



# VOTE for OHIO KIDS



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## ***Groundwork Ohio and the Ohio Children's Hospital Association Launch Statewide Campaign to Spotlight Need for Greater Priority in Ohio's Youngest & Most At-Risk Children***

**Columbus, Ohio:** Groundwork Ohio and the Ohio Children's Hospital Association (OCHA), today formally launched the *Vote for Ohio Kids Campaign*, an effort dedicated to ensuring all 2018 gubernatorial candidates commit to making early childhood education and healthcare a top priority.

"Ohio must elect a governor who understands that kids who receive quality early childhood education and healthcare do better in school, are more likely to attend higher education and are better prepared for the workforce," said Shannon Jones, Executive Director of Groundwork Ohio. "The evidence is clear and now we need Ohio's next Governor to follow it and make Ohio's youngest kids a priority."

Research and extensive brain science demonstrate that early investments in our children are smart investments. The most critical period of human development—a time when the brain is most sensitive to learning and brain architecture is taking form—occurs in the first 1,000 days of life. Access to quality healthcare and education in these early years has a 13 percent return on investment to taxpayers. The earlier the investment in human capital, the stronger the future workforce and economy.

"Ohioans understand that investing in evidence-informed healthcare and early education interventions is good for kids, good for families and good for our future," said Nick Lashutka, President and CEO, OCHA. "We have a strong history of partnering with healthcare, business and child advocacy leaders as well as elected officials to remove costs from the healthcare system and improve the quality of healthcare for kids in Ohio. We look forward to working with our stakeholders to ensure that our next governor and members of the Ohio General Assembly understand the need to prioritize children's health and education in making policy decisions."

***The Vote for Ohio Kids Campaign centers on a two-fold agenda -- the importance of proven high-quality early childhood experiences for our most at-risk children and ensuring access to essential high-quality healthcare for all Ohio kids.*** Over the next several months, the campaign will continue to expand its network of support by building a coalition of business, healthcare, and education leaders as well as child advocates from across the state all committed to Vote for Ohio Kids. The campaign will include the **Vote for Ohio Kids Leadership Forum on September 27, 2018**, bringing this coalition together to dialogue with the gubernatorial nominees and seek a commitment to our kid-focused agenda.

"Our shared agenda represents the issues most urgently plaguing Ohio's kids and threatening our state's future—access to high-quality healthcare and early childhood education," Jones added.

## About Vote for Ohio's Kids

*Vote for Ohio's Kids is a statewide effort dedicated to ensuring all 2018 gubernatorial candidates commit to making early care and education a top priority. The initiative is led jointly by Groundwork Ohio and the Ohio Children's Hospital Association in partnership with business, healthcare, and early education leaders as well as child advocates from around the state. To learn more about Vote for Ohio Kids, visit [www.VoteforOhioKids.org](http://www.VoteforOhioKids.org) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) @Vote4OhioKids.*

## About the Founders

*Groundwork Ohio is a committed, nonpartisan advocacy organization formed in 2004 that believes quality early learning and development is the most transformative strategy to improve school outcomes, increase the life-long success of Ohio's children, and lay a strong foundation for economic prosperity in the state of Ohio. To learn more about Groundwork Ohio visit [www.GroundworkOhio.org](http://www.GroundworkOhio.org) and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) @GroundworkOhio.*

*The Ohio Children's Hospital Association is the voice of Ohio's youngest patients, their families and health care providers. Our six member hospitals and their nearly 40,000 employees are dedicated to saving, protecting and enhancing children's lives. Nothing matters more to the future of our state, nation and world than protecting the health and well-being of our children. Sustaining and growing Ohio's investment in saving, protecting and enhancing the lives of children is both good medicine and sound public policy. To learn more about the Ohio Children's Hospital Association, visit [www.ohiochildrenshospitals.org](http://www.ohiochildrenshospitals.org) and follow us on [Twitter](#) @OhioChildHosp and [Facebook](#) @OhioChildrensHospitals.*

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