

EVENT NEWS

Soup Sunday: So nice, we host it twice!



Ask anyone. Soup Sunday is one of THE MOST FUN events in Arkansas. We even won the Arkansas Times Best Charity Event, three years in a row!

Northwest Arkansas Soup Sunday is February 2 at the Rogers Convention Center from 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. Our committee is led by Honorary Event Chair, Kayln Chance and Event Chair, Channing Barker. Soup's On!

Central Arkansas Soup Sunday is happening on March 2 at The Venue at Westwind in North Little

Rock from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Co-chairs Dr. Gene Lu and Kevin Shalin are leading an engaged volunteer committee making SOUPER plans for this year's event. **Sponsorships and tickets:** aradvocates.org/events

Proceeds from both events support AACF's mission to ensure that all Arkansas children and their families have the resources and opportunities to lead healthy and productive lives.

Want to support Soup Sunday using your Donor Advised Fund? We can help! Call and we'll provide a quick summary of the tax deductible portion of your sponsorship and the fair market value of your tickets, no matter what level of sponsorship you're considering.

Donate to Support Advocacy

Visit www.aradvocates.org/donate
Text ADVOCATES to 44834

Make a larger impact with a gift of stock or transfer from your IRA

Donate through a Donor Advised Fund
Help us plan for the future by including a bequest to AACF in your estate plans

Fran Carter **Esther Schroeder**
501-454-5014 501-258-6836

DID YOU KNOW?

Although most gifts to Arkansas Advocates come in the form of cash and check, there are other ways to give. You can make a donation of stock or transfer from your IRA with beneficial tax implications. For more information, contact Fran or Esther or your financial advisor.

The year's not over yet. Make your gift today to support Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families!

Advocacy Matters



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Where do we go from here?

At Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families, we believe in a brighter future for every child in Arkansas. But the challenges are clear: Arkansas's children face some of the highest rates of poverty and food insecurity in the nation. Currently, one in five children lives in poverty, and we continue to struggle with some of the highest rates of teen births, infant mortality, and maternal mortality in the country.

These problems show a bigger issue: too many families lack the support they need to thrive. We believe public funds should be used to help kids and families first. Thanks to your support, we're working to make this vision a reality by pushing for policies that help every child get a strong start in life.

As we look ahead, we believe that every dollar of public investment should prioritize children and families. And with your continued support, we're advocating for policies to make that vision a reality.

Here are just a few of the critical investments Arkansas needs to help children thrive:

- Comprehensive mental health support in public schools
- Expanded access to maternal health care
- Universal free school meals
- Expanded, reliable internet access
- Affordable childcare and early education options

Your support can make a real difference in children's lives. Together, we're working for an Arkansas where every child can grow up healthy, safe, and ready to succeed. Thank you for standing with us.

Exciting news!

Long-time supporters Cathy and Denton Seilhan have offered a \$100,000 matching challenge to help us grow our impact. Every multi-year pledge or increased gift will be matched, up to \$100,000, doubling your support for our important work!

You can help us be ready for the Legislative Session

Your year-end gift helps Arkansas Advocates stay flexible enough to focus on our agenda and respond to surprises during the Legislative Session. Together we can fulfill our mission – helping Arkansas children and families have the resources and opportunities to lead healthy and productive lives and to realize their full potential.

Make the choice today to be an advocate.



Be Social

- facebook.com/aradvocates
- twitter.com/aacf
- [@aradvocates](https://instagram.com/aradvocates)

AACF Issue Areas

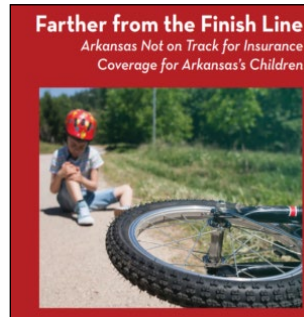
AACF focuses on key issue areas to help improve child well-being in Arkansas.

- Child welfare
- Economic security
- Early childhood and K-12 education
- Health care
- Hunger
- Immigrant children and families
- Juvenile justice
- Racial equity
- Tax and budget

LATEST PUBLICATION

Farther from the Finish Line

Every year, our Finish Line report provides a snapshot of the previous year's progress toward ensuring all children have insurance coverage in our state. Last year was an uncommon year for health coverage in Arkansas, making it important that recent context is included in the "story" of what's happening for children and families' health. Unfortunately, Arkansas is not on track for insurance coverage for Arkansas's children. Find this and other reports from Arkansas Advocates at aradvocates.org/publications



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STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Christin Harper

Policy Director



Christin Harper joined the Arkansas Advocates team as the Policy Director in August 2024. She previously worked for the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for 15 years, most recently serving as the Assistant Director for Infrastructure and Specialized Programs. In that role, she oversaw child welfare programs such as policy, professional development, quality assurance, education, and transitional youth services. Prior to that, Christin worked for the DHS Office of Policy and Planning as the Senior Policy Analyst evaluating social services programs and coordinating initiatives in the areas of childcare and mental health.

Christin grew up in North Little Rock. She completed her undergraduate studies at Vanderbilt University and earned a Master of Public Service degree from the University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service.

2024 Friends of Children

Celebrating child advocates

Our 2024 Friends of Children Annual Luncheon was a wonderful success! We are especially thankful for our Presenting Sponsor Entergy Arkansas.

We are always humbled by the show of support for our work. We are grateful to Senator Linda Chesterfield and Ben Goodwin for their work on behalf of our state's children and families. Sen. Chesterfield is a retired school teacher and has served as an Arkansas legislator since 2003. Ben Goodwin is the Executive Director of Our House, which serves Central Arkansas's homeless and near-homeless families and individuals.

We are especially thankful to the family of the late Judge Wiley Branton, Jr. We were proud to celebrate his legacy of child- and equity-centered work.



Go to www.youtube.com/aradvocates to watch the honoree videos.

Luncheon Photos



Ben Goodwin and Keesa Smith-Brantley

Mayor Frank Scott and Senator Linda Chesterfield



Stephanie Branton and Judge Joyce Williams Warren (Ret.)



AACF Staff

For more AACF event photos, visit flickr.com/photos/aacf.