

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 2011 Advocacy Priorities

As you know, at The Children's Hospital, it is key to 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 2011, Children's will focus on legislation around the regulation of youth sports in an effort to reduce concussions and head injuries sustained during play. We will also work to protect budget items that ensure access to kids and families to high quality healthcare.

Additionally, Children's is pleased to present ongoing advocacy priorities which are advocated for on a yearly basis.

Ongoing 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 ongoing implementation of the 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 healthcare programs
- Removing administrative barriers for providers who participate in public health insurance plans
- Supporting efforts to ensure children have a medical home

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 healthcare capacity for children through coordinated school-based health programs
- Enhancing coverage for targeted pediatric services as well as targeted populations:
 - 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. Sign up for the [Grassroots Advocacy Network](#) today!

The Children's Hospital and HealthTeacher Partner to Improve Health Literacy of Children

Nearly 500 schools to have access to the leading online health curriculum

The Children's Hospital is pleased to partner with HealthTeacher to provide Colorado teachers in Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Douglas, Eagle and Pitkin counties with access to a comprehensive K-12 online health education curriculum with the goal of improving the health literacy of students in participating schools. The Children's Health Advocacy Institute (CHAI) at The Children's Hospital, which is sponsoring this program for the schools, is committed to increasing health knowledge and aims to influence healthy and safe lifestyle choices and behaviors in children and teens throughout the state.



"We know that healthy kids are better learners, and we really see this program as an opportunity for Children's to partner with Colorado schools in a much more comprehensive and collaborative way to impact the health of our kids," says Deb Federspiel, Director of CHAI.

The HealthTeacher curriculum covers 10 key health, wellness and safety topic areas and is designed to help students develop knowledge and skills needed to pursue healthy lifestyles throughout their lives. Used by more than 20,000 K-12 teachers nationwide, HealthTeacher's curriculum and resources are aligned to the National Health Education Standards and the Colorado Academic Standards for Comprehensive Health Education. The lesson plans are customizable by school district and designed to help teachers meet state and national standards while simultaneously infusing health into the classroom. In addition to lesson plans/curriculum, the resources offered include activities for in the classroom and at home, teacher resources, newsletters for parents and teachers, and relevant health and safety information.

Now through the 2014-2015 school year, Children's will underwrite the HealthTeacher curriculum and teacher training for participating schools. In addition to providing financial support, Children's is committed to provide pediatric expertise regarding modification of existing resources or creation of new resources and development of evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of the program. Children's also plans to identify opportunities to develop additional health and safety programming and support in schools who are participating in the health literacy collaborative as well as resources

to help ensure sustainability. The program is staffed with two Local Education Coordinators who are charged with training teachers in participating districts and providing ongoing support.

The response has been tremendous and Children's is thrilled to announce that as of November, 12 districts throughout Colorado have committed to participate in the 2010-2011 school year, including: Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Adams County School District 14, Aspen School District, Aurora Public Schools, Bennett School District, Byers School District, Charter School Institute, Cherry Creek School District, Douglas County School District, Eagle County Schools, Mapleton Public Schools, School District 27J (Brighton) and Sheridan School District.

For more information on HealthTeacher, please visit www.healthteacher.com.

Child-Only Health Insurance Policies

In early September 2010, most of Colorado's private health insurance plans announced that, starting October 1, they would stop selling new child-only health insurance policies. Federal health care reform prohibits denying insurance to kids with pre-existing conditions but doesn't require that everyone have coverage until 2014. As a result, insurers worry that parents will only buy child-only coverage if their kids are already sick, creating an unsustainable risk pool.

The Colorado Health Institute estimates that perhaps 27,000 children are currently covered by child-only policies, and most of these will have the option to keep their coverage. Though most companies have stopped selling new policies, parents with kids on existing child-only policies as of September can continue to renew their coverage year after year. These already pricey products, however, could become less affordable due to the changes in the market.

In an effort to ease the health plans' concerns, on September 23, Commissioner of Insurance Marcy Morrison announced an emergency regulation to establish a mandatory open enrollment period for the child-only market, ensuring that all children enroll at the same time. If other health insurers don't come back into the market soon, the only two companies that are still selling child-only policies—Kaiser and Rocky Mountain Health Plans—could be forced to exit as well.

The General Assembly is currently considering legislation regarding the issue of child-only health insurance policies. This is a complex issue, and while it affects a relatively small number of children in Colorado, the impact on those children and their families is quite significant. The benefits of coverage are clear: kids with health insurance enjoy better care and stronger health outcomes.

We at The Children's Hospital will be following this issue closely, and we hope that the legislature is able to craft a thoughtful solution that works for the kids who need insurance as well as the health plans that sell it.

Safe Kids Colorado Receives National Honor for Public Policy Work

Safe Kids Colorado, of which The Children's Hospital is the lead organization, has received the Safe Kids USA Outstanding Achievement in Public Policy award. Safe Kids Colorado was selected from more than 600 state and local Safe Kids coalitions in the nation for the honor.



The award for Outstanding Achievement in Public Policy reflects Safe Kids Colorado's success in public policy efforts for 2010, both local and state, including revising Colorado's child passenger safety law to increase the safety of children across the state. Studies have shown that children as old as 8 and up to 80 pounds, when in a booster seat, have a 45 percent less chance of injury during a car crash than those just using a standard seat belt. The Colorado state law now requires that children ages eight and under ride in a booster seat and in the back seat of a moving vehicle.

"Every local Safe Kids coalition has saved countless lives. To be singled out of such a caring group of advocates is a huge vote of confidence for the work that Safe Kids Colorado does every day," says

Safe Kids Manager Mae Hsu, of The Children's Hospital. "Safe Kids Colorado is committed to programs that will help Colorado's children stay out of the emergency department and works closely with local Safe Kids coalitions and chapters in the Denver Metro area, Larimer County, Colorado Springs and Summit County."

Safe Kids Colorado works to prevent unintentional childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to children ages 1 to 14. Its members include Safe Kids coalitions and chapters in the Denver Metro area, Larimer County, Colorado Springs and Summit County.



Grassroots Advocacy Network

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

2011 Legislative Session!

The 2011 legislative session began on January 12, 2011. Stay connected with our legislative efforts by visiting www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy and clicking on Legislative Issues and Action Alerts.