



Birth to 22 | 2020 Legislative Agenda

1. A Stronger Pathway to Kindergarten Readiness

- a. Enhance the VPK Assessment Policy with a higher degree of learning gains and observational assessments in the calculation of the Kindergarten Readiness Rate.
 - *Children and teacher accomplishments should be recognized.*
- b. Create an option of additional VPK hours and learning opportunities for children to master the standards necessary to be ready on day one.
 - *Support children's learning by diving in deeper.*
- c. Focus the state's investment on the actual cost of education. Policy and funding should mirror the results desired with a focus on quality teacher interactions and effectiveness tied to kindergarten readiness.
 - *Better results will come from a stronger focus.*

2. Expand access and opportunities for mental health and behavioral services to children and young adults when and where they need it.

- a. Help children and young adults cope and prevail over traumatic experiences. Advocate for the expansion of mental health services via telehealth.
 - *Support children who are hurting whenever and wherever they need help.*
- b. Support the "Hope for Healing Florida" campaign by working with DCF, AHCA, and First Lady Casey DeSantis to expand access and increase funding.
 - *Helping our youth heal and lead healthier lives to reach their full potential.*
- c. Support Florida's need for more behavioral and mental health specialists in a variety of settings.
 - *Create programs and professional development to meet the needs of our children.*
- d. Support and fund mental health and well-being initiatives on college campuses
 - *Recognize the biggest culprit that hinders higher education completion is directly related to mental and behavioral health.*

3. Focus on Two-Generations to Interrupt the Cycle of Poverty

- a. Support Two-Generation (2gen) policies, which address two generations at the same time and provide opportunities for and meet the needs of low-income children and their parents simultaneously.
 - *A parent's economic well-being is critical to a child's pathway to success.*
- b. Review and modernize Florida's policies, so well-intended programs do not disincentivize economic progression.
 - *Support the parent and child's dream of self-sufficiency simultaneously.*
- c. Recognize a child's development is directly related to their family's economic stability.
 - *Support the whole child and family unit to end the cycle of poverty.*

4. Increase Financial Support for Higher Education Institutions

- a. Adequately fund Florida College System and State University System institutions to ensure all students have access to quality education.
 - *This includes workforce training that is focused on meeting industry needs and boosting Florida's competitiveness in creating a home-grown skilled labor force.*