



CLASP

The Center for Law and Social Policy

Impact Report 2023

POLICYMAKING TOGETHER

Amplifying Lived Expertise to Advance Equity



LETTER FROM CLASP'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

2024 marks the 60th anniversary of the War on Poverty, an ambitious package of social welfare legislation introduced under President Lyndon B. Johnson. Today, as we continue the fight to end poverty, we face both long-standing and more recent structural, systemic, political, and economic challenges that impede this urgent goal.

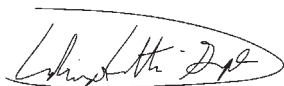
Our nation has made meaningful gains in the last few decades to bring economic security and opportunity to millions. However, the reality is clear—we remain far from achieving the equitable, inclusionary, and transformative changes needed to end poverty and advance a multiracial democracy. In 2023, CLASP redoubled our strategic advocacy, implementation and technical assistance, research and analysis, and narrative change work at the national, state, and local levels.

Our 2023 Impact Report highlights just some of the ways CLASP has worked to limit the harm of poverty in America through a multitude of strategies and collaborations. The COVID public health emergency may be behind us, but the profound economic insecurity experienced every day by millions of children, working people, families, and communities of color is an epidemic that requires immediate attention with substantial public investments.

I often say that poverty is a choice—one made by policymakers, not by people who experience it. CLASP offers policymakers the information, ideas, insights, and inspiration to shrink poverty and help move our country toward equity, justice, and inclusive democracy.

Thank you for being a partner in our mission and vision for a world where children, families, youth and young adults, immigrants, and individuals across all lived experiences and identities can live a healthy, economically secure, and civically engaged life now and for generations to come.

In solidarity,

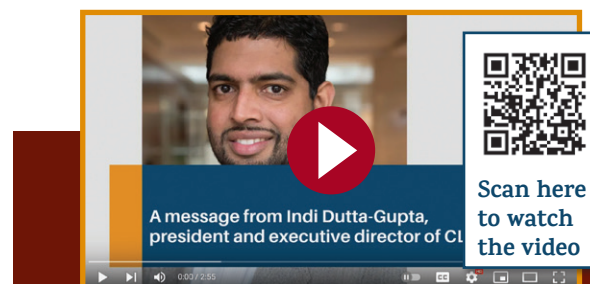


Indi Dutta-Gupta
President and Executive Director



Indi Dutta-Gupta,
President and Executive Director

"We must holistically improve the life outcomes of people experiencing the consequences of poverty, especially communities of color."



2023 BY THE NUMBERS

225

Testimonies or briefings for policymakers or staff (in-person or virtual)



2,620

Estimated number of policymakers or staff who attended testimonies or briefings

27

Public policy events during which a CLASP expert presented (in-person or virtual)



3,240

Number of attendees at public policy events (in-person or virtual)

69

Videos published



58,735

Approximate number of people who have viewed these videos

13

Op-eds published



650

Total media mentions: covering our work, citing research, or quotes from our policy experts

106

Policy reports, issue briefs, fact sheets, and blogs published on our website



45,177

Number of times policy reports, issue briefs, fact sheets, and blogs were accessed or downloaded

In 2023, CLASP won two Anthem Awards, honoring impactful publications from 2022. CLASP received a Silver Anthem Award in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Fundraising Strategy category for With Impact As Our North Star, our 2022 Impact Report; and a Bronze Anthem Award in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Research Projects or Publications category for A Community-Driven Anti-Racist Vision for SNAP.



25 YEARS OF CHILD CARE & EARLY EDUCATION POLICY WORK AT CLASP

1999

Child Care and Early Education team is founded to address the child care needs of working families following the establishment of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).



2005

Plays an instrumental role in the reauthorization of the **Head Start** program.



2008

CLASP and partners publish the first **child care agenda**, which later acts as the foundation for the 2014 reauthorization of Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

2010

Plays a lead role in **The Work Supports Strategies initiative**, providing SNAP, Medicaid, and child care technical assistance to six states.

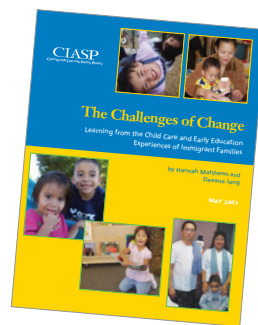
2004

Publishes **All Together Now**, the first national study on mixed delivery pre-K.



2006

Convenes a national summit on **immigrant access to child care and early education**.



2009

Helps to secure **\$5 billion for child care and early education** in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act resources during the Great Recession.

2013

Helps develop and support President Obama's **Strong Start** legislation and pre-K campaign.



2014

Plays crucial support role in the reauthorization of CCDBG.



2018

Alongside **National Women's Law Center**, leads the effort to secure \$2.4 billion in CCDBG funding.

Launches the **Moving on Maternal Depression** initiative, which advances policies that improve maternal depression prevention, screening, and treatment.

2020

Joins the **Care Can't Wait Coalition** to build a 21st century care infrastructure with robust investments to expand access to child care, paid family and medical leave, and home- and community-based services.

In response to the COVID pandemic, CLASP and partners successfully advocate for **\$50 billion in child care relief**.



2023

Leads a multi-organizational effort to provide comments on the **Child Care and Development Fund Notice of Proposed Rulemaking**.

2017

Works with the office of Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) to draft and support the **Child Care for Working Families Act**.

2019

Co-founds the **Child Care for Every Family Network**, which works to build a racial and gender justice-centered child care system.

Establishes its first Immigration and Immigrant Families policy team and founds the **Children Thrive Action Network**.

2022

Provides significant support, knowledge, advocacy, and analysis for a transformative child care plan through the **Build Back Better** legislation.

Partners with **United Parent Leaders Action Network** to support a federal advocacy strategy and engage in learning and policy development.

2024

Celebrates 25th anniversary and looks ahead to future progress in the child care and early education field.



CENTERING LIVED EXPERTISE IN OUR WORK

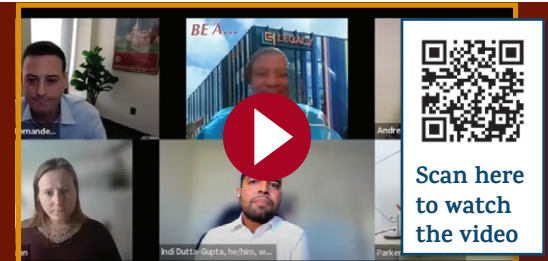
The systemic exclusion of those most affected in policy development and implementation is a key driver of U.S. poverty. CLASP—often in collaboration with our partners—develops practical and visionary strategies to support individuals from a range of backgrounds, promote economic opportunity, and tackle structural and systemic barriers faced by people and families with low incomes.

- ◆ Alongside the [Community Partnership Group](#), CLASP facilitated local-level conversations with nearly 50 youth and community members in Baltimore, Las Vegas, and a group of Tribal Nations in the Pacific Northwest. As part of CLASP’s Community Driven Policies and Practice initiative, the conversations were focused on community and belonging, different advocacy strategies, and policies related to economic justice.
- ◆ Through the [Children Thrive Action Network](#) (CTAN) and alongside [United Parent Leaders Action Network](#) and other community organizations, CLASP organized nine listening sessions with 71 parents and youth of immigrant families and began designing a new fellowship for parents in CTAN. Once funded, this fellowship would formalize the valuable contributions of these parents’ lived experience with the immigration system in CTAN’s work planning and advocacy.
- ◆ CLASP facilitated a discussion among more than 20 partners working in immigrant mental health to identify policy gaps and community needs. This discussion will inform the development of an ambitious national strategy to address barriers to immigrant mental health resources.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GROUP Cycle of Engagement



CLASP convened our second annual “Indi + Friends” event with more than 120 attendees. CLASP President and Executive Director Indi Dutta-Gupta and partners with expertise in community organizing, philanthropy, and policy discussed authentic and sustainable collaborations with individuals who have lived experiences in policy design and implementation.



- ◆ In partnership with 50 youth and young adult Changemakers from the New Deal for Youth (ND4Y) initiative, CLASP published an [evaluation of ND4Y](#), highlighting community impact and individuals' experiences. CLASP also hosted the second annual Week of Action in D.C., bringing together community members, policymakers, and Changemakers for events building community around youth-focused policies.
- ◆ CLASP anchored the [Good Jobs Collaborative](#) convening in Chicago. The event featured insights into worker-centered workforce development programs.

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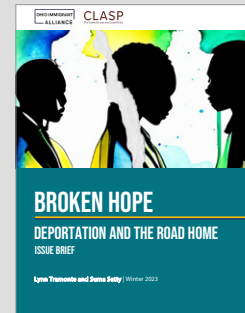


ND4Y Event

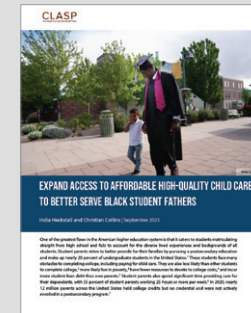
In 2023, we began the Lived Experience/Expertise Partnership Working Group, a bi-monthly convening of CLASP staff to share best practices and collaborate in cross-team efforts to center lived expertise equitably in our work across the organization.

Publications

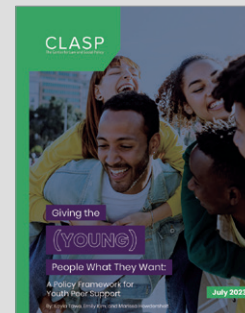
CLASP amplified the voices of people who have lived experience with poverty by publishing dozens of reports, briefs, blogs, and other materials. For a full list, visit our [news clips](#) and [library](#) pages at www.clasp.org.



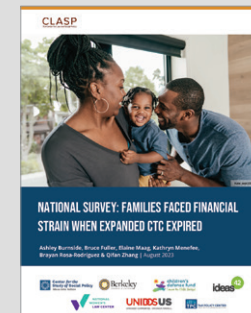
[“Broken Hope: Deportation and the Road Home”](#) highlights the experiences, hopes, and dreams of 255 people who were deported from the United States.



[“Expand Access to Affordable High-Quality Child Care to Better Serve Black Student Fathers”](#) details the unique challenges faced by Black student fathers in obtaining a postsecondary degree.



[“Giving the Young People What They Want: A Policy Framework for Youth Peer Support”](#) discusses how youth support can help broaden access to mental health assistance for marginalized groups.



[“National Survey: Families Faced Financial Strain When Expanded CTC Expired”](#) analyzes how the expiration of the monthly, expanded Child Tax Credit payments impacted families.

ADVANCING GENDER, RACIAL, AND DISABILITY EQUITY

CLASP cannot achieve our mission without intentionally focusing on uprooting the systemic inequities caused by unjust treatment due to gender, race, immigration status, disability status, and other forms of identity.

Building the Framework for Equity at the National Level

- ◆ CLASP advocated to protect and improve equitable access to nutrition benefits accessed by more than 41 million Americans, 43 percent of whom are children, through reauthorization of the [Farm Bill](#). This work continues into 2024.
- ◆ CLASP helped lead national advocacy supporting federal infrastructure bills such as the [Inflation Reduction Act](#), [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#), and [CHIPS and Science Act](#) to ensure federal funding translates into equitable investments and job opportunities for women and people of color.
- ◆ CLASP [documented the impact of COVID-era relief resources](#) on child care and early education and [called on the White House and Congress](#) to maintain the progress achieved with these resources.
- ◆ CLASP played an instrumental role in organizing a [sign-on letter](#) and template for partners to use in response to the Department of Health and Human Services' proposed rule on Improving Child Care Access, Affordability, and Stability in the Child Care and Development Fund.
- ◆ CLASP actively participated in the [Disability Economic Justice Collaborative](#), which works to achieve economic justice for people with disabilities and bring a disability justice lens to economic justice policy.
- ◆ CLASP [Senior Policy Analyst India Heckstall](#) participated in the U.S. Department of Education's negotiated rulemaking process on student loan forgiveness. CLASP's research on racial and gender inequities in the burdens of student loan debt was included in the article "[10 Reasons Why The Biden Administration Must Provide Student Loan Debt Relief For Black Americans.](#)"

LIFT the BAR Act



For more than 25 years, millions of struggling immigrant families have been barred from basic safety net programs. CLASP, in partnership with the [Protecting Immigrant Families Coalition](#) (PIF), is leading the charge to eliminate racial and health inequities by passing the [LIFT the BAR Act](#), which would restore access to critical programs for immigrant families. CLASP and PIF created resources for partners and organized Hill meetings throughout the year, leading to more than 100 cosponsors in the House and Senate and more than 750 organizations supporting the bill across the country.



India Heckstall, Senior Policy Analyst

- ◆ CLASP President and Executive Director Indi Dutta-Gupta [testified to the Senate Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Taxation and Oversight](#) about the Child Tax Credit, its history and track record, and what Congress should do now.
- ◆ CLASP produced two briefs on how the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act perpetuates the youth [criminalization](#) and [mental health](#) crises, disproportionately harming Black and brown youth.



Implementing Equitable Policies at the State and Local Levels

- ◆ CLASP launched the [Building Equitable Economic Systems in the South](#) (BEES) project, which works with community organizations to examine ways for more families to access the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program in Mississippi and expand equitable access to Medicaid in North Carolina.
- ◆ CLASP provided intensive support to the equitable implementation of Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) in Oregon by ensuring the program is accessible to low-paid workers and workers of color. In addition to ongoing implementation support in Maine, Maryland, and Delaware, CLASP established a learning community network for PFML administrators in the 14 states that have passed paid leave laws.
- ◆ CLASP provided technical assistance to policymakers in Maryland to draft legislation allowing youth to access mental health services without a diagnosis.
- ◆ CLASP used our knowledge of Maryland's implementation of "presumptive eligibility" to produce a [fact sheet](#) and [FAQ](#) on how states can improve timely access to child care. We also created [four profiles](#) outlining the presumptive eligibility policies of the three states and one county that are currently implementing this policy.

Senior Policy Analyst Lorena Roque [testified at a hearing](#) in Massachusetts in support of employment protections for app-based workers and to hold Big Tech accountable.



Lorena Roque, Senior Policy Analyst

A Vision for Multiracial Democracy and Civic Engagement at the Federal Level

In the face of mounting threats to democracy, CLASP believes that it is critical to promote a vision for a vibrant and multiracial American democracy where civic engagement is not limited to voting. In 2023, CLASP continued our commitment to partnering with people experiencing poverty to engage in all stages of the policy development process—from lifting up the problems they identify and developing solutions grounded in their lived expertise to advocating for these solutions at all levels of government and then implementing the policies that have been enacted.

- ◆ CLASP submitted comments about best practices for community engagement to the [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) about the proposed Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule and to the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) regarding the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grants.
- ◆ CLASP shared [resources and expertise](#) on how the public can be involved in the regulatory process.
- ◆ CLASP hosted a Hill briefing with ND4Y Changemakers on how to put youth in power.



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Smitha Gundavajhala, ND4Y Changemaker

Equity Matters: A Public Policy Community of Practice Addressing Poverty and Racial Inequity

In 2023, CLASP launched the virtual convening series “Equity Matters,” bringing together partners, allies, policymakers, implementors, advocates, community organizations, and others for interactive discussions with experts about how to address economic and racial inequities and their root causes. The inaugural panel discussion, “Addressing Poverty, Racial Injustice, and Threats to Multiracial Democracy,” featured experts on multiracial democracy, racial equity, and community engagement. Deputy Executive Director for Racial Equity Eddie Martin Jr. hosted the convening, which had over 300 attendees.



RESOURCES

Page 2

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Page 3

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Page 4

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<https://childrenthriveaction.org/members/>

<https://unitedparentleaders.org/who-we-are/>

Page 5

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<https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/giving-the-young-people-what-they-want-a-policy-framework-for-youth-peer-support/>

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Page 6

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<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/11/09/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-celebrates-historic-progress-in-rebuilding-america-ahead-of-two-year-anniversary-of-bipartisan-infrastructure-law/>

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<https://www.clasp.org/profile/india-heckstall/>

<https://news.yahoo.com/10-reasons-why-biden-administration-200711300.html?guccounter=1&emci=d629a88b-9df8-ec11-b47a-281878b83d8a&emdi=f5bd21b7-b7f8-ec11-b47a-281878b83d8a&ceid=2833925>

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Page 7

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[bipartisan-safer-communities-act-a-dangerous-new-chapter-in-the-war-on-black-youth/](#)

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<https://www.clasp.org/blog/bees-project-equity-mississippi-north-carolina/>

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<https://www.clasp.org/publication/presumptive-eligibility-in-child-care-frequently-asked-questions/>

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Page 8

<https://www.clasp.org/publications/testimony/comments/clasp-comments-on-community-engagement-requirements-within-huds-proposed-rule-on-affirmatively-furthering-fair-housing/>

<https://www.clasp.org/publications/testimony/comments/request-for-information-on-the-environmental-and-climate-justice-block-grant-program/>

<https://www.clasp.org/blog/demystifying-the-rulemaking-process-to-increase-public-engagement/>

Page 9

<https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/clasp-2022-impact-report/>

<https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/a-community-driven-anti-racist-vision-for-snap/>

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OUR MISSION

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advancing anti-poverty policy solutions that disrupt structural, systemic racism and remove barriers blocking people from economic justice and opportunity.

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