



Leading for Kids is a new non-profit committed to improving the health and well-being of children by creating a movement to change how we talk about kids, how to invest productively in their futures, and how decision makers can protect their rights and reflect their voices.

Founded in 2018 by Dr. David Alexander, the former president and CEO of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health, Leading for Kids will work to respond to a troubling but undeniable truth: by many measures, we are failing America's kids. The U.S. has poorer child health outcomes than other wealthy nations despite greater per capita spending on health care, and we are ranked 37 out of 41 in UNICEF's 2017 [report card](#) that measures the progress of rich countries in meeting child-related sustainable development goals.

We can do better.

We have the opportunity to create a new path for America's kids, one where they will be given opportunities to succeed, their voices will be heard, and our policy decisions will take into account how they affect kids. Through the work of Leading for kids, we will raise awareness of the current state of America's kids, and help frame discussions about charting a better course.

Much great work is being done by children's advocates and organizations across the country, and without their passion and dedication, our country's kids would be even farther behind. But Leading for Kids believes that a set of core principles can unite the field and fuel both individual and collective success in changing how we approach public policy for children.

- **All Children Matter:** Rather than target policies by age, gender, ethnicity, or socio-economic status, Leading for Kids wants to change the focus to stressing that society has a responsibility to and for all children.
- **All Children Have the Right to Succeed and Prosper:** The concept of children's rights has proved politically volatile in the U.S. but Leading for Kids is determined to lead a discussion on how best to enshrine the idea that children have a basic right to good health, care and support, and educational opportunity.
- **All Children's Voices Should be Heard:** Leading for Kids believes that children must no longer be passive targets of policy – they should be participants in any and all discussions about their well-being. In all its activities and as one of its overriding principles, LFK will stress substantive youth involvement in everything it does.

To accomplish its mission of building a culture that more deeply values children, Leading for Kids will:

- **Spearhead narrative research and communications strategies** to change social norms and cultural understandings of children.

- **Advocate for the creation of new or strengthened government structures that are responsible for the wellbeing of children** and are widely used across Europe.
- **Encourage overall investment in children through increased charitable commitments from philanthropists and the public.**
- **Empower youth voices and advocate for their inclusion in decision making.**
- **Unite the existing field of experts, practitioners, and advocates committed to making kids a national priority and emphasize the idea that children have the basic right to the best chance to thrive and succeed.**

As Leading for Kids formally launches in early 2019, its initial focus will be an ambitious research project designed to assess the current narrative around children's issues and produce actionable conclusions that can be used to give the field a more effective frame with which to make the case that all kids have the right to succeed and prosper.

With that ground-breaking research as a baseline, LFK will turn to specific lines of advocacy, while staying true to a handful of larger core beliefs. Leading for Kids will be:

- **A Convener:** bringing together long-standing experts, advocates, policymakers, and practitioners with new actors and ideas to share best practices.
- **A Collaborator:** building off the decades of work others have done in this field by prioritizing partnerships and collaboration over starting from scratch.
- **A Change Seeker:** that always sees the big picture and prioritizes large, and sometimes difficult, systemic changes over small victories.
- **A Voice for Children:** including their input and empowering their agendas in all aspects of the organization's work.
- **A Public Champion:** that uses its networks and influence to disseminate new narratives and lead a social movement centered around valuing kids and finding ways to ensure that they have a voice in policies that will help determine their futures.

For further information, please go to www.leadingforkids.org or email David.Alexander@leadingforkids.org