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## **New Report: U.S. Can Lift 5.5 Million Children Out of Poverty Right Now**

*Children's Defense Fund study shows America could lift 5.5 million children out of poverty immediately by investing in nine modest policy improvements*

**COLUMBUS, OHIO**—America can immediately lift millions of children out of poverty and reduce child poverty by 57 percent by making modest investments in policies that work, according to a new report released today by the Children's Defense Fund. [Ending Child Poverty Now](#), the second edition of a groundbreaking report first released in 2015, details the devastating impacts of poverty on children and our nation. It provides a roadmap of nine policy improvements that, taken together, would benefit 95 percent of all poor children – including the 510,000 living in Ohio – lifting 5.5 million of them out of poverty entirely and immediately. The report also shows how our nation can easily pay for the \$52.3 billion it would take to implement these changes with modest tradeoffs, including adjustments to the \$1.9 trillion tax reform package passed in 2017.

### ***Facts on the Child Poverty Crisis:***

	<b>Ohio</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Children in poverty</b>	20%	18%
<b>Children ages 0 to 5 in poverty</b>	23%	20%
<b>Black or African American children ages 0 to 5 in poverty</b>	48%	37%
<b>Hispanic or Latino children ages 0 to 5 in poverty</b>	39%	28%
<b>Non-Hispanic White children ages 0 to 5 in poverty</b>	16%	12%
<b>Children receiving food assistance</b>	1 in 3	1 in 4
<b>Children living in households that were food insecure at some point during the year</b>	18%	17%

<b>Children living in high poverty areas</b>	13%	12%
<b>Children whose parents lack secure employment</b>	28%	27%
<b>Black or African American children whose parents lack secure employment</b>	47%	42%
<b>Hispanic or Latino children whose parents lack secure employment</b>	40%	32%
<b>Non-Hispanic White children whose parents lack secure employment</b>	23%	21%

“It is a moral disgrace and profound economic threat that nearly 1 in 5 children are poor in the wealthiest nation on earth,” said Marian Wright Edelman, Founder and President Emerita of the Children’s Defense Fund. “Permitting more than 12.8 million of our children to live in poverty when we have the means to prevent it is unjust and unacceptable.”

In the report, the Children’s Defense Fund identifies improvements to nine existing policies and programs that could be made immediately to meet more children’s basic needs, increase employment and make work pay more for adults with children. The policy recommendations in the report are designed not only to lift children out of poverty but also to help keep them of poverty. The nine policy recommendations are included below.

The Children’s Defense Fund contracted with the Urban Institute to analyze the impacts and costs of these policy improvements and found that together, they would help children of different races and ages and in different types of families and parts of the country. The policy package would cut poverty by:

- 65.4 percent for Black children, reducing the Black-White child poverty gap by 30 percent
- 59 percent for Hispanic children
- 62 percent for children ages 3-5
- 59.5 percent for single-parent families with children
- 57 percent for children in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas

The report finds that the combined policy improvements would cost about \$52.3 billion per year, slightly more than 1 percent of the federal budget. The report offers examples of how unwinding specific provisions of the 2017 tax bill or reducing other federal spending could cover these costs, including:

- Repealing the 2017 tax bill, which would save \$280 billion in 2019 alone; or
- Taxing the accumulated wealth of the richest 0.1 percent of Americans by one percent more per year, which would increase federal revenues by about \$190 billion a year; or
- Repatriating offshore profits of the nation’s wealthiest corporations, which would increase federal revenue by almost \$200 billion; or

In Ohio, efforts are underway to meet the needs of families and children living in poverty, but specific policy changes are needed in order to generate the revenue to support these efforts, including capping or eliminating unproductive state tax breaks that prevent needed investments in education, human services and local governments.

“Governor DeWine’s inaugural budget is a first major step in the right direction for our children and we recognize his commitment,” said Tracy Nájera, executive director of Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio. “We are encouraged by Gov. DeWine’s proposed budget and focus on children living in poverty and at-risk, including increases in state aid for

county children's services agencies, evidence-based home visitation programs, child nutrition programs, maintenance of children's health insurance, funding for economic disadvantaged students, and the list goes on. However, notably absent in the introduced budget are investments in the 2020 Census to prevent the undercount of children, funding for an expanded and refundable earned income tax credit for poor working families, and expanded eligibility for public child care. Children's Defense Fund-Ohio encourages leaders in the Ohio House and Senate to protect investments in the DeWine budget and go further by increasing investments in child anti-poverty measures."

The Children's Defense Fund is urging Congress to act now to implement the federal policy improvements outlined in the report to lift millions of children out of poverty now and make a substantial down payment on ending child poverty for all children.

To learn more about the Children's Defense Fund's work to end child poverty and how you can get involved, [click here](#).

### **Federal Policy Improvements to Reduce Child Poverty at Least 57 Percent Nationally**

#### **Increasing Employment and Making Work Pay More for Adults with Children**

- Create transitional jobs for unemployed and underemployed individuals ages 16-64 in families with children.
- Increase the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15.00 by 2024.
- Increase the Earned Income Tax Credit for lower-income families with children.
- Make the Child Tax Credit fully refundable with additional benefits for families with young children.
- Make child care subsidies available to all eligible families below 150 percent of poverty with no co-pays.
- Make the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit refundable with a higher reimbursement rate

#### **Meeting Children's Basic Needs**

- Determine Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits based on USDA's Low-Cost Food Plan for families with children and increase benefits by 31 percent.
- Make housing vouchers available to all households with children below 150 percent of poverty for whom fair market rent exceeds 50 percent of their income.
- Require child support to be fully passed through to families receiving Temporary Assistance or Needy Families (TANF), fully disregarded for TANF benefits and partially disregarded for SNAP benefits.

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*The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit child advocacy organization that has worked relentlessly for more than 40 years to ensure a level playing field for all children. We provide a strong, effective and independent voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor children, children of color and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventive investments before they get sick, drop out of school, get into trouble or suffer family breakdown.*