mountain
State: The Unwinding Through
the Voices of Program Participants**



State of
Working
West
Virginia
2024:
Women's
Paid and
Unpaid
Labor

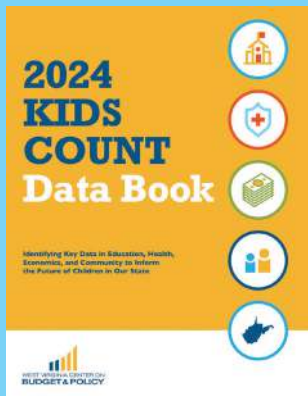
STATE OF WORKING WEST VIRGINIA 2024: WOMEN'S PAID AND UNPAID LABOR



The 17th edition of the State of Working West Virginia, an annual report that examines the state's economy through the lens of its workers, focused on the state of women in and around West Virginia's workforce. The report found that while the outlook for women in West Virginia's workforce has improved over the years, with declining unemployment and rising labor force participation, many disparities still exist. The gap between men and women persists in labor force participation, wages, poverty, and overall economic insecurity. The report also found that women bear a disproportionate share of caregiving responsibilities, essentially unpaid labor that is vital to the economy. Of the women who are not participating in the formal labor force, over half are caring for home and family. This unpaid work is worth just under \$1.6 billion in West Virginia.

**"It's Not Designed for Children":
A Fuller Accounting of the Costs
of West Virginia's Criminal System
for Youth**

**Solving Child Care Requires
Strong Public Investment**



2024 KIDS
COUNT
Data Book

"IT'S NOT DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN": A FULLER ACCOUNTING OF THE COSTS OF WEST VIRGINIA'S CRIMINAL SYSTEM FOR YOUTH



The WVCPB partnered with Midian Leadership Project (Charleston), a Black-led youth leadership organization, to learn more about the criminal legal system for children. Our research began with a look at the financial penalties imposed by courts: fines, fees, and restitution. But as we reviewed the data and spoke with those personally impacted by the criminal legal system, we learned that the most serious costs are those that go uncounted.

The report revealed a system that separates children from their loved ones, classrooms, and community supports, while extracting wealth from their families in the form of financial penalties, jail expenses, rides to and from court appointments, lost work earnings, and more. But the most striking finding was how a criminal case record and resulting trauma followed people into adulthood.

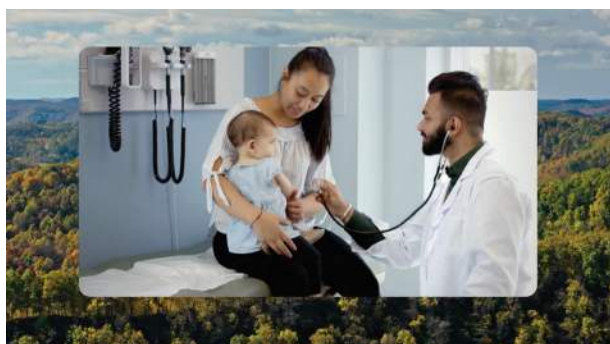
**Hope Scholarship Expansion
Threatens Public Education,
Communities Already
Under Strain**

**Final 2025 Budget Makes
Deep Cuts to Medicaid;
Fails to Meet Important Needs**

The report calls on West Virginia to reduce the ever-expanding criminal system for children, to invest instead in child-affirming institutions such as public schools and community recreation centers, and to support parents and caregivers with a living wage, affordable housing, and access to health care.

Publications

Amplifying Voices and Expanding Resources



Medicaid in the Mountain State

In 2024, the WVCBP continued our work to learn from Medicaid enrollees how the program could be more efficient and accessible for themselves and their families. In partnership with West Virginians for Affordable Health Care, we collected video and audio clips from storytellers,

allowing them to directly share their experiences with the public, lawmakers, and other decision makers in their own words. These conversations highlighted the life-saving impacts of Medicaid through increasing access to substance use treatment, cancer care, and preventive services. They also showed the ways in which underinvestment in Medicaid program administration has made health care more difficult to access when eligible people are denied due to paperwork barriers and when connecting with a person on the phone or in the office takes many hours. These insights helped support meaningful changes to make the state's Medicaid program more accessible including streamlining enrollment and renewals and advancing policies that allow stronger communication with enrollees. ■



COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL

Community Collaborative Council



In 2024, the WVCBP launched the Community Collaborative Council (CCC), a project to support people behind bars and the many folks who care about them. In dozens of conversations with people who are incarcerated, the WVCBP learned what resources are most needed. The result is the CCC website, where people can access self-help materials about West Virginia's jail and prison system, learn how to advocate for parole release, and connect to other advocates through the WV Criminal Law Reform coalition. ■

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Criminal Legal
Policy Analyst

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE TEAM



The WVCBP was fortunate to welcome an incredible new member to the team in 2024.

Tamaya Browder joined in June as our education policy fellow through the State Policy Fellowship program. This research-focused

fellowship is a project of the State Priorities Partnership, a national network of independent state policy organizations that the WVCBP is a proud and longstanding member of. Tamaya plays an essential role in our growing public education advocacy efforts. From conducting research and analysis to hosting community town halls and webinars to providing important data and insights to policymakers and the media, her multifaceted work helps us fight for a Mountain State where every child has access to a high-quality public education.

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Union IUPAT DC53

Rick Wilson

American Friends
Service Committee

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



5,160

FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS



3,819

NEWSLETTER
SUBSCRIBERS



3,970

X
FOLLOWERS



52

PUBLICATIONS



12

FACT SHEETS



35

BLOG POSTS



5

REPORTS & BRIEFS



185

MEDIA MENTIONS

EXPENDITURES*



GENERAL PROGRAM

\$1,092,025

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE

\$46,667

FUNDRAISING

\$4,099

**Preliminary figures*

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



State Priorities
Partnership

KIDS COUNT®

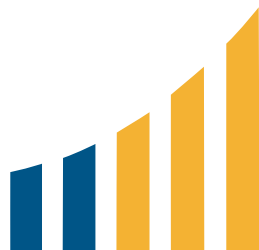
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Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
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Annie E. Casey Foundation
Arnold Ventures
Pritzker Children's Initiative
ACLU of West Virginia
American Friends Service Committee
Community Education Group
National Association of Social Workers -
WV Chapter
Ohio River Valley Institute
SEIU 1199
West Virginia Association of Counties
West Virginia Citizen Action Group
West Virginia Council of Churches
West Virginia Education Association
West Virginians for Affordable Healthcare

COALITIONS

Call to Action for Racial Equality
Food for All
Health Care for All WV
Legislative Action Team for Children
and Families
Paid Leave Works for WV
Race Matters
Together for Public Schools WV
West Virginia Criminal Law Reform Coalition
West Virginia Tax and Budget Coalition
West Virginians Together for Medicaid
WV United



WEST VIRGINIA CENTER ON
BUDGET & POLICY

Data-driven policies. Shared prosperity.

wvpolicy.org

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