



# Vote Because: Your Vote Matters at Every Level

It's not just the next president on the ballot this November 3rd.



It's decisions in your community about health insurance, school funding and classroom curriculum, parks and roads, police reform, and affordable housing.

Being informed about these decisions can help ensure your vote is protecting children in your community. These are some of the decisions your vote can impact:

## Federal Executive: President & Vice President

- The President chooses who should run federal agencies like the Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Homeland Security.
- The President also has the power to nominate Supreme Court Justices, sign executive orders, and approve or veto legislation that impacts families across the country and addresses injustices facing America's children.
- Executive actions and administrative rules can be greatly beneficial or harmful to children depending on how they are used. For example, they were used to create work for jobless Americans during the Great Depression, to desegregate the military, and to establish the DACA program to protect young immigrants and keep families together. More recently, these executive powers have also been used for a range of different actions from immigration policy to food assistance policy.

## Federal Legislative: U.S. Senators & Representatives

- Federal elections also include representation in Congress - the Senate and the House of Representatives.
- Senators and Representatives introduce and vote on legislation that impacts children, dictating how taxpayer money is allocated, making decisions about major federal programs like Medicaid and Social Security, and approving influential positions like Supreme Court Justices, Secretary of Education, and Secretary of Health and Human Services.
- Who is elected to the Senate and House of Representatives determines what changes can be made to better support children. Find out about bills Members of Congress have recently supported or opposed through CDF Action Council's Legislative Report Card.

## State Executive: Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, and Others

- State elections include Governor as well as other leaders in the state executive branch like Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Auditors, and Commissioners.
- The Governor chooses who runs state departments responsible for things like the health, housing, education, child welfare, and criminal justice decisions of your state.
- The Governor also has the power to sign executive orders and approve or veto legislation that impacts families across your state, for example, setting the minimum age at which children can be arrested or deciding who should be able to enroll in Medicaid to access health care.

## State Legislative: State Senators & Representatives

- State elections also include State Senators and State Representatives.
- The State Senators and State Representatives are meant to act as a voice for children and families in their community when making decisions on how to use state taxpayer money and when introducing or voting on legislation that impacts families across the state.
- These decisions can include Medicaid and SNAP eligibility and benefits, funding for schools, curriculum and standardized test requirements, and services for foster youth across your state.

## Local: Mayor, City Council, School Board, and Others

- Local elections include positions like Mayor, City Council, Sheriff, District Attorneys, and School Board officials.
- These officials make decisions that impact everyone living in your city or county including local parks and youth programs, access to affordable housing, access to clean water, and public transit. These officials also make decisions about out of school programming as well as school funding and policies like curriculum, school policing, and school resources.

**Elections are a way to hold officials accountable at every level of the government. If we like or don't like what our public officials stand for, then we must use our voices and our votes to make that clear!**

**Find out who is on your ballot and research where they stand. Make a plan to register and vote using our [Vote Because: You Can Use Your Power to Vote for Children](#) resource.**