

For Mississippi to reach its potential, we must make sure our state's children reach theirs.

When we Mississippians come together to ensure that the foundation of our children's well-being is as sturdy as possible, we unlock new possibilities for every community, town, city, and county in our state.



WHO WE ARE

The Children's Foundation of Mississippi (CFM) was founded in 2019 to help improve and sustain the well-being of children in our state by **fostering collaboration, delivering data, and shaping the systems, programs, and policies that impact communities, our children and youth, and their families.** We look at the **whole picture** of what children and youth need – physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally – and work to connect the efforts of programs that often focus on only one aspect of a young person's needs.

THE CHALLENGE

As children develop, their needs change, and they practice new skills. Babies and toddlers are busy building brains, especially in their first 1,000 days. Adolescents are **shaping identities, discovering their purpose, and making decisions that can last a lifetime.** At every stage, children, young people, and their families need **environments that lift them higher, fuel their dreams, and open doors to opportunities.** We Mississippians must ensure that our **systems, programs, and policies support positive development from the start** and throughout childhood and adolescence.

WHAT WE DO

We turn knowledge into action. Through research, collaboration, grant-making, and advocacy, we **bring people together around what works to strengthen systems and shape smarter policies.**

- You can't improve what you don't count! That's why **research is the heart of the Children's Foundation of Mississippi.** We collect, analyze, and disseminate high-quality data about the status of Mississippi's children to highlight opportunities for meaningful change. We believe in the **power of data to drive smart decisions at every level.**

The CFM is a **trusted resource for individuals and organizations for promoting positive parenting and caregiving** by building skills and improving environments.

- **Meaningful change requires collaboration,** because no single voice holds all the answers. That's why we **bring together state agencies, grassroots organizations, community leaders, and people with direct experience** of our systems. We believe in **breaking down silos to maximize impact.**
- Focusing on **children's issues,** rather than on external pressures like funding trends, is key to building the legitimacy needed to act as an effective advocate for children. Since our founding, we have become a **trusted voice** in both the **public and private sectors** and a **trusted resource** for community members' **child-focused organizations.**

OUR IMPACT

Our track record demonstrates what's possible when research, collaborative problem solving, and strong partnerships light the way forward. For example:

Providing timely data used by a variety of Mississippi stakeholders

- Over the last three years, respondents surveyed noted that the use of Mississippi KIDS COUNT and CFM data resulted in **\$52 million invested across a wide array of Mississippi communities, in both public and private sectors**
- The CFM is recognized as the **premier data source** for children and youth in Mississippi and is home to **Mississippi KIDS COUNT**
- Recent digital infant mental health resources received over **11,000 views** within 6 weeks of releasing to the public

Funding Early Childhood Councils (ECCs)

- Recognizing that no one knows what a community needs better than its members, the Children's Foundation of Mississippi launched **planning grants to establish 24 ECCs** at the local level to "turn the curve" for children and youth in Mississippi.

Conducting research to support youth transitioning from foster care to independent living and to determine their reasons for participation or non-participation in post-secondary education.

- Through its research, the CFM has elevated more than **1,000 "voices"** of a wide array of youth and professionals engaged in Mississippi's **child welfare** system, resulting in a research and development strategic plan.
 - ***Establishing Child Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC)***
 - The result of multiple data collection efforts (across Mississippi and in other states), CWAC brings together professionals from diverse fields, including **pediatrics, law, education, and public health, to inform policy and procedural changes relating to child welfare** in Mississippi communities.
 - ***Partnering with the US Chamber of Commerce and the Mississippi Economic Council***
 - The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Mississippi Economic Council, and the Children's Foundation of Mississippi partnered to identify the economic and social impact of childcare breakdowns in Mississippi. The finding that childcare breakdowns cost Mississippi **\$673 million** annually (more than the state's rainy-day fund!) has motivated **advocates and businesses to work together to strengthen early education for Mississippi's children, families, businesses, and economy.**
 - In partnership with MEC, CFM surveyed Mississippi's business leaders regarding their perspective on the **critical linkage between quality childcare and its impact on businesses.**

**WHAT
YOUR
SUPPORT
MAKES
POSSIBLE**



Thriving children don't happen by chance.
They grow in thriving communities.

Your support helps us improve the well-being of Mississippi's young people by equipping decision-makers at all levels – grassroots organizations, local officials, state agency heads, and legislators – with trusted, actionable data. Together, **we can drive policies that build stronger communities and sustain the nurturing, stable environments where our children and families can flourish.**