

# ROOTING FOR KIDS!

News for The Children's Hospital's  
Grassroots Advocates



The Children's Hospital



The Children's Hospital

## The Children's Hospital's 2009 Advocacy Priorities

As you know, at The Children's Hospital, it is a key part of our mission to advocate on behalf of kids in the public policy arena, making sure that their needs and concerns are heard when important decisions are made. The Children's Hospital will be monitoring legislative bills related to children's healthcare in the coming year. In hope of focusing these efforts, the hospital has outlined some top priorities for 2009. Additionally, Children's is pleased to present ongoing advocacy priorities which are advocated for on a yearly basis.

### 2009 Advocacy Priorities:

#### Strengthening Medicaid Provider Network

- Protecting inpatient hospital and provider reimbursement rates for public health programs
- Protecting the Pediatric Specialty Hospital state budget line item
- support for efforts to institute a statewide hospital provider fee to support and enhance the Medicaid program
- Maintaining and enhancing federal Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education (CHGME) dollars

#### Covering All Kids

- Supporting efforts to ensure that all Colorado children have access to public or private health insurance

#### Increasing Access

- Ensuring that all eligible children are enrolled in public health care programs
  - Removing administrative barriers for providers who participate in public health insurance plans
- Supporting efforts to ensure children have a medical home
- Improving access to medical care at The Children's Hospital main campus by removing transportation barriers and advocating for an additional interchange on I-225 that reduces traffic congestion

#### Keeping Kids Safe from Injury and Abuse

- Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention

- Collaboration with hospital and community partners in preventing child abuse and neglect
- Community engagement in injury prevention efforts such as promoting bicycle helmets, car seats, and other safety measures
- Supporting efforts to enhance Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) in Colorado

### The Children's Hospital Ongoing Advocacy Priorities:

#### Improving Health of Colorado Children

- Obesity prevention/promoting nutrition and exercise
- Promoting childhood immunizations
- Enhancing community health care capacity for children through coordinated school based health programs
- Enhancing coverage for targeted pediatric services as well as targeted populations: special formulas/foods for metabolic or GI conditions, mental health services, developmental disability services, services targeted at teens and young adults

### How You Can Help!

More voices are needed to strengthen Children's Grassroots Advocacy Network. As adults who care about the future of our children and grandchildren, we can give voices to their needs with just one or two minutes of our time. If you are already a member, encourage your family, friends, colleagues, and social network to have a voice!

### January 20, 2009 Events

We are pleased to host two exciting advocacy events on Tuesday, January 20!



#### Presidential Inauguration Watch Party

Come witness this historic occasion! The oath of office will be administered to the President-elect and the Vice President-elect on the steps of the United States Capitol in Washington, DC. We are pleased to host a watch party at Children's. Come by any or all of the scheduled broadcast! Seating on a first come, first serve basis. A light snack will be provided. No RSVP required.

*Time:* 9:15a.m. - 11:00a.m.

*Location:* Mt. Oxford, The Children's Hospital, 13123 E. 16<sup>th</sup> Ave.

#### Advocacy Lunch and Learn

The Children's Hospital's lobbyist Ruth Aponte will share her perspective on the 2009 legislative session, discusses some of the issues The Children's Hospital is currently monitoring, and gives her take on the Colorado political landscape after the 2008 elections. Aponte is a Principal with Aponte & Busam: Public Affairs Consultants and has been lobbying in Colorado for more than a decade. *Due to popular demand, this event has reached capacity.* Resources and information from the event will be available on [www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy](http://www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy) after January 20.



## Trends and Implications of Child Poverty in Colorado

In the next two years, Colorado's population will reach five million people, nearly a quarter of whom will be children. While unmatched as a place to live and raise a family, Colorado is also the state with the largest increase in the percentage of children living in poverty. Impacting everything from health, education, earning potential and victimization rates, the effects of poverty are devastating. On December 17, Dr. Alex Medler, Vice President of Research and Analysis for the Colorado Children's Campaign, led a discussion with

over 65 advocates, summarizing the 2008 KidsCount in Colorado! report, particularly the trends related to children's health. Additionally, advocates learned how these trends impact everyone who lives in Colorado, and how we can work together to promote action in key areas.



### Advocacy Spotlight: Jann Hodge

Interview with Jann Hodge, one of The Children's Hospital's Active Advocates

Why are you a member of the GAN? I'm a member of GAN because it's important for me to be actively involved in our political processes, whether it is through advocacy, volunteering or serving on committees and groups. I was especially interested in GAN because of their core value; that it's all of our responsibility to lift up and speak for those who are vulnerable or who cannot speak for themselves. Becoming involved with GAN was easy, and it was the perfect avenue for me to do something useful and meaningful for someone else. Nurses and other healthcare providers are in the unique position of knowing the health care needs of our communities; and as providers we are the ones who can figure out most rational way to solve some of these problems, therefore we need to take the lead in shaping the way we take care of the children in our community.

**Why is it important to have a voice for Colorado children?** It's hard to believe that in a country as rich as ours, that there are 9.4 million American children who are uninsured. I was taken aback the first time I heard about the number of children who are uninsured here in Colorado. It's important for all of us that we work to change this abysmal statistic. It's not rocket science; we know that pregnant women who have access to adequate prenatal care have fewer premature births and complications during pregnancy; and children who have access to adequate health care perform better in school, have fewer emotional and physical problems, are less likely to be involved in crime, and more likely to attain a higher educational and socioeconomic status as adults. So this is not just about health care in isolation; but it's about how our health care system affects our economy, our ability to compete globally, how well we are able to educate our children, and ultimately it's about morality, fairness and equality.

**What is the most rewarding part of being part of the GAN?** It's so easy, and it really feels good when I hear that legislation or a bill has been passed that I advocated for.

Please discuss something that you've learned through the GAN during the 2008 legislative session that you felt really passionate about. I really feel passionate about our need to continue funding Medicaid, SCHIP, Head Start, WIC and other programs that help children. It worrisome to know that there is the potential for these programs to have their funding cut by as much as \$2.8 billion in the coming years. It's counter intuitive, and we really can't afford to skimp on our kids.

What are you looking forward to working on during the 2009 legislative session? I look forward to the day when all children are covered by some form of universal health care and I imagine that this process will long and often difficult. For the coming year I'll continue to advocate and participate in GAN to change healthcare policy. In addition, there are now new opportunities for all of us to participate in this conversation and be active in this process in concert with our new Administration; so this will be my focus for the coming year and beyond.

**Additional comments:** It took me about 30 seconds to sign up for GAN; it takes me about 30 seconds to send a letter to my Representative seeking change and better health care for kids, and the effects of those efforts have the potential to last a lifetime! It's quite an honor to be recognized by GAN, thank you so much.



***News, updates, and events from The Children's Hospital  
Grassroots Advocacy Network....***

**Grassroots Advocacy Network 2009 Legislative Session!**

The 2009 legislative session began on January 7, 2009. Stay connected with our legislative efforts by visiting [www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy](http://www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy) and clicking on Legislative Issues and Action Alerts.

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