



Summary of Early Childhood Policy

**MO Dept. of Revenue
collects
\$225 million new
Tobacco Tax Revenue**



Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education's Coordinating Board for Early Childhood (CBEC)

- Commissioner of DESE
- Director of DHSS
- Director of DSS
- Director of Mental Health
- 2 Members of Joint Committee on Education
- Director of MO Head Start Collaborative Office
- Citizen- Early Childhood Development
- Citizen- Business
- Citizen- Local Head Start Provider
- Citizen- Higher Education
- Citizen- Faith
- Citizen- Medicine



Awards grants to early childhood development providers based on population of children ages 5 and younger

- Public and private schools
- Community child care providers
- Hospitals
- Universities & colleges
- United Way, Community foundations

Grant criteria:

- Improve outcomes
- Leverage matching \$
- Address needs of local community
- Sustainability



Grants must be used for:

- Health & Development Screenings
- Home Visitation programs like Parents as Teachers, Nurses for Newborns
- Preschool
- Professional Development
- Parent Education
- Smoking Cessation for Pregnant Women like Baby & Me – Tobacco Free



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Raise Your Hand for Kids (RYH4K) envisions a healthy and educated workforce that will help Missouri grow and prosper. To achieve this, RYH4K promotes family-centered, high-quality early learning and health investments that every child needs to become a productive, self-reliant and confident adult.

At 17 cents per pack, Missouri has the lowest tobacco tax in the nation. RYH4K is pursuing a ballot initiative to increase Missouri's tobacco tax by 50 cents and invest the new revenue in early childhood development and smoking cessation for pregnant mothers. RYH4K was formed by a non-partisan group of business leaders committed to funding education and health priorities for children so that our state can build the workforce needed for business growth and prosperity.

After identifying the tobacco tax as the best source for early childhood investment, RYH4K designed a blueprint outlining the necessary steps to win voter approval. First, we studied past tobacco tax increase attempts and the challenges each campaign faced. Then, we conducted polling to confirm voters' support for raising the tobacco tax and investing the revenue in early childhood programs. Next, we held community conversations across the state to gather input and gain support from local business leaders, educators and health professionals. Finally, we met with state and local elected officials to determine the best structure for collecting, distributing and overseeing tax revenue.

After 18 months of research, analysis and grassroots outreach, we crafted a policy that offers both the flexibility local communities need and the structure taxpayers demand to ensure fairness, value and accountability. In July 2015, we engaged the law firm of Graves Garrett, LLC to draft our ballot language and litigate legal challenges. On August 7, 2015, we filed the policy with the Missouri Secretary of State.

Over 250 individuals and organizations have endorsed and/or funded RYH4K, including:

- Alliance for Childhood Education
- August Busch III
- Clark-Fox Family Foundation
- Communities Creating Opportunity
- Deaconess Foundation
- Ferrell Capital
- Holland 1916
- LUME Institute
- Missouri AEYC
- Missouri Budget Project
- Missouri Health Advocacy Alliance
- Missouri PTA
- Missouri School Boards' Association
- Mother & Child Health Coalition
- Nurses for Newborns
- St. Louis Regional Early Childhood Council
- St. Louis Suburban Nurses Association
- U.S. Engineering
- U.S. Toy
- Youth In Need

On August 22, 2015, African American faith leaders and elected officials from St. Louis, including Rep. Courtney Curtis, Sen. Jamilah Nasheed, Sen. Maria Chappelle-Nadal, Councilwoman Hazel Erby and St. Louis City Treasurer Tishaura Jones, held a press conference endorsing our initiative.

The next step in our campaign, and the most critical, is collecting the required signatures from registered voters across Missouri to place the initiative on the November 8, 2016 ballot. Your support at this crucial phase will help secure \$225 million annually for health and education priorities for our youngest citizens and revitalize Missouri's workforce.