

Children's Defense Fund

Children's Rights

<https://www.childrensdefense.org/organizational-strategy/>

Campaign and Advocacy

CDF Community,

Inevitably when one enters a new role of community leadership and responsibility people ask, What's your vision for the future? As I began service to the Children's Defense Fund's mission in December 2020, I fielded this question from media, staff, funders, and other colleagues in the social sector. My most authentic answer (which some found insufficient) was, I don't have a *vision*. Right now, I'm working to get a *view*.

What I needed was the time, opportunity, and ability to see the state of our movement and institution at a moment in time. With a clear view, I would be able to develop an informed opinion (or point of view). At best, I had a sense of our call. Vision becomes clear as one gains perspective and sight. Vision is shaped through discernment in community. Vision is OURS, not mine. So, I'm grateful for the time members of this community invested over the last year to discern a collective vision and develop our organizational strategy.

The Children's Defense Fund envisions a nation where marginalized children flourish, leaders prioritize their well-being, and communities wield the power to ensure they thrive.

The Board clarified organizational direction. Partners and stakeholders gave interviews and important perspective. The staff team completed assessments and recommendations through task forces on culture, operational efficiency, and program strategy. Facilitators, consultants, and subject matter researchers guided us through the journey. Every person lived the wisdom to keep the baby in the center of the table. Thank you.

The following pages reflect our collective vision and strategy for the coming years. To realize our vision, we will pursue a ***movement-building*** and ***institutional growth strategy*** to build power for ***child-centered public policy***, informed by ***racial equity*** and the ***lived experience*** of children and youth. This three-year evolution will complement CDF's well-regarded public policy legacy and leverage milestones of the 25th anniversary of CDF Freedom Schools marked in 2020, the 30th anniversary of the Black Community Crusade for Children in 2021, and CDF's 50th anniversary in 2023.

I hope this gives you a view of how we work for 74 million children and youth across the country and you can see yourself in the plan.

For our children,

Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson
President & CEO
Children's Defense Fund
& CDF Action Council

The Children's Defense Fund is the only national, multi-issue advocacy organization working at the intersection of child well-being and racial justice by wielding the moral authority of programmatic proximity and community organizing to inform public policy.

CDF serves and advocates for the largest, most diverse generation in America: the 74 million children and youth under the age of 18 and 30 million young adults under the age of 25, with particular attention to those living in poverty and communities of color. We partner with policymakers, aligned organizations and funders to serve children, youth, and young adults.

Washington, D.C.; Nearly 100 U.S. Cities and Thirty (30) U.S. States or Territories

Public Affairs, including Federal and State Policy Advocacy, Public Education and Communications Campaigns

Literacy and Leadership Development, including our widely regarded CDF Freedom Schools

Movement Building, including place-based work through State and Territorial Offices and Targeted Community Organizing

A unified organizational budget, reorienting development, finance and information technology functions as national service units, while consolidating communications and marketing efforts as program functions.

A diffuse and diverse mix of foundation grants, major individual gifts (\$10K+ per annum) or bequests, program fees and signature events.

A socially responsive investment strategy producing 5% per annum of general operating revenue from organizational investments after inflation.

Equity is just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Unlocking the promise of the nation by unleashing the promise in us all.¹

Love is a form of sweet labor: fierce, bloody, imperfect, and life-giving a choice we make over and over again.² We practice, model, and teach it by prioritizing children.

Unifying organizational culture through

Increasing sustainability by

Enhancing program strategy by

The Children's Defense Fund's Leave No Child Behind mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

A gift today helps children get the help they need

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

Let us know how you're using this resource



Count me in!

Be a champion for every child. Sign up for updates about our work to fight for children and ways you can help.

- Name*
 First Name Last Name
- Email*
- Address*
 Zip
- Hidden
CDF-National Constituent
- Email

This field is for validation purposes and should be left unchanged.

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

