

ROOTING FOR KIDS!

News for The Children's Hospital's
Grassroots Advocates



The Children's Hospital



The Children's Hospital Announces Heidi Van Huysen as Director of Public Affairs

The Children's Hospital is pleased to announce that Heidi Van Huysen, J.D., has joined the hospital as the Director of Public Affairs! Heidi brings a wealth of experience in government and legal affairs. Most recently, she served under Governor Ritter's administration as legislative program manager for the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR) where she developed and implemented a natural resources policy and legislative agenda. She carried a wide range of responsibilities in this role, from drafting legislation to tracking communications plans and crafting messages. During her time at the DNR, Heidi also served as state-wide director of the "NO" on Amendment 52 Campaign for the 2008 election cycle.

Prior to her work with the DNR, Heidi worked as an attorney for the Office for Civil Rights under the U.S. Department of Education where she advocated for children with disabilities by enforcing the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Civil Rights Act, and the Rehabilitation Act. Heidi has also worked as an attorney for The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People.

Before earning her law degree, Heidi held the positions of press director for the La Jolla Group, a political consulting firm, and director of sales and marketing for Believe Productions, an independent record label, raising more than \$1 million for school K-12 music education programs nationwide. Please join us in welcoming Heidi to the Public Affairs Team. She can be reached at VanHuysen.Heidi@tchden.org.

Tracking Federal Health Care Reform

As many of you know, the federal health care reform debate has been very intense over the past few months. Over the next several weeks, the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate will work to pass their health care reform bills through their respective chambers. We continue to encourage children's advocates to educate themselves on the various proposals and maximize every opportunity to communicate key messages about issues specific to children's health care.

We will continue to advocate on behalf of children all across the nation to ensure that kids in our community have access to the right care in the right place at the right time. Some of the key issues Children's has been advocating for include:

- Ensuring all children are enrolled in a health insurance plan
- Adequacy of medicaid provider payments
- Protecting benefits for children

- Investments in the pediatric specialist workforce
- Investments in quality (IT, medical homes, etc.)
- Investments in prevention and wellness
- Insurance market reforms (ex -- prohibit denials for pre-existing conditions, administrative streamlining, etc.)
- Discount drug pricing for hospitals

For additional and up-to-date information on federal health care reform, please visit:

[The White House website on Health Reform](#)

[Kaiser Family Foundation](#)

[The Commonwealth Fund](#)

[NACHRI Public Policy Information](#)

Please visit www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy for additional information and resources.



**It's More Important Than Ever to Speak Up for Kids!
HELP US RECRUIT NEW ADVOCATES!**

As many of you know, The Children's Hospital Grassroots Advocacy Network (GAN) is an easy way for thousands of people to unite to ensure that state and national laws are in the best interest of kids. Help us strengthen our community's grassroots momentum and spread awareness by encouraging your friends and peers to join the GAN.

During the month of September, the annual Membership Challenge allows members to promote the advocacy network at the grassroots level. Challenge your friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues to join the GAN, and show them how easy it is to make a difference for kids! Make sure to have new advocates type in YOUR name in the area where it asks how they heard about the Network! Those who recruit the most new members

are eligible to win great prizes such as gift cards and Children's collateral.

Because our site is packed with advocacy tools to help you promote the Network, recruiting new members is just as easy as being one! Visit our site to download text that you can e-mail to all of your networks. You can also watch a video that highlights some of our most dedicated advocates talking about the value of their participation and how easy it is to speak up for kids. It only takes a couple of minutes to make a difference for children in Colorado! Everyone who lives in Colorado, has a valid e-mail address and cares about the welfare of kids is encouraged to join! Please email advocacy@tchden.org with questions or visit www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy for additional information, tools and events!

Advocacy Spotlight: Betsy Cabell

Interview with Betsy Cabell, one of The Children's Hospital's Active Advocates



Why are you a member of the GAN?

I like feeling that I can stay informed about issues significant to children's welfare and easily take action to communicate with my representatives and senators about bills addressing these issues. The system circumvents the laziness/too busy factor because it's quick and easy to follow up on an important issue. I feel good about following through on things I'm interested in, but with not much effort on my part.

Why is it important to have a voice for Colorado children?

I feel like children in general, and economically disadvantaged children in particular, are often voiceless in our political system. In theory their parents as voters represent their children's interests, but often the parents feel overwhelmed and voiceless themselves. So I feel those of us working in these fields must speak up for them when we can.

What is the most rewarding part of being part of the GAN?

The feeling of accomplishment that I took action on an issue and may have a positive impact and that I got it done quickly and easily so it didn't just disappear in a pile on my desk.

What do you feel are the important healthcare issues facing children in our state?

1) Universal access to quality health care, 2) Expanded access to immunizations, 3) Expanded quality mental health services

Please discuss something that you've learned through the GAN during the 2009 legislative session that you felt really passionate about.

The general issue of access to health care for all children is very important to me, so I was especially enthusiastic about those bills involving expanding CHIP coverage, insurance reform, and universal coverage.

Everyone's busy these days, can you discuss how easy it is to become an advocate and how a little effort goes a long way?

Signing up to become a member of GAN takes only a couple of minutes. You get email notices of issues coming up for votes in the legislature. There is always background information and if I'm not familiar with the issue, I'll read through that. Then you just click "take action," and the system identifies the appropriate senator or representative to send your email to. A suggested email is already written, but unless I'm really busy I usually go through the suggested email and make a few small changes so it doesn't look like a form letter and so I can highlight what I think is most significant about that issue. This really doesn't take long. Sometimes I edit the first sentence so the person receiving the email doesn't glance at it and think it's identical to 100 other emails. But I do think even 100 identical emails has some impact; that many people cared enough to at least send the message!



Grassroots Advocacy Network Updates

As you know, Children's is committed to providing a full range of pediatric services for children and families. The 2009 free parenting seminars are one way to share our expertise with community members, parents, employees and patient families. As valued members of our Network, we'd like to invite you to the following parenting seminar.

Speak UP for Kids!

New this year, this seminar will provide parents with information, examples and necessary tools to speak up on behalf of children. Because advocacy is a key part of the mission at The Children's Hospital, we look to parents to partner with us in making a difference on issues that matter.

WHEN: 7pm - 8:30pm on Wednesday, Oct. 14
WHERE: The Children's Hospital 2nd Floor Conference Center, 13123 E. 16th Ave.
SPEAKER: The Children's Hospital Public Affairs Team
RSVP: Admission is FREE, but space is limited! Please reserve your spot online today!

Seminars are for adults only, please.

For a complete schedule of parenting seminar topics and dates, please [click here](#).

Continue to visit www.thechildrenshospital.org/advocacy for advocacy tools, news and upcoming events!

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