



Agenda

What are three pillars of effective advocacy?

How does the legislative process work?

How can I make a difference?



A little about us

Katie

- Have worked in public health and women and children's advocacy for 14 years
- Have run programs for/helped to build anti-violence and health access community networks
- Registered as an unaffiliated voter
- Part-time stay at home mom
- Most important for today...



A little about me



A little about you

Raise your hand if...

- You are a parent...grandparent...mentor
- You work at a school... district level... regional level
- You've ever written a letter to the editor...a guest commentary...a blog
- You've ever contacted a state legislator... governor... federal legislator



Who can advocate?

You—you are the expert!

When you talk about an issue you care about, you are advocating. Advocacy can take many forms—speaking out, letter writing, protesting, voting and even wearing a t-shirt that makes a statement.

Advocacy happens when you meet with a legislator on an important issue, write an editorial for a newspaper, raise awareness for a cause at a community event, or even promote an issue while having dinner with friends.



Three Pillars of Advocacy

Community

Media

Decision-Makers

Colorado General Assembly

- The legislative session lasts 120 days
 - 2nd Wednesday of January through 2nd Wednesday of May
- 100 Lawmakers
 - 35 Senate – Republican majority
 - 65 House – Democrat majority
- In 2017, 681 bills introduced
 - Children’s Campaign tracked 140 bills

Legislative Process

1. Bill introduced
2. Assigned to committee
3. Committee hearing with public testimony & vote
4. Second reading in full chamber
5. Third & final reading
6. Moves to other chamber where the process repeats
7. If passed, goes to Governor for signature or veto

Legislative Process

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

COLORED HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

65 Members
18 Democrats
17 Republicans
Elected every 2 years

COLORED STATE SENATE

35 Members
17 Democrats
17 Republicans
Elected every 4 years

100 MEMBERS TOTAL

200 HOUSES TOTAL

200 SENATORS TOTAL

400 LEGISLATORS TOTAL

100 HOUSES TOTAL

200 SENATORS TOTAL

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400 LEGISLATORS TOTAL

Source: <http://stand.org/colorado/how-bill-becomes-law>

Legislative Process

- The earlier you weigh in on a bill, the greater impact you can have.
- Try to weigh in before the bill is introduced, or while it is in committee

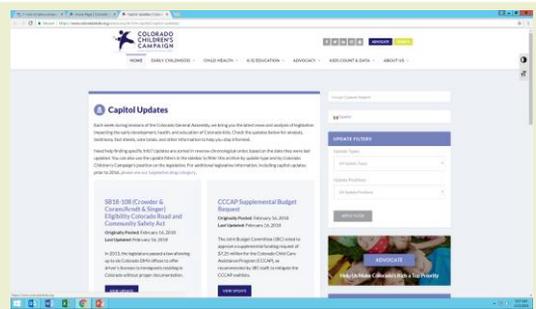


Legislative Process

At leg.colorado.gov you can:

- Learn what bills are pending
- View calendar of committee hearings & floor votes
- Learn which legislators serve on which committees
- Find contact information for all legislators

Legislative Process



SB18-13

Child hunger is widespread in Colorado and ensuring access to complete school meals is one way to limit its impact and help kids learn.



1 in 6
Colorado kids (16%) may not always know when or where they will get their next meal.



20% decline among kids who qualify for reduced-price lunch in lunch participation when kids move from 5th to 6th grade.

SB18-13 Expand Child Nutrition School Lunch Protection Act [Fields & Gardner/Michaelson-Jenet]

Other Current Legislation

- **SB18-151 (Priola & Fields/Wilson & Buckner) Colorado Department of Education Bullying Policies Research**
 - The bill requires the Department of Education to develop a model bullying prevention and education policy based on best practices in other states. It directs CDE to publish these policies on the Department's website by July 1, 2019 and update them every three years for school districts, charter schools, and the charter institute to use as guidance.
- **HB18-1003 (Pettersen/Priola & Jahn) Opioid Misuse Prevention**
 - This bill would allow school-based health care centers to provide treatment for opioid and other substance use disorders and to apply for grants to provide these services. The bill would also establish the Opioid and Other Substance Use Disorders Study Committee in statute until 2020.

Tips for Legislator Outreach

- Learn about your lawmakers prior to meeting.
- Dress appropriately (business attire).
- Decide what you want to say.
- Strategize and rehearse.




Tips for Legislator Outreach

- Personal stories will have an impact.
- Don't attack, criticize, or threaten.
- If you don't know something, say so.

This is about building a relationship!



Tips for Legislator Outreach

- Introduce yourself as constituent.
- Be brief.
- Ask for a commitment from them and how you can help moving forward.
- Leave a fact sheet.




Tips for Legislator Outreach

- Address legislators as Representative _____ or Senator _____
- Always introduce yourself:
 - Why you are interested in the issue?
 - Where in THEIR district do you live?



Tips for Legislator Outreach



- Follow up with thank you card.
- Share any information you promised.
- Keep in touch!



Small Group Discussion

- What is the best part of being a school nurse?
- What is the biggest challenge you see kids facing?
- What are some solutions you see for these challenges?



Lobbying vs. Advocacy

Advocacy is focused on **education** about a specific issue on behalf of the people your organization serves.

Lobbying is focused on convincing decision-makers to take a **specific position** on a specific policy or law.



Lobbying vs. Advocacy

Lobbying: Any attempt to influence specific legislation

Lobbying involves attempts to influence specific legislation at the local, state, or federal level:

- Contacting any legislative member, legislative staff, or government employee to influence him or her to propose, support, or oppose specific legislation
- Trying to persuade the public to share your views on a particular legislative proposal



Lobbying vs. Advocacy

Advocacy: Stakeholders making their voices heard on issues that affect their lives and the lives of others

- Telling legislators how a state or federal has helped your constituents.
- Educating a legislator about the effects of a policy on your constituency.
- Inviting a legislator to visit your organization so that he/she may see first-hand how public funding or policy affects day-to-day operations.
- Updating the members of your own organization on the status of legislation, without a call to action.



Lobbying vs. Advocacy

- Different organizations have different levels of comfort with advocacy and lobbying activities and may operate with different expectations.
- It's always best to talk with your supervisor or board of directors to ensure you understand your organization's advocacy guidelines.



Who can advocate? YOU!

Tell your story!
Tell the story of a child in your community.

- Facts and statistics only take us so far when advocating to address the challenges children encounter throughout Colorado.
- What do the facts and statistics mean for the lives of children in your community?
- Give life to the facts and statistics by telling a story about a specific child you have known or worked with, or a challenging situation you have witnessed.



Stories are powerful

For every challenge, a child.



You can make a difference!

- Your voice matters because decisions about child health and well-being are too important to be left solely to others. You can speak up!



"The question is not whether we can afford to invest in every child; it is whether we can afford not to."

— Marian Wright Edelman



Ideas for next steps

- Call your legislators and let them know how home visiting programs have positively impacted your community.
- Follow your legislators on social media to stay informed about their priorities and town hall meetings.
- Email your legislator to share your opinion on a current bill.
- Sign up for KidsFlash



Keep in touch!

- "Take Back Your Government: A Citizen's Guide to Grassroots Advocacy", Colorado State Sen. Morgan Carroll (book)
- "NAEYC Advocacy Toolkit", National Association for the Education of Young Children: www.naeyc.org
- "Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit", Ounce of Prevention Fund: www.theounce.org
- "Be A Champion for Children's Health", Children's Hospital Association and Speak Now for Kids: www.childrenshospital.org
- "You Have What It Takes! A Tool for Identifying Your Skills as an Early Childhood Advocate", BUILD Initiative: www.buildinitiative.org



Keep in touch!

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Keep in touch!

- www.coloradokids.org
- KIDS COUNT Data Center
<http://datacenter.kidscount.org>



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