NEW JERSEY
CHILDREN'S
TRUST FUND
JOIN US TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

2025-2026 Prospectus

INVESTING IN SAFE AND HEALTHY CHILDHOODS

https://njchildrenstrustfund.org



WHAT WE BELIEVE

- All children have the right to grow up safe, healthy, and connected.
- Child abuse and neglect are preventable.
- Investment in community innovation, coordinated efforts, and the use of evidence-supported strategies are the keys to successfully preventing child maltreatment in our home state.

WHAT WE DO

The New Jersey Children's Trust Fund (NJCTF) is a public/private partnership created by law to fund child abuse and neglect prevention, identification, and treatment programs in New Jersey. We raise funds through a combination of strategies, and utilize them to provide grants for community-based and statewide initiatives that support the conditions that allow families to thrive and children to grow up healthy and safe.

HOW WE DO IT

The NJ CTF is primarily funded through an income tax checkoff, allowing New Jersey residents to designate a portion of their tax return to help prevent child abuse and neglect. The Trust Fund is also able to collect private and corporate donations to fund innovative child abuse prevention projects. The NJ Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect—a partnership of stakeholders with representation from government, non-profits, and children's advocacy organizations—is responsible for approving expenditures from the fund, and a mechanism for in-community mini-grants is being developed to support local prevention projects.

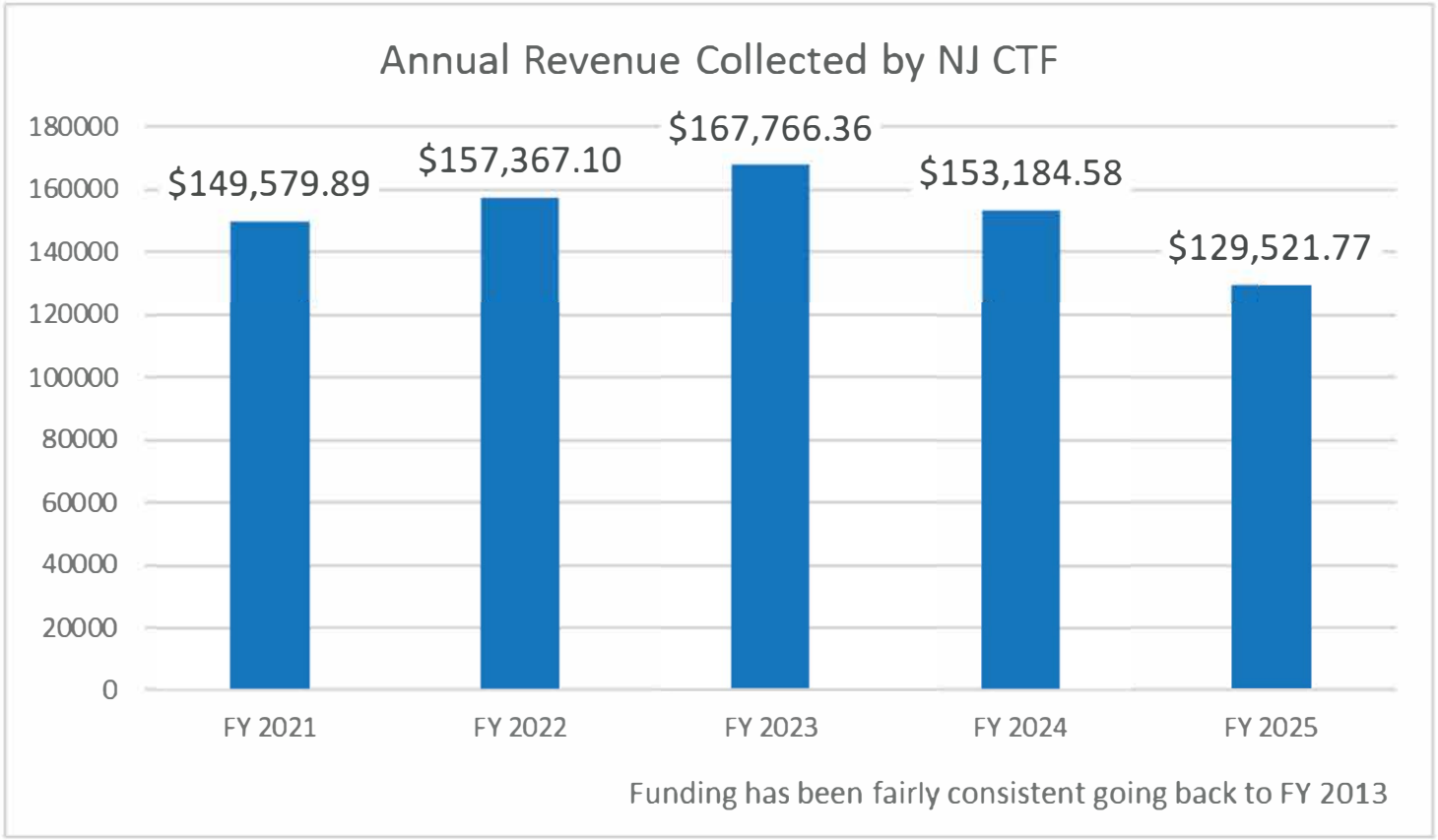
History of New Jersey's Children's Trust Fund

New Jersey's Children's Trust Fund (NJ CTF) was established by law in 1985 (NJ Rev Stat § 54A:9-25.4) as a means of funding child abuse and neglect prevention initiatives. New Jersey was among the first states to implement a trust and prevention fund for child abuse and neglect; Kansas was the first state to do so in 1980, and today, every state, Puerto Rico, and Washington D.C. have a legislatively created children's trust fund.

The idea to establish a dedicated funding source for child maltreatment prevention was originated by Ray E. Helfer, a Michigan pediatrician and Vice President for the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, who reasoned that other dedicated funds already existed to support our nation's highways and transportation infrastructure, wildlife conservation, and open space protection. Dr. Helfer argued that the care and protection of our nation's children was just as important a goal.

Children's trust funds vary from state to state in how they're organized, how they're funded, and what prevention initiatives they support. The one constant is the drive to protect children from abuse and neglect, and the opportunities for partnership between diverse corporate, governmental, philanthropic and individual stakeholders to see that vision become a reality.

Nearly every state, including New Jersey, is a member of the national Children's Trust Fund Alliance, which advances best practices in the development and use of charitable dollars in order to support child maltreatment prevention initiatives.

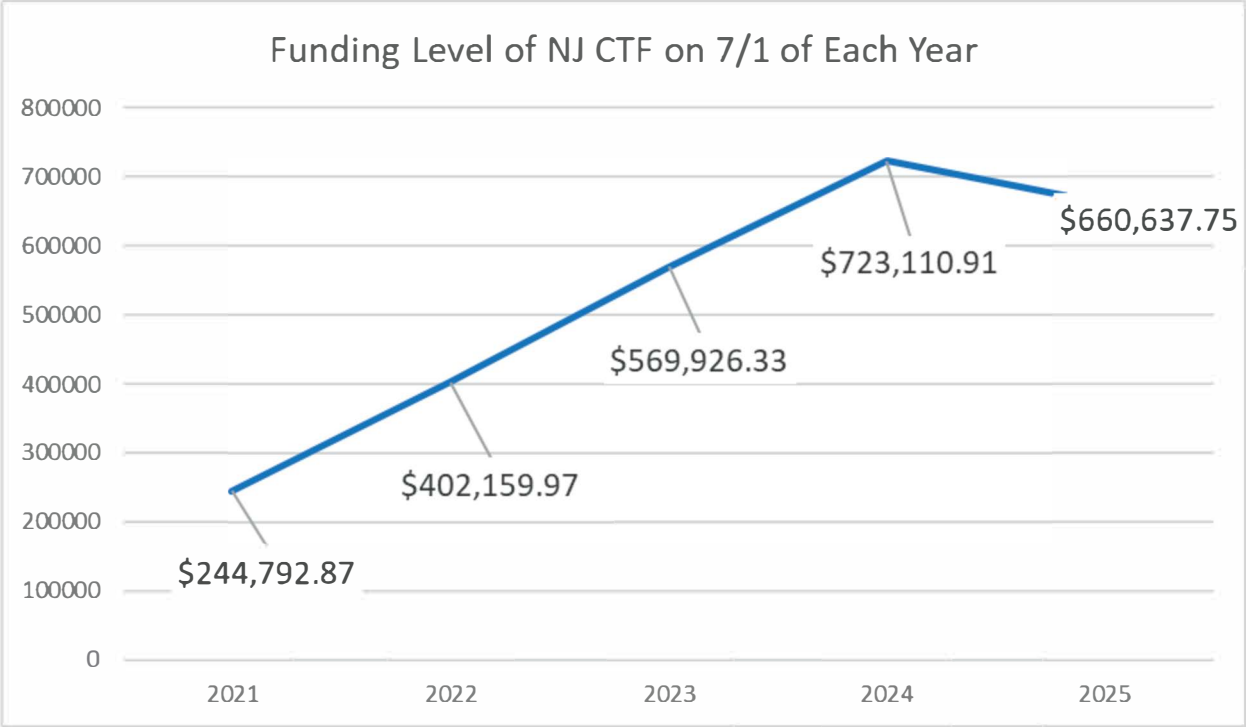


Impact of New Jersey's Children's Trust Fund

Since its inception, the New Jersey Children's Trust Fund (NJ CTF) has supported important, innovative projects to advance the practice of child welfare in the Garden State. Recent funding priorities include:

- FY 2018 – Pilot Fatherhood Engagement Initiative in Middlesex, Mercer, and Monmouth counties, which laid the foundation for the incorporation of family voice and fatherhood practice across child welfare in NJ.
- FY 2019 – Predict, Align Prevent Data Evaluation project to determine communities in need of additional prevention support.
- FY 2019 – Collaborative Safety Initiative which applies safety science pioneered by aeronautics and heavy industry to advance systems evolution in child welfare.
- FY 2024 – Review of NJ's Mandated Reporter Training to align curriculum toward the goal of supporting families in need, rather than imposing unnecessary and traumatic child protective services interventions.

Since FY 2018, the NJ CTF has invested nearly $1 Million in child abuse prevention programming in NJ.



Economic Effect of Child Abuse Prevention

Beyond society's collective responsibility to protect children from harm, many studies indicate a high return-on-investment for proactive child abuse prevention efforts. A 2024 Chapin Hall analysis estimated the national annual cost of child maltreatment to be **$83.3 billion in direct and indirect costs** with the lifetime cost of substantiated child abuse and neglect cases estimated at **$563 billion**, costs that could be greatly reduced by preventing child abuse in the first place.

Conversely, a study published in July 2025 in the Journal of the American Medical Association reviewed the potential economic effect of Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) in four states – Kansas, Montana, South Carolina, and Wisconsin. This study identified cost savings to those states of **$216 billion** over the adult's lifetime for adults who experienced 3 or more Positive Childhood Experiences, and adults who report experiencing 6 or 7 PCEs were **64% likely to have received a college degree, and 117% more likely to earn a salary of $50,000 or more.**

Together, we can keep children safe, healthy, and connected.

ROADMAP TO PREVENTION

The NJ CTF aims to make an impact on the wellbeing of children in the state by supporting innovative programming with a foundation in the ***Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework*** – a research-informed approach which focuses on engaging families, programs, and communities in building five key protective factors:

- **Parental Resilience**, meaning the ability for parents to recover from, and cope with, difficult life experiences;
- **Social Connections**, or positive relationships we have with other people that decrease our stress and build a supportive network;
- **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**, meaning that parents have a general understanding of age-appropriate parenting techniques and developmental milestones;
- **Social and Emotional Competence of Children**, meaning that children have opportunities, through interactions with family members and other children, to communicate, to recognize and regulate their emotions, and to develop the foundations for healthy relationships later in life; and
- **Concrete Support in Times of Need**, which refers to access to supportive services that reduce familial stress, meet material needs, and help families to focus their energies on nurturing, and not just surviving.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Everybody in NJ has a role and the ability to participate in efforts to keep children safe, healthy, and connected, and to keep families strong and nurturing. Child maltreatment carries many significant societal costs: children who are abused or neglected have greater lifetime risks of physical illnesses and socioeconomic challenges, including higher rates of heart disease, cancer, depression, substance misuse, lower educational and career attainment, and decreased overall lifespan. By investing in children, you are investing in the future of New Jersey.

- **Individual Donors:** To make a donation, go to njchildrenstrustfund.org
- **Corporate and Foundation donors are welcomed and encouraged!** Please contact DCF-NJCTF@dcf.nj.gov.
- **Volunteer:** To be a part of the effort to raise awareness and funds for the CTF, contact DCF-NJCTF@dcf.nj.gov.

NEW JERSEY
CHILDREN'S
TRUST FUND
JOIN US TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

NJTFCAN
New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES