

## **2018 Children First Alliance of Alabama Accomplishments**

### ***Protection of 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.

### ***Advocated for Sufficient Funding for Agencies that Serve Children***

The twelve state agencies that benefit from the Children First Trust Fund are also funded by either the General Fund or the Education Trust Fund. As budgets in Alabama become tighter, it is important to continue to educate lawmakers and the public on what proposed cuts could do to the well-being of Alabama's children. Children First played a vital role in ensuring that the agencies which serve children received level funding from the previous year.

### ***Continued the Nationally Recognized #IamMedicaid Campaign***

As the healthcare debate continues nationally and in our state, we saw a need to educate the public about the Medicaid program in Alabama. There are many misconceptions about what Medicaid is, who it serves and why it is needed. By developing and promoting the #IamMedicaid campaign, we helped change the conversation in the state about how to properly fund the program – this is important for all Alabamians but especially its children. Over 56% of the child population in Alabama receive Medicaid benefits.

### ***Successfully Advocated for the Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP)***

CHIP, called the All Kids Program, in Alabama currently serves over 80,000 children. All Kids provides insurance for children whose parents do not meet the poverty threshold required to qualify for Medicaid. These identified families pay a small insurance premium in order to receive services. For the past several years, the federal government had fully funded this program. We along with other non-profits and state agencies successfully advocated for the CHIP program to be fully federally funded through FY2019. Starting FY2020, Alabama will have to contribute 11.5% of the dollars needed to sustain the program – an estimated \$25-30 million dollars. This new outlay of dollars will greatly affect FY2020 budgets and will be one of our agenda items for the upcoming legislative session.

### ***Worked with State Leaders Regarding Juvenile Justice Issues***

We worked with policymakers to find ways to give judges more discretion with regards to the trying of children as adults and also on the expungement of their records. A joint coalition, of which we are a part, was formed to study these issues more closely. Also, we helped secure the services of the Pew Charitable Trusts which is guiding Alabama as we continue to examine our current system and find ways to improve it.

We also advocated and successfully secured \$2.8 million dollars through the General Fund and Education Trust Fund so that we could retain our current number of Juvenile Probation Officers.

