In 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) published the Blueprint for Children: How the Next President Can Build a Foundation for a Healthy Future. The Blueprint outlined critical programs and policies to advance child health over the next four years.

Two years later, the AAP has revisited the comprehensive recommendations made in the Blueprint and the progress made to date.

Looking ahead, the AAP will continue to pursue opportunities to advance bold new policies to improve the health of all children and defend the gains made thus far.

The Academy’s 2019 federal advocacy priorities include the following:

- **Preserving and improving children’s access to quality health care.** The Academy will continue to vigorously protect children’s health insurance coverage by defending Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The AAP will oppose legislative, regulatory, and administrative efforts that may undermine access to health care, including barriers to eligibility and enrollment for families such as work requirements. The Academy will advocate for policies that address inequities in Medicaid payment, so children and families can access needed providers and services, and work to improve access to Medicaid services by simplifying eligibility processes, reducing bureaucratic barriers to care, and streamlining enrollment.

- **Supporting immigrant child health.** The Academy will continue to oppose the separation and detention of immigrant families and to highlight the short- and long-term harms of separation and detention on child health. The AAP will also oppose harmful regulatory or legislative changes to immigration policy, such as modifications to the public charge rules and standards for the detention of immigrant children. The AAP will advocate for the appropriate care and treatment of children while they are in federal custody, for the protection of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and for a permanent solution for DACA youth. The AAP will promote access to health care for all children, no matter where they or their parents were born.

- **Reducing firearm-related deaths and injuries.** Achieving bipartisan solutions to firearm-related injuries and deaths remains challenging but is nevertheless essential. The Academy will educate policymakers about the consequences of continued inaction. The AAP will advocate for common sense policies, such as adequate funding for public health research by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and more robust federal background check databases.
• **Advocating for robust federal funding for child health policies.** The Academy will continue to urge the federal government to put children first in spending decisions and increase federal spending on child health programs. The AAP will demonstrate the better outcomes and cost savings that result from investing in child health rather than addressing challenges later, in adulthood.

• **Ensuring substance use treatment and prevention meet the needs of children.** The Academy will advocate for federal policies that address children impacted by substance use and the opioid epidemic, from newborns born with neonatal abstinence syndrome to adolescents struggling with opioid dependence. The AAP will also continue its work to prevent youth initiation of and exposure to tobacco products, including e-cigarettes.

• **Protecting children from abuse and neglect, and helping families heal.** The Academy will urge Congress to strengthen and renew the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and increase funding for its programs. In addition, the Academy will provide expert input as the federal government implements the Family First Prevention Services Act. This landmark bipartisan law, enacted in 2018, makes critical reforms to the U.S. child welfare system to maximize child and family health and well-being.

• **Ensuring children with disabilities thrive.** The AAP will advocate for the reauthorization of several important pieces of federal legislation that provide vital supports for children with disabilities. These include: the Autism Cares Act, which provides funding for federal Autism research, programming, and provider training; the PREEMIE Act, the only federal law dedicated to preventing premature birth and its consequences; and the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act, which provides grants related to heritable disorders.

• **Improving child health globally.** The AAP will continue to advocate for global health funding, which has been consistently targeted for disproportionate cuts. In addition, the AAP is working to integrate early childhood development, child protection, and non-communicable disease programming at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the CDC. The Academy will also defend the role of the U.S. State Department in supporting international refugee law.

• **Supporting and growing the pediatric workforce.** The AAP will advocate for Congress to address critical shortages of pediatric subspecialists by passing legislation to fund loan relief for pediatric subspecialists who work in underserved areas.

• **Responding effectively to the needs of children in disasters.** The Academy will continue to push for passage and implementation of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Advancing Innovation Act. AAP’s priorities for this legislation include reauthorizing the National Advisory Committee on Children and Disasters and authorizing the CDC’s Children’s Preparedness Unit.

• **Protecting child nutrition programs.** As Congress works to reauthorize the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Academy will continue advocating for legislation that protects SNAP for millions of children. The AAP’s ongoing advocacy for key nutrition programs will include support for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and breastfeeding programs.

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**With the engagement and expertise of its 67,000 members, the AAP looks forward to making great strides in federal child health in 2019.**