

# Children First

## 2015 LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### »» ***Protected the Children First Trust Fund***

We oversaw the passage of this vital trust fund (CFTF) of almost \$40 million dollars which is dedicated solely for the needs of children. It has become the backbone of support that allows many state agencies to provide programs and services to over 150,000 of Alabama's children.

### »» ***Secured An Additional Revenue Source for the CFTF***

We passed legislation that will give taxpayers the capability to donate a portion or all of their state tax refund to the Children First Trust Fund. With tobacco intake decreasing in the state, this new source of revenue will help to sustain the CFTF.

### »» ***Supported a Tobacco Tax Increase***

We helped to form and now lead the *Alabama Healthy Change Coalition*, a group of 20 advocacy organizations, which is working to increase the tax on tobacco products. The dollars generated from such a tax would go to the General Fund budget which funds numerous state agencies that affect the well-being of Alabama's children and families. By increasing the tax on cigarettes by \$1/pack, it is estimated that teen smoking will decrease by 15% and \$215 million dollars annually will be raised for the state's ailing budget.

### »» ***Increased Funds dedicated to Early Childhood Education (especially HIPPY)***

We successfully advocated for an increase of \$300,000 dollars for HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters). This evidenced-based program works with families in their home to support parents in their critical role as their child's first and most important teacher. We were also part of the coalition that worked to provide an additional \$10 million dollars annually in funding for the state's nationally recognized Pre-K program. These dollars will enable 1,800 more children to receive this important early education experience.

### »» ***Worked to Reduce Childhood Obesity by Providing Healthy Food Access***

We assisted in the passage of legislation designed to encourage retailers to provide healthy food in underserved communities. Making nutritious, affordable food available in Alabama communities with limited access to healthy foods can improve health outcomes as well as create opportunity for local business development.

### »» ***Monitored 82 Bills Concerning Children and Families***

Each year, legislators bring numerous bills that could impact our smallest citizens. We examined each one and took appropriate steps when necessary to positively impact children.

*"Children First faced many challenges during the 2015 session. However, because of our efforts, and with your help, we were able to positively impact the future of Alabama's smallest citizens."*

*Christy Cain  
Executive Director*