



Kathleen Joyce R. Lamorena <krlamorena@gdoe.net>

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## Fwd: [EMAIL EXTERNAL] Strengthening America's Families Through Strategic Focus

2 messages

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**Dr. Kenneth E. Swanson (Superintendent)** <keswanson@gdoe.net>

Wed, Sep 17, 2025 at 6:41 AM

To: GEB <geb@gdoe.net>

Cc: Angelina Marie C Lape <aclape@gdoe.net>

Dear Board,

Please take the time to read the email here and follow the link in the text. It takes you to new policy that may have an impact on our operation of Head Start. At the very least it injects US political agendas directly into our classrooms. I recommend taking time to reflect on the mandates and their local implications.

ES

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Office of Head Start** <HeadStartinfo@acf.hhs.gov>

Date: Tue, Sep 16, 2025 at 11:58 PM

Subject: [EMAIL EXTERNAL] Strengthening America's Families Through Strategic Focus

To: Dr. K. Erik SN Swanson Ph.D <keswanson@gdoe.net>



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**  
Office of Head Start

### **Strengthening America's Families Through Strategic Focus**

Dear Grantees,

The American people have entrusted the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) with significant resources to support vulnerable populations across our nation. Today, I'm announcing a new strategic alignment initiative that will coordinate our efforts across all programs to maximize impact. This coordinated approach allows us to concentrate funding on proven interventions, address complex human services challenges holistically, and achieve measurable results for children and families in communities throughout America.

Priorities within the new strategic alignment initiative include promoting quality early learning environments and improved child outcomes, promoting work and self-sufficiency,

supporting family formation, ensuring efficient use of taxpayer dollars, and emphasizing personal responsibility. For more information and to learn about each priority and guiding principle within ACF's new strategic alignment initiative, please visit <https://acf.gov/about/acf-vision-mission-values>.

Thank you.

/ Andrew Gradison /

Andrew Gradison  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Administration for Children and Families



The Office of Head Start (OHS) supports children's growth from birth to age 5 through services focused on early learning and development, health, and family well-being.

 [Visit Headstart.gov](https://headstart.gov)

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K. Erik Swanson, PhD  
Superintendent  
Guam Department of Education  
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[keswanson@gdoe.net](mailto:keswanson@gdoe.net)

*We are all one crew, there are no passengers on this journey.*

Guam Department of Education 2025

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**Maria A. Gutierrez** <[magutierrez@gdoe.net](mailto:magutierrez@gdoe.net)>  
To: "Dr. Kenneth E. Swanson (Superintendent)" <[keswanson@gdoe.net](mailto:keswanson@gdoe.net)>  
Cc: Angelina Marie C Lape <[aclape@gdoe.net](mailto:aclape@gdoe.net)>, GEB <[geb@gdoe.net](mailto:geb@gdoe.net)>

Wed, Sep 17, 2025 at 6:46 AM

Thank you for sharing. Confirming receipt of this email.

MGutierrez

[Quoted text hidden]

To view this discussion visit <https://groups.google.com/a/gdoe.net/d/msgid/geb/CAKc3-o6r3hx3AVZh77aa%2Bkh0x%3DjsNAX%3D-p3Cgnt1hFAxKRyyDw%40mail.gmail.com>.

# ACF Vision, Mission, Values, Priorities, & Guiding Principles

Listen

## Strengthening America's Families through Strategic Focus

The American people have entrusted ACF with significant resources to support vulnerable populations across our nation. Today, I'm announcing a new strategic alignment initiative that will coordinate our efforts across all programs to maximize impact. This coordinated approach allows ACF to concentrate funding on proven interventions, address complex human services challenges holistically, and achieve measurable results for children and families in communities throughout America.

At ACF, we recognize that vulnerable individuals need paths to economic independence and stronger family units. In alignment with the Make America Healthy Again vision, we embrace the fundamental principle that the best economic program is a job, and the best social program is a family.

Consistent with our vision, ACF is sharpening its focus on improving outcomes in child welfare, strengthening family formation, and enhancing early childhood education. We are prioritizing work as the primary pathway to self-sufficiency, recognizing that employment not only provides income but instills dignity, responsibility, and opportunity for American families. We will expand support for proven practices and newly designed programs that promote marriage and family formation, recognizing the critical role of fathers and the importance of two-parent households in fostering economic and social well-being.

To ensure accountability to taxpayers, ACF is enhancing its oversight mechanisms and reinforcing fiscal responsibility across all programs. Each ACF office will evaluate funding allocations through the lens of our strategic objectives. In an environment where worthy activities exceed available funding, this review process is increasingly vital to ensure we make new investments consistent with our priorities and ensure we are paying for real results. ACF will empower its programs to make funding decisions that reflect our core priorities: promoting quality early learning environments and improved child outcomes, promoting work and self-sufficiency, supporting family formation, ensuring efficient use of taxpayer dollars, and emphasizing personal responsibility.

By establishing clear priorities that align with HHS' vision for a healthy America, we demonstrate to the American public our serious commitment to earning their trust and investing strategically in our nation's future prosperity.

## Vision

Children, youth, families, individuals and communities who are resilient, safe, healthy, and economically secure

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## Mission

To foster health and well-being by providing federal leadership, partnership and resources for the compassionate and effective delivery of human services

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## Values

- **Family & Community First**...by strengthening families, empowering parents, and partnering with communities — including faith-based organizations—for the effective delivery of human services
  - **Personal Responsibility & Work**...by supporting pathways to employment, self-sufficiency, and long-term well-being
  - **Federalism & Local Leadership**...through partnership with states, territories, and Tribes; reducing administrative burdens; and avoiding one-size-fits-all approaches so decisions can be made closest to the people we serve
  - **Program Integrity & Rule of Law**...by protecting eligibility, preventing waste, fraud, and abuse, and faithfully administering programs consistent with statute and congressional intent
  - **Results & Evidence**...by focusing on outcomes that matter for children and families, using data and proven practices to improve performance and discontinue what doesn't work
  - **Fiscal Stewardship**...of taxpayer resources, prioritizing high-impact investments, living within budgets, and demanding transparency in costs and results
  - **Collaboration & Accountability**...working across ACF and with partners in good faith, communicating clearly, owning our commitments, and being answerable for our actions as public servants
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## Priorities

**Promoting Quality Early Learning Environments and Improved Child Outcomes**

ACF recognizes that a strong foundation in early childhood is critical to lifelong success. We will prioritize partnerships and investments in high-quality early learning programs and research to help foster the cognitive and physical development of children. By supporting programs that improve child health and well-being, ACF aims to ensure that the children served by its programs have the opportunity to thrive. This includes promoting evidence-based practices in early childhood to ensure children are prepared to succeed in school. These investments will respect parents' preferences, recognizing that parents are the primary decision-makers in their children's lives. Through these efforts, ACF reaffirms its commitment to building a brighter future for America's children.

### **Promoting Work and Self-Sufficiency**

Work is not just a means of income; it instills dignity, responsibility, and opportunity. ACF will prioritize programs and policies that promote work as the primary pathway to self-sufficiency and economic independence.

- **Work Requirements:** ACF will prioritize moving work-eligible individuals off government assistance and into meaningful work activities, especially employment.
- **State Innovation:** States will be encouraged to design programs that move individuals from dependency to independence, with a focus on measurable employment outcomes.
- **Outcome-Based Funding:** ACF will prioritize funding for programs that demonstrate measurable reductions in dependency and align with the Administration's goals of economic independence.

### **Promoting Marriage and Family Formation**

Strong families are the cornerstone of a healthy society. ACF will prioritize initiatives that promote marriage, family formation, and stability.

- **Marriage as a Foundation:** ACF will support programs that encourage marriage, recognizing its importance in fostering economic and social well-being.
- **Fatherhood Initiatives:** ACF will promote fatherhood and emphasize the critical and necessary role of fathers in the lives of their children.
- **Two-Parent Families:** Programs that encourage the formation and stability of two-parent families will be prioritized, recognizing their importance in fostering economic and family well-being.
- **Supporting Life:** Programs that recognize and support the value of human life will be prioritized.

### **Gold-Standard Research**

Research projects funded by ACF will reflect the standards of **HHS's Gold Standard Science** [↗](#) (PDF).

- **Gold Standard Science:** The key tenets require science be conducted in a manner that is: (i) reproducible; (ii) transparent; (iii) communicative of error and uncertainty; (iv) collaborative and interdisciplinary; (v) skeptical of its findings and assumptions; (vi) structured for falsifiability of hypotheses; (vii) subject to unbiased peer review; (viii) accepting of negative results as positive outcomes; and (ix) without conflicts of interest.
- **Value Alignment:** ACF funded research projects will align with the values outlined in this priority document.

### **Ensuring Value Alignment in Funding**

ACF is committed to ensuring that taxpayer dollars support organizations and programs that advance our core priorities. To strengthen this commitment, ACF will implement a systematic approach to evaluating alignment between grant programs and ACF priorities.

- **Value Alignment Assessment:** ACF will develop and implement a process to assess whether potential and current grant programs are aligned to ACF's core priorities.
- **Funding Prioritization:** When making funding decisions, ACF will prioritize programs that demonstrably support:
  - Work as a pathway to self-sufficiency
  - Marriage and family formation
  - Biological definitions of sex
  - Compliance with immigration laws
  - Efficient use of taxpayer dollars

### **Eliminating DEI and Gender Ideology in Funded Programs**

ACF will ensure, to the extent permitted by law, including any relevant court orders, that its programs and funding align with the Administration's commitment to merit, equality, and biological truth.

- **DEI-Free Programs:** To the extent permitted by law, including any relevant court orders, ACF will not fund programs that promote divisive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) ideologies. Programs must focus on measurable outcomes that align with ACF's mission.
- **Ending Gender Ideology:** To the extent permitted by law, including any relevant court orders, ACF will not support programs that advance gender ideology, especially the teaching of gender ideology to children.

### **Ending Taxpayer Subsidization of Open Borders**

ACF will ensure that federal benefits are reserved for eligible individuals and families, in compliance with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) and other federal laws.

- **Eligibility Enforcement:** ACF will enforce strict eligibility requirements to ensure that those who are ineligible, including aliens who are not “qualified aliens” do not receive federal public benefits, to the extent permitted by law including any relevant court orders.
  - **Data Integrity:** ACF will require states and grantees to submit accurate data, to ensure compliance with federal law.
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## Guiding Principles

ACF’s unified strategy is guided by the following principles:

1. **Work as the Foundation of Economic Independence:** Work is the primary pathway to self-sufficiency and personal dignity.
2. **Families as the Cornerstone of Society:** Strong, stable families are essential to the well-being of individuals and communities.
3. **Personal Responsibility:** Individuals must take responsibility for their own success, with government assistance serving as a temporary support.
4. **Efficient Use of Taxpayer Dollars:** Federal funds must be used responsibly to support programs that align with ACF’s mission and priorities.

**Parental Authority.** ACF believes parents are the primary decision-makers in their children’s education and should have full authority over what their children are taught. Policies and curricula should emphasize knowledge, critical thinking, and civic responsibility, without imposing ideological agendas. Families should have transparency and choice, ensuring that education strengthens children’s skills and character rather than advancing political or social ideologies. To the fullest extent of its authority under the law, ACF programs will defend the constitutional rights of parents to direct the religious upbringing of their children, including parents’ right to protect their children from exposure to content that burdens the exercise of their religious beliefs.

**Conflicts of Interest.** The public must know that unbiased science—evaluated through a transparent process and insulated from conflicts of interest—guides the recommendations of our human services agencies and ACF-funded programs and activities carried out by ACF’s partners. ACF will prioritize partnering with organizations that do not present conflicts of interest or otherwise compromise their objectivity or integrity in carrying out ACF-funded programs

**Ending Crime and Disorder on America’s Streets:** ACF will increase competition among grantees in relevant programs, such as the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, through broadening the applicant



pool and holding grantees to higher standards of effectiveness. These standards include increasing public safety and reducing homelessness through promoting treatment, recovery, and self-sufficiency, rather than failed “housing first” policies. ACF funds will not be used to support poorly defined so-called “harm reduction” activities, consistent with [guidance on July 29, 2025 provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#) (PDF)).

It is a priority of ACF not to support programs for grantees that operate drug injection sites for illegal drugs or so called "safe consumption sites," knowingly distribute drug paraphernalia, or permit use or distribution of illegal drugs on property under their control.

To the extent allowable by law, ACF intends to give priority for relevant grants in States and municipalities that actively meet the below criteria: (i) enforce prohibitions on open illicit drug use, (ii) enforce prohibitions on urban camping, and loitering; (iii) enforce prohibitions on urban squatting; (iv) enforce, and where necessary, adopt, standards that address individuals who are a danger to themselves or others and suffer from serious mental illness or substance use disorder, or who are living on the streets and cannot care for themselves, through assisted outpatient treatment or by moving them into treatment centers or other appropriate facilities via civil commitment or other available means, to the maximum extent permitted by law; or (v) substantially implement and comply with, to the extent required, the registration and notification obligations of the Sex Offender Registry and Notification Act, particularly in the case of registered sex offenders with no fixed address, including by adequately mapping and checking the location of homeless sex offenders.

ACF will implement these priorities consistent with applicable laws, regulations, court orders, and any required procedures.

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