



LEGISLATIVE

2025






Review

Thank you to our community of youth and family advocates who engaged in legislative action to strengthen the system of supports in Colorado.

Colorado legislators faced a challenging legislative session this year, with a more-than-\$1 billion budget shortfall looming large as legislators were forced to make cuts to balance the state budget. In the face of these challenges, legislators were still able to develop and approve plans which will benefit children and families in Colorado.

Some key wins for youth and families from this legislative session:

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-  **HB25-1003: Children Complex Health Needs Waiver**
This bill merges the Disabled Children Care Program and the Pediatric Hospice Care Program into a single program called the Children with Complex Health Needs Waiver Program.
-  **HB25-1132: Military Family Behavioral Grant Program**
This bill reenacts the Veterans Mental Health Services Program in the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. The bill also authorizes grants to nonprofit organizations to establish and expand behavioral health programs for service members, veterans, and their families.
-  **HB-1146: Juvenile Detention Bed Cap**
This bill increases the number of emergency detention beds from 22 to 39. It also establishes a pilot program requiring staff supervising youth to wear body cameras during interactions. Finally, it establishes the Deflection and Community Investment grant program to implement a mixed-delivery system of trauma-informed care.
-  **HB25-1274: Healthy School Meals for All Program**
This bill will refer two ballot measures to Colorado voters in November 2025. The first will ask voters if they want the state to continue the Healthy School Meals for All Program or scale it back. The second will ask voters to expand the program by limiting tax deductions for those who earn over \$300,00 a year.
-  **HB25-1294: Court Costs Assessed to Juveniles**
This bill makes permanent the prohibition on charging certain court costs to youthful offenders (e.g. court-ordered costs, restorative justice surcharges, public defender processing fees, and other fines and fees)

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HB25-1335: Implementing the Family Affordability Tax Credit

This bill implements the Family Affordability Tax Credit which is a refundable credit providing up to \$3,200 per child and \$2,400 per child aged 6-16 for eligible families.



SB25-017: Measures to Support Early Childhood Health

This bill codifies the HealthySteps program as the Pediatric Primary Care Practice program in the Colorado Department of Early Childhood.



SB25-197: Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program

The Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program is a 31-year-old program which helps community-based programs access critical funding to prevent youth crime, violence, and child abuse and neglect. This bill updated this program to help more programs provide these services.



Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle came together to approve these critical pieces of legislation which will make a profound impact on the lives of children and families throughout Colorado. These bills will help children access healthcare and quality education, make vital reforms to the youthful offender system to reduce recidivism, and expand behavioral health services for active-duty service members, veterans, and their families.



Joint Initiatives supports public policies and legislative issues consistent with JI's Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan. JI also actively tracks newly proposed legislation at the federal, state, and local levels that has the potential to impact our work and the work of our community partners and tracks legislation to inform JI's Board about these potential impacts.

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