



Press Release

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Child Advocate Hails New Report to Help Boost Oklahoma's Economy

Oklahoma City, OK – What happens at the State Capitol plays a big roll in whether Oklahoma prospers according to Anne Roberts, Executive Director of the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. A new report has just been released by the Center for the Study of Social Policy outlining research-based policies that can help states move closer to the American dream. That report, *Policy Matters*, is the first of its kind to offer a state-by-state analysis of effective policy strategies for each state to consider.

Ms. Roberts explains, "Oklahomans are famous the world over for our response to those in need. We care deeply for our children and for each other. Working on policies is simply a different way of ensuring that all Oklahomans will have opportunities to prosper. Instead of working on a case-by-case basis with individual children and families – like building a suit of armor to protect each child – a good state level policy will put systems in place to ensure that all of Oklahoma's children are protected."

The new report finds that Oklahoma has made great progress in the areas of early childhood education, which will, in turn, result in a better-prepared and productive workforce. But the state can do more to ensure the economic stability of its communities by implementing a mix of proven strategies, including providing better protection against unfair and abusive lending practices, and changing some of its child support laws.

The *Policy Matters* report suggests that significant changes over the past decade have jeopardized the stability of Oklahoma's communities and families. In particular, Oklahoma has witnessed a reduction of employer-based health insurance benefits. "Oklahoma's economic engine needs a boost from innovative policy solutions that have a proven track record," states Roberts. "The *Policy Matters* report provides us with a blueprint for responsible management of our state economy."

The *Policy Matters* report outlines solutions in the areas of employment, education and health. The Center for the Study of Social Policy hopes that through this analysis, advocates, community leaders and state lawmakers can identify opportunities for pursuing an organized policy agenda that will strengthen communities throughout their states.

To access the Oklahoma State Policy Brief, go to www.oica.org, and click on Policy Matters.

For more information about the report, contact: Anne Roberts, Executive Director 405-236-5437 ext 110 at the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy or cell at 405-627-9877. The full report is available at www.policymatters.us on January 10th.