

IMPACT REPORT 2023



voices for
children
IN NEBRASKA

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

What a year 2023 was for Voices for Children in Nebraska! An annual report provides an opportunity to reflect on challenges and successes, and I am so proud to share this one with you, as it highlights a period of immense transformation, renewal, and new growth. In 2023, Voices for Children:

- **Finalized and implemented a new strategic plan**, including updating our mission, vision, and values statements to reflect our ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
- **Expanded our team**, growing capacity and continuing the process of rebuilding from the pandemic turnover.
- **Developed our youth engagement program** and won policy victories for and with youth and families impacted by our state child-serving systems across the state.
- **Maintained our reputation** as a nonpartisan, fact-based, fierce advocate for children and youth through a tumultuous legislative session and political environment.
- After nearly thirty years at our old office, **we moved into a new space** in the heart of downtown Omaha, where we are more accessible and visible.
- **Produced our 30th annual Kids Count in Nebraska Report**, sharing the latest and best available data pertaining to child well-being, and looking back over those 30 years to see how far we've come – and where we still need to go.

Through it all, I have been overwhelmed with gratitude for your steadfast support of our mission. The commitment of our supporters – both longstanding and new – has been the heartbeat of our successes as a small, locally-grown, independent advocacy organization committed to making Nebraska a great place to grow up.



Because of that support, we are strong financially, with every dollar invested wisely to maximize impact. Transparency and accountability remain at the forefront of our operations, ensuring your trust is well-placed. For detailed insights, please refer to the financial breakdown on page 11.

As an organization, we are fueled by optimism and determination. We aspire to expand our reach, work innovatively, address challenges with creativity and efficiency, and collaborate with existing and new partners to amplify our impact through shared goals and collective efforts.

As we continue this journey in 2024 and beyond, know that your support is instrumental in moving our mission forward. Together, we can create a future where every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for being the backbone of Voices for Children in Nebraska. Your belief in our vision fuels our passion, and we look forward to achieving even greater heights in the coming year.

With heartfelt gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Juliet Summers".

Juliet Summers
Executive Director

Our Mission

Voices for Children in Nebraska advocates for equitable opportunity for children in Nebraska through research, policy, and community engagement.

Our Vision

We envision a Nebraska with strong communities, where every child has all they need to lead a healthy, secure, and fulfilling life.



Our Values

We keep children at the heart of everything we do and follow a core set of values that serve as a guide for our words and actions.

INTEGRITY

We serve as an independent and non-partisan voice to drive systems change.

INFORMATION

We use research, data, and community input to inform our direction and guide our actions.

EQUITY

We intentionally center diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in all we do.

COURAGE

We fight against the status quo when necessary to amplify youth's voices and transform systems.

COLLABORATION

We listen and partner in order to support children and families according to their needs.

2023 Board of Directors

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Emily Mwaja

John Stalnaker, J.D.

Kate Noble Weitz

Lisa M. Whitehead

Patty Pansing Brooks

*We lovingly remember Dr. Webb, who passed away on July 25, 2023.



Research

In 2023, Voices for Children published a milestone 30th edition of the Kids Count in Nebraska Report. This publication serves as a trusted resource for Nebraska lawmakers, researchers, service providers, educators, and community leaders, providing pertinent information on the well-being of all Nebraska children in the areas of health, child welfare, education, economic stability, and juvenile justice.

All data contained in Kids Count is also available on NERactive, a searchable, easy-to-navigate online tool optimized for use on the go. Explore NERactive at www.kidscountnebraska.com.

Sharing Data; Impacting Communities

Voices for Children in Nebraska is proud to provide reliable, relevant, and up-to-date data on child well-being in our state each year. In addition to gathering, aggregating, and publishing the data, we work hard to share it both locally and nationally. In 2023, we distributed over 1,000 free copies of the report, and our research coordinator gave several presentations to organizations and groups across Nebraska.



Pro-Kid Policy Plan

Children are our state's greatest resource, and the decisions our leaders make about them impact our collective future.

Voices for Children has developed a Pro-Kid Policy Plan, focusing on the issues of **child welfare**, **economic stability**, **health**, and **juvenile justice**. Our policy priorities are guided by research, data, and proven best practices that improve child well-being. We pay close attention to the impact of race, socioeconomic status, and geography, and seek to remove barriers to opportunity within these areas.



CHILD WELFARE

Children grow up in safe, permanent, and loving homes. An effective child welfare system strengthens families and minimizes trauma through timely and appropriate action.



ECONOMIC STABILITY

Families are able to achieve financial security, and children's basic needs are met. State economic policies support families in trying to build a better future and balance work and family life.



HEALTH

Children and families have access to affordable, quality physical and behavioral health care. Consistent and preventive health care gives children the best start to grow up to be healthy and productive adults.



JUVENILE JUSTICE

Youth are held accountable for their actions in developmentally appropriate ways that promote community safety and allow them to grow into responsible citizens.

Positive Noise at the Capitol

The small and mighty Voices for Children team weighed in on a whopping 57 bills and one legislative resolution in 2023. In the end, 10 of our topline priority bills for kids became law, and we successfully opposed three harmful bills — making the 108th Nebraska legislative session successful by providing tangible benefits to thousands of children and youth across our state.



Policy Victories



Health

Voices for Children fought to maximize School District Uptake of the Community Eligibility Provision so that children in our lowest-income neighborhoods are guaranteed nutritious meals at school without red tape getting in the way.



Economic Stability

In 2023, Voices for Children retained our current eligibility level for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the childcare subsidy so that families relying on these crucial supports won't lose access to them.



Juvenile Justice

We opened our extended foster care program, Bridge to Independence, to young people aging out of the juvenile justice system at risk of homelessness. This allows them to safely transition from system involvement to adulthood.



Youth Voice

Two youth lobby days were hosted by Voices for Children in 2023, bringing middle and high school students to the Capitol to participate in the action and make their voices heard with state legislators.

Our supporters

Voices for Children in Nebraska thanks the following individuals, foundations, organizations, and businesses for supporting the work we do each day to advocate on behalf of children and families in Nebraska.

\$100,000+

Lozier Foundation
Sherwood Foundation
Weitz Family Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Annie E. Casey Foundation
Edward and Sally Malashock Family Foundation
William and Ruth Scott Family Foundation

\$10,000 - \$49,000

Action Now Initiative
Heider Family Foundation
Kate and Roger Weitz
Partnership for America's Children
Presbyterian Church of the Cross

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Bruce Meyers
Buffet Early Childhood Fund
Dr. Katie Weitz
Elizabeth Summers
John Scott
Mutual of Omaha
Nebraska Civic Engagement Table

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Absolutely Fresh Seafood West, LLC
Al Davis
Boys Town
Dr. Ali Khan & the University of Nebraska
Medical Center
Jane Tonniges
Lou III and Jill Rotella
Lutz
Nancy and Daniel Pridal

Our supporters

\$1,000 - \$2,499

A. Jill Batter
Amy Christensen and Ronald Lindhart
Amy and Dennis Boesen
Arbor Bank
Buffet Early Childhood Institute
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Denise and John Meyers
Don Perry
Emily Tonniges
First National Bank of Omaha
Glenn Summers and Denise Miller-Dolan
Jeffrey Couch
John and Debbie Stalnaker
Kathy and Craig Moore
Michael Moylan
Nebraska State Education Association
Pinnacle Bank
Robert Townsend
Security National Bank of Omaha
Susanne Shore
The Fred and Sally Bekins Foundation
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\$500 - \$999

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Epic Consultation
Gary and Sally Kaplan
Lawrence Thomas
Lord of Love Lutheran Church
McGill, Gotsdiner, Workman, and Lepp
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Patty Pansing Brooks
Shucks Legacy, LLC
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Thomas Stalnaker



Our supporters

\$250 - \$499

Christina and the Hon. Matthew Kahler

Cindy Tully

Delynn and Esther Hay

Denise Powell

Dr. Laura Wilwerding

Dulce and Allen Sherman

Eileen Vautravers

Gary and Gretchen Bren

Gloria Dinsdale

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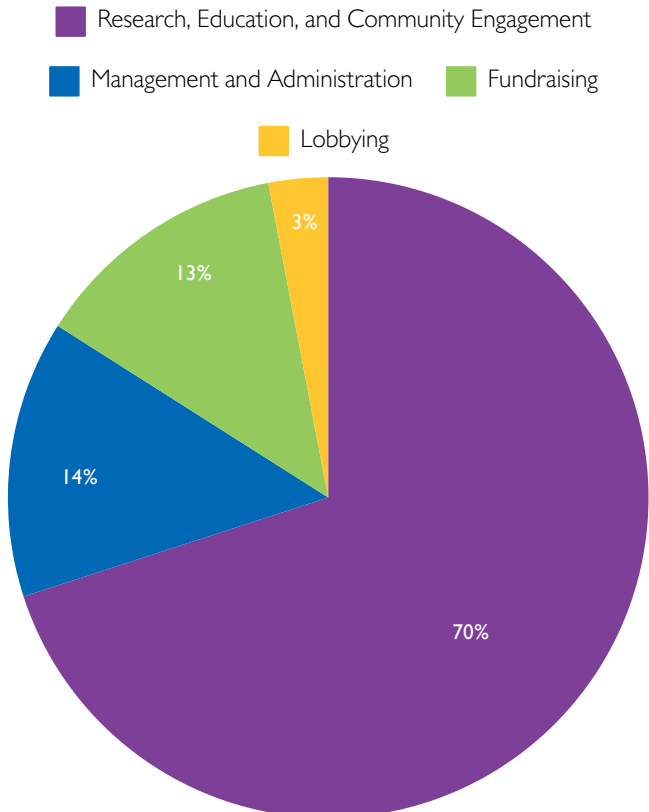
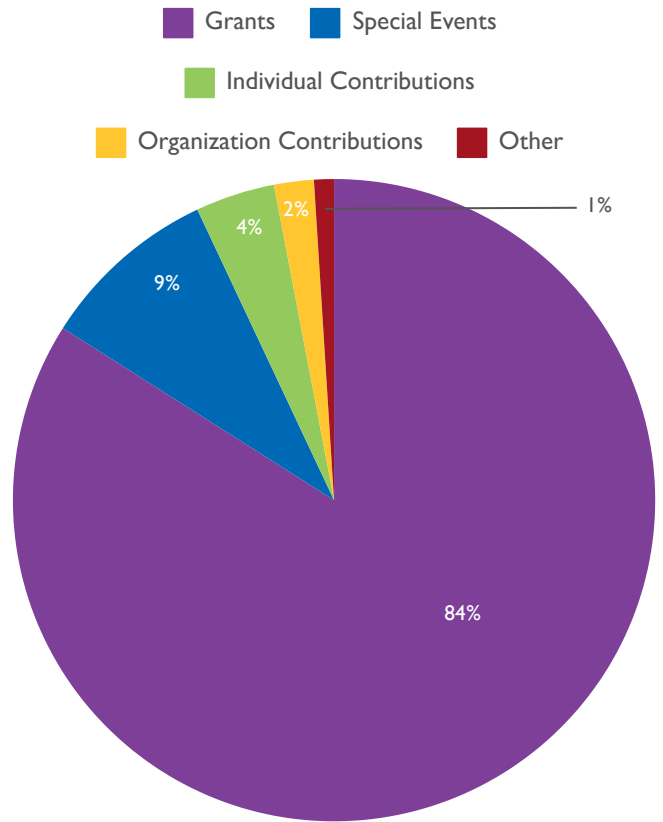
Financials

Revenue

Grants*	\$ 867,880
Special Events	\$ 90,195
Individual Contributions	\$ 38,961
Organization Contributions	\$ 17,420
Other	\$ 13,711

Total **\$ 1,028,167**

*Grant Revenue reporting has been updated to reflect the FASB Accounting Standards Update (ASU) 2018-08. We report pledges in the year they are made.



Expenses

Research, Education, and Community Engagement	\$ 444,285
Management and Administration	\$ 90,508
Fundraising	\$ 84,462
Lobbying	\$ 14,821

Total **\$ 634,076**



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