



## The Process of Passing Oklahoma's Independence for Children Law

In May 2021, Governor Kevin Stitt signed the Oklahoma S. 2565 which passed by overwhelming margins in both the Oklahoma House (86 yes, 2 no, 13 excused) and Senate (36 yes, 9 no, 3 excused). The bill was the result of outstanding leadership of Rep. Chad Caldwell (a Republican) and Rep. Jacob Rosecrants (a Democrat), who both introduced similar legislation and then worked together to pass the bill. Rep Caldwell was inspired to take up the cause after he read Jonathan Haidt and Greg Lukianas's book, *The Coddling of the American Mind*. Rep. Caldwell reached out to Let Grow for assistance early in the legislative session and Let Grow met regularly with him throughout the session as the language of the bill was negotiated with stakeholders. Sen. Daniels led the effort to pass the bill in the Senate.

The language of the Oklahoma law's protections for families against neglect charges includes a policy against removing children for reasons of poverty.

For more information see:

Reps. Chad Caldwell and Jacob Rosecrants, "A Bipartisan Bid to Save Childhood," *The Oklahoman* (March 26, 2021)

Skenazy, Reason (April 29, 21), "[In Oklahoma and Texas, Parents Who Let Their Kids Play Outside Will No Longer Face Neglect Charges,](#)" (reporting legislative final passage the previous Wednesday in both states).

Let Grow Blog (May 5, 2021) "[Oklahoma Reasonable Childhood Independence Bill](#)" [Signed in to Law](#)

Let Grow Blog (March 30, 2021) "[A Democrat and a Republican Explain Why They are Supporting a Reasonable Childhood Independence Bill in Oklahoma.](#)"

David Pimentel, [Legislating Childhood Independence](#), 50 *Pepperdine Law Review* 285 (2023).

[Webinar "Four Down, Yours to Go"](#) (featuring Rep. Caldwell as one of two legislators on Let Grow's legislative webinar, September 28, 2023).