

Children's Defense Fund–Texas

A strong, effective, independent voice for all Texas children

With a statewide presence and offices in Houston and the Rio Grande Valley, CDF-Texas represents the interests of Texas children and works to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood.

CDF unites partners across the state and in local communities to champion policies and early intervention programs that lift children out of poverty, protect them from abuse and neglect, and ensure their access to health care and quality education. CDF-Texas' work has attracted prestigious recognition from numerous agencies, including the **World Health Organization**, **U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services**, American Association of School Administrators, Anti-Defamation League, American Leadership Forum, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Texas Association of Partners in Education, and Leadership Houston.

CDF-Texas Programs and Initiatives

Texas Finish Line Campaign / KidsWell Texas Campaign

Texas has the highest rate and highest number (1.2 million) of uninsured children of all 50 states in the nation. Without health insurance, children do not get needed routine and preventive medical care in a doctor's office and are forced to rely on emergency rooms where costs are exponentially higher. The impacts are not only felt by the family but are borne by the entire community through public health consequences, cost shifting and greater local tax burden. CDF-Texas leads the statewide policy effort to ensure that all Texas children have access to quality, affordable health care coverage. The Campaign coordinates advocacy activities with the support of over 100 of the state's most influential and leading health organizations. Since 2007, CDF-Texas has led policy advances that have secured **health coverage for more than 800,000 Texas children.** (www.kidswelltexas.org)

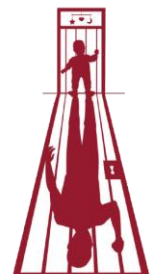


All Healthy Children Campaign (formerly The 100% Campaign)

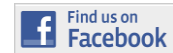
CDF-Texas' *All Healthy Children Campaign* is a proven school-based outreach model that efficiently identifies and connects eligible uninsured children to CHIP and Medicaid by adding an insurance question to school enrollment forms. The campaign was **selected by the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services as a best practice model** that could potentially be scaled nation-wide. The American Association of School Administrators and America's Promise Alliance have also hailed the campaign as a national best practice model.

Cradle to Prison Pipeline® Campaign

We face an urgent national crisis at the intersection of poverty and race that puts a Black boy born in 2001 at a **1 in 3 chance of going to prison** in his lifetime, and a Latino boy a 1 in 6 risk of the same fate. CDF's *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* Campaign is a **national call to action** to stop the funneling of tens of thousands of youth, down life paths that often lead to arrest, conviction, incarceration and sometimes death.



Focusing on early intervention and prevention CDF-Texas works with community, business and civic leaders to develop and coordinate effective models for systematically dismantling the *Pipeline* in Texas communities. The campaign was adopted by Class XXV of the American Leadership Forum in Houston.



Freedom Schools® Program

Rooted in the American Civil Rights Movement and the courageous efforts of college-age youths to make a difference, the *CDF Freedom Schools* program provides summer and after-school enrichment through a model curriculum that supports children and families around five essential components: high quality academic enrichment; parent and family involvement; social action and civic engagement; intergenerational servant leadership development; and nutrition, health and mental health.



Through community partnerships the *CDF Freedom Schools* program **boosts student motivation to read, generates positive attitudes toward learning**, and connects the needs of children and families to the resources in their communities. CDF-Texas has previously received funds from television's American Idol® Gives Back to expand *Freedom Schools* programs in Texas.

Beat the Odds® Scholarship Program

CDF initiated the *Beat the Odds* program in 1990 to affirm the academic success of young people who, in the face of overwhelming adversity, have worked hard to succeed and give back to their community. In recognition of their

achievements, students are awarded college scholarships and other gifts. Scholars are also invited to participate in leadership training at the *CDF Haley Farm*, which serves as CDF's vibrant training ground for leadership development, advocacy and service. Since 1999, CDF-Texas has provided more than seventy students the **opportunity to attend college**.



In addition to providing scholarships, CDF's *Beat the Odds* celebrations serve as the organization's major annual fundraiser in Texas to sustain the effective year-round advocacy and programming for all the children of Texas who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves.

Young Advocates Leadership Training® (YALT) Program

CDF is grooming the next generation of leaders committed to social justice and improving the lives of children in America. CDF's YALT program is a three-day, intensive training in community organizing that **educates young adults about the state of America's children**, and about CDF's campaigns and policy priorities for quality education and affordable health coverage for all children. Participants are mentored in the basics of community organizing and strategies that can later be implemented in their college campuses and home communities.

Strengthening Families to End Child Poverty

CDF collaborates with an array of federal, state and local government entities, faith- and community-based organizations and local businesses to educate parents about the importance of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax credit, and other benefits to reduce financial hardship on working families. CDF testifies and educates the public about the dangers of predatory lending practices and trains high school and college-age young adults to provide free tax preparation in their communities through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites.

National Observance of Children's Sabbaths® Celebrations

Every third weekend in October, CDF unites thousands of congregations of every faith to **lift up the needs of children in worship, prayer, song, and action** during an annual *National Observance of Children's Sabbaths* weekend. CDF-Texas works with community partners, friends and families to present an annual Houston children's choir and performance.