



# CHILDREN'S SERVICES FUND

REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT (2019-2023)



**Boone County  
Children's Services Fund**

---

COMMUNITY REPORT

---

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Boone County Children's Services Board (BCCSB) contracted with Central Missouri Community Action who subcontracted Partner for Better to conduct an assessment of progress toward meeting the needs identified in the Community Input Report completed by the University of Missouri Institute of Public Policy in July 2014 and updated in May 2019. Partner for Better employed a multifaceted approach, integrating data from multiple sources to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the fund's impact. The study utilized a mixed-methods approach that drew on both quantitative and qualitative data. The researchers reviewed data spanning the 11-year lifespan of the Boone County Children's Services Fund (BCCSF), from 2013 to 2023, with a deeper analysis of the most recent five years, 2019 to 2023. The research methodologies included an analysis of administrative data and gathered perceptions about the BCCSF through community surveys, focus groups, and interviews. It's important to note that some recommendations may fall outside the scope and not statutorily eligible for the BCCSB to address. The full report can be viewed at <https://www.showmeboone.com/community-services/comm-data.asp>.

## BOONE COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICES FUND BACKGROUND

On November 6, 2012, the citizens of Boone County passed the County of Boone Proposition 1, which created the BCCSF for children and youth nineteen years of age or less in Boone County. The BCCSB is appointed by the County Commission and entrusted to oversee the BCCSF. The BCCSF was created pursuant to RSMo §67.1775, RSMo §210.861, and the ballot language presented to the voters on November 6, 2012. RSMo §210.861 specifies the types of services that may be funded by the BCCSB. By statute, funds may be invested to address the following needs:

- Up to 30 days of temporary shelter for abused, neglected, runaway, homeless, or emotionally disturbed youth
- Respite care services
- Unmarried parent services
- Outpatient chemical dependency and psychiatric treatment programs
- Counseling and related services as a part of transitional living programs
- Home-based and community-based family intervention programs
- Prevention programs that promote healthy lifestyles among children and youth and strengthen families
- Crisis intervention services, inclusive of telephone hotlines
- Individual, group, or family professional counseling and therapy services
- Psychological evaluations
- Mental health screenings

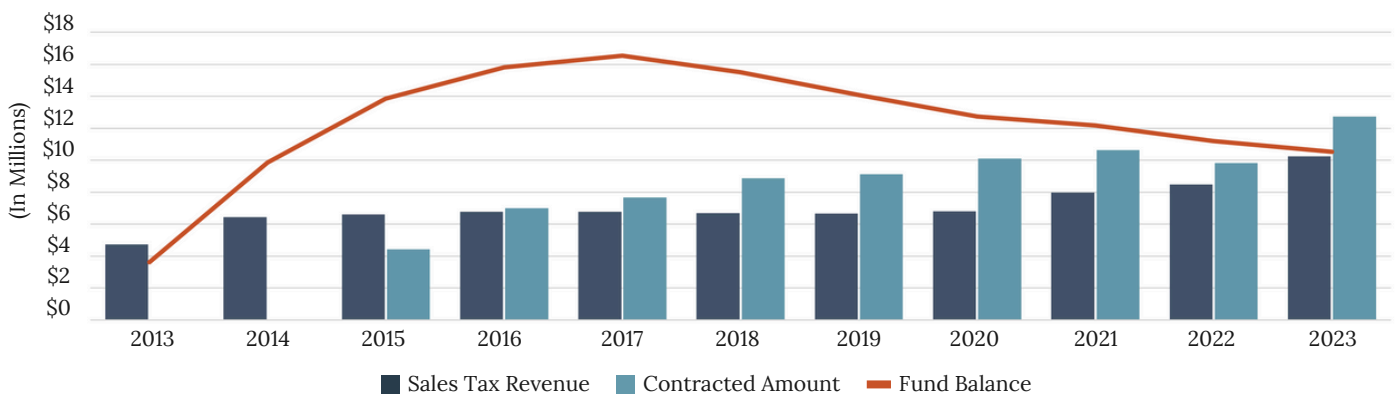
Revenues collected and deposited in the community CSF may not be expended for inpatient medical, psychiatric, and chemical dependency services or for transportation services.

# INVESTMENTS

The collection of the BCCSF tax began in 2013 with the BCCSB contracting with programs in 2014. Providers are typically contracted through a purchase-of-service model, where services are delivered for a set rate, negotiated with the Boone County Community Services Department (BCCSD) and approved by the BCCSB. Services are reimbursed by the BCCSF after they are provided, often leading to contracted amounts exceeding what the provider actually utilizes within the fiscal year. Administrative costs of the BCCSD include personnel costs, supplies, training, utilities, insurance, and services from other offices such as the Auditor’s Office, Purchasing Department, Legal Services, and Facilities Management Department.

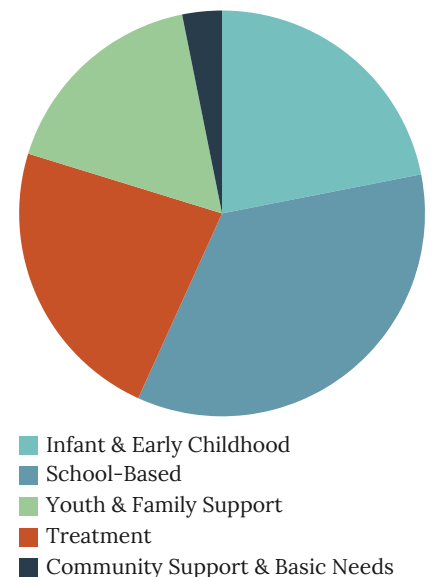
The **BCCSB has invested approximately \$69,676,322 in Boone County over the last decade.** By statute, BCCSB is required to keep 17% of CSF in reserves. The fund balance has displayed fluctuating trends over the years, starting at approximately \$3,621,462 in 2013 and peaking at approximately \$16,556,849 in 2017 before gradually declining to approximately \$10,518,005 by 2023.

**BCCSF Sales Tax Revenue, Contracted Amount, and Fund Balance (2013-2023)**



Between 2019 and 2023, the BCCSB allocated funding across various population-based program areas. School-Based Programs received the highest allocation with approximately \$14,063,159 reflecting the BCCSB’s significant investment in services in the schools. Infant and Early Childhood Programs also saw substantial support, receiving approximately \$9,033,955 underscoring the importance placed on early development. Similarly, Youth and Family Support Programs were prioritized with an allocation of approximately \$11,688,522 highlighting a focus on services that benefit the wider family unit and youth services. Treatment Programs, with an allocation of approximately \$6,368,610, and Community Support and Basic Needs Programs, receiving approximately \$1,808,234 indicate targeted investments in specific areas of need, although at lower funding levels compared to other categories.

**Overall Allocation from 2019-2023 by Population Category**



---

## IMPACT OF FUNDING

The report included a return on investment, key findings in community needs, and recommendations for each population category. National return on investment (ROI) studies on various populations reveal significant returns on investment in social programs, yet it can be difficult to apply these at the local level due to differences in spending, baseline outcomes, and program duration. To implement a standard approach in calculating the ROI at the local level, a validated data model from Washington University Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) Cost-Benefit Ratios was utilized. The final ROI is for each dollar invested over the last five years and the amount of return for participants, taxpayers, and others. More information on the ROI can be found in the full report. The report shows an ROI for each program category:

- Infant and Early Childhood: For each dollar invested, there is an **expected return of \$9.70** over the participant's lifetime.
- School-Based: For each dollar invested, there is an **expected return of \$42.36** over the participant's lifetime. This unusually high ROI is attributed to investments in specific outreach campaigns.
- Youth and Family Services: For each dollar invested, there is an **expected return of \$14.23** over the participant's lifetime.
- Treatment: For each dollar invested, there is an expected return of \$4.19 over the participant's lifetime.
- Community Support and Basic Needs: For each dollar invested, there is an **expected return of \$10.04** over the participant's lifetime.

## INFANT & EARLY CHILDHOOD



**Return on Investment Amount: 1:9.70 (\$88,296,378.79)**

### Key Findings and Community Needs:

- Licensed and accredited childcare capacity in Boone County has declined.
- Infant mortality rates in Boone County increased slightly, with a significant disparity between Black and White infants.
- There are workforce shortages and high turnover rates for early childhood educators, making it difficult to maintain consistent staffing.
- Access to parenting resources is uneven, and programs providing guidance for families navigating support systems often lack funding.

### Recommendations:

- Invest in expanding high-quality, affordable childcare options in Boone County, especially in underserved areas.
- Support workforce development in early childhood education through increased wages, professional development, and raising awareness of the profession's value.
- Address racial disparities in infant mortality through targeted interventions and increased access to prenatal care for underserved communities.

---

## SCHOOL-BASED



**Return on Investment Amount: 1:42.36 (\$669,517,764.50)**

### Key Findings and Community Needs:

- Student mental health needs in Boone County have increased. More students are identified as at risk, and teachers are increasingly concerned about student mental health.
- 3rd-grade reading proficiency has declined.
- High school graduation rates in Boone County have decreased slightly.
- Equity concerns are evident, with disparities in academic outcomes and access to mental health services between school districts and student populations.

### Recommendations:

- Increase access to mental health services within schools by expanding the availability of school-based mental health professionals and offering professional development to teachers on supporting student mental health.
- Address academic disparities by supporting evidence-based interventions and programs that improve literacy skills and promote academic success.
- Promote communication and collaboration between parents, teachers, and school administrators to improve support for student needs.

## YOUTH & FAMILY SUPPORT



**Return on Investment Amount: 1:14.23 (\$123,318,934.30)**

### Key Findings and Community Needs:

- Community-level indicators like juvenile law violation referrals and child abuse and neglect rates have improved but there are still significant unmet needs that persist.
- Racial disparities remain in juvenile justice referrals and low birth weight rates for Black infants.
- Access to parenting education and support services is limited, especially for low-income families.
- Volunteer retention declined during the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting programs that rely on volunteers.

### Recommendations:

- Promote parent engagement and support by increasing funding for parenting education programs, particularly for low-income and underserved families.
- Strengthen efforts to address racial disparities in the juvenile justice system and maternal and child health outcomes.
- Support volunteer recruitment and retention initiatives to ensure program sustainability.

---

## TREATMENT



**Return on Investment Amount: 1:4.19 (\$23,051,392.84)**

### Key Findings and Community Needs:

- Demand for mental health services continues to exceed supply, leading to long waitlists and limited access, particularly for specialized services.
- Shortages of mental health providers, particularly child psychiatrists, persists.
- Systemic barriers like lack of health insurance and difficulties with Medicaid billing continue to hinder access to treatment.
- Racial disparities exist in hospitalization rates for substance abuse and mental health issues, with Black individuals experiencing significantly higher rates.

### Recommendations:

- Increase access to mental health services by investing in recruitment and retention of mental health providers, especially child psychiatrists.
- Reduce systemic barriers to treatment by advocating for policies that expand access to affordable health insurance and simplify Medicaid billing procedures.
- Address racial disparities in mental health and substance abuse through targeted interventions and culturally competent service delivery.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT & BASIC NEEDS



**Return on Investment Amount: 1:10.04 (\$19,584,734.43)**

### Key Findings and Community Needs:

- Overall community indicators regarding basic needs like food security, housing cost burden, and poverty show that Boone County has improved.
- However, significant racial disparities persist. Black individuals in Boone County experienced a significant increase in food insecurity and childhood poverty from 2019 to 2022.
- Access to mental health services is a critical unmet need, with long waitlists, few providers outside of Columbia, and many providers not accepting Medicaid or insurance.
- Housing and transportation remain significant barriers, especially for those in rural areas or with criminal backgrounds, poor credit, or prior evictions.

### Recommendations:

- Increase access to mental health services by supporting recruitment and training of a diverse workforce, particularly for rural areas.
- Provide targeted funding to support low-income families at risk of homelessness, focusing on housing assistance, emergency shelter services, and homelessness prevention.



---

## ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2024 Boone County Children's Services Fund Review and Assessment outlines several key recommendations for the BCCSB and the BCCSD. The overarching goal of these recommendations is to improve equity and access to services for children, youth, and families in Boone County. The report identifies three key areas for action:

1. Targeted Funding Initiatives
2. Enhanced Communication
3. Provider Technical Assistance

### TARGETED FUNDING INITIATIVES

- **Increase access to mental health services:** The report emphasizes the critical need to address the shortage of mental health providers and long waitlists.
- **Support low-income families at risk of homelessness:** The assessment highlights the need for greater investment in services to prevent homelessness.
- **Improve rural accessibility:** The report acknowledges that families in rural areas face significant challenges accessing services due to transportation barriers and limited provider availability.

### ENHANCED COMMUNICATION

- **Increase outreach and education about the Children's Services Fund:** The assessment found a lack of awareness and understanding within the community about the CSF, its funding mechanisms, and the services it supports.
- **Clarify the funding decision-making process:** The report identifies concerns about transparency in the BCCSB's funding decisions.
- **Clarify the use of equity data:** While applications and reports collect information about equity, it's unclear how this data informs funding decisions.

### PROVIDER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- **Provide application support prior to the Request for Proposal (RFP) process:** Recognizing the challenges faced by smaller and new organizations in navigating the application process, the report suggests offering workshops and one-on-one assistance and holding pre-RFP workshops.
- **Support provider workforce development:** To sustain high-quality services, the report emphasizes the need to invest in workforce development.

## NEXT STEPS

Since the report was finalized, the BCCSB has already implemented changes based on the recommendations and suggestions. The BCCSB is discussing developing a strategic plan to prioritize and improve funding investments that improve equity and access to services for children, youth, and families in Boone County.

# BOONE COUNTY CHILDREN'S SERVICES BOARD MEMBERS

Leigh Spence, Chair  
Gregory Grupe, Vice Chair  
Connie Leipard, Treasurer  
Bob Aulgur  
Lynn Barnett  
Rodney Dixon  
Michele Kennett  
Sebastián Martínez Valdivia  
Wiley Miller

## BOONE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Kip Kendrick, Presiding Commissioner  
Justin Aldred, District I Commissioner  
Janet Thompson, District II Commissioner

## BOONE COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT STAFF (AS OF OCTOBER 2024)

Joanne Nelson, Director  
Kristin Cummins, Deputy Director  
Verna Laboy, Program Manager  
Victoria Woods, Program Manager - Health & Justice Coordinator  
Gina Jenkins, Data & Performance Analyst  
Kerby Webb, Program Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Specialist  
Michelle Thompson, Program Specialist  
Emilio Ayala Youngblood, Administrative Coordinator



SCAN THE QR TO VIEW THE  
FULL REPORT & LEARN  
MORE ABOUT THE BCCSF

