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SAN FRANCISCO LAUNCHES THE COUNTRY'S MOST EXPANSIVE LOCAL EARLY CARE INITIATIVE

Finally – With the court cases resolved, a new city department created, staff hired, and a robust planning process involving 1565 residents completed – San Francisco's new **Department of Early Childhood** has just released the plan and budget for its “**Universal Childcare for San Francisco Families Initiative.**” The measure was passed in

2018, creating a \$150K annual fund from a gross receipts tax on commercial rental receipts over \$1M. [Link to Legislative summary and full legislation passed by voters](#)



This newest and largest local voter-approved funding stream in San Francisco is added to \$23M from the early care portion of the city's Children and Youth Fund (passed in 1991) and the Preschool for All fund (passed in 2004). **This means that San Francisco's 44 thousand children ages 0 – 5 benefit from over \$218 M annually – the largest local investment in early care (per population) in the country.**

The funds will be used for the following priorities:

- All San Francisco families (based on families of 4) making up to \$152k a year will be eligible for full childcare subsidies. The waiting list, which for decades has numbered in the thousands, will be eliminated - permanently.
- All early care providers (center and family based) will earn a minimum of \$28 per hour through increased salaries, stipends, and other teacher incentives.
- 26 Family Resource Centers will receive funds to provide families with basic needs and parent support.
- Over \$70 M will be allocated in just the first year to facility expansion and improvements, including and especially much-needed infant/toddler spaces.
- In collaboration with the school district, a Kindergarten Readiness Index will be fully implemented, that, among other things, will evaluate the goal of ensuring race is not a predictor of child outcomes.
- There will be universal screening for child health and wellness.

“Could the new San Francisco tax be the solution to the child care crisis” was the lede of one of the best articles nationally on childcare in recent years, appearing last month in the San Diego Union Tribune. It is a comprehensive review of the crisis and San Francisco’s groundbreaking policies. [Link to article](#).



While preparing for the implementation of its newest and most expansive funding stream, San Francisco turned its office of early care into a full-fledged city department. All of the city's early care work will now be coordinated under one umbrella. The work will be guided by a recently released Strategic Plan for the city’s young children. The plan is premised on 5 guiding values: racial equity, universal access, collaboration with community, continuous learning and improvement and transparency. [Link to Strategic Plan](#)



The head of the newly created Department of Early Childhood, **Ingrid Mezquita**, says “The first five years of life set children up for long-term success, and the Department of Early Childhood is here to ensure that all of you – our children, their families, and their providers – have everything they need during these special early years. Together we are building an ever-evolving network of care combining early learning, family support, and child health services to create a family-friendly City where all children flourish.”



Myrna Melgar, a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and a leading proponent of the new department declares, “This department is a first of its kind in the State, and I am proud that we are again leading the way, creating the necessary systems and that puts San Francisco on its way to being one of the first major cities to offer universal early care and education.”



CALIFORNIA'S ANTI-TAXERS LAUNCH THEIR NEXT CRUSADE AGAINST DEMOCRACY

It's now official – the latest assault on the rights of voters to make decisions on critical local services. On Feb. 1 the California Secretary of State announced that the measure its advocates label the “taxpayer protection and government accountability act” has qualified for the ballot. The official title of the measure that will actually be on the ballot is a lot more honest – it reads “**LIMITS ABILITY OF VOTERS AND STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO RAISE**



REVENUES FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.” [Link here.](#)

Some of the harmful elements of the measure:

- Limits voters’ ability to pass voter-proposed local special taxes by raising vote requirement to two-thirds. Courts have determined that only a majority vote is needed under current law, and child advocates have taken full advantage of that ruling.
- Prevents advisory measures about how funding should be allocated to be on the same ballot as tax measures creating the funding – a common strategy to give the public the opportunity to weigh in about how their money

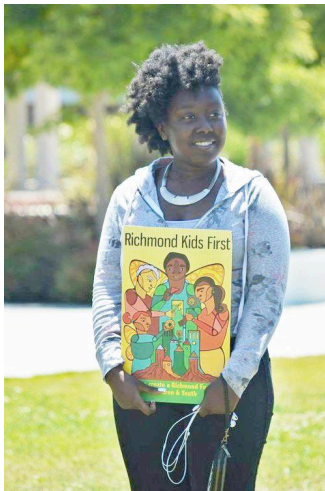
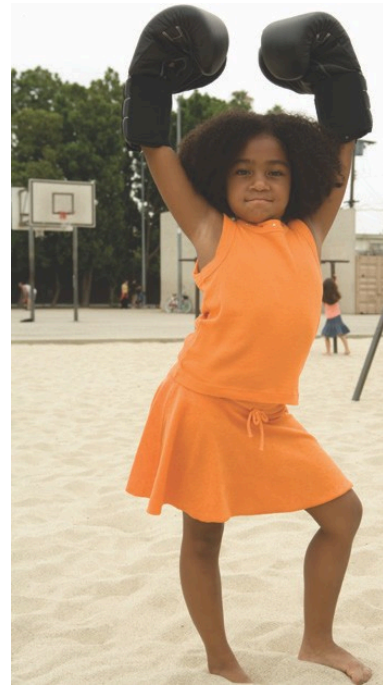
is spent, such as advising funds be spent on kids.

- It goes to extraordinary lengths to define every possible public revenue as a tax requiring a vote – opponents saying that this creates loopholes making it much more difficult for state and local regulators to impose penalties on corporations that violate laws intended to protect our health and neighborhoods.

This constitutional amendment substantially lowers both state and local revenue and curtails the ability of California state and local government to provide services to the public – services like childcare and healthcare – forcing cuts. The proponents claim that this helps working families, when advocates and public finance experts say it does the opposite. It is funded so far in great part by large real estate developers.

The measure is already facing tremendous opposition – from local governments at every level throughout every part of the state, as well as labor, firefighters, and numerous civic and advocacy organizations.

Should this proposed constitutional amendment slow down our efforts to place revenue measures on local ballots for kids? We asked our most trusted and widely respected expert advisers. Here’s what they said, “Absolutely not. If we do, the terrorists win. We shouldn’t trim our sails at all for now. Obviously we should watch the measure, but for now we should not let it spook us. 2024 is too good an opportunity.” And we should note: This amendment will not apply to voters’ ability to mandate set-asides of existing revenue, a favorite strategy for child advocates.



MOVEMENT TO CREATE KIDS BALLOT MEASURES IN CALIFORNIA IS GOING STRONG

Nineteen cities and counties in California attended the launch of Funding the Next Generation's Ballot 2024 learning community. They came from all over the state. The representatives of the groups attending included youth, elected officials, city and county department leaders, as well as advocates and community organizations. If you are considering a ballot measure for 2024, check out the [powerpoint](#) from the meeting, as well as [the video](#).

Funding the Next Generation has now officially merged its work with **Children's Funding Project**, our new fiscal sponsor and partner. We are delighted to coordinate our work and build a stronger movement to fund opportunities for children and youth, in California and nationally.



As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions, ideas or requests for support - no matter how big or small. With a team of some of the best experts in the country, we provide free technical assistance on everything

related to local revenue measures for kids and budget advocacy with your city or county.

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[Check out our website full of information.](#)