

# Helping Candidates Do Their Homework

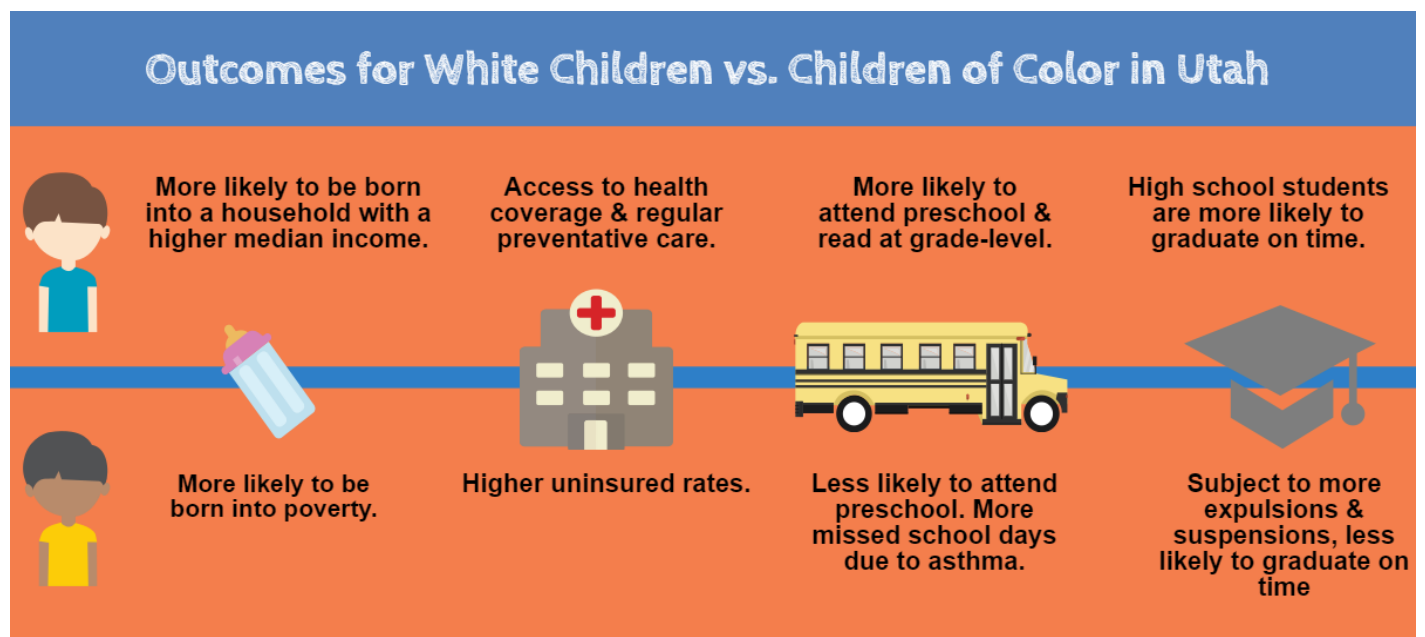
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Written by: Questions?

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## 2016 Candidate Briefing Guide



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2016 is an important election year in Utah. The public offices on the ballot in November include the following:

- U.S. Senate
- U.S. House of Representatives
- Governor and Lt. Governor
- Half of the State Senate
- The entire Utah House of Representatives

Our elected officials play a central role in determining whether all children have the opportunity for health, safety, education, and economic security. As the Utah child population grows and becomes more diverse, it is important for candidates to discuss the needs of Utah children and the policies they would pursue to ensure that all Utah's children can thrive.

Voices for Utah Children is providing candidates for elected office in Utah with the tools and resources they need to understand the needs of their youngest constituents, so they can be prepared to enact effective policies to protect their youngest constituents.

Utah voters can also use these resources to educate ourselves about children's issues as we seek to elect candidates that will prioritize the needs of children and invest in our state's future.

## More Information:

[Register and Attend Equity for Children in Utah: What we learned from the 2016 Regional Session](#)

[Kids Count](#)

[Health](#)

[Juvenile Justice](#)

[Early Childhood](#)

[Economic Security/Tax & Budget](#)

[Kids Count](#)

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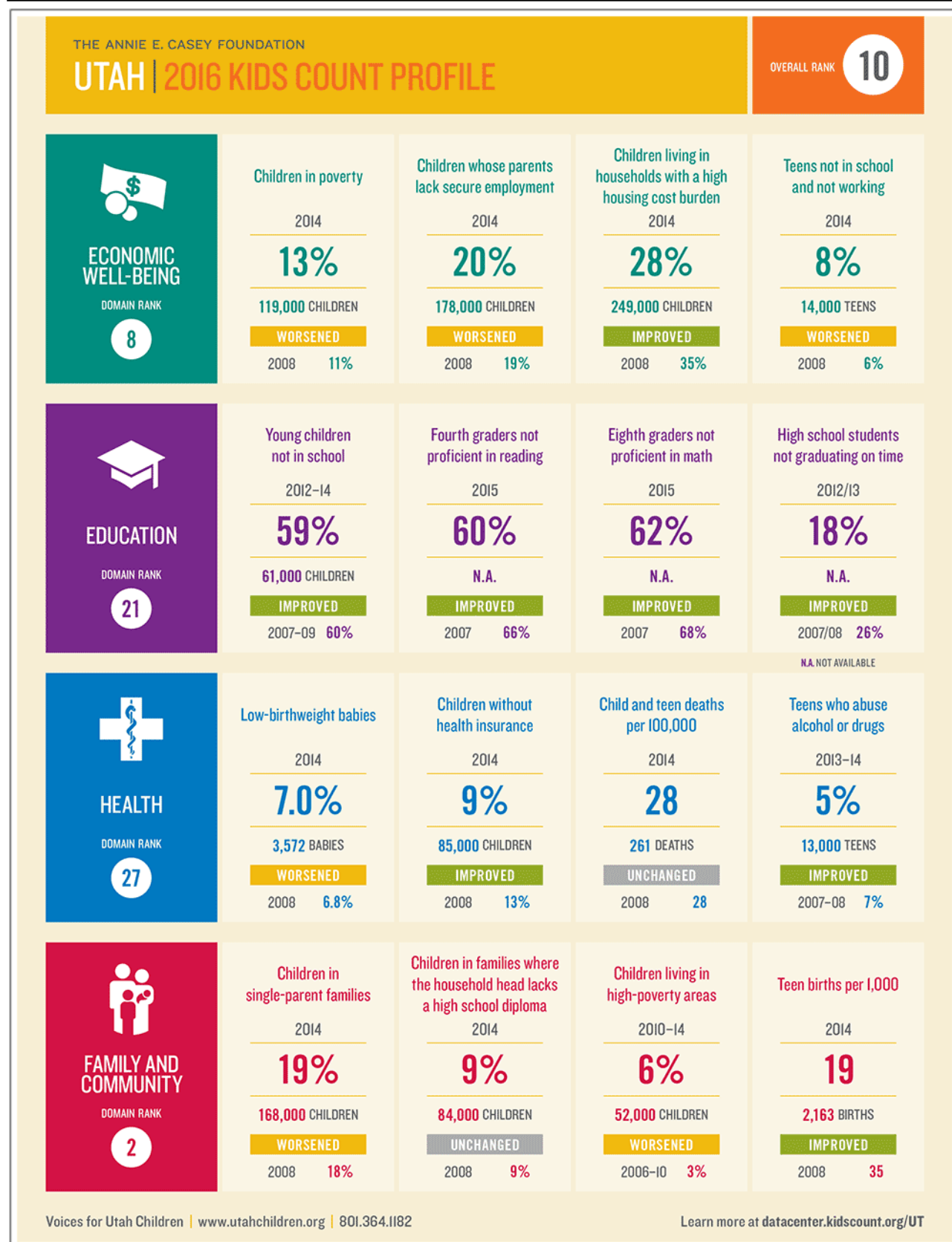
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~~Supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, our KIDS COUNT® work aims to~~  
~~polices that benefit children and families across the state. We the Kids of course,~~

This year, Utah barely held on to its position among the top ten in the annual Annie E. Casey Foundation KIDS COUNT® Data Book report. Ranking 9th in 2015, Utah now ranks 10th among the fifty states (despite a dramatic change in the health domain, where Utah dropped from 7th in 2015 to 27th in 2016). Utah's 2nd place ranking for the Family & Community domain and 8th place ranking for Economic Well-Being remained unchanged. In the Education domain, Utah ranked 21st — up from 29th in 2015.

Deputy Director  
Voices for Utah Children

## More Information:

[2016 Kids Count Data Book](#)

[Measures of Well-Being in Utah, 2015](#)



[2016 Utah and United States Kids Count Profiles](#)

[The Federal Safety Net Cuts Child Poverty in Utah in Half](#)

Health

[Terry Haven](#)

Each child brings the promise of a healthier, stronger future for Utah. To make good on that promise, Utah needs to make sure children can grow up healthy, from the prenatal period all the way through their teenage years.

Utah children and families should have access to:

- Appropriate prenatal care;
- Affordable, accessible, culturally competent care that encompasses both prevention and treatment; and

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- Supportive services and environments designed to help facilitate the best possible health outcomes.

All families in Utah must be able to achieve optimal health in order for our state to continue to grow and prosper.

[Jessie Mandle, MPH](#)

Health Policy Analyst  
Voices for Utah Children

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## **More Information:**

[12-Month Continuous Eligibility for Children on Medicaid](#)

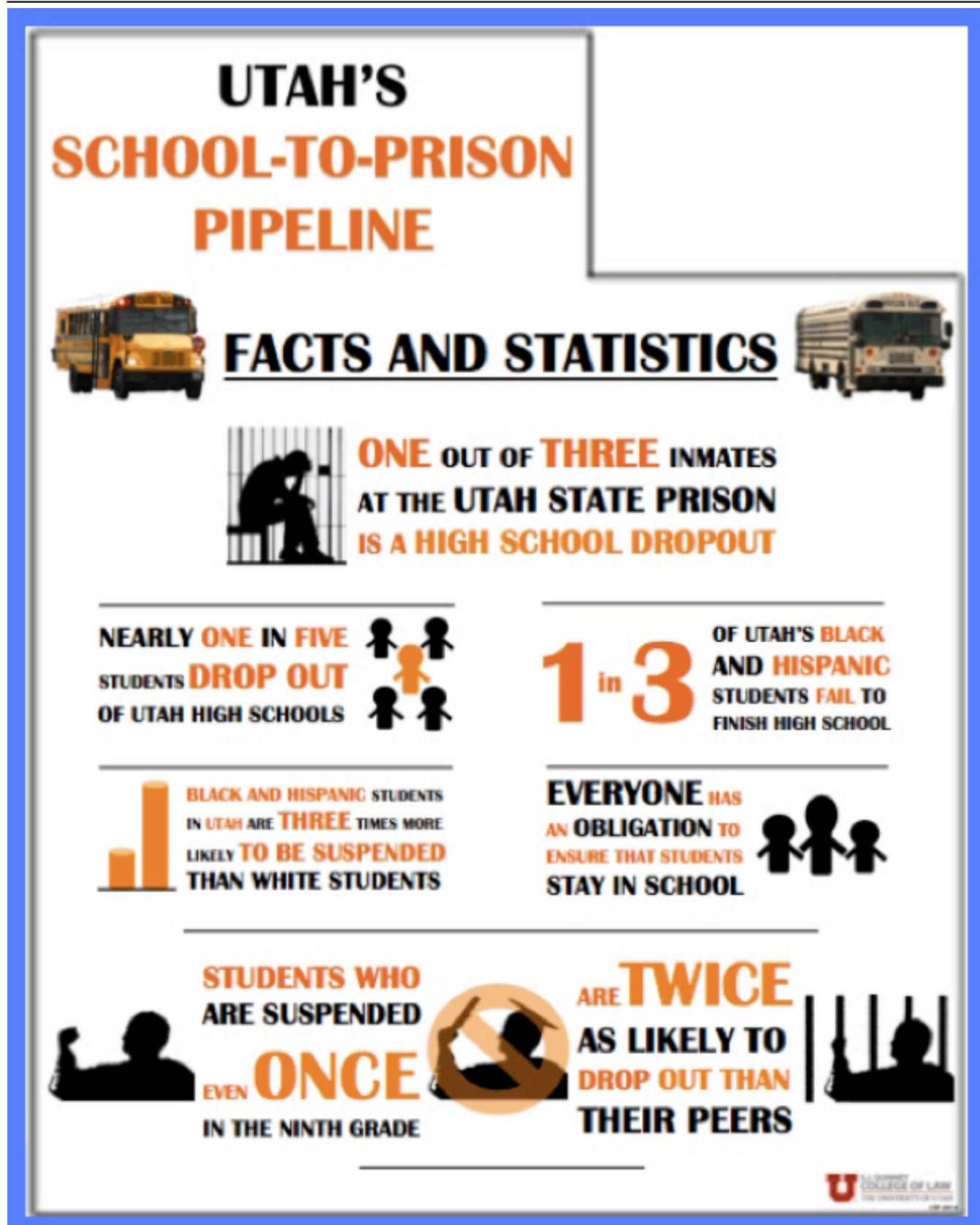
[Utah's Uninsured Rate for Hispanic Children: Highest in the Country](#)

[A Coverage Gap Solution for Utah Families](#)

[Majority of Eligible Parents Who Would Benefit from Medicaid Expansion are Working](#)

Juvenile Justice







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Voices for Utah Children seeks to reduce juvenile incarceration rates and eliminate the inappropriate use of secure confinement and out-of-home placement, ensuring that juvenile correction systems better protect youth and the public.

A key aspect of our juvenile justice work involves a commitment to challenging the School-to-Prison Pipeline, wherein children — particularly children of color and those with disabilities — are funneled out of public schools and into juvenile and criminal justice systems in a discriminatory application of discipline. “Zero-tolerance” policies criminalize minor infractions in the classroom, while the presence of law enforcement officers in schools often leads to student behavior being criminalized rather than handled within the school setting.

We are committed to the belief that children should be educated, not incarcerated. We work to empower advocates and community members alike, arming people with information that allows them take action to end School-to-Prison Pipeline.

[Lincoln M. Nehring, JD](#)

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President & CEO

Voices for Utah Children

## Early Childhood

The early years in a child's life form the core foundation for later social, emotional and cognitive development. Done well, early childhood education can help level the playing field, especially for low-income children, by closing the access and achievement gaps, thereby enhancing not only school performance, but self-sufficiency over a lifetime.

At Voices for Utah Children, we focus on promoting targeted investments in early childhood education, with the goal of creating a statewide early learning system in Utah that supports all families by making sure they have access to high-quality options for their children's early care and learning—whether children spend their days at home, in formal child care, or with family and friends.

[Tess Davis, JD](#)

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Policy Analyst

Voices for Utah Children

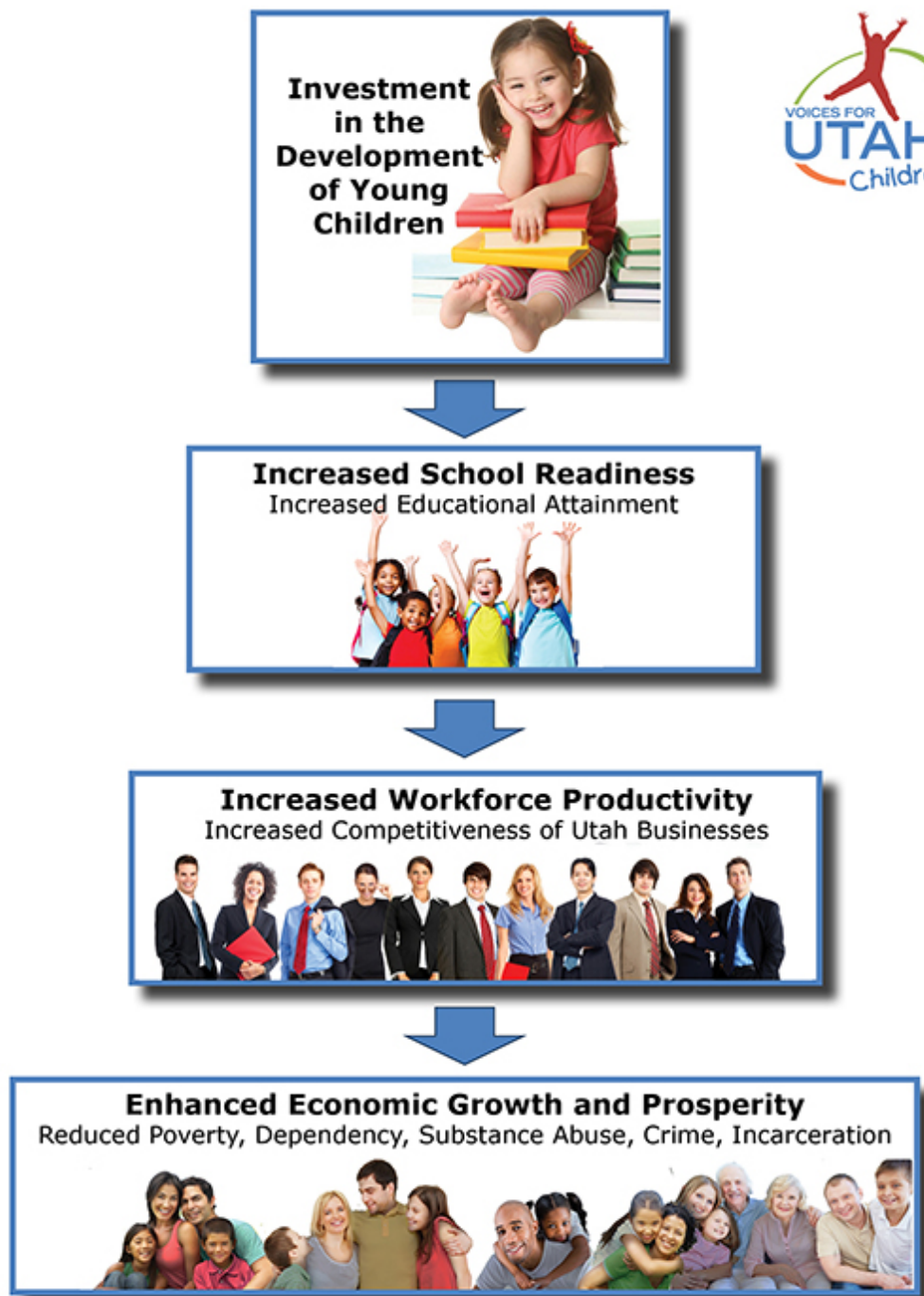
## **More Information:**

[Optional Extended-Day Kindergarten](#)

[5 Minute Guide to Shared Services](#)

Economic Security/Tax & Budget

## The Link Between Investment in Children & Economic Growth



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Every day, state governments raise and spend tax revenue in ways that profoundly affect families and communities. The fiscal choices Utah makes — about investing in schools, health care, child care, and other services — can help foster equal opportunity and lay the foundations for our future growth and prosperity.

Voices for Utah Children's fiscal policy program works to ensure that we invest sufficient resources in the vital public systems that ensure that our kids get world-class education and health care as well as special support for children most in need. We also work to ensure that public revenues are generated in ways that are fair; no family should be taxed into poverty as the price of educating their children.

[Matthew Weinstein, MPP](#)

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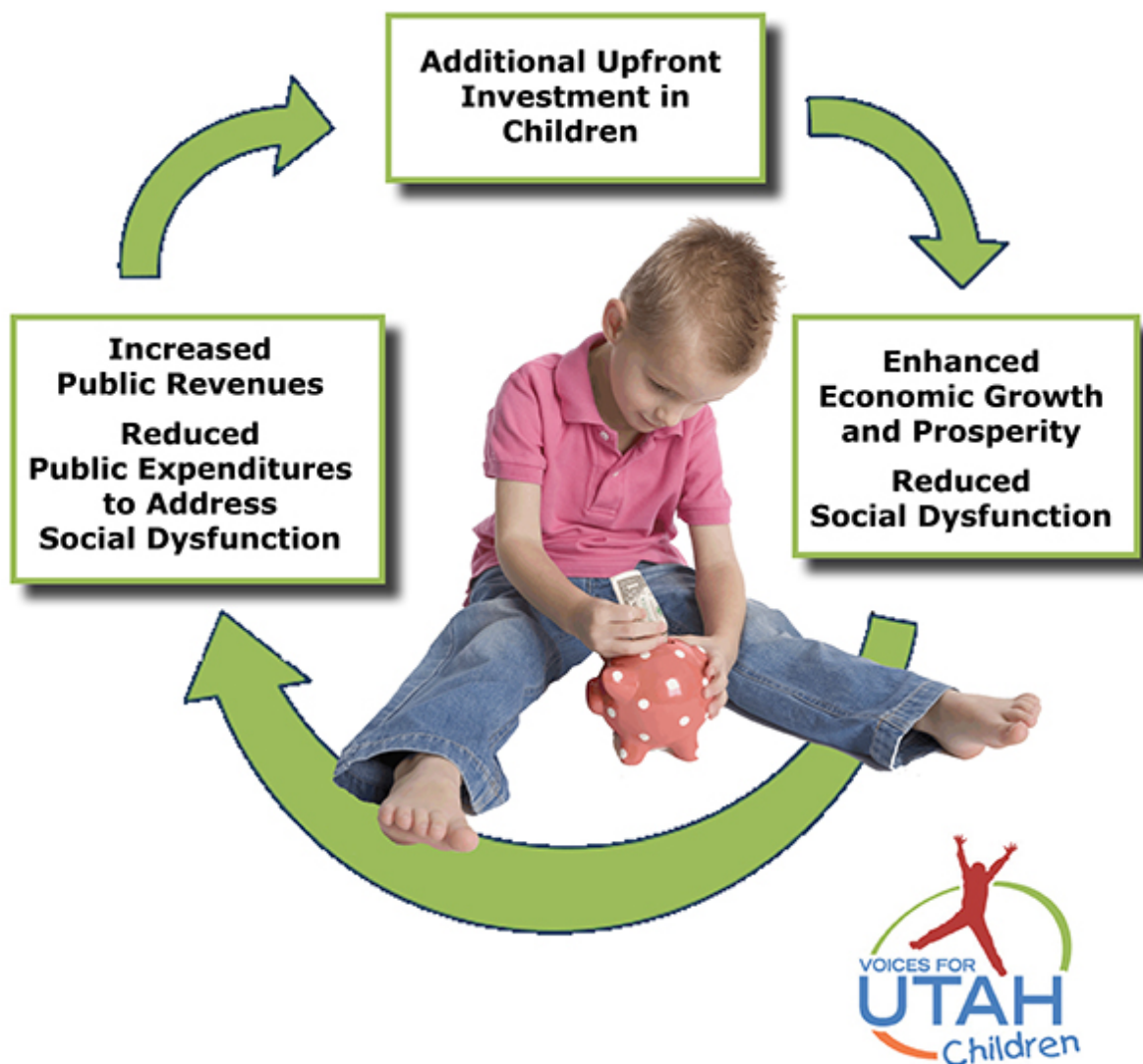
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State Priorities Partnership Director  
Voices for Utah Children

# How Upfront Investment in Children Pays for Itself

## The Virtuous Cycle





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## **More Information:**

[Restoring Revenues](#)

[Utah Children's Budget Report 2015](#)

[Ending Earmarks](#)

[What's Still Eating Utah's General Fund?](#)

[Top 10 Reasons to End the Earmarks](#)

[Deseret News: Social service advocates call for lawmakers to 'end the earmarks'](#)

[Deseret News: In our opinion: Utahns need to understand and appreciate the value of their citizen Legislature](#)

[Utah Policy.com: Poll: Utahns Split on Eliminating Transportation Earmarks](#)

## **A Comparative Look at Utah and Colorado:**

[Part 1: Economic Opportunity](#)

[Part 2: Standard of Living](#)

[The Earned Income Tax Credit: A Time-Tested Two-Generation Strategy for Poverty](#)

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For 30 years now, Voices for Utah Children has called on our state, federal and local leaders to put children's needs first. But the work is not done. The children of 30 years ago now have children of their own. Too many of these children are growing up in poverty, without access to healthcare or quality educational opportunities.

## **How can you be involved?**

[Make a tax-deductible donation](#) to Voices for Utah Children—or [join our Network](#) with a monthly donation of \$20 or more. Network membership includes complimentary

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admission to Network events with food, socializing, and opportunity to meet child advocacy experts. And don't forget to [join our listserv](#) to stay informed!

We look forward to the future of Voices for Utah Children and we hope you will be a part of our next 30 years.

*Special thanks to American Express for sponsoring our 30th Anniversary Year.*

