Dear Friends,

In the 33 years since we were founded, we’ve mobilized to help countless children and their families in all types of disasters. But none has been as far-reaching and devastating as COVID-19, especially to children and families living in marginalized communities, many of them communities of color.

Initially, the higher rate of underlying health conditions in communities where Children’s Health Fund works pointed to their susceptibility, but we’ve always known that the root of their vulnerability is systemic inequalities.

That’s why, more than at any other time in the history of Children’s Health Fund, we understand the urgency to also acknowledge and address the social conditions that undermine the health and wellbeing of marginalized communities. Things like access to nutritious food, dignified housing, quality education, racial justice, and more all have a significant impact on children too.

The work ahead looms large, but we are grateful for people like you who also care so deeply about children, and we’ll continue to rely on your generous support as fellow advocates in this work, because we can’t do it alone.

The heartless and unjust murders of George Floyd and many other Black people has ignited the call for racial and social justice. Across our nation, communities have had to confront the painful reality of racism that robs Black people of life, humanity, and opportunity.

At Children’s Health Fund, this moment revealed that there is no place for neutrality and that to protect the health of all children, we all must explicitly confront racism, white supremacy, and anti-Blackness. We must take a stand and be a part of the solution.

Where we go from here was best articulated by our Assistant Vice President of Healthy and Ready to Learn Dr. Wenimo Okoya:

“...What does it mean to protect our children when we know the trauma they are experiencing now is compounded by similar injustices experienced by their parents, grandparents, and through generations?

The answer lies in healing. And to heal is to acknowledge there was a wound in the first place. We must give children and caregivers space, support, and tools to cultivate joy, self-worth, and care for themselves and their communities. And we must continue to put our resources into impacting the root social causes of health inequities and trauma, which lie in... things like poverty, housing, and punitive school systems.”

We cannot do this important work without allies. Thank you for your support of our work. And for simply caring and being aligned in hearts and minds.

Save the Date!
2020 Annual Benefit
October 7, 2020 | 8 pm ET

You are invited to our virtual benefit to build true health equity for children and families during COVID-19 and beyond.

Now is the time for change. Be a Changemaker for Children. Stay tuned for exciting updates!
In the early days of the pandemic, Children’s Health Fund quickly realized that the pandemic still would present unimaginable challenges to children and their families, in spite of how authorities downplayed the harm.

“Many of the inequities families were already experiencing are being magnified with this crisis. As fantastic as the push to virtual learning has been, it assumed that all kids and families were privileged with access to technology, which couldn’t be further from the truth. ...we are seeing tremendous food insecurity and financial instability.”
- Ginelle Wynter, Senior Site Manager for Healthy and Ready to Learn

Our school communities needed us to be there for them more than ever, and with your help, we were. Not a week after the closure of schools in mid-March, Healthy and Ready to Learn (HRL) took their operations online.

We held weekly virtual workshops for hundreds of educators and parents on topics such as coping through crisis and connecting to resources to advocate for their children’s needs. These provided guidance to school administrators and support to families facing tremendous difficulties brought on by this crisis such as emotional strain, financial challenges, and lost learning.

Support Beyond the Virtual Classroom

For families already experiencing poverty, homelessness, and instability, the changes brought on by the COVID-19 crisis have been devastating. Many parents and caregivers have lost their jobs or had their work hours cut, and are struggling to sustain their families.

A mother whose child is in our HRL program shared: “I am just trying to stay positive. This is not very positive. This whole thing has been very scary and I can’t even answer the questions my kids have.”

Supporting the mental health of families and educators became as much a priority as providing financial support for food and other basic needs — something we had never done before in the history of our organization!

Through our school partners, we have been identifying families and giving them gift cards to help those struggling to provide for their children. When families can’t meet their basic needs for food and shelter, being physically and mentally well is even more out of reach.

A Summer of Hope, Thanks to Your Support

This summer break we continue to support school staff who are creating virtual fun programming for children, and to provide grief counseling for families in severe need of these services.

It is also a time of intensive preparation and advocacy as we anticipate the needs of New York City children, families, and educators. We are creating programming and tools to support them in the fall to ensure learning continues and families have needed resources as they face continued hardship.

This year was so much more unpredictable and difficult than any child, caregiver, or educator could have imagined. They persevered and did their best to make it through, and with your invaluable help, they will continue thriving.

To access resources for school communities that support learning through the lens of health, visit our refreshed site at www.hrl.nyc.

Your Donations at Work

Our HRL initiative has provided 69 families with multiple rounds of financial assistance to help address their immediate unmet social needs.

Hundreds of parents, caregivers, and educators participated in 15 virtual learning and engagement events hosted by HRL, and more than 5,000 individuals accessed resources on the HRL Resource and Training Center.
The Call for Help That Changed Our Lives Forever

As most of the country retreated to their homes in response to the spread of coronavirus in March, our healthcare system found itself unprepared to face the worst public health crisis in a century. The 26 programs in the Children’s Health Fund (CHF) national network, which over a hundred thousand children and families depend on for care and support, were immediately facing a crisis.

As we learned more about the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, personal protective equipment became essential and in rare supply. Without it, many programs faced shutting down their operations and leaving many children and families across the country with nowhere to turn.

We heard this from the Arizona program you help us support, Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc.:

“...we are in a dire situation with personal protective equipment (PPE) and running out quickly. If we don’t get masks soon, we’ll have to shut down our operations...which means 32,000 children and adults we see in our clinics would need to turn to hospital ERs for care, and they are beyond capacity.”

- Dr. Darlene Melk, Director of Community Medicine

Upon hearing this desperate call for help, Children’s Health Fund quickly took action and established the COVID-19 Community Emergency Response and Recovery Fund. Thanks to your generosity we were able to provide clinics with PPE and also launch a massive COVID-19 screening and testing effort — not a small feat in the face of severe testing equipment and kit shortages. In April and May, CHF-supported programs screened more than 700,000 and directly tested more than 100,000 women, men, and children. Since that time, well over one million patients have received coronavirus screening and testing services from our clinical partners.

Adapting Bravely to a New World

Through our many years of working in marginalized communities, we know that systemic inequities stemming from racism, classism, and other injustices, have deepened their health vulnerability and lessened their access to expedient and high-quality healthcare.

Given this reality, mobilizing telehealth services took on critical importance in continuing to care for communities grappling with these inequities. Helped by the guidance of our network experts, and your support, nearly 80% of our programs were able to transition to telehealth services! For small children with medical conditions or in need of time-sensitive vaccinations, medical programs continued to provide in-person services for the most urgent cases.

We Are Doubling Down

Medical providers are doubling down for the tough road ahead but they remain optimistic. “Being able to be the patients’ advocate during this unforeseen time has allowed me to gain their trust, ease their fears, educate, and stand up for them,” says Registered Nurse Terrie Whitfield of the Le Bonheur on the Move mobile clinic we support in Tennessee.

We are not out of this crisis. Cases of COVID-19 are rising dramatically in many states. The communities we serve are still bearing the brunt of infections, loss, trauma, and socio-economic impact. This social injustice emboldens our efforts. Thank you for standing up with us for thousands of children and families during this darkest of hours.
Thank you!
We are so grateful for the individuals, corporations, and foundations who have generously supported our COVID-19 Community Emergency Response and Recovery Fund. These donations helped us get closer to our $5 million goal!

**Major Foundation and Corporate Supporters:**
- PepsiCo Foundation
- BlackRock Gives Social Impact Fund
- Booth Ferris Foundation
- Centerbridge Foundation
- Charles A. Frueauff Foundation
- Marymount Philanthropy and Community Transformation Program, at Marymount School of New York
- MetLife Foundation
- Novartis US Foundation
- NYC COVID-19 Response and Impact Fund in The New York Community Trust
- Robin Hood
- The Carson Family Charitable Trust
- The Deerfield Partnership Foundation
- The Lawrence Foundation
- United Way of New York City COVID-19 Community/ BET Fund
- United Way of New York City COVID-19 Community Fund

“Thank you for supporting our communities and those most in need during this challenging time! We appreciate everything that you do to keep families safe with resources that they need, along with your efforts to help families directly impacted by this disease.”
- Donors Andrew and Sophie, Colorado

**Major Individual Supporters:**
- Dan Levinson
- Colin Moore
- Lily Safra
- The Hexberg Family Foundation
- Jane and Garry B. Trudeau
- Visionary Women