

ROOTING FOR KIDS!



The Children's Hospital

News for The Children's Hospital's
Grassroots Advocates



SPEAK NOW
FOR KIDS
CHILDREN NEED A VOICE IN HEALTH REFORM

Speak Now for Kids in Health Reform

In the national health care debate, one thing is exceedingly clear: If you don't speak up you won't be heard. And there are no better voices for what children need in health care reform than those of the parents, family members, physicians, educators, advocates and others who care for them and about them. The Children's Hospital has joined the National Association of Children's Hospitals' [Speak Now for Kids in Health Reform campaign](#), along with the American Academy of Pediatrics, Children's Defense Fund, Children's Health Fund, First Focus, March of Dimes and more than 100 other children's hospitals and allied organizations around the country to provide those who care about children and health reform the opportunity to voice their concerns directly to Congress.

Please join us in this effort by telling Congress that children's health care is important to you - [share you're voice](#) . You'll also have the option to add your personal story, upload photos or video testimonials on the aspect of health reform that you care about most. Whether it is access to care, coverage for all children, cost of insurance or co-pays, or the quality of pediatric care - reach out and share your opinions. Engage your friends, family, colleagues and even your kids in the campaign, and ask them to "Speak Now for Kids!"

Additional Resources on Health Care Reform

If you are interested in learning more about health care reform, please visit:

[Kaiser Family Foundation Health Reform Gateway](#)

[National Association of Children's Hospitals](#)

[The Commonwealth Fund](#)

Governor Ritter Signs the Colorado Healthcare Affordability Act at The Children's Hospital at Saint Joseph Hospital

Governor Bill Ritter signed the Colorado Healthcare Affordability Act at The Children's Hospital at Saint Joseph Hospital on April 21, 2009. This piece of legislation will allow Colorado to access additional federal funds in order to provide coverage to more than 100,000 uninsured Coloradans.

The bill, designated as House Bill 1293, will collect a hospital provider fee from all licensed hospitals for the purpose of leveraging enhanced federal funding. The proposal will also help stem the rising cost of health insurance for businesses and families by addressing cost-shifting, one of the key drivers of rising costs, without increasing the burden on taxpayers.



"At no increased cost to taxpayers, the Colorado Healthcare Affordability Act will allow us to provide critical health services to people who need those services most." Gov. Ritter said. "This historic legislation will significantly address the crisis of the uninsured while also reducing uncompensated care and cost-shifting in our healthcare system. This legislation would be groundbreaking in a good economy, but it means even more in a down economy as Colorado families struggle to make ends meet."

The Colorado Hospital Association, the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing and the Governor's Office have been working together for more than nine months to develop the proposal. Earlier this year, The Children's Hospital President and CEO, Dr. Jim Shmerling spoke out in support of House Bill 1293. "With this bill, with this new funding, we will be able to reduce that cost shift. And so people who have insurance will actually end up, hopefully, paying less," Shmerling said. The enhanced funding will be used to offset the costs of uncompensated care for hospitals and expand public health insurance coverage to thousands of Colorado children and adults. For more information on the Colorado Healthcare Affordability Act, please [click here](#).

Advocacy Spotlight: Lori Kiely

Interview with Lori Kiely, one of The Children's Hospital's Active Advocates

How long have you been a member of The Children's Hospital Grassroots Advocacy Network ("GAN")? I've been a member of The Children's Hospital Grassroots Advocacy Network for 18 months.

Why are you a member of the GAN? I am a member of GAN because I want to help all children with special needs. Ultimately, I hope GAN will help me with the reformation of Colorado law concerning PKU and coverage for necessary foods and formulas.



Why is it important to have a voice for Colorado children? All children count. It is that simple.

What is the most rewarding part of being part of the GAN? Knowing I make a difference.

What do you feel are the important healthcare issues facing children in our state? The cost and quality of health insurance. Also, I feel laws need to be changed concerning PKU.

Please discuss something that you've learned through the GAN during the 2009 legislative session that you felt really passionate about. I have learned to network with state legislators. Of course, I feel passionate about getting Colorado to pass a law to give an allowance for the low protein foods my son needs to remain healthy and also to have the age limit removed for coverage of formula. Currently, Colorado ceases coverage at age 21, but people with this metabolic disorder need to remain on the formula for life.

Additional comments:

It is very easy. Most of it entails e-mailing responses that are already composed. I thoroughly recommend every person gets involved. Keep up the good work.



Grassroots Advocacy Network Updates

The 2009 state legislative session came to a close on May 6, ending a flurry of activity over 120 days during which legislators finalized the state budget and debated nearly 700 bills. The Children's Hospital and our dedicated network of grassroots advocates contacted legislators on many of those bills because of their potential to impact the health and well being of Colorado kids. In all, over 4700 e-mails were sent to legislators by our advocates - a huge THANK YOU to all of you who helped us be a powerful voice for kids! Read the [2009 Kids' Health Check-Up](#).

Continue to visit www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy for advocacy tools, news and upcoming events!

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