

# 2017 Federal Legislative Agenda

## Promote social emotional learning

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. SEL, sometimes akin to employability skills, promotes success and 21st century competitiveness in the workplace while also advancing classroom learning, teamwork, and academic achievement. Social-emotional skills help prevent youth violence, bullying, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual harassment, and other negative outcomes in young adults lives. **Committee for Children advocates for the inclusion, support and funding of employability skills and SEL curricula, training and professional development in all appropriate child care, education, and workforce related legislation such as:**

- Full funding of Titles I, II, and IV Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- The reauthorization of Head Start
- The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, with a specific focus on Title II
- The reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, with a focus on employability skills as included in Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (H.R. 5587)

## Support trauma informed practices

Every classroom in every school in the United States has students who have experienced trauma. Trauma can result from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), including household dysfunction, abuse, or neglect. Witnessing or being a victim of violence, poverty, housing instability, or natural disasters can be equally traumatizing, as can immigration and refugee experiences. In school, students who have been traumatized may act out, withdraw, or have difficulty paying attention, all of which impede their ability to pay attention and benefit from instruction. Schools can address these children's needs and improve their ability to learn by implementing trauma-informed practices. **Committee for Children supports legislation and budget that:**

- Recognizes the adverse effects of trauma on a child's ability to learn and takes steps to incentivize leadership, staff, and families to identify and prioritize the policies and practices that best fit with the school culture and context.

## Protect children from abuse

Committee for Children supports research-based policies and practices that promote children's safety by training teachers, parents, and children to recognize the signs of child sexual abuse (CSA) and report it and report incidences that lead to unsafe environments. Committee for Children advocates for the following:

- The development and funding of a National Technical Assistance Center that provides states with information on available evidence-based programs and training for mandatory reporters; supports evaluation of promising practices; runs a national hotline for individuals affected by child sexual abuse; and disseminates uniform, updated definitions and language regarding of CSA and CSA reporting.
- Full funding of Title II of Every Student Succeeds Act which authorizes funds for pre-service training and ongoing professional development for educators regarding age appropriate education to spot and stop CSA.
- Appropriate funding for the National Injury Prevention Center at the Centers for Disease Control and other relevant agencies to support both proven prevention strategies and research to evaluate promising child sexual assault prevention practices.

**Committee for Children** is a global nonprofit dedicated to fostering the safety and well-being of children through social-emotional learning and development. Launched in 1976 as a result of a landmark research study about what led youth into prostitution, Committee for Children is now the world's largest provider of research-based education programs that have helped over 9 million children in 26,000 schools develop vital social-emotional skills to avoid violence, bullying, and sexual abuse.