



ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship

Project:	Building Resilient Kids and Families across CO through Responsive Policy Solutions
Organization:	Colorado Children's Campaign (Denver, CO)
Location:	Remote
Stipend:	\$60,000 per year, plus health insurance and professional development funding
Start Date:	September 2021

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

The Colorado Children's Campaign is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research, policy, and advocacy organization based in Denver and committed since 1985 to realizing every chance for every child in Colorado. We advocate for the development and implementation of data-driven public policies that improve child well-being in health, education and early childhood learning and development. We do this by providing Coloradans with [trusted data and research on child well-being](#), organizing an [extensive statewide network of dedicated child advocates](#) and [serving as a voice for children and families](#) at the state capitol. Read about our legislative impacts during Colorado's 2020 session [here](#).

Every child has assets and needs specific to their circumstances, inclusive of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities, geography, and religion, as well as immigration, economic security, and family status. To effectively fight for what is right for every child—especially for those who face the most barriers to well-being—we recognize that our work must be guided by values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We know adopting these values is not enough; we are committed to [integrating them into our daily work](#) with intention, action and humility. To learn more about the Colorado Children's Campaign, visit www.coloradokids.org/.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Every Colorado family has been impacted by the disruptions of COVID-19. Specifically, the impacts of lockdowns, job loss and school closures on the mental and behavioral health of Colorado's children and parents are likely to be significant given challenges that existed prior to the pandemic. Colorado's maternal mortality rate rose sharply prior to COVID-19, with behavioral health struggles including suicide and accidental overdose serving as the major drivers. Instances of child abuse in Colorado have increased in recent years as well, and in 2018, the child abuse rate reached its highest level in nearly two decades. Experts predict that child maltreatment may be on the rise during the pandemic, even as preliminary data show that calls to the state's abuse and neglect hotline have fallen significantly throughout the pandemic. Among adolescents, more than one third of Colorado high school students reported symptoms of clinical depression in 2019; for all Colorado youth between the ages of 10 and 19, suicide has been identified as the leading cause of death in recent years.

The Leading Edge Fellow will bring strong analytical and written communications skills for a project focused on assessing and ultimately bolstering the mental and behavioral health of Colorado children and families in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project will include the development of a series of reports illustrating the mental and behavioral health of children and families before COVID-19, as well as the likely and/or documented effects of the pandemic. Most importantly, the briefs are expected to include responsive policy solutions with the potential to improve the mental health among those hardest hit by the pandemic and its economic and social effects. Ultimately, the Colorado Children's Campaign expects this project to soften the ground for legislation at the state level, benefitting Colorado children and their

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families and advancing social justice and equity among those who were impacted the most by the pandemic.

Throughout the course of the project, the fellow will be able to work with available data from state agencies as well as raw data from partner organizations conducting their own research. This report and other related work products will help stakeholders and state legislators think proactively about the mental and behavioral health needs of children and families in the years to come. In addition to researching and writing the briefs, the fellow will have the opportunity to present their research to audiences that could include state policymakers, mental health practitioners and other leaders in the child advocacy field, among others.

The fellow will be placed within the Children's Campaign's research team but will have the opportunity to work with colleagues across other teams within the organization. The Leading Edge Fellow will report to Children's Campaign Vice President for Research Initiatives, Sarah Hughes, and will also work closely with Manager of Research Initiatives, Erica Manoatl. This is a full-time commitment for the fellowship year, including dedicated time for professional development activities.

Responsibilities and Tasks:

- Work closely with the Children's Campaign's Vice President for Research Initiatives, Manager of Research Initiatives and other key staff, state agencies and partner organizations to develop the structure of the project
- Gather and analyze available state- and county-level data pertaining to mental and behavioral health of children and/or parents, with an emphasis on data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, age and income status, and data that reflect conditions during the pandemic
- Follow and incorporate emerging data and research pertaining to mental and behavioral health for families amid COVID-19
- Work closely with Policy and Communications staff at the Campaign to develop policy recommendations based on the findings of the reports, with the potential for the development of fact sheets, infographics and talking points for partners and/or state legislators

Qualifications:

- PhD in any field of the humanities or humanistic social sciences. Read more about eligible fields [here](#);
- Excellent writing and communication skills;
- Proficiency in qualitative analysis and familiarity with quantitative analysis (sophisticated statistical methods not required);
- Excellent organizational skills and demonstrated ability to meet deadlines;
- Experience with or interest in child well-being and racial equity work;
- Interest in state policy work;
- Alignment with the mission and values of the Colorado Children's Campaign

APPLICATIONS

- Information on the Leading Edge Fellowship Program: <https://www.acls.org/Competitions-and-Deadlines/Leading-Edge-Fellowships>
- All applications must be submitted through the ACLS Online Fellowship Application System (ofa.acls.org)
- Application deadline: 9pm EDT, May 6, 2021

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