

# Highlights *in Advocacy* 1999-2007

**T**he Children's  
**Alliance is proud  
to celebrate**

**our role  
promoting  
policies  
and  
practices  
that make  
our  
children, families and  
state healthier, safer and  
more secure.**



## **Today in New Hampshire**

- Nearly 70,000 low-income children are able to access appropriate health care, thanks to the Healthy Kids Health Insurance program, championed by the Children's Alliance of New Hampshire.
- Close to 900 child victims of abuse or neglect receive more timely and effective protective services, thanks to changes in state agency policy and practice subsequent to a class action law suit revived by the Children's Alliance of New Hampshire.
- 34,000 low-income children can enjoy a healthy school breakfast, thanks to legislation passed this year under the leadership of our NH CAN partners.
- 200,000 children attending public schools throughout the state were protected from efforts to drain resources away from their schools, thanks to NH CAN opposition to numerous school voucher proposals.
- 600 children involved in custodial issues each year can be secure knowing that decisions will be made based on their best interests, as opposed to parental financial preferences, based on strong advocacy from the Children's Alliance and our partners in the NH CAN.
- 424 New Hampshire state legislators are accountable for their votes on children's issues, thanks to the annual Children's Legislative Report Card produced each summer by the Children's Alliance

# 1990-2000 Biennium

## Focused Advocacy

- Children's Alliance prioritizes work in the area of early childhood education- with focus on Parents as Teachers and fight for universal kindergarten.
- Children's Alliance works with strong coalition to raise minimum wage (a near win in 2000).
- Statewide survey of TANF families by Children's Alliance provides insight into real impact of federal TANF reform.

## A Credible Voice

- Children's Alliance releases Kids Count New Hampshire 1998 Data Book with focus on special education data.
- Kids Count Data drives state policy, as Children's Alliance makes presentations of local, state and national data to the Governor's Kids Cabinet.
- Children's Alliance releases Kids Count New Hampshire 2000 data book showing unprecedented growth in NH economy has left many behind - with growing disparity between the haves and have-nots.

## Raising the Volume

- Children's Alliance creates first ever Legislative Voting Report Card revealing...who votes for kids and who is just kidding.

**"The Children's Alliance of New Hampshire keeps an eye on our kids."**

Boston Globe (8/15/99)

- Kids Count New Hampshire strengthens local voices through reinvigoration of Kids Count Advisory Cabinet.
- Children's Alliance launches web site which makes Kids Count data, advocacy tools and issues briefs available to all. Children's Alliance creates newsletter (Voices for NH's Children) to build awareness.

- Children's Alliance founds the New Hampshire Child Advocacy Network- NH CAN - to coordinate advocates and shape state budget and policy priorities.
- NH CAN holds Second Annual Children's Summit to bring together Voices for Children. President of NHCF presents keynote address saying: "We must take children's issues off of the family pages of our newspapers and move them onto the front pages."
- President and Founder of the Children's Defense Fund Marian Wright Edelman visits NH to help release the NH CAN Children's Agenda- with 12 goals and 55 recommended actions for government, business and communities. NH CAN partners number 100 by end of 2000.

# 2001-2002 Biennium

## NH CAN's emphasis on partner education and outreach produces stunning results

- State funding for subsidized health insurance for low income children.
- Protection of statewide universal distribution of children's vaccines- with defeat of effort to cut \$650,000 from state budget.
- State funding for 13 home visiting programs that serve first time pregnant mothers and babies.
- Coordinated successful advocacy campaign that persuaded Executive Council to release \$1 million in family support funding.
- House passes increase in minimum wage! (Senate defeats)

## Powerful Friends for Powerless Children

- Children's Alliance work with the Governor's Kids Cabinet builds visibility and enhances relationship with leadership. Governor Jeanne Shaheen speaks at release of 2001 Children's Agenda and becomes first sitting Governor to address annual Children's Summit. By fall of 2002, NH CAN includes over 150 organizations. Governor appoints Children's Alliance to state Early Education Public Will Team- and invites Team to National Governor's Association Conference in Washington DC on September 11th.
- Launch of School Readiness Indicators project in partnership with Department of Education, DHHS, Legislative leadership and the Governor.
- NH CAN develops Priority Children's Agenda for following year- narrowing focus to 12 action steps across four core issues.
- 92% of NH CAN partners surveyed found Children's Agenda helpful or very helpful. By end of 2001, NH CAN partnership includes 120 organizations- rising to 150 by the end of 2002.

## The Bottom Line

Children's Alliance releases a special Kids Count report – Kids Count to the Bottom Line in NH. Report targets business audience- to build new voices for children. Special report reprinted as insert in BusinessNH Magazine with distribution of over 15,000.

**"In response to cuts to state social service programs made by the Legislature last session, the Children's Alliance of New Hampshire has developed a program to garner the political clout of the state's most powerful force — the business community — in support of children's issues."**

Portsmouth Herald (10/15/01)



# 2003-2004 Biennium

## ...Voices Raise Even Higher

- NH CAN Priorities published as a full page in Parenting NH.
- NH CAN partners include 187 organizations- now connected through biweekly electronic updates that serve as child advocacy bulletin board (with news, legislative updates, job listings, current research and upcoming events).
- 2004 sees launch of web based legislative action center and increased advocacy on national level concerning federal budget issues.
- Children's Alliance helps launch the New Hampshire Citizen Voice Project- to engage public in community forums about successful schools.
- Department of Education partners with Children's Alliance in release of Ready, Set Grow! Investing in Quality Early Care and Education for a Thriving New Hampshire.
- Children's Alliance briefed all gubernatorial candidates on proposed agenda for children.
- Children's Alliance partners with Children's Defense Fund to work on federal funding for early childhood programs- including Head Start. Head Start funding protected!
- Sullivan County's Parents as Teachers pilot program extended and funded for another two years.

## ...Voices Making a Difference

**A Safe Home for Every Child:** Passage of Cassidy Bortner Child Protection Act - requires DCYF to prepare report on necessary steps to reach national accreditation.

**Healthy Children and Strong Families:** Children's Alliance takes leadership role in state budget issues, including: protection of state funding for Healthy Kids. Voices raised at both state and national level to defeat proposed cuts to Medicaid. Legislature approves \$5 million for affordable housing.

**Cherishing Public Education:** Defeat of proposals to undermine state support of public education, including a proposed constitutional amendment and numerous school voucher proposals.

## Best Practice

- Release of Kids Count New Hampshire 2003 Data Book attended by over 180 individuals from over 106 organizations.
- NH CAN and CANH take leadership role in establishing best practice policy guides for national Policy Matters project. Legislators referenced Policy Matters in deliberations over issues as diverse as predatory lending, school health and nutrition, tobacco taxation and kindergarten funding.
- Tri-state partnership releases: *Making Kids Count in Rural Northern New England*.
- NH CAN lauded as national model as the Sixth Annual Children's Summit comes out of the church basement and into the Holiday Inn.



# 2005-2006 Biennium

## An Increasing Powerful Voice

- Child advocates help ensure state budget includes necessary funding for health insurance for low-income children and pregnant women.
- Legislation enacted mandating health insurance coverage for treatment of adolescent eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse.
  - State general fund dollars committed to school breakfast program.
  - Legislation enacted requiring insurance coverage for seriously ill college students.
  - Passage of legislation (with funding) for early learning quality initiative.
  - Extension of Kindergarten Construction Aid.
  - Juvenile death penalty defeated.
  - Harmful child support changes defeated.
  - Near-win on increase in minimum wage.
  - Efforts to introduce school choice and expand school vouchers defeated.

## Many Voices, More Volume

- Nearly one hundred of our child advocacy partners respond to our electronic updates and alerts by sending out 519 letters in their own names- a 29% increase in advocacy activity from the prior year.
- Thanks from our partners in child advocacy: "You do more good than can be measured." "Just a line to let you know how much I appreciate your tireless efforts on behalf of NH kids and families ..." "I just wanted to commend you on what a great service this is and what a great job

you do ..."

- The Governor applauds work of NH CAN: "Investing in our children is the best thing I think we can do...it's the right thing to do and smart thing to do" Governor John Lynch, Nashua Telegraph, February 1, 2006.

## Information is Power

- Children's Alliance partners with Maine and Vermont to create Kids Count in Northern New England.
- Children's Alliance works with Carsey Center to build state capacity for state fiscal analysis.
- WMUR partners with Children's Alliance to bring the inaugural Children's Alliance Awards into living rooms across New Hampshire.

## ...always more to do

- Children's Alliance challenges State Minimum Education Standards for lack of universal public kindergarten. Extensive radio coverage and print media coverage addressing failure of State Board of Education to stand firm for universal Kindergarten. The Valley News called the Board "spineless" while the Concord Monitor used the term "weak kneed."
- Board of the Children's Alliance sets two year policy goals with advocacy focus on state budget (child and family support services including TANF and Healthy Kids), public education, child support and child protection.

**"There is increasing strain on families and while the attention of a lot of policy makers is focused almost exclusively on the issue of educational opportunity, in order to address that issue effectively, we also need to stand back and address the need of economic opportunity for families."**

Ellen Shemitz, Boston Globe  
(1/12/07)

# Current Calendar Year

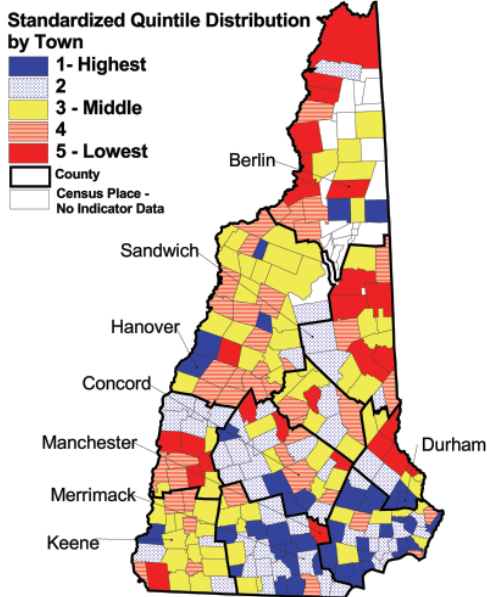
## Study reveals 1 in 10 children living in poverty in New Hampshire

Nashua Telegraph (1/12/07)

Children's Alliance presents critical Kids Count findings in DVD presentation to a standing room only crowd of state legislators and leaders. Hard work should keep a family out of poverty, but data book shows:

- 10% decline in real family income, 2000-2005
- Median family income for single mothers 40% less than for all families with children
- More than ¼ of 3rd and 10th grades score below basic on language arts.
- More than 15% of 3rd grades and 19% of 10th grades score below basic on math

### Child Well-Being in New Hampshire

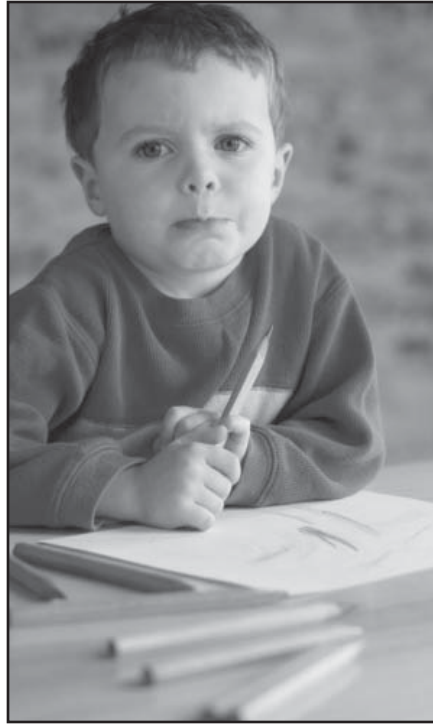


## Raise Your Voice

Lend your support as we work together to raise public understanding and knowledge of the issues related to children and families and build a common voice for children and impact change. Call (603) 225-2264 today to learn more.



2 Greenwood Avenue, Concord, NH 03301 [www.childrennh.org](http://www.childrennh.org) 603.225.2264 • 4



### Many Voices, More Volume

- For the first time in eight years, state House and Senate leaders yesterday stood with children's advocates from at least a dozen groups at an annual, start-of-the-session press

conference to announce the groups' agenda for 2007. Concord Monitor (1/17/07)

- New Hampshire successfully adopts legislation to protect vulnerable children and families by tracking TANF client outcomes. Congratulations to all who worked so hard to support NH's vulnerable families!
- Efforts to amend constitution to weaken right to education soundly defeated!! Nashua Telegraph credits the Children's Alliance as leading advocacy efforts to protect constitutional right!
- UNIVERSAL KINDERGARTEN included in both House and Senate definitions of adequate education.
- Minimum wage increase becomes law!!
- Creation of Executive Committee to address special education

## And the Winner Is... New Hampshire's Children

It is still too early to call the game...but keep your fingers crossed that 2007 is the year universal kindergarten finally becomes law in the Granite State.