



Children's Agenda 2000

NH CAN Partners and Supporters

American Friends Service
Committee - NH Program
Appalachian Mountain Teen Project
Bi-State Primary Care Association
Cedarcrest
Child Development Center of
Strafford County
Child and Family Services
Children of Sullivan County
Children's Alliance of NH
Community Support Network, Inc.
Crotched Mountain Foundation
Disabilities Rights Center, Inc.
Early Education & Intervention Network
Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire
Families and Communities Together
Families First of the Greater
Seacoast
Families Matter in Carroll County
Family Resource Center at Gorham
Familystrength
Friends of Recovery, NH
Girl Scouts of Swift Water Council
Lakes Region Day Care Center
David Lamarre Vincent
Manchester Health Department
School Nursing Division
Microptix, Inc.
NAMI-NH
National Education Association NH
NH Association of School
Administrators
NH Association for the Education
of Young Children
NH Chapter of the National
Association of Social Workers
NH Child Care Association
NH Citizens Alliance
NH Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual
Violence
NH Commission on the Status of
Women
NH Conference, United Church of Christ
NH Developmental Disabilities
Council
NH Federation of Teachers
NH Foster and Adoptive Parents Assoc.
NH Healthy Kids Corporation
NH Head Start State Collaboration
NH Mediators Association
NH Pediatric Society
NH Principals Association
NH Special Education Policy
Initiative (Disability Rights Center,
NHDDC)

Executive Summary

The Children's Agenda 2000 is a child-centered plan of action for the legislature, governor, state agencies, social service providers, business sector, and local communities. Its purpose is to focus attention on the needs of the children of our state and to build support for meeting those needs. The long-term goal of the Children's Agenda is to impact state and local policy and budget priorities so that all children in New Hampshire live in healthy, nurturing environments which enable them to reach their full potential.

This Children's Agenda is the work of over fifty organizations and individuals who are partners and supporters of the New Hampshire Child Advocacy Network (NH CAN). The purpose of NH CAN and the Children's Agenda is to create a comprehensive picture of child health and well-being and to build understanding of and support for the changes necessary to assist our children and families.

The slogan of NH CAN — putting the pieces of the puzzle together — reflects both the broad scope of demands placed upon children and families and our goal of building support for wide-ranging, prevention-oriented change.

We hope our Children's Agenda will help the public and policy makers understand how issues as varied as school funding, prenatal care, living wages and affordable housing are all children's issues.

The Children's Agenda 2000 is divided into four sections:

1. Education
2. Health and Wellness
3. Economic Security and Well-being
4. Child Safety and Protection.

Each section begins by stating an over-arching vision for our children. It is followed by three long-term goals, a listing of facts describing the current status of children, and a series of recommended action steps. The four vision statements and 12 long-term goals are presented on the back side of this Executive Summary.

NH CAN intends to publish a new Children's Agenda every year — to update the public and policy makers on indicators of child health and well-being, to assess our progress toward long-term goals, and to set new short-term objectives to meet those goals.

We do not anticipate realizing our goals in a single year; rather, the goals should serve to guide long term planning in the state. The action steps listed beneath each goal are intended to guide short-term policy and budget setting.

We invite you to use this Children's Agenda as a guide for your own advocacy. You may copy or disseminate or otherwise use information from this Executive Summary as long as appropriate acknowledgment is given. You may obtain a copy of the complete Children's Agenda from the Children's Alliance of New Hampshire.



NH United Ways / Success By Six
 NFI North, Inc.
 Parent Information Center
 Parent to Parent
 Penacook Community Center
 Planned Parenthood of Northern New
 England
 Plus Time NH
 Prevent Child Abuse NH
 Richie McFarland Children's Center
 The United Methodist Church
 New England Conference
 United Methodist Church
 UNH Cooperative Extension
 White Birch Community Center

Rep. David Alison
 Sara Allen
 Arnie Alpert
 Jonathan Baird
 Charlene Baxter
 Tricia Brooks
 Sarah Brown
 Reverend Carole Carlson
 Robert W. Chamberlin, M.D.
 Michael J. Cohen
 Robert Copeland
 Jackie Cowell
 Carol Crocker
 Reverend Benjamin C.L. Crosby
 Diane Drellick
 Rep. Barbara French
 Kate Frey
 Jennifer Frizzell, Esq.
 Becky Gentes
 Andrea Gilbert
 Rep. Mary Stuart Gile
 Cathy Gray
 Beverly Grenert
 Linda Griebusch
 Joseph Harding
 Bishop Susan Hassinger
 Dr. Mark V. Joyce
 Jack Lightfoot
 Reverend Dr. John W. Lynes
 Mariellen MacKay
 Grace Mattern
 Julie McConnell
 Catherine P. McDowell
 Cheryl Avery Molloy
 Betsey Andrews Parker
 Bev Parry
 Alice Porembski
 Peggy Small Porter
 Alan Reed-Erickson
 Alan Robichaud
 Donna San Antonio
 Lori Seog
 Ellen Shemitz
 Reverend Janet Smith-Rushton
 Rep. Mary Jane Wallner
 Reverend Mary Westfall
 Major Wheelock

Children's Agenda 2000

Visions and Goals

EDUCATION:

All children in New Hampshire will receive an equitably funded education that is appropriate to their academic and social-emotional needs, that enables them to become contributing members of society, and that inspires them to achieve their full potential.

Goal 1 - Adequate Education: Ensure that every child in New Hampshire has the opportunity to receive an adequate education by securing sufficient and dependable funding, by defining and maintaining appropriate curricula standards, and by assessing adequacy using appropriate means and measures.

Goal 2 - Access to Schools: Ensure that all children have access to appropriate educational services that provide them with the skills they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn and to leave high school ready to realize their full potential.

Goal 3 - Safe Learning Environments: Ensure that all children have access to an appropriate education provided in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

All children in New Hampshire shall be free of hunger, violence and preventable disease and shall receive appropriate, quality physical, mental, behavioral, substance abuse prevention, and dental services that promote and sustain their well-being.

Goal 4 - Access to Health Care: Increase access to preventive and primary health care services, including physical, mental, behavioral and dental health care.

Goal 5 - Substance Abuse Prevention: Develop and maintain child mental and behavioral health and substance abuse prevention services and ensure that all children in the state have equal access to such services.

Goal 6 - Health Education and Prenatal Care: Increase access to health and parenting education and prenatal care so that all children in New Hampshire are born free of preventable illness.

ECONOMIC SECURITY and

WELL-BEING:

Children in New Hampshire will have safe and affordable housing, sufficient and nutritious food, heat and other utilities, clothing, adequate income, child care and other essentials necessary to support their physical, social, emotional, psychological and cognitive development.

Goal 7 - Economic Self Sufficiency: Address the problem of children living in poverty by supporting a living wage and by investing in worker training and education.

Goal 8 - Economic Safety Net: Protect and expand the existing "safety net" so that children in need have adequate income, housing, health care, education, child care, nutrition and other necessary family supports.

Goal 9 - Child Care: Increase access to safe, affordable, quality child care.

CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION:

Families will be supported in their efforts to nurture the healthy development of all children so that each child is able to reach her or his full potential.

Goal 10 - Coordination and Funding of Services: Promote healthy children, families and communities by encouraging coordination of child protection and family support services and by increasing funding for prevention and support services.

Goal 11 - Staffing Standards: Assess current inadequacies in state staffing and develop new state staffing standards (regarding salaries, training and caseloads) to recruit and retain sufficient staff to support children in need.

Goal 12 - Information Systems: Improve information systems so that the state can accurately track and report on the numbers, needs and status of children and families.