

Children's Defense Fund

Children's Rights

<https://www.childrensdefense.org/blog/how-america-ranks-in-protecting-children/>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

We Americans boast about being the number one world superpower and about our economic and military prowess. But what does it say about our collective values that we are content to lag behind many other nations in caring for children?

Marian Wright Edelman, CDF Founder and President Emerita

If Americas standing in the world is measured by how we treat our children, we are failing miserably. According to a recent [WHO, UNICEF and Lancet Commission report](#), the United States ranks 31st out of 36 OECD countries for child well-being. Children in America are less likely to have opportunities to survive and thrive than their peers in countries like Greece, Hungary, Israel, Canada, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Japan. In fact, America is consistently outperformed on measures of child opportunities and outcomes. Among 36 OECD countries, the United States ranks:

Americas appalling record on education, health, and poverty reflects our unwillingness to adequately invest in our children. While we rank first for the number of millionaires and billionaires, Gross Domestic Product and military spending, we rank *next to last* among industrialized nations for [public spending on children and families](#). We are the only rich nation that does not guarantee [paid parental leave](#) and the only member of the United Nations that has not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the abandonment and neglect of children, the United States stands disgracefully alone.

What is the point of our enormous wealth, power and strength if not to provide a better future for our children? It is time to redefine our measures of success and remind ourselves that Americas ability to be great rests in her ability to be good. So let us hear and heed our childrens plea: Be good to me, the sea is so wide and my boat is so small.

To learn more about CDFs viewpoints and analysis on issues impacting children and youth, [click here](#).

A gift today helps children get the help they need

The Childrens Defense Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our Federal Tax ID number is 52-0895622.

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Fight for children, stay informed and know when to act.