



# Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth

Connect. Inspire. Engage. Act

**Igniting collective action to cultivate, honor & empower resilient, thriving communities.**

*CCC&Y is a **non-partisan** organization who supports educated, engaged and participatory communities.*

*Visit <https://servicearizona.com/voterRegistration> to register to vote in Arizona.*

## CCC&Y Action and Outreach Initiative Statement

### **Education**

The Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth values education (pre-k through post-secondary), not merely as a necessary rite of passage for our children and youth, but as a vital part of strong and sustainable communities. Quality education has the power to transform and is a strategic initiative for addressing cycles of trauma, poverty and other difficulties facing our children. We know that adverse childhood experiences can have significant impact in terms of both financial costs, but also a wide array of social measures. To this end, we believe that the highly educated professionals charged with preparing our society's most important resource must be supported with the tools, resources, and respect worthy of this endeavor.

Educational Funding- CCC&Y supports policy that encourages equal transparency and accountability across all schools using public funds. Arizona must have a stable, sustainable, transparent and accountable funding structure for our education system supported by sound Federal education policy. Our schools must have highly qualified professionals, relevant and functioning materials, and ratios of counseling support that could be deemed reasonably effective.

- Rural Schools Funds- CCC&Y continues to support this funding, as well as, keep informed about impacts due to funding cuts.
- CCC&Y does not support voucher or tax credit expansion until the effects on the general fund are addressed.
- Progress Meter- CCC&Y supports and promotes the Arizona Education Progress Meter.
  - <https://www.expectmorearizona.org/progress/?region=Arizona>

### **Child Welfare**

The Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth is committed to the prevention of childhood trauma through collective impact strategies. The high cost to families and society of adverse childhood experiences (which includes traumas such as child abuse, neglect and separation of children from their families at the border) is well documented. To counter the effects of childhood abuse, neglect and trauma, CCC&Y has a strong interest in our State supporting these most vulnerable citizens. CCC&Y will review and support measures that help promote normalcy, trauma informed care and permanency for foster children, as well as kinship connections and significant relationships. CCC&Y supports increasing support/limiting barriers (where appropriate) for families caring for children who have experienced trauma.

- CCC&Y supports adequate funding to the Department of Child Safety in order to:
  - Ensure high quality services both direct and through contracted providers
  - Allow for a return of outside, independent oversight
- CCC&Y requests that any separation of children from families at the border stop and calls on the United States government to reunite separated families as expediently as possible.

## **Environmental Equity**

The Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth recognizes the importance of our land and environment to the health of communities and families. We must protect our environment and resources for our future generations. Further, the contamination of lands through uranium has had tremendous health and safety consequences for many of our community members. Disregard for the welfare of our community members has direct health consequences for each person directly impacted, but further, the children of these communities are internalizing the value of their own lives through these actions.

- CCC&Y is requesting the Federal government to clean up mine and uranium sites posing dangerous health conditions for our citizens.
- CCC&Y supports the moratorium on uranium mining near the Grand Canyon until independent, evidence-based studies guarantee protection of water, health and environment.

Further, CCC&Y is actively engaged in prevention work that addresses the cycles of trauma for children. We recognize that adverse experiences can stem not only from generational challenges, but also, from historical traumas faced by entire groups. We recognize that environmental usage decisions, contamination and voice equity are all areas that contribute to historical trauma which is having a continuous impact on our county.

## **Incarcerated Parents and Justice Reform**

The Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth supports initiatives and reforms that ensure equitable justice experiences for all citizens. CCC&Y supports children remaining with parents where possible, acknowledges that substance abuse most often stems from adverse childhood experiences that require support, and endorses a system that employs preventative resources early in life vs. costly incarceration in adulthood.

Arizona has one of the highest incarceration rates in the nation. Arizona's 2019 prison budget was \$1.1 billion. Meaningful, proven criminal justice reform in Arizona would lead to more parents who are non-violent offenders being reunited with their families, greater financial and housing security for children, and huge savings to Arizona's tax payers and potentially more money for education and other needed children's services.

## **DACA**

The Coconino Coalition for Children & Youth supports and promotes the well-being of all children, regardless of their place of birth. CCC&Y works to assure all children in our community have healthy, stable childhoods and environments that nurture their development in becoming productive contributing members of our society. We recognize that the young people impacted by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program were, on average, under the age of 7 on arrival in the United States. DACA eligibility requires extensive background investigations and that the individuals covered must either currently attend school, or have graduated from high school or obtained a general education certificate, or be an honorably discharged veteran, and have no felony convictions or major misdemeanors. Nationally, DACA beneficiaries pay approximately \$2 billion each year in state and local taxes and make positive contributions to communities across our region.

CCC&Y encourages our local, state and national leaders, and ultimately the United States Congress, to create legislation to support DACA eligible individuals and their pursuits to contribute and participate in the American society as citizens.