

Guiding Principles

Ask grantees and other community organizations what they need. To the extent feasible, don't assume. Especially as we hear about early childhood and social service programs not being able to withstand closure, we need to understand exactly what would help. For example, home visiting and early intervention programs are seeking authorizations to be able to do telehealth visits. NAEYC and Child Care Aware of America, including local AEYC affiliate and child care resource and referral agencies, are sources of information about what EC providers need in the short and long term. NAEYC just released [initial data from a survey of providers on COVID 19 impacts](#).

We need a BOTH/AND strategy between advocacy and more direct responses. Funders should pursue both direct response and advocacy. Don't pull back on advocacy and organizing, because equitable public investment strategies will yield more support to families and programs than philanthropic investments would ever be able to do. Advocates are working to expand the safety net and to include low income families and ECE providers in public funding responses.

Philanthropy should consider how to target investments to have the most impact, augmenting and supplementing other public and private responses without reducing the responsibility and obligation of the public sector. For example, Head Start grants will continue to flow to providers even if they are closed and they are expected to pay their staffs. They may be able to also provide "to-go" meals to families, but that may vary location to location based on how feasible. Philanthropic support could help address any gaps in nutrition services or new ways to deliver services to families during the crisis. CCDBG may continue to pay providers, even if they are closed. States have many choices about how to implement ongoing payments to providers and how to ease the burden on families through copay waivers and other flexibilities. Philanthropy can work in public-private partnership to encourage good state policy choices and augment public responses.

Flexible Philanthropic Practice is Key. Grantees should be given broad flexibility to redeploy or reset resources from existing purposes to rapid response. Grantees should be able to suspend and/or modify deliverables and deadlines without prolonged renegotiations (perhaps through direct contact with program officers with minimal paperwork). General operating support is an important resource to allow grantees the flexibility to respond to the changing circumstances.

This will be a marathon, not a sprint. Funders need to balance their response to urgent and immediate needs with their ability to sustain support for the field as it rebuilds over time.

Emerging Areas of Need

Based on what we are hearing so far, and keeping in mind the above guiding principles, the following are some areas of need that early childhood funders may wish to consider. Additional or different needs may emerge.

(1) Advocacy around equitable approaches to the public investment response:

WHY? There are immediate Federal public investments planned through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and other economic stimulus packages. We know from previous financial crises that responses were highly

inequitable, and more relief was available to those with voices at the table. Now more than ever, we need to have advocates and community members fighting for a fair public investment response. If the public resources flow to low-income communities and providers, this will do more to support them than all the philanthropy resources available.

OPPORTUNITIES: Early childhood advocates at the national and state levels, state affiliates of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, family and medical leave advocates, and community organizers will all be mobilizing. This is an opportunity for early childhood funders to build bridges with funders working across a variety of social safety net issues. Funders can add funding to these efforts – by enhancing grants you already have with trusted grantees. ECFC will try to keep you apprised of more opportunities as they become available.

(2) Support for home-based providers:

WHY? Home based providers may not be eligible for some of the relief that will come to center-based providers. In addition, home -based child care may be critical to the response that will require smaller groups of contact and for COVID response workers, longer hours and shifts at atypical times.

OPPORTUNITIES:

Home Grown Funders Collaborative – This philanthropic collaborative, focused on home-based care providers is, working on COVID responses for home-based child care. Home Grown will support communication and information sharing around the distinct needs of licensed family providers and facility, friend and neighbor providers during this crisis and will support local and national funders in considering how emergency funding can include and support home-based providers.

National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) – Will advocate to be sure that in-home care workers are covered in public relief efforts. NDWA has also established a Coronavirus

Care Fund for people who need direct assistance.

(3) Emergency Child Care:

WHY? Cities and states across the country are concerned about providing child care for first responders, medical personnel, and non-medical personnel critical to response, including cleaning and support employees, and employees at pharmacies, grocery stores, etc. There may be funds available for this from public sources, including emergency appropriations and Child Care and Development Fund flexibilities. In the meantime, this care is specialized and may cost more. Sustaining existing child care is also key to equitable community recovery (Related: [Want to Support Your Community's Equitable Recovery from COVID-19? Invest in Child Care](#))

OPPORTUNITIES: These will likely be local opportunities, in conjunction with resource and referral agencies and state or local governments. Here are some considerations: Contribute to “hazard pay” for providers who remain open, covering 1.5-2x their usual rate; Pay for cleaning supplies and deep cleaning as needed; Identify, recruit, and pay for telehealth services for those needing trauma related therapy in the short or long-term; Cover the cost of substitutes as needed; Create a grant or loan program to cover costs needed to keep providers in business if they are closed (cover mortgage or rent costs, utility bills, etc.) For examples of local and state emergency funds addressing child care needs, see ECFC’s [Emergency Fund Tracking](#) chart. If you need help connecting to the efforts in your local community, we may be able to help.

(4) Support for vulnerable families:

WHY? Families, particularly low-income and hourly wage earners, will be the first to feel the pain of COVID-19’s economic impacts and will feel that pain most acutely. Families are already reporting mass layoffs. Essential workers are spending cash on babysitters for school age children that they would normally have used for household expenses. While food may be available through food programs and distribution

sites, families face reduced income for household expenses like housing, medication, and transportation. Families with babies who had received formula and diapers through child care are already reporting inability to access these vital resources. Advocates and public officials are working to make the social safety net keep up with these changing times, but at best there will be a lag while new public funds are dedicated, and new distribution channels are developed.

OPPORTUNITIES: Local community foundation COVID-19 response funds; local nonprofits that provide emergency financial assistance; utilizing existing grantees to disseminate resources to known, impacted families.

(5) Advocacy & Implementation for Paid Sick Leave and Paid Family and Medical Leave

WHY? This is a new and powerful moment in the movement to secure paid sick days and paid family and medical leave (PFML) for families. Now is the time to harness new policies from the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, to benefit families and look toward permanent policy solutions. While these new paid leave programs are limited, they represent a significant opportunity to get help to eligible workers AND broaden constituencies for future gains in permanent paid leave laws for working families.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

Continued advocacy with both governments and large business to get more comprehensive and equitable coverage of paid leave – Advocates need an infusion of support to get more coverage (e.g. long term medical leave was not covered) and equitable responses into future national COVID legislation, corresponding State initiatives, and directly with large corporations who are not required to provide paid sick leave or paid family leave under the Covid-19 leave law.

Outreach, education and base building

– Organizations will need to help low-income families access and utilize the new paid sick and family leave programs. Then, they are working to capture and tell those stories and engage those individuals in the grassroots base for paid sick

leave and paid family and medical leave. The beneficiaries of these temporary COVID-19 leave provisions can be added to the base of voters who will fight for more permanent paid sick days and paid family and medical leave policies.

Implementation support – We need to pivot quickly to ensure that crisis programs are responsive and roll out well. The implementation of these new paid leave policies needs to go well to help the most vulnerable people AND to generate stories about what difference can be made if we build broader, more durable paid leave policies.

OPPORTUNITIES:

Paid Leave for All Campaign: Immediate funds (both C3 and C4) are needed to continue the Federal advocacy in COVID response bills, while building up capacity on the education/outreach/base-building on the need for sustained paid sick days law and a social insurance systems to address paid family and medical leave. Steering Committee members in **Paid Leave for All are here.** Paid Leave for All also has an implementation working group chaired by CLASP and A Better Balance to work quickly with state officials and state advocates in providing technical assistance, outreach to families, and base building. Interested funders can contact **Dawn Huckelbridge,**

Paid Family and Medical Leave Fund: The New Venture Fund at Arabella Advisors hosts a pooled fund for strategic investment in paid family and medical leave focused on broadening support and new constituencies (with a special matching funding in supporting racial equity and racial justice groups), building bipartisan support, and providing rapid response support to the paid family and medical leave field. Interested funders can contact **Shelley Waters Boots.**

Arabella Advisors also hosts the donor table for paid family and medical leave, which is open to any donor interested in funding investments in this policy area. Contact **Andrew Peters** for more information.

(6) Advocating and Investing in Equity for Immigrant Families

WHY? Twenty-five percent of children under six have a parent who is an immigrant and the overwhelming majority of those children are U.S. citizens. Twenty percent of the people who provide early learning services are themselves immigrants. Immigrant families often experience inequity because they have less access to safe work, fair and steady pay, prenatal care, maternity leave and other basic opportunities to strengthen families. As a result, children of immigrants represent a disproportionate share of children living in poverty.

The Coronavirus pandemic adds to these health and economic **disparities**. For example, immigrants represent a large share of frontline workers responding to the pandemic (e.g., home health aides, grocery store cashiers, pharmacy clerks), yet they are half as likely to have health insurance. Similarly, immigrants – many of them parents – were over-represented in industries hardest hit by the pandemic (e.g., hotels, restaurants, cleaning services, childcare and nail and hair salons) and many are now experiencing mass layoffs. Many immigrants, including some with permanent residency also known as green cards, do not qualify for safety-net programs like food stamps and key parts of the federal relief bills exclude mixed-status households and other immigrant families from some forms of relief, making private action more crucial.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

Advocacy for equity and immigrant families' access to resources. Advocates can influence policymakers and legislators by drawing attention

OPPORTUNITIES:

National Advocacy – The Children Thrive Action Network is a national network aimed at protecting and supporting children in immigrant families. The Network brings together advocates and service providers at the national, state, and local levels to ensure children of immigrants have access to good nutrition; regular health care; healthy living environment; high-quality education and childcare;

to rules that create inequity for children of immigrants and their parents. For example, through advocacy immigrant families can have greater access to prenatal care and other important health care services as lawmakers direct more funding to community health centers which treats patients regardless of immigration status or as states opt to use federal matching funds to make prenatal care coverage available through Medicaid or CHIP.

Investment in disaster relief assistance for children of immigrants. Since both safety-net programs that predated the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., cash assistance, food stamps) and many provisions within the relief legislation (e.g., tax rebatement payments, expanded unemployment insurance) exclude certain immigrant groups, some state and local governments have established their own pandemic relief funds. While each state or local disaster relief assistance program is uniquely designed, money from these funds generally go to families as direct payments to help with rent, food, and other basic needs. Supporting these funds can help stabilize immigrant families in crisis from the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Outreach, education, and case management. Immigrant-serving organizations are uniquely positioned to help immigrant families navigate the policy maze of available benefits, services, eligibility rules and application processes. Given the economic consequences of the pandemic, many of these organizations are in desperate need of financial support to continue operations. They need financial support to deliver outreach, education, and case management services to immigrant families, including tele human services.

economic security; and stable, nurturing caregivers. To learn more about the Children Thrive Action Network and how to advocate for immigrant families, contact [Wendy Cervantes](#), Director of Immigration and Immigrant Families, CLASP.

State Advocacy – Children's advocates at the state level can collaborate with immigration, civil rights, and other advocates to improve children's access to benefits and to improve their lives by ensuring that parents have income and family support. This

[report](#) provides a good example of how state rules on immigration-related issues, such as drivers' licenses and sanctuary policies, can impact children's health and wellbeing. To learn more about the policies that impact immigrant families in your state, visit the [State Immigration Policy Resource](#). You may also be able to identify potential advocacy partners in your state by contacting organizations that are affiliated with the [Partnership for America's Children](#) or the [Alliance for Early Success](#).

State and Local Disaster Relief Programs

- Recognizing that many immigrant families have been hit hardest by the pandemic and have no safety net or relief assistance to fall back on, some states and nonprofit organizations have partnered with the private sector, philanthropy and community members to establish assistance programs for those left out of the federal help. In partnership with [Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees](#) and other philanthropic organizations, California established a the [California Immigrant Resilience Fund](#), a disaster relief fund to support unauthorized immigrants in the state. Washington state formed a similar disaster cash assistance program. For more information about that, read the [news release](#) or contact Norah West at norah.west@dshs.wa.gov. The National Domestic Workers Alliance created a [special fund](#) designed to help home care workers, nannies and house cleaners facing financial hardships because of COVID-19. To support this or other local funds, visit this directory of [Coronavirus Care Funds](#).

Support to Immigrant-Serving Organizations - Like many small businesses, nonprofit organizations need support to remain solvent and continue serving immigrant families. Some foundations developed new funds or modified existing grant programs to support vulnerable families, including those with limited English proficiency. The Seattle Foundation partnered with business, government, and philanthropic groups to deploy rapid response grants to organizations serving at the frontlines of the COVID-19 response. To support these efforts, contact Kris Hermanns, Chief Impact Officer, Seattle Foundation at k.hermanns@seattlefoundation.org. Other ways to support immigrant serving organizations include reaching out to national networks with hundreds of local affiliates including [refugee resettlement agencies](#) and other members of the [Refugee Council USA](#) or [UNIDOS US](#), which has a network of over 300 affiliates.

Learn more about the impact of the pandemic on immigrant communities and the philanthropic response on Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees [COVID-19 Resources](#) page.

Key Resources for EC Funders

- ...State Information
- ...Advocacy Information
- ...Federal EC Program Guidance
- ...Response & Relief Funds

www.ecfunders.org/covid-19

