

# 2017 State Legislative Agenda

## Promote Social-Emotional Learning in Schools

Social-emotional learning (SEL) helps youth engage in classroom learning, improve their academic achievement, establish and maintain positive relationships, and develop effective life skills, such as teamwork, sound decision-making, and clear communication. This can result in better jobs, higher wages, and greater well-being. **Committee for Children advocates for inclusion of SEL curricula and professional development in all education and childcare legislation:**

- [Support HB 1518](#), which calls for further refinement of the statewide SEL benchmarks and standards and for the provision of SEL technical assistance from OSPI for schools, as well as funding to implement quality before- and after-school programs and summer programs with an SEL component
- [Support SB 5155](#), which eliminates use of suspension and expulsion in Grades K–2 and encourages schools and districts to adopt evidence-based practices to support students in meeting behavioral expectations

## Support Trauma-Informed Practices

In nearly every classroom in every preschool and K–12 school in the United States there are students who have experienced trauma resulting from household dysfunction, abuse, neglect, poverty, housing instability, witnessing violence, or immigration and refugee experiences. Traumatized children may act out, withdraw, or have difficulty paying attention, all of which impedes their ability to learn. **Committee for Children supports legislation and budget allocation to address children’s needs in childcare and school settings by implementing trauma-informed practices:**

- [Support HB 1638](#), which encourages trauma-informed practices in childcare

## Protect Children from Abuse

Children can thrive when raised in safe home, school, and out-of-school environments. **Committee for Children supports efforts that use research- and evidence-based practices to protect children from violence, abuse, bullying, and racial disparity and that train teachers, parents, and other adults to recognize, respond appropriately, and report child sexual abuse, bullying, and potentially lethal situations:**

- Support the [creation of a Department of Children, Youth, and Families](#) focused on improving outcomes for children using intergenerational strategies and addressing issues of racial and ethnic equity
- Support full implementation and use of the [2016 health and physical education standards](#) and other evidence-based, age-appropriate work that prevents violence, promotes safety, and creates a positive school climate where youth feel safe from bullying and abuse and supported in developing and maintaining positive relationships
- [Support HB 1563](#), which would require school districts to post the National Child Abuse Hotline
- Ensure that mandatory reporters know the signs of child sexual abuse, respond appropriately, and report suspected cases to the proper authorities
- [Support HB 1122](#), which ensures guns are kept away from schools and out of the hands of children and young adults through responsible storage of firearms

**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 help over 10 million children in 26,000 schools every year develop vital social-emotional skills to avoid violence, bullying, and sexual abuse.