Additional copies of this publication are available to affiliated Healthy Families America sites and members of the chapter network for $20; the regular price is $28. Please call the above number to order or to ask about bulk purchases.
Dear Child Advocates,

We at Prevent Child Abuse America are excited to offer you this advocacy guide. Whether you are a parent or community leader and have never considered yourself an advocate or whether you are a statewide PCA America chapter and have been extensively involved with your state’s legislative process, we hope that you will all take something useful from this resource.

PCA America and all of its chapter network members and partners have been dedicated to preventing child abuse and neglect before it begins. This dedication has been put into action through many direct service, education, public awareness, and support programs throughout the country. Part of our responsibility to the children and families that we serve is to meet the challenge of prevention and ensure the safety of children through more effective advocacy. We must ensure that the proper programs and policies are in place to protect our most vulnerable citizens and that these programs and policies are properly implemented and monitored.

On the pages immediately following you will find the PCA America National Advocacy Agenda and our Home Visiting National Advocacy Agenda. These agendas drive our advocacy efforts here at the national level and should influence your activities at the state and local levels as well. These agendas are updated each year. You will receive an updated agenda each year to insert into the tool-kit. As you begin your advocacy efforts, it is important to examine these national agendas and determine what your specific advocacy goals will be. Don’t be afraid to think large – you’ve got to aim high to make big changes! On the other hand, it is important to set realistic goals to achieve along the way. Your advocacy agenda, or advocacy mission statement, will drive your efforts. It is important to put some time into creating this blueprint.

We encourage you to use this guide as best fits your organization. Some topics may be more relevant to you than others. We also encourage you to try new things that you have not previously considered. This is a great opportunity to be creative and push your organization in new directions!

Best of luck in your advocacy efforts!

Best Regards,

A. Sidney Johnson, III
President and CEO,
Prevent Child Abuse America
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Prevent Child Abuse America’s mission is to prevent the abuse and neglect of our nation’s children. PCA America envisions a world in which children are valued, parents are supported, and communities are engaged in our efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect. To achieve this vision, PCA America works to:

- Ensure that new parents have access to the resources necessary to care for themselves and their children;
- Expand and enhance the network of PCA America state chapters to promote the prevention of child abuse and neglect at state and local levels;
- Contribute to and disseminate research-based information needed for designing effective child abuse prevention strategies, programs, and policies; and
- Inform the public about child abuse prevention through public awareness, advocacy, and public policy initiatives.

This guide is intended for use by PCA America chapters, Healthy Families America (HFA) state leaders, and other partners to assist efforts to advocate for state and local policies, as well as federal policy and program initiatives. This is a working tool for our network’s advocacy efforts, and we encourage you to utilize and modify this material for your advocacy needs.

What is Advocacy?

To many of us, the word “advocacy” seems somewhat mysterious. The word may conjure up visions of a professional lobbyist in Washington, D.C., who is a paid expert on an issue. Alternatively, we may envision mass demonstrations or rallies. While professional lobbyists are advocates and demonstrations and rallies are relevant examples of advocacy efforts, they are only a small piece of the advocacy puzzle. Advocacy can actually be quite simple. Much of advocacy is simply seeing a need and finding ways to address that need. In short, advocacy is as basic as speaking on behalf of oneself or others to get something done or accomplished. You are an advocate if you have ever:

- Given your opinion in a town meeting;
- Returned a faulty product to a store;
- Stood up for someone who was being unfairly treated in a public place;
- Written a letter to a business about poor or outstanding services received;
- Gone to City Hall to complain about a property tax bill that seems too high;
- Participated in a “Get Out the Vote” effort for a bill you supported; or
- Met with your legislator to discuss concerns in your community.
This handbook will focus on advocating on behalf of children and families – specifically, for child abuse and neglect prevention policies and programs. Being a child and family advocate gives you the opportunity to influence the way the public and policy-makers think and act on child abuse and neglect issues. Based on the above principles, we act under the assumption that all children have an existing right to a safe and healthy childhood. As child advocates, we are concerned with ensuring that the institutions and policies in place to protect children are operating effectively, and we are concerned with supporting efforts to help these institutions and programs operate more effectively. While the advocacy strategies discussed in this guide can be applied to many different issues, the case examples highlighted in this guide will illustrate prevention advocacy efforts.

The following chapters will provide detail and guidance on the following advocacy tactics:

**Legislative Advocacy:** Legislators are the decision-makers through which policies are made, programs are created, and dollars are allocated to those programs and policies. By cultivating relationships with legislators, and by becoming a resource on child abuse and neglect prevention, the PCA America network can influence and shape child abuse prevention policy throughout the states and the nation. This chapter focuses on ways to cultivate those relationships and strategies for influencing the legislative process.

**Media Advocacy:** Informing the public and policy-makers through the media can be a powerful force for change. This chapter offers tips on dealing with media and cultivating relationships with the press, and provides the tools needed to use the media to effectively communicate about child abuse and neglect prevention.

**Advocacy During Election Years:** Election years provide an important venue from which to initiate public awareness and social change. This chapter discusses ways to inform candidates about child abuse prevention efforts and garner support from candidates on prevention issues. This chapter also covers post-election advocacy strategies and ways to communicate with newly elected officials.

**Regulatory Advocacy:** Local, state, and federal regulatory agencies are the administrative bodies responsible for implementing the programs and policies authorized by the legislature. Advocates have the opportunity to help shape how these programs and policies will look and ensure that they are operationalized as intended and in the best interest of children and families. This chapter provides an outline of the regulatory process and suggests ways to advocate throughout that process.
Organizing Your Advocacy Efforts: The techniques described in each of the above chapters can be used by your organization as you pursue your advocacy goals. However, you will probably find it useful to join forces with others to promote your cause. Collaborating with others can make your advocacy efforts more effective. This chapter focuses on two ways to organize your efforts – through coalition building and grassroots organizing.

1. Coalition Building: There is power in numbers. By creating or joining a coalition with organizations focused on compatible child and family issues, network members can strengthen their voices and create a powerful presence for child abuse prevention programs and policies. This section provides the framework of how to build a coalition and offers advocacy strategies for your coalitions.

2. Grassroots Organizing: Constituents elect their public officials. It follows that constituents influence the decisions that these officials make. This section provides the framework from which to mobilize an advocacy effort around the people in your community.

To become an effective advocate, it is critical that you know your subject. In order to speak effectively about an issue, one must be equipped with accurate information. It is important to stay abreast of the latest developments in the field of prevention, including the most recent research and statistics on abuse and neglect. The following statistics are the most recent from PCA America (November 1999). This sheet can be removed and replaced with more recent statistics as data becomes available.
Child Abuse and Neglect Reports Nationwide

In 1998, over 3 million (3,154,000) children were reported for child abuse and neglect to child protective services (CPS) agencies in the United States. This figure represents a 2.4% decrease from the number of children reported in 1997.

- In 1998, CPS confirmed that approximately 1,009,000 children were victims of child maltreatment. This represents 14 out of every 1,000 children.

- The breakdown of confirmed cases of abuse in 1998 was:
  - 19% physical abuse
  - 10% sexual abuse
  - 54% neglect
  - 3% emotional maltreatment
  - 14% other forms of maltreatment

Incidence of Child Maltreatment in the General Population

- In 1998, about 45 out of every 1,000 children were reported as victims of child maltreatment.

Child Fatalities

- The most accurate data on child maltreatment fatalities currently available estimate that in 1996, 1,185 child abuse and neglect related fatalities were confirmed by CPS agencies. Based on these numbers, more than three children die each day as a result of child abuse or neglect. Since 1985, the rate of child abuse fatalities has increased by 34%.

- Young children are at high risk for loss of life. Between 1995 and 1997, 78% of these children were less than five years old at the time of their death, while 38% were under one year of age. Of these deaths, 44% resulted from neglect, 51% from physical abuse, and 5% from a combination of neglectful and physically abusive parenting. Approximately 412 of these deaths occurred to children known to child protective service agencies as current or prior clients.
Attention-Grabbing Talking Points

✖ Three children die every day in the U.S. from child abuse.

✖ For every death attributed to cancer, America spends $794 in prevention, intervention, and research; for heart disease, $440; and for AIDS, $697. These are all worthwhile investments and should continue. For every death attributed to violence, we spend $31.

✖ One in every 4 girls and 1 in every 6 boys will be sexually abused by age 18.

✖ Children who grow up in a family where there is domestic violence are 8 times more likely to be sexually molested within that family.

✖ Children who are maltreated are 50% more likely to be arrested for juvenile crimes and 40% more likely to be arrested for violent crimes when they become adults.
1. **Get to know your legislators.**
   Become familiar with their districts and constituencies, voting records, schedules for being in the capitol and being home in their district, expertise, interest, and views. Become familiar with legislators’ concerns and priorities. Contact legislators before you have an issue that you want addressed.

2. **Learn the legislative process.**
   Understand how ideas work their way through the process to become laws or programs. Stay abreast of events and issues in the community and the legislature.

3. **Identify fellow advocates and partners.**
   Forming a coalition with those with common goals arms you with more power and potentially more influence. Strengthen relationships with allies.

4. **Be open to negotiation.**
   Do not dismiss potential allies because of past disagreements or a history of opposition. You never know who may turn out to support your issue.

5. **Be honest, straightforward and realistic.**
   These are musts for any successful relationship. Never stretch the truth of a situation or make promises that you can’t keep.

6. **Timing is everything.**
   The earlier in the legislative process that you involve yourself, the more likely you will be able to influence the process.

7. **Be sure to follow up with legislators and their staff.**
   Provide requested follow-up information and be a reliable and timely resource to your legislators. Let them know that they can rely on you as a resource.

8. **Recognize the sensitivity of issues that involve government and family.**
   The same policy that some people believe will strengthen families is often seen by others as intrusive. Focus on families, not on the family, in your goals and communication. Don’t let anyone attack your objective because you described it in a way that appeared to support only one kind of family.

9. **Always say thanks.**
   Complement policy-makers who support your issues. Policy makers get hundreds of letters of criticism for every letter of appreciation they receive. Write letters thanking them when they support goals and policies you have recommended. Write letters to the editors in their community newspapers thanking them by name for their leadership and support. They will remember those letters and who wrote them.

10. **Have staying power and be persistent.**
    Don’t give up! Don’t let one defeat discourage you. Changes don’t happen overnight, but if you stay committed, you will succeed.
Types of Prevention Efforts
Child abuse and neglect prevention covers a broad range of services from public awareness, to parent education, to home visiting. These services are designed for a range of audiences – from the general public to those individuals who have abused or neglected a child. Typically, prevention efforts have three common goals:

1. To deter predictable problems
2. To protect existing states of health
3. To promote desired life objectives.

Child abuse and neglect prevention activities generally occur at three basic levels that reflect the audience targeted to receive the service. These three levels are:

**Primary Prevention:**
These activities raise the awareness of the general public, service providers, and decision-makers about the scope of problems associated with child abuse and neglect. Primary prevention efforts might include:
- Public service announcements on the radio or television encouraging parents to use nonviolent forms of discipline;
- Parent education programs and groups teaching parents age-appropriate expectations; and
- Public awareness campaigns informing citizens how and where to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

**Secondary Prevention:**
These activities focus efforts and resources on children and families known to be at higher risk of maltreatment. Risk factors associated with child abuse and neglect include factors such as substance abuse, young maternal age, developmental disabilities of children, and poverty. Secondary prevention programs may direct services to communities or neighborhoods that have a high incidence of any or all of these risk factors. Secondary prevention efforts might include:
- Parent education programs located in high schools for teen mothers;
- Substance abuse treatment programs for mothers and families with young children;
- Respite care for families who have special needs; and
- Family resource centers offering information and referral services to families living in low-income neighborhoods.
**Tertiary Prevention:**

These activities focus efforts on families where abuse or neglect has already occurred. The goal is to prevent maltreatment from recurring and to reduce the negative consequences associated with maltreatment. Tertiary prevention efforts might include:

- Intensive family preservation services with trained mental health counselors available to families 24 hours a day for a short period of time;
- Parent mentor programs; and
- Mental health services for children and families affected by maltreatment.

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**Healthy Families America**

PCA America network members have a variety of programs that address child abuse and neglect prevention at various levels. HFA is PCA America’s national prevention initiative designed to help parents of newborns get their children off to a healthy start. HFA offers home visiting and other support services on a voluntary basis to families in over 400 communities. The initiative promotes positive parenting and child health and development, with the goal of preventing child abuse, neglect and other poor childhood outcomes.

According to a report released by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, “the earliest years of a child’s life are society’s most neglected age group, yet new evidence confirms that these years lay the foundation for all that follows.” Programs that begin working with parents right after birth, such as HFA, stand the greatest chance of reducing the risk of child abuse for several reasons:

- New parents are eager and excited to learn about caring for their babies;
- Positive parenting practices are supported before patterns are established;
- Research shows that the risk of child abuse and neglect can be reduced if a continuum of support and education services are made available around the time of birth;
- Most physical abuse and neglect occurs among children under the age of two;
- Children need to be immunized from childhood disease during the first two years of life; and
- The most critical brain development occurs during the first few years of life.

**The Role of Home Visitors**

Home visitors assist families by linking them to necessary resources and providing them with support. Services can include:

- Linking families to primary care physicians and healthcare services for prenatal visits, well child visits and preventive health care;
- Supporting families in the home when they respond to their child’s needs (e.g., health and nutrition), and their own needs (e.g., stress management, job placement, parent support groups);
- Sharing ideas on caring for new babies, toddlers and young children (e.g., how to hold and feed the baby, how to change diapers, how to make the home safe for youngsters);
• Educating parents on a child’s developmental growth (e.g., when to expect a baby to begin walking, toilet training); and
• Linking families with community programs for assistance in job placement, identification of daycare providers, and other needed services.

Facts About Home Visiting Programs and HFA

The Costs of Abuse:
• Depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, conduct disorders, brain damage, developmental delays, and learning disorders are only a few of the consequences of childhood abuse and neglect.  
• Long-term societal costs include increased risk of low academic achievement, drug use, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. Further, these consequences cost society by expanding the need for mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, police and court interventions, correctional facilities, and public assistance programs, and by causing losses in productivity.  

The Cost Savings of Prevention:
• For every dollar spent on prevention, at least two dollars are saved that might otherwise have been spent on child welfare services, special education services, medical care, foster care, counseling and housing juvenile offenders. It would take less than half the cost society presently spends treating and managing the consequences of child maltreatment to make HFA services available to all families that want them.
• In some states, research indicates even greater savings. A study commissioned by the Colorado Children’s Trust Fund concluded that the cost of making home visitation services available to all Colorado families with children from birth to age three who want these services would cost approximately $32 million annually. This is compared to the $402 million combined costs (indirect and direct) of maltreatment to the state today. For every dollar spent, 12 are saved.
• A study by the Michigan Children’s Trust Fund found that a statewide prevention program, including the availability of home visitation services for every family expecting its first child would cost approximately $43 million. The current cost of maltreatment is $823 million. For every dollar spent, 19 are saved.

Home Visiting Programs are Associated with Reduced Rates of Abuse:
• Home visiting programs can help prevent child abuse. Some studies suggest that the risk of child maltreatment is two to three times higher (8 – 12%) among children living in families comparable to those enrolled in HFA services. That is, families enrolled in HFA are two to three times less likely to maltreat their children than comparable families who are not enrolled.
- One hundred percent of Virginia HFA participants are free of substantiated abuse.¹⁵
- In Hawaii, treatment group families had significantly fewer substantiated cases of abuse or neglect, 3.3% compared to 6.6% from the control group.¹⁶
- In one county in Florida, between 1993 – 1997 the substantiated rate of abuse for participating families was only 1.3% compared to a county-wide rate of 5.6%.¹⁷

**Participants are Better Linked to Medical Care:**
- In Oregon, the 1997 statewide immunization rate for two-year-old children was 73%, while the immunization rate for children whose parents were participating in HFA was 97%.¹⁸
- One hundred percent of two-year-olds in Florida HFA programs and 70% of 16 – 23 month-olds were fully immunized and current with well-baby check-ups.¹⁹
- Ninety-two percent of Virginia HFA participants were up-to-date with child immunizations versus only 74% in a control group.²⁰ Ninety-eight percent had a primary health care provider for their children.²¹
- HFA participants in Arizona exceeded community-wide immunizations rates in 9 out of 14 communities.²²
- Over 96% of children in Tennessee HFA programs are fully immunized by age two.²³
Notes

2. Adapted from N. Amidei.
6. Talking points taken from A National Call to Action, *Alarming Facts We Can’t Ignore in the U.S.*
7. The following information was derived from the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information at www.calib.com/nccanch/pubs/prevent.htm.
15. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Daro and Harding.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

Legislative advocacy is probably what most of us think of when we think of advocacy activities. It involves working towards positive change for children and families through the law-making processes of our local, state and federal legislative systems. This chapter provides the following information:

- A review of the legislative process;
- How to contact and communicate most effectively with policy-makers;
- How to provide congressional testimony;
- When and how to take action most effectively; and
- How to continue and strengthen your advocacy efforts throughout the year when the legislature is not in session.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Understanding your local, state and federal legislative systems is an integral part of becoming an effective advocate. The legislative process can seem confusing and complex. This section provides an overview of how the legislative process works. While this overview highlights the federal legislative process, keep in mind that it is important to understand and be very familiar with your state and local legislative systems as well.

Figure I on page 19 illustrates how legislation moves through Congress and comes before the President. The 14 steps discussed below provide more detailed descriptions of what takes place in each step of the process.

The United States Congress consists of two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate. Two Senators are elected from each state for a total of 100 Senators. Each district in every state elects a Representative. There are currently 435 Representatives. Senators serve six-year terms, as opposed to Representatives who serve in office for two years.

Note that legislation can begin in either the House of Representatives or the Senate. A bill must survive many hurdles to actually become a law or policy, and many bills never make it through the process. But don’t be discouraged – you can play an important role in the process!

**Step 1: Introduction of the Bill**

Any member of Congress can introduce a bill. An idea for a policy proposal or a bill might come from constituents or interest groups of a member of Congress. These proposals might address an unmet need and attempt to create a new law, make a change in an existing law to strengthen that law, or create a new program. The member who introduces the bill is the bill’s sponsor. Each introduced bill is assigned a number and is referred to the appropriate committee to be placed on that committee’s calendar.
Step 2: Referral to Committee
Members of Congress sit on legislative committees, which are the pathway through which the legislative process proceeds. The House and Senate each have a committee system. When a bill is introduced in the House or Senate, it is usually referred to the appropriate standing committee according to carefully defined rules of procedure. For example, a bill related to child protection laws might be assigned to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Step 3: Committee Action
When a bill is referred to a committee, it is placed on that committee’s calendar. A bill can be referred to a subcommittee or considered by the committee as a whole. It is at this point that a bill is examined carefully and its chances for passage are determined. If the committee chooses not to act on a bill, it is the equivalent of killing it.

Step 4: Subcommittee Review
Most often, the committee will send the bill to a subcommittee. Committees in both the House and Senate have subcommittees, which are responsible for detailed examination of legislative matters referred to them. For example, the child protection bill mentioned earlier above might be assigned to the Human Resources Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Subcommittees hold hearings, which offer congressional members the opportunity to study the bill language carefully. These hearings provide the opportunity to record the views of the executive branch, experts, other public officials, supporters and opponents. Testimony can be given in person or submitted in writing.

Step 5: Mark Up
After the hearings are completed and the proposal has been investigated, the subcommittee “marks up” the bill. This is where changes, edits and amendments are made to the proposed bill prior to recommending the bill to the full committee. At this point, if a subcommittee votes not to report the bill to the full committee, the bill dies. Alternatively, the subcommittee may issue a report to the full committee with the marked-up bill.

Step 6: Committee Action to Report a Bill
After receiving the subcommittee’s report on a bill, the full committee can go through a similar process of holding hearings and marking up the bill, or the committee can vote directly on the subcommittee’s recommendations and any proposed amendments. After the committee’s mark-up process, the committee votes on its recommendation to the House or Senate. This process is called “ordering a bill reported.”
**Step 7: Publication of a Written Report**

Once the committee votes to have a bill reported, the chairman of the committee instructs staff to prepare a written report on the bill. This report describes the intent and scope of the legislation, impact on existing laws and programs, position of the executive branch, and views of dissenting members.

**Step 8: Scheduling Floor Action**

When the bill comes before the full House or Senate, it is placed on the business calendar. In the Senate there is only one legislative calendar. However, in the House there are several different legislative calendars, and the House leadership has great influence in determining if and when bills will be brought before the House for a vote.

**Step 9: Debate**

Once the bill is brought before the House or the Senate, the third mark-up process takes place. There are rules or procedures governing debate. These rules determine the conditions and amount of time allocated for debate of the bill.

**Step 10: Voting**

After the debate and approval of any amendments, the bill is passed or defeated by all members voting on the bill.

**Step 11: Starting Over**

Once a bill has passed in the House or the Senate, the bill is sent to the other chamber and goes through the same process. It is important to remember that the other chamber can approve the bill in its current form, modify the bill, reject the bill, or consider its own version of the bill.

**Step 12: Conference Committee Action**

If there are differences between the House and Senate versions of a bill, a Conference Committee is appointed to reconcile the differences between the two versions. The Conference Committee generally is made up of members from the relevant committees of both chambers. If the Conference Committee is unable to reach an agreement, the legislation dies. If the members of the Conference Committee reach an agreement, both the House and the Senate must approve the final conference report, which is the agreed upon language of the bill.

**Step 13: Final Actions**

Once both the House and Senate have approved the bill, it is sent to the President for approval. If the President approves the bill, it is signed into law. If the President takes no action for 10 days while Congress is in session, the bill will become law automatically. The President has the power to veto the bill if he opposes it. A vetoed bill is returned to Congress.

**Step 14: Overriding a Veto**

If the President vetoes a bill, Congress may attempt to override the veto. This requires a two-thirds vote of each chamber.
Understanding Your State’s Legislative System

The legislative process varies somewhat by states, but generally follows the same basic steps as the federal legislative process. The state House of Representatives, Senate and Governor act in a similar capacity as the federal House, Senate and President. It is important to understand your state and local legislative processes and to be advocates at the state and local levels of government. To find out more about your state legislature, contact your local or state chapter of the League of Women Voters or the National Conference of State Legislatures at:

League of Women Voters
1730 M. Street NW
Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036
202.429.1965
www.lwv.org

National Conference of State Legislatures
449 North Capitol St., NW
Suite 515
Washington, DC 20001
202.624.5400
www.ncsl.org

For more information on resources in your state, see Appendix C.
How a Bill Becomes a Law

CONGRESS BILL INTRODUCTION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House Sub-committee Action

House Committee Action

House Rules Committee Action

House Floor Action

SENATE

Senate Sub-Committee Action

Senate Committee Action

Senate Floor Action

Conference Committee

President

Bill Becomes a Law

or

Bill Vetoed
When Can I Influence the Process?

You can call, write and visit your legislators all you want, but it is important to be strategic about when these communications will have the most significant impact. This section will discuss when in the legislative process you can make a difference and at what point you should use the tactics discussed above. See Appendix C for information on the timing of your state’s legislative session and how to track pending legislation.

Recall from the discussion of the legislative process on page 15 that there are 14 steps in the legislative process. The following outlines each of those steps with suggestions of actions you can take as an advocate at each step.

- **Steps 1 and 2: Introduction of a Bill/Referral to Committee**
  - Propose an idea or point out an unmet need to a policy-maker or committee member interested in child abuse prevention efforts.
  - Contact your legislators and request that they co-sponsor the bill. The more co-sponsors a bill has, the more likely it is to gain support and move through the legislative process.
  - Develop an “action alert” for your chapter’s members and partners indicating how they can get involved in supporting or opposing the legislation. Include directions to contact legislators and position of the organization.
  - Once a relevant bill has been introduced, contact members of the committee to which it is assigned and make them aware of your opinions. Communication can be through calls, letters, personal visits or emails.

- **Steps 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7: Committee Action, Subcommittee Review, Mark Up, Committee Action to Report a Bill and Publication of a Written Report**
  - Provide testimony (written or verbal) before the committee or subcommittee as an advocate for children and families, and child abuse prevention.
  - Contact committee and subcommittee legislators and staff to communicate your position on the legislation.
  - Be prepared to provide alternative language for the legislation and suggestions for strengthening it.
  - Indicate under which circumstances you support or oppose the bill. For instance, if with the changes you have proposed, you would support the bill, say so, or if you are clearly opposed, make it clear that under no circumstances could you support the bill. Be clear about how you would like the member of Congress to vote.
  - Send letters to committee members supporting or opposing the marked-up version of the bill.
Steps 8, 9 and 10: Scheduling Floor Action, Debate and Voting
× Contact your Congress members (call, write or visit) to communicate your support of or opposition to the bill and any amendments. If there are areas of the bill which could be improved, recommend these improvements to members of Congress and try to find a member who will support amendments.

Step 11: Starting Over
× As the process starts over in the other chamber, continue efforts at the committee, subcommittee and full chamber levels.

Step 12: Conference Committee Action
× Communicate with members of the Conference Committee and the House and Senate leadership to encourage support of the preferred version of the bill in conference.
× Contact the White House to voice your support or opposition to the bill and call for Presidential support or veto.
× Keep in mind that both the House and Senate must approve the final version of the bill – each legislator must register a final vote. Continue your communication with members of Congress by calling, writing or visiting in person to indicate support or opposition for the bill in its final version.

Step 13: Final Actions
× It is at this point that the President either approves a bill or vetoes it. Contact the White House to voice your support or opposition to the bill and call for Presidential approval or veto.

Step 14: Overriding a Veto
× Contact members of Congress to make sure they are voting consistently in the direction you want them to. If you can identify ‘swing voters’ or those who could go either way, provide them with information and data to support voting in the ‘right’ direction.
Contacting Your Legislators

Calling Your Legislators
Politicians and decision-makers take notice when constituents make the effort to call and convey their views on particular issues. Calling may be especially suited for those who are politically shy, as calls are often answered by a receptionist or machine. If there is a message machine, simply state who you are and what you want them to support or reject. If you speak with someone, let that person know concisely: who you are and that you are a constituent of a public official, what you are calling about, and what action you would like to see taken (for example, support for or opposition to a bill, action on a proposal, etc.).

Writing Your Legislators
Writing a letter to a legislator is one of the most effective ways to get your point across. Decision-makers pay attention to their mail. Many state and federal legislators weigh an issue’s importance to constituents based on the number of letters they receive. You can write to a legislator to voice support for or opposition to a piece of legislation, inform them of a problem in your community, share your expertise or knowledge with them, or thank them for their vote on a certain measure. Letters to policymakers should always:

1. Include the correct spelling of the legislator’s or policy-maker’s name and address.
2. State your purpose in the first paragraph.
3. Be short, to the point and legible (no more than 1-2 pages).
4. Be informative and polite.
5. Be personalized. Avoid form letters whenever possible. Handwritten letters are every bit as effective as (if not more effective than) typed letters, as long as they are legible.

If you are writing about a specific bill or policy, you should:

1. Cite the bill by number or the policy by name.
2. State your position (whether you are for or against the bill or policy) and why you hold that position.
3. Be honest and speak from your own experiences and your own perspective.
4. Ask for a response back about their views on the issue or bill.
When writing to policy-makers or public officials, it is important to use the proper salutation and address as follows:

**To the President:**
The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500  

**To the Vice President:**
The Vice President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500  

**To Senators:**
The Honorable (insert full name)  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  

**To Representatives:**
The Honorable (insert full name)  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  

**Dear Mr. President:**  
**Dear Mr. Vice President:**  
**Dear Senator (insert last name):**  
**Dear Representative (insert last name):**

**Visiting Your Legislators**
Meeting face-to-face with your local, state and federal policy-makers can be an effective way to convey your message and an important way to develop important relationships. Elected officials can be visited on the job, (in Washington, the State Capitol, the City Council chambers) in their local offices, or whenever they are engaged in public business.

**Tips for Meeting with Your Legislators**

1. **Make an appointment.** Whenever possible arrange a meeting ahead of time by contacting the individual in charge of appointments for the legislator (see Appendix C for how to contact your state and federal legislators). When making an appointment, explain the purpose of the meeting and who will attend.

2. **Be brief and concise.** Chances are that you will have a very limited amount of time to meet with your public official. Be prepared to sum up your point clearly and concisely.

3. **State your purpose.** Make it clear who you are and why you have asked for this meeting. Be straightforward in your presentation.

4. **Ask for what you want.** Tell your legislator what action you would like for him or her to take in support of your request.

5. **Make your politics local.** Let the legislator know how the issue relates to his or her constituents – what your request will accomplish for you.

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See Exhibit I on page 27 for a sample letter to a member of Congress.
and your community.

6. **Don’t bluff.** If you don’t know the answer to a question, admit it. Tell your legislator that you don’t know, but that you will follow up and get back to him or her with the information. Always keep your word!

7. **Leave evidence.** Bring written materials to leave with your legislator with more information about the issue at hand. This will provide a reminder of your visit and a refresher on the points you presented.

8. **Always remember to thank.** No matter how you feel the meeting went, always send a note thanking the legislator for the meeting. This is also an opportunity to mention any points you may have forgotten or to send follow-up information that you promised.

9. **Appreciate staff.** You may be asked to meet with a staff member instead of your legislator. Don’t be put off. This person can be a valuable resource to you and should have a good understanding of your issues.

In light of this last point, it is important to understand a little about who your legislator’s staff are. Remember that these individuals work closely with your legislators and can be very helpful throughout the process. The following highlights the key staff members for most congressional offices:

- **Legislative Director, Senior Legislative Assistant or Legislative Coordinator:** The Legislative Director is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations regarding the pros and cons of particular issues. In some congressional offices there are several Legislative Assistants and responsibilities are assigned to staff with particular expertise in specific areas. For example, depending on the responsibilities and interests of the member of Congress, an office may include a different Legislative Assistant for health issues, environmental matters, child welfare, etc.

- **Press Secretary or Communications Director:** The Press Secretary’s responsibility is to build and maintain open lines of communication between the member of Congress, his or her constituency, and the general public. The Press Secretary is expected to be the expert on print and electronic media and on how to most effectively promote the Congress member’s views on specific issues.

- **Appointment Secretary, Personal Secretary or Scheduler:** This person is responsible for allocating a Congress member’s time among his or her many commitments and demands from congressional responsibilities, staff requirements, and constituent requests. This person may also be responsible for coordinating travel arrangements, speaking events, etc.

- **Caseworker:** This person is usually assigned to help with constituent requests by preparing replies for the member of Congress to sign. There are often several Caseworkers in a congressional office.
Using the Internet

As noted above, personalized communication is the best way to influence policymakers. However, the world is changing as technological advances are made. Many people now have access to the internet, including most of our legislators. If you don't have time to write a personal letter, make a phone call or schedule a meeting, sending an email is better than nothing at all!

Legislators are beginning to see email as a viable mode of communication, and in many cases will take the time to respond. This is likely to become even more common in the future. If it's the only option that you have, do it! However, you are encouraged to first consider the other communication techniques.

The same general guidelines hold for sending electronic mail as for sending personal letters. Most legislators with email accounts can be located through the federal or state web sites. Email addresses for federal Senators and Representatives can be found at www.senate.gov and www.house.gov, respectively. See Appendix B for additional information on the internet.
July 12, 2000

The Honorable ______________________
United States Senate (House of Representatives)
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (Representatives) ____________:

I am writing to urge you to vote in favor of Senate (House of Representatives) Bill S. (House of Representatives) ______, to expand home visiting programs as a nationwide effort.

Child abuse is a national tragedy that affects more than one million children every year. In 1998, 14 out of every 1,000 children were victims of confirmed child maltreatment. Our children are our country’s most vulnerable citizens and deserve to be protected from harm. Home visiting programs for at-risk families can help alleviate the stresses of parenting by educating and supporting parents. By making this a national effort, we can potentially provide safety for thousands of children.

The future of America depends on what we do for our children today. Therefore, we need you to support this proposal. I am looking forward to hearing from you on your views on the issue. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ima Advocate
1234 W. Proactive Way
Anytown, USA 12345
Another way to participate in the policy-making process is to provide testimony during congressional committee or subcommittee hearings. Testimony can be submitted in written form or can be given in person before the committee. Typically, you must be invited to testify live before the committee, but you should be proactive about getting that invitation. To show your interest you can:

- **Show your support.** Write a letter in support of the bill to the committee members indicating your interest in working with the committee on the bill and your interest in providing testimony.
- **Contact the committee.** Contact the staff of the committee with jurisdiction as soon as you learn that hearings are scheduled to take place.
- **Get invited.** Secure an “invitation” to testify through the bill’s sponsor or committee members. When you are preparing to testify, find out the committee’s procedural rules including length of statement, format of panels, and number of packets required. Be sure to find out how far in advance written materials need to be submitted to committee staff.

### Written Statement

Your written statement for testimony purposes should include the following:

- A title page;
- A clear presentation of your position: “I/We support ________”;
- Factual arguments and data as evidence to support your position. Consider including research data, news articles and PCA-developed resources; and
- A conclusion that reviews your basic position.

### Oral Testimony

Keep in mind that your written statement will become part of the official record and can be longer than your oral statement. Your oral statement is an opportunity to summarize your written testimony. Effective oral testimony includes the following elements:

- An easily understood, jargon-free, five to ten minute statement, focused on the issue before the committee;
- The basic facts, including who you represent and your involvement in the issue;
- A clear statement of your points of agreement or disagreement with what is being discussed;
- Changes you would like made in the pending legislation;
- Real examples of people who will be affected by the matter being discussed and how they will be affected; and
- A rebuttal of the opposition’s main argument.
As you can see, so much of the legislative advocacy process is about communicating with your legislators. This is true at both the state and federal levels. Much of what needs to be done revolves around building relationships with your policy-makers. And while there is certainly no formula for effectively forming relationships, there are things that you can do towards this end.

Ideally, as a child abuse prevention advocate your relationship with your policy-makers will become a reciprocal one. You have the opportunity to become a resource for your legislators – they can call you when they need information about child abuse issues or prevention strategies. Building strong relationships takes time and effort. It doesn’t happen overnight. But there are things that you can start doing now to begin this process.

- Schedule meetings or lunches with legislators in their hometowns or home states. Utilize the PCA America network and board members to identify people who know legislators. These individuals can set up and participate in meetings and be your “in” to establishing a relationship. Meetings with legislators should be informative. Taking the time to meet with your legislators before you need their assistance puts you in a better position to ask for assistance down the road. You should provide information about your organization’s mission and goals. Let them know that you are available as a resource. Always follow up your meeting with a thank-you letter.

- Invite legislators to attend a program site – HFA or another prevention program. This provides an opportunity for policy-makers to see first-hand how their decisions directly impact individuals. There is no better way to advocate for our programs! The best way to arrange a visit is to contact the legislator’s local office and ask to speak to the person in charge of that legislator’s schedule.

- Invite legislators to your meetings and events. Add legislators’ names to your mailing list to ensure that they receive invitations to open houses and conferences. Also include them on your newsletter mailing list or the mailing list of other publications. This is a great way to keep policy-makers updated on what kinds of things are going on with your organization, what needs are being met, and what obstacles with which you are faced.

- Invite legislators to speak at meetings, open houses and conferences. This is another great way to involve policy-makers in the organization. You can also ask legislators to write an article for your newsletter or other publication. These kinds of invitations force legislators to think about the issues that interest you.
Consider honoring those legislators who have supported child and family policies with an award or by highlighting them in your newsletter. This gives your “champions” recognition and support, and shows appreciation for their work to help children and families. This is a great way to thank legislators and keep your organization in the forefront of their minds.

Send thank-you letters. Write thank-you letters to legislators when they are not in session thanking them for their work in the previous session. This keeps you in touch with legislators without always asking for something from them.

This list is just a sample of the many activities in which you can involve your legislators when they are not in session. The important point here is to continue developing these relationships throughout the year – not just when you need their help with something. It’s a long-term commitment with long-term benefits! The next section summarizes a very creative approach that a PCA America chapter used to influence its state legislature. This is an example of how you can tailor your advocacy efforts to your needs and interests.

**Creative Legislative Advocacy Techniques:**

The 1996 Louisiana state legislative session was a “fiscal-only” session, meaning that only legislation related to taxes or fiscal matters could be introduced. PCA Louisiana took advantage of this time to raise awareness of child abuse prevention in the legislature and throughout the state.

PCA Louisiana partnered with several other child welfare organizations throughout the state to initiate a doll campaign. They enlisted volunteers to create cloth dolls for every single legislator in the state of Louisiana. Each doll included a story about a child who had died from a preventable cause or who had survived as a result of prevention efforts. PCA Louisiana had arranged with the Speaker of the House and the Senate President to have the dolls placed at every Representative and Senator’s desk. On the designated morning, legislators in both chambers arrived to find these cloth dolls waiting for them with a story to tell. By including a personal story, each legislator gained a deeper understanding of the value of prevention efforts. This is not an easy thought to dismiss.

This campaign was coordinated to coincide with the state’s Child Death Review Panel report to a legislative committee. They received the dolls the same day that this report was presented, thereby strengthening the impact of both the doll campaign and the results of the Child Death Review Panel report. While the idea was not to pass any specific legislation, this grabbed the attention of the legislators and the media, and forced state policy-makers to think about child fatalities and why prevention policies and programs are important.
It is a good idea to become familiar with the budgeting process at both the state and federal levels. This is another area where you can be active as an advocate for children and families. This section will discuss the federal budget process. See Appendix B for contact information to find out more about your state’s budgeting process.

The congressional budget process requires Congress to establish annually the level of total spending and revenues and how total spending should be divided among the 20 major functions of government. These major functions are:

- Administration of Justice
- Income Security
- Agriculture
- International Affairs
- Allowances
- Medicare
- Commerce & Housing Credit
- National Defense
- Community & Regional Development
- Natural Resources & Environment
- Education
- Net Interest
- Energy
- Social Security
- General Government
- Transportation
- General Science, Space & Technology
- Undistributed Offsetting Receipts
- Health
- Veterans Benefits & Services

Each of these functional levels of spending is the sum of discretionary and mandatory spending for each fiscal year.
Mandatory Spending
Mandatory spending, also known as direct spending, includes all spending for which there is no annual discretion to establish spending levels. Mandatory spending usually involves a binding legal obligation by the federal government to provide funding for an individual, program or activity. Another way to describe mandatory spending is that it is all spending that is not discretionary.

Entitlement spending is a subset of mandatory spending and is the largest component of mandatory spending. An entitlement represents a binding obligation on the part of the federal government. Eligible recipients have legal recourse to compel payment from the government if the obligation is not fulfilled.

Usually, the laws providing for an entitlement contain formulas or criteria that specify who is eligible for federal assistance. Unless the underlying law establishing the entitlement is changed, these individuals retain a legal right to the benefits, regardless of the budget situation. For example, the Social Security law sets formulas that determine the amount of money retired workers receive, based on the length of time they have worked and their earnings. The cost of Social Security for a given fiscal year is thus determined by the number of qualifying retirees rather than by the amount of money in the Treasury or an annual appropriation.

Discretionary Spending
Discretionary spending refers to those programs that are subject to annual funding decisions in the appropriations (or budget) process. If Congress decides to lower funding for a program of this type, it can simply reduce the annual appropriation. Most of the actual operations of the federal government are funded by discretionary spending.
Federal Budget Timetable
This section provides the basics of when and how Congress determines the annual budget.

On the first Monday in February every year, the President submits the Administration’s budget request for the upcoming year. The federal government’s fiscal year is from October 1 – September 30 of the following year. **To meet this February deadline, the President’s Administration must begin preparing its budget request during the previous spring and summer – nearly a year-and-a-half prior to the start of the fiscal year!**

After receiving the President’s budget request, the Senate and House Budget Committees hold hearings to receive testimony from Administration officials, experts from academic and business communities, representatives of national organizations, members of Congress and the general public. During this same period, the other committees of Congress review the President’s budget submission with respect to programs within their jurisdictions. The committees then transmit their views and estimates on appropriate spending levels for programs to the Budget Committees within six weeks of the President’s submission. Also during February, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) sends reports on the budget and economic outlook to the Budget Committees. The purpose of the CBO is to provide Congress with the objective, timely, nonpartisan analysis needed for economic and budget decisions.

In March, the CBO sends its report, which analyzes the President’s budget request, to the Appropriations and Budget Committees. Using the President’s budget request, information from their hearings, views and estimates from the other committees, and the CBO’s reports, the Budget Committees of both the House and the Senate draft a congressional budget plan during March. This is done through a series of public committee meetings called “mark-ups.” It is during this time that members of the committee may offer their own budget plans or amendments to budget plans laid before the committee. Once the mark-up is completed, the committee reports to its respective chamber a concurrent resolution on the budget or a “budget resolution.”

Budget resolutions set forth budgetary levels for the upcoming fiscal year and planning levels for the following four fiscal years.

**April 15, Congress Adopts a Budget Resolution:** When the Budget Committees complete their mark-up of a budget resolution, they report their respective resolutions to the full Senate and full House. All members of the Senate and House then have an opportunity to alter the work of the Budget Committees by offering amendments to the budget resolution as it is debated on the floor of each chamber.
Notes

1 Steps of the Legislative Process were adapted from the congressional web site - http://congress.org/
4 Kids Public Education and Policy Project.
5 Letter adapted from Kids Public Education and Policy Project.
6 N. Amidei.
7 Information taken from the congressional web site at http://congress.new.dc.us/c-span/staff.html
9 Adapted from the APHA Advocates’ Handbook.
10 N. Amidei.
11 Adapted from the APHA Advocates’ Handbook.
12 Information extracted from Senate web site at: www.senate.gov/budget/republican/reference/
here is a common misconception that non-profit organizations cannot participate in lobbying activities. THIS IS NOT TRUE! This chapter provides information on what kinds of activities constitute “lobbying,” how much lobbying is permitted for non-profit organizations, and details on lobbyist registration requirements.

What is Lobbying?
Most of the PCA America network organizations are classified as 501(c)3 organizations according to federal tax code. 501(c)3 organizations are allowed to engage in lobbying activities. The current federal tax law simply limits the amount of lobbying activities allowed as discussed below. Lobbying is broken down into two types for purposes of this regulation: direct lobbying and grassroots lobbying.

Direct Lobbying is defined as “any attempt to influence local, state or federal legislation by contacting any member of a legislature, legislative staff or government employee to persuade him or her to propose, support, oppose, change, or otherwise influence legislation.” Examples of direct lobbying are:

- Writing to state or federal legislators;
- Calling legislators;
- Meeting with legislators in person; and
- Presenting testimony to a legislative committee or subcommittee.

Grassroots Lobbying is “any attempt to influence local, state or federal legislation by attempting to influence public opinion and get the public to act.” To be considered grassroots lobbying, an activity must meet both of the following criteria:

1. Express a view for or against a specific piece of legislation; and
2. Encourage the public to take action regarding that legislation.

A communication must do both of these things to be considered grassroots lobbying. Examples of grassroots lobbying include:

- Legislative alerts that inform readers about pending legislation and urge them to contact legislators about it.
- Advertisements in newspapers and other media urging the public to take action on legislation.
- Reports and analyses that support or oppose a specific measure and contain a call to action.
- Meetings, demonstrations, and other public events to encourage the public to support or oppose legislation.
There is an important note here for membership organizations. If an organization communicates with its members and urges its members to take actions on a particular issue, this is considered direct lobbying. However, if the communication asks its members to urge other people outside of the organization to contact legislators, it is considered grassroots lobbying.

**How Much Lobbying is Allowed?**

There are two ways to determine how much lobbying your nonprofit is allowed to do.

**Substantial Part Test**
Under this methodology, the organization is required to show that lobbying does not make up a “substantial part” of its total activities. Unfortunately, the IRS does not provide much guidance on what “substantial part” really means. Most groups interpret this to mean that if lobbying expenditures make up less than 5% of an organization’s total expenditures, then this is not substantial. Under this methodology, grassroots and direct lobbying are included together and not distinguished from one another.

**Expenditure Test**
This alternative is much more explicit about exactly how much a nonprofit can lobby. In order for an organization to use the expenditure method, the organization must “elect” to do so with the IRS. To elect, the organization simply files with the IRS the one-page IRS Form 5768. Once the organization elects this option, it is entitled to use a special formula to determine its allowable lobbying expenditures. This formula works as follows:

- Your organization is allowed to spend up to 20% of its first $500,000 of total yearly expenditures on lobbying activities.
- Of the next $500,000 of total expenditures ($500,000 - $1,000,000), your organization can spend up to 15% on lobbying activities.
- Of the next $500,000 of total expenditures ($1,000,000 - $1,500,000), you can spend up to 10% on lobbying activities.
- Of total expenditures greater than $1,500,000, you can spend up to 5% on lobbying activities.
- An organization’s total lobbying expenditures cannot exceed $1 million per year.
- Only 25% of your organization’s total allowable lobbying amount can be used for grassroots lobbying.
Organizations that make this election also receive further clarification about what is and what is not a lobbying activity. For those organizations, the following activities are allowed and not subject to lobbying limits:

- Contacts with Executive Branch employees or legislators in support of or opposition to proposed regulations are not considered lobbying. For example, if your organization is trying to get a regulation changed, you may contact members of the Executive Branch as well as legislators to urge them to support your position on the regulation. This is not considered lobbying.
- Lobbying by volunteers is only considered a lobbying expenditure to the extent that the organization incurs expenses associated with volunteers’ lobbying activities.
- An organization’s communications to its members on legislation, even if it takes a position on the legislation, is not lobbying as long as the organization does not ask its members to take action.
- An organization’s response to written requests from a legislative body for technical advice on pending legislation is not considered lobbying.
- Self-defense activities, such as lobbying legislators (but not the general public) about matters that may impact the organization’s existence, powers, tax-exempt status, and other such matters, are not considered lobbying.
- Making available the results of “nonpartisan analysis, study or research” on a legislative issue that presents a sufficiently full and fair exposition of the pertinent facts to enable the audience to form an independent opinion, is not considered a lobbying activity. Analyses are not required to be neutral or objective in nature to qualify for this exclusion. This exclusion is available to research and analyses that take direct positions on legislation, as long as the facts are fully and fairly presented, the material is generally available, and the report does not include a direct call to the reader to contact legislators.
- Efforts are not considered to be grassroots lobbying if an organization urges the public, through the media or other means, to vote for or against a ballot initiative or referendum. This is considered direct lobbying because the public becomes the legislator in this situation.

For organizations that have not made this election, the distinction between exactly what is and what is not a lobbying activity remains unclear. For this reason, along with the explicit dollar limit provided by the election, it is generally viewed as beneficial for a non-profit to make this election.
Lobbyist Registration

The Lobbying Disclosure Act that took effect January 1, 1996, requires that you register with the federal government and report your lobbying expenditures every six months if:

1. Your organization has at least one employee who devotes at least 20% of his or her time to lobbying activities.

2. Your organization spends $20,000 or more every six months on lobbying activities.

You must register in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. You can obtain a registration statement by contacting the following:

**Secretary of the Senate**
**Office of Public Records**
232 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

**Clerk of the House of Representatives**
**Legislative Resource Center**
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

In addition to federal requirements, many states have lobbying registration requirements. Check with your state for requirements. See Appendix B for state contact information.
Notes

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Information taken from web site at www.nonprofit-info.org/npofaq/16/34.html
ever underestimate the power of the press! Not only does the press help shape public opinion, it can also be one of the most influential advocacy tools. Sometimes educating our political leaders alone is not enough to ensure that children receive the attention they deserve. It is important to garner wide-based public support of child and family issues. To do this, the public must be informed and educated about the issues and current proposals. The media play a key role in getting information to the public.

Media coverage is also a great way to get the attention of your policy and decision-makers, from local elected officials to members of Congress. Every congressional office has a dedicated staff person who monitors newspapers in the district or state and clips articles that mention the Representative or Senator by name. These articles are circulated each week. Decisions to support legislative initiatives are often influenced by media coverage. To get the most legislative impact, when you talk to members of the media, refer to your members of Congress or your state and local officials by name, and cite legislation by name and bill number.

What do we mean when we refer to “the media”? The media include many different channels of communication – radio, television, newspapers, magazines and internet. Each of these entities provides different opportunities to reach particular audiences with a specific message. As advocates, it is crucial to understand how the media work and how you can engage the media to further your advocacy agenda. This chapter will address how to most effectively use the media for your purposes, including sections on how to:

- Cultivate a relationship with the press;
- Prepare a press briefing kit;
- Write letters to the editor and op-ed letters;
- Approach editorial board meetings;
- Hold a news conference;
- Write a news release; and
- Participate on radio and television talk shows.
## Top 10 Tips for Effective Advocacy Media Relations

1. **Stay local.**
   One strong article in your hometown newspaper may be worth 10 in the New York Times.

2. **Keep it focused.**
   You may have many issues to bring to the media, but stick to one at a time or they will all get buried.

3. **Clip and use your good press.**
   A good article can have a long life. Make sure to send press clippings to your members of Congress, coalition partners and other decision-makers.

4. **Don't forget your own media outlets.**
   Take advantage of your coalition newsletters, publications, local radio and cable programs to educate and get others involved in your advocacy campaigns.

5. **Just the facts.**
   Stick to what you know and never exaggerate. Remember, you can always get back to reporters after finding the right answer.

6. **Don't just say it – show it.**
   A demonstration or real-life testimonial goes a long way to illustrate your point and make it more colorful.

7. **Build media relationships.**
   Get to know the reporters who cover child and family issues and take time to meet editorial boards. Relationships develop over time!

8. **Put media relations in your advocacy agenda.**
   Media relations should be a year-round function – part of the “official” functioning of your coalition or organization in its advocacy role.

9. **Appoint a press spokesperson for your coalition or organization.**
   This contact person must be fully informed about your advocacy agenda to know what to tell and what not to tell reporters.

10. **Take advantage of all media outlets.**
    Congressional offices may read newspapers most often, but radio and television have a powerful impact on public opinion and should not be overlooked.
As with most types of advocacy, “it’s all about relationships.” This is a common theme throughout this guide. Developing good relationships with reporters and other media contacts is an important part of developing a media strategy. You want them to value what you say and give you favorable press. By maintaining contact with reporters who cover stories related to child and family issues, you will be more likely to have them take the time to come to your events, write an extra article, and keep you informed of press opinions on child and family issues that arise.

A good place to start (if you have not already done so) is to create an up-to-date media list of contacts who cover your issues. This is perhaps the most important tool for conducting media advocacy. Developing such a list takes time, and the list is always evolving. The following are some hints for getting started:

- **Research media directories.** Local libraries will often have a copy of resources such as Bacon’s Media Directories, Burrelle’s Media Directories, News Media Yellow Book, and Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media. These resources will provide a starting point for creating your local media list.
- **Share a list.** Ask partner groups or coalition members to share their media lists with you.
- **Contact the media.** Call your newspapers, radio and television stations and ask for the appropriate contact person, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail information. You will want to know who covers children’s issues, public policy and other pertinent topics. Your list should include reporters, producers, editorial writers, news editors, assignment editors, and so on.
- **Follow the media.** Read the newspaper bylines and watch broadcast reports of good stories that cover child and family issues. Add these reporters to your list.
- **Update your list.** Make changes to your list by adding new contacts or updating existing records. Keep a log of your contacts with the media.
- **Provide sign-in sheets.** Have the news media sign in when they attend your press events. This helps you to keep track of which members of the media are following your areas of interest.
Press Briefing Kit

Having a comprehensive media list provides you with the foundation to move forward and incorporate the media in your advocacy efforts. A press kit should be sent, along with an introductory cover letter to all local media contacts. Press kits are a standard education packet on your issue. They may include fact sheets, key concerns and local impacts, parent/child stories, recent publications, summaries of key legislation, press clippings showing favorable press received in recent months, and contact names for more information.

See Exhibit 1 on page 49 for an example of PCA America’s background information. See Exhibit 2 on page 59 for a sample fact sheet on child abuse and neglect from PCA America. These are examples of types of information to include in a press briefing kit.

Letters to the Editor and Op-Ed Letters

Letters to the editor and opinion editorials (op-eds) written by readers are useful ways to speak up on an issue, respond to an article or editorial, or express your opinion in your own words.

Letters to the Editor

A letter to the editor is one of the simplest ways to communicate an opinion to the general public. Depending on the size of your local newspaper, your chances of having your letter printed may vary. On average, many local papers publish up to 80% of the letters submitted. Here are some points to consider when writing your letters:

- **Be brief and focused.** Focus your letter on just one idea or concept. Limit yourself to 250-300 words. If the article is too long, the newspaper may edit out some important facts.
- **Refer to a recent event or article.** If possible, refer to other articles, editorials or letters the newspaper has recently published. This will increase its chances of being printed.
- **Include contact information.** Include your name, address and phone number so the paper can contact you with any questions and verify authorship.
- **Send your letter to your members of Congress.** Clip your published letter and mail or fax it to your Congress members. This will ensure that they are informed of your opinion on the issues.

See Exhibit 3 on page 63 for an example of a letter to the editor.
Overview
Each year an estimated 3 million cases of suspected child abuse and neglect are reported to Child Protective Service agencies, and more than three children die each day in the United States from child abuse and neglect. Prevent Child Abuse America (formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse) was established in 1972 by Donna J. Stone to build a nationwide commitment to preventing all forms of child abuse.

Today, supported by private and corporate donors, the organization is widely known for its public awareness, education, prevention programs, advocacy and research. Our Healthy Families America® (HFA) program of voluntary home visits for new parents has grown to more than 400 sites in 39 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. More than 33,000 families are served annually, and the number is growing.

On the state level, our chapter network has provided leadership to promote and implement prevention efforts. Our research center has made noteworthy contributions to the expansion of current knowledge in the child abuse prevention field. Our educational efforts have helped raise public awareness about the issue of child abuse from 10 percent in 1976 to over 90 percent in 1982.

Parents magazine named Prevent Child Abuse America one of the ten most effective, family-oriented organizations in the country.

Chapter Network
Founder Donna Stone recognized that a strong presence at both the state and national levels was essential to leading child abuse prevention efforts. Thus, Prevent Child Abuse America established state chapters across the country. In 1976, the first chapter was formed in Kansas. Prevent Child Abuse America’s network of approximately 40 state chapters now involves more than 120,000 active volunteers who organize and implement direct service child abuse prevention programs.
The aim of each chapter is to be the child abuse prevention leader within the state. Every chapter is involved with various activities to raise public awareness and education. State chapters are also involved in advocacy by influencing legislation. Some chapters help to make primary prevention programs available to their communities, while other chapters serve as an information source, offer 1-800 help lines, or have training programs for professionals and parents.

The result of Prevent Child Abuse America’s training, technical assistance, and education activities has been the growth and strengthening of the Chapter Network. Prevent Child Abuse America’s goal is to charter a chapter in every state.

Healthy Families America
Prevent Child Abuse America launched Healthy Families America in 1992 in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities. With continuing support from Ronald McDonald House Charities, the Freddie Mac Foundation and others, HFA focuses on three equally important goals: to promote positive parenting, to encourage child health and development, and to prevent child abuse and neglect.

These goals remain constant from site to site. But, because of the flexibility of the HFA program model, HFA's more than 400 sites in 39 states are tailored to meet the specific and expressed needs of the families and communities they serve. In addition, all HFA sites adhere to proven best practice standards that ensure the highest quality of service delivery to families. Each HFA program is implemented on the local level by public and private partnerships, including business and community leaders, faith groups, healthcare providers, local and state governments, social service agencies and parents.

HFA's national partners include the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association, the National Head Start Association and the Cooperative Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions, and others.

Research
The National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research was established in 1986 to increase understanding of the complex causes of child maltreatment and to establish an empirical base of information on the effectiveness of child abuse prevention programs. In 1994, the center established a formal national network of prevention researchers to solidify the link between research and practice.

To better determine the volume of child abuse reports and the availability of child welfare resources, the center conducts an annual national survey of child protective service agencies. This fifty-state survey provides the most current data available on the number and characteristics of child abuse reports and fatalities, as well as changes in the funding and scope of child welfare services. The center also commissions an annual public opinion poll to determine the public's attitude and involvement with child abuse prevention.
Public Awareness
At its inception in 1972, Prevent Child Abuse America’s focus was on public education. An early partnership with the Advertising Council allowed Prevent Child Abuse America to get its prevention message out to the general public. The first of many educational pamphlets, “What Every Parent Should Know,” was produced and disseminated. In 1995, Prevent Child Abuse America established a toll-free telephone number, 1-800-CHILDREN, to increase public awareness about child abuse prevention.

Public opinion polls have indicated that the percentage of people aware of the problem of child abuse has increased greatly over the years. Prevent Child Abuse America plays an important role in changing public attitudes toward child abuse and neglect.

Prevent Child Abuse America’s prevention efforts include a variety of initiatives that provide the public with a broad education about the problem of child abuse and neglect. The primary vehicles used have been our national media campaigns developed in conjunction with the Ad Council. Early campaigns focused on the existence of the problem and gave reasons for focusing on prevention. Later public awareness efforts addressed how parents under stress could help themselves, and encouraged the public to call 1-800-CHILDREN to learn how they could get involved in child abuse prevention in their communities.

In addition to our national media campaigns, Prevent Child Abuse America produces and maintains a library of more than 70 publications, which have an annual circulation of more than 2 million throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Prevent Child Abuse America is the nation’s largest producer of child abuse and neglect publications. Included in the library of publications are a series of Spider-Man comic books. The first comic book was created in 1984 in an innovative initiative to educate children about non-violence. Subsequent comic books have proven to be an effective tool in teaching children and adolescents about such topics as fatherhood, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

Since 1983, April’s National Child Abuse Prevention Month has become a national event. Prevent Child Abuse America sends out thousands of Child Abuse Prevention Month packets. This year’s theme is “Teaming up to keep kids ... SAFE AT HOME™.” The packets are designed to solicit the involvement of entire communities by encouraging the formation of partnerships to build a support network for families and children.

Advocacy
Prevent Child Abuse America supports its more than 40 chapters on the state and local levels by providing training and technical assistance for their advocacy efforts. In addition, Prevent Child Abuse America collaborates on the federal level with over 30 national organizations, which comprise the National Child Abuse Coalition. Through these partnerships, Prevent Child Abuse America is able to advocate for critical resources and a continuum of services — starting with prevention — to support children and their families.
Beginning in 1979 with our Kansas chapter, Prevent Child Abuse America took the lead in helping to establish Children’s Trust Funds in nearly all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Using both public and private revenue sources, these trust funds serve as a continuous funding mechanism for child abuse prevention efforts at the state and community levels.

Over the years, Prevent Child Abuse America has been instrumental in ensuring that the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) is reauthorized and that funding is continued for localized child abuse prevention efforts through Community-Based Resource and Support grants. We also worked to ensure the safe passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, which reauthorized the Family Preservation and Family Support grants, renamed Safe and Stable Families.

In March 2000, Prevent Child Abuse America, with the support of its chapters in Texas and Ohio, helped pass the Child Abuse Prevention and Enforcement (CAPE) Act. This new law gives state and local officials the flexibility to use existing Department of Justice program funds to prevent child abuse and neglect, and to intervene and protect children who have been maltreated. Recent advocacy efforts have focused on creating effective and informed citizen participation in community efforts to protect children from abuse. In addition to providing training and seminars, Prevent Child Abuse America, along with the Child and Family Policy Center, developed and distributed guidelines for states as they begin planning for, and implementing, citizen review panels. These panels will provide oversight and reviews of state child protective service systems, as outlined in CAPTA.

Currently, Prevent Child Abuse America is looking at a variety of national funding streams to support prevention efforts, including the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant, Medicaid, the new Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and revenue from the tobacco settlements. To achieve these aims, Prevent Child Abuse America communicates with chapters and HFA sites through action alerts, legislative updates and analysis, and monthly bulletins.

**Resource Development**
Prevent Child Abuse America has been fortunate to garner a broad base of support from corporations, foundations, individuals, associations and workplace campaigns. Their support over the years has enabled Prevent Child Abuse America to achieve dramatic results. Among our most significant corporate and foundation supporters are the Ronald McDonald House Charities, the Freddie Mac Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Other key Prevent Child Abuse America benefactors include: the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Target Stores, the Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Kappa Delta Foundation, American Airlines and the Prevent Child Abuse America Chicago Board.
The Campaign for Healthy Families is an effort to raise funds for the continued expansion of the Healthy Families America program. Leland C. Brendsel, chairman and CEO of Freddie Mac, is chairing a major fundraising effort to raise $15 million from the corporate sector to ensure the long-term success of Healthy Families America.

With lead support from the Freddie Mac Foundation, the following have already made commitments to the Campaign for Healthy Families: Abbott Laboratories, Andersen Consulting, Bear, Stearns & Co., The Michael Bolton Foundation, Countrywide Home Loans, Fannie Mae Foundation, J.P. Morgan, Field Foundation of Illinois, GE Fund, Goldman, Sachs & Co., J.M. McDonald Foundation, National Basketball Association, CitiGroup Foundation, Frank P. Smeal Charitable Lead Trust and the St. Paul Companies Inc.

Prevent Child Abuse America has maintained a longstanding partnership with the National Basketball Association. PCA America has also partnered with several Major League Baseball teams including the Cincinnati Reds, L.A. Dodgers, St. Louis Cardinals and many others. Other cause-related marketing partners have included Target Stores, Coca-Cola, Dutch Boy Paints, Nabisco and Gund Teddy Bear.

# # #
Key Facts on Child Abuse & Neglect

- An estimated 3,154,000 children were reported to child protective service agencies as alleged victims of child abuse or neglect in 1998, and approximately one million of these reports were confirmed.¹

- Approximately three children died each day in the United States from abuse or neglect in 1997.²

- While the nation’s overall crime rate fell 22 percent from 1993 to 1997, reports of child abuse and neglect grew by 8 percent and confirmed cases increased 4 percent.³

- During the period 1993-1997, Prevent Child Abuse America estimates that over 5,000 children died from abuse or neglect in the United States.⁴

- Forty-five out of 1,000 children were reported as abused or neglected and 14 children out of 1,000 were confirmed as abused or neglected in 1998.⁵

- Fifty-one percent of the reported cases in 1998 involved neglect, while 25 percent involved physical abuse, 10 percent involved sexual abuse, 3 percent involved emotional abuse and 11 percent were related to other forms of child maltreatment.⁶

- One-half of all Americans believe child abuse and neglect is the most important public health issue facing this country, compared to other public health issues like drug and alcohol abuse, heart disease, cancer and HIV/AIDS.⁷


Op-Ed Letters

The op-ed page usually appears opposite the editorial page in the newspaper. Op-eds are usually longer than letters to the editor, offering an opportunity to present an extended argument. Members of the community write op-eds, whereas journalists usually write editorials. Op-eds are similar to editorials in that an op-ed typically carries more weight than a letter to the editor – it presents a point of view with much greater detail and persuasion than a short letter will allow.11

Op-ed letters usually have credibility because of the author’s professional background and familiarity with the subject. It follows that it may be most effective to have a well-recognized local person submit the op-ed. Papers are often more likely to publish an op-ed submitted by a local community leader or expert.12 Here are some other tips to think about when writing an op-ed:13

- **Get guidelines.** Call and ask the editorial page editor or op-ed editor for the newspaper’s op-ed policies. Be sure to find out about the submission guidelines, accepted length and the approval process.

- **Talk to the editor.** Try to arrange an appointment with the editorial staff to discuss your unique qualifications for writing an op-ed and the issue’s urgency. Use the meeting to “sell” your issue, your organization and yourself. Some newspapers will not take the time to meet with you and will make a decision based solely on the article. But it doesn’t hurt to try. At the very least, the editor might have some useful suggestions on how to write your article and improve its chances of being published.

- **Localize your letter.** Adopt a local angle, even on a national issue. You may be competing for space with nationally syndicated columnists, and a local angle can make your article more appealing.

See **Exhibit 4** on page 67 for an example of a PCA America op-ed.
Dear Editor:

Each year, more than 3 million children in the United States are reported abused or neglected, according to statistics released by Prevent Child Abuse America, the nation’s leading child abuse prevention organization. Approximately one million of these cases are confirmed. These statistics are particularly alarming in light of the fact that overall crime statistics have gone downward since 1993 (by 21 percent) while the number of children reported abused and neglected increased 9 percent from 1993 to 1997.

While it is important to take note of these statistics and to learn from them, it is just as important – maybe even more so – to prevent abuse and neglect from happening in the first place. That’s what April’s observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month is all about.

Here are a few simple ways each of us can help prevent child abuse and neglect:

- **Be a nurturing parent.** Children need to know that they are special and loved. Educate yourself about a child’s development process so you can have reasonable expectations about what your child can and cannot do.
- **Help a friend, neighbor or relative.** Being a parent isn’t easy. Someone you know may be struggling with his or her parenting responsibilities. Offer a helping hand.
- **Help yourself.** When the big and little problems of everyday life pile up to the point you feel overwhelmed and out of control, take time out. Don’t take it out on your child. Take a deep breath, turn on some music.
- **Know where you can turn for help when you need it.** If your baby cries…It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry, especially when nothing you do seems to work. Learn what to do if your baby won’t stop crying. But, never shake a baby!
- **Get involved.** Advocate for services to help families. Ask your community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the needs of children and families.
- **Monitor your child’s television and computer use.** Watching violent films on TV or playing violent computer games can harm young children. Not only does it scare them, it also teaches children that aggression is a good way to handle frustration and solve problems.
- **Spend time playing with your children…or read to them instead!**
- **Report suspected abuse or neglect.** Keeping children safe is the responsibility of every adult in our community. If you have reason to believe a child has been – or may be – harmed, call your local Department of Children and Family Services or your local police department.

April’s observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month is an appropriate opportunity to remind ourselves of our collective responsibility to prevent the abuse and neglect that robs so many of our society’s children of their childhood, their sense of security and well-being, and their future. Together, we really can make a difference.

For more information about how to prevent child abuse and neglect, call Prevent Child Abuse America at 1-800-CHILDREN.

Signed,

A. Sidney Johnson, III  
President and CEO,  
Prevent Child Abuse America
A final point to keep in mind when writing both letters to the editor and op-eds is timeliness. Letters are most effective when they are written while an issue is already in the public eye because of either recent or upcoming events. For example, it would be entirely appropriate to send a letter urging elected officials and citizens to take action on issues affecting children the week that the General Assembly convenes and news of what is happening at the Capitol is already a hot topic. That same letter would probably not be as effective if sent in September when legislative initiatives are not on the minds of the readers. 14 This is not to say that these tactics should not be used outside of the legislative session. Letters to the editors and op-eds can be a powerful way to keep the issues in the forefront of the minds of the public and your legislators and policy-makers. These are also good tactics to use surrounding a special event being sponsored by your coalition or organization or to gear up for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. The point here is that timeliness can influence the impact of your letters.

Editorial Board Meetings

Probably the most powerful way to win support for your issue or reach your member of Congress or local official through the media is to gain the editorial support of your local newspaper. 15 This section will help you prepare for meeting with the editorial board of your local newspaper.

Setting Up the Editorial Board Meeting

- Begin by calling the publisher, editor-in-chief, managing editor, editorial page editor, editorial writers or the secretary to the editorial page editor. Describe the issue, and why you think it is important for the newspaper to support child abuse and neglect prevention. If the paper is fairly large, you should make your first contact to set up the meeting a week to 10 days before you wish to meet.

Before the Meeting

- The meeting will probably take place at the newspaper’s office. You will have the opportunity to talk to the key people who deal with your issue and who will hopefully become your primary media contacts.
- Get old clippings of positions taken by the paper in the past. The newspaper librarian can be helpful in finding articles pertaining to your issue. Most papers now have web sites where you can search for editorials and news stories.
- Prepare a press briefing kit to leave with the editorial board after your meeting.
Nation Urged to Focus on Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect
Prevent Child Abuse America Launches Nationwide Initiative, One Percent to Prevent™

CHICAGO, IL, August 17, 2000 – Each year, more than 3 million children in the United States are reported abused and neglected, according to Prevent Child Abuse America, the nation’s leading child abuse prevention organization. And, three children die each day in this country from abuse and neglect.

These statistics are particularly alarming considering the growing body of evidence linking child abuse and neglect with drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, youth violence, and chronic health problems. The long-term negative effects of child maltreatment can have a profound impact on our lives and communities. That’s why it is critical for our country to focus on preventing child abuse and neglect before it starts.

As a society, we are increasingly recognizing the value of prevention. Over the years we have learned ways to reduce the likelihood of such life-threatening illnesses as cancer, heart disease and HIV/AIDS. We fluoridate drinking water to prevent tooth and gum disease. Yet, we have invested little for the prevention of child abuse and neglect; a major public health epidemic.

In February, a poll commissioned by Prevent Child Abuse America found that 50 percent Americans believe child abuse and neglect is the nation’s most important public health issue, far surpassing cancer, heart disease, drug and alcohol abuse, and HIV/AIDS.

Registered Trademark of Prevent Child Abuse America
Despite the statistics, child abuse and neglect is a public health issue that has never received adequate funding. For example, funding for research on substance abuse is ten times higher than for child abuse prevention and treatment. This year alone, the federal government will invest approximately $4,500 in research for every American with cancer or HIV/AIDS, but only $10 in prevention research for every reported case of child abuse and neglect.

And, for every dollar spent on the treatment of child abuse, the U.S. spends only one penny on prevention. Although spending on treatment is critical and should not be reduced, we can greatly decrease the need for, and cost of, treatment by preventing the abuse from happening in the first place.

That’s why Prevent Child Abuse America is leading One Percent to Prevent, a new nationwide initiative. The National Call to Action, a collaboration of national organizations working to end child abuse and neglect, has also voted the One Percent to Prevent initiative as its number one priority for action this year. This initiative is urging elected officials at all levels to earmark one percent of their projected budget surplus for child abuse prevention in 2001.

By increasing funding for prevention, we would be providing much needed resources to community-based efforts to help prevent child abuse and neglect and to help promote healthy child development from day one. Increasing child abuse and neglect prevention funding would also help us better understand the negative consequences of child maltreatment as well as the strategies needed to prevent child abuse and neglect from occurring.

Together, we can help stop child abuse and neglect before it starts by encouraging the support of One Percent to Prevent. Here are a few simple ways each of us can help:

1. Contact your U.S. senator and representative and urge them to earmark one percent of their projected budget surplus for child abuse prevention. To locate your senator and representative access www.senate.gov or www.house.gov, or call the U.S. Capital switch board at 202-224-3121.
2. **Get your community involved.** Go to town hall meetings or volunteer for an upcoming election. Talk to your political candidates, neighbors, schools, churches, and other community organizations about the importance of supporting *One Percent to Prevent*.

For more information about *One Percent to Prevent* and the issue of child abuse prevention, call Prevent Child Abuse America at 1-800-CHILDREN or access the organization's web site, www.preventchildabuse.org.
During the Meeting

- Begin your meeting by introducing yourself, your position on the issue, who or what organization you represent, and what you hope to accomplish.
- Explain your current situation and your ideas on how to work toward solving or alleviating the current problem.
- Summarize the newspaper’s history of coverage on your issue (citing old clippings), and how you would like to build on this coverage in the future. Share upcoming events that are planned, and invite the newspaper to attend.
- Let your spokespeople (preferably prominent community leaders and/or your organizational leaders, limited to two or three) present their information about the importance of the issue, and then let the board question them. Share why the general public would be interested in child abuse and neglect prevention and how it could affect them.
- Be prepared for hard questions by practicing questions and answers before the meeting. If there is a question you cannot answer, admit it, but agree to send an answer promptly.
- End the meeting by giving the board press kits, recent publications, and names and numbers of spokespeople they can get in contact with for interviews. Ask them to editorialize in support of child abuse and neglect prevention.

After the Meeting

- Send a thank-you note immediately after the meeting.
- If the paper writes a favorable piece, send a thank-you note to the writer. Also, share the article with others, including your members of Congress.
- Even if the paper does not write an article on child abuse prevention, ask them to print an editorial or an op-ed for you.
Holding a News Conference

Holding a news conference is a major undertaking and should be reserved for a time when there is a significant development on which to comment – such as the creation or launching of a new program, the creation of a coalition, a celebration of an historic event, or the launching of a legislative campaign. This is an effective way to deliver a message once to a large group rather than make multiple individual media calls. When organizing your news conference, keep the following in mind:

- **Pick the date.** Try to find a date for your news conference when there is a “news hook” and articles have already been written about your subject. As with most of your advocacy efforts, timing is everything! Also make sure that there is not some big competing event that will attract media attention away from your conference. Avoid conferences on Fridays and Saturdays. Sunday events can sometimes be effective if there are local TV news programs that evening. But in general, try to hold your event on other days during the week.

- **Pick the time.** News conferences should be held at 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., or 2:00 p.m. to assure TV news coverage that day and newspaper coverage the following morning.

- **Notify the press.** Let the press know several days in advance about your news conference by sending a Press Advisory. This should include the date, time, and location of the event and very briefly explain its importance. Follow up with phone calls to remind reporters the day before the event.

- **Pick the location.** Choose a room with appropriate space and enough chairs just for those who will attend. It is better to have to add chairs than have empty seats! The room should not be so large that it looks empty. It is also a good idea to provide a visual backdrop by holding the press conference in a location that reinforces the message you want to convey. Examples might be your HFA site headquarters, a local children’s hospital or a local community center.

- **Select a moderator.** Identify a person to be in charge, make opening remarks, introduce each speaker, and field questions.

- **Keep it brief.** Keep all comments to a few minutes at most. You should have no more than three or four speakers, preferably each with an important point of view and different perspective. A news conference is for the media to ask questions, not attend a lecture!
**Distribute press kits.** You should be prepared to provide information to the attendants. This information should include the press releases you have prepared, the day’s agenda, the text of any speeches to be given, background on the issue, and information about the sponsor organization.

**Provide resource people.** Have a couple of people available to assist journalists before and during the conference to provide them with media kits, manage a sign-in list, direct them to the nearest phone, and handle other last-minute details.

**Follow up.** After the news conference, call the reporters who attended. Ask them if they need further information and thank them for attending. Be sure to add any new contacts that you made to your media list!

### Writing a News Release

A news release is the basic means of official communication with the media. A news release is meant to give the who, what, when, where, why and how of a news story – all of the information a reporter needs to determine whether to write an article or otherwise cover your “news.”

Here are some tips for writing a winning news release:

- **Provide the name of your organization.** Print the release on organizational letterhead if possible.
- **Provide a contact name and phone number.** The name of the contact person and a phone number should run at the top of the release where a reporter can quickly get more information.
- **Include a headline.** This descriptive phrase gives the reader a capsule phrase summarizing the essence of the release.
- **Include a release date.** This information should be at the top of the release and should tell when the information can be published or broadcast. It can read: “For immediate release” or “Embargoed until [a certain date].”
- **Keep it simple.** Usually one or two double-spaced pages is sufficient. Put only one or two sentences in each paragraph, using plain language.
- **Structure of release.** Start with the who, what, when, where, why and how; more information should follow in order of importance.
- **Develop a strong lead.** The first sentence, or the lead, tells the reporter the most important information. It needs to grab his or her attention.
- **Quote a spokesperson.** Quoting someone from your coalition or organization allows reporters to use the quotes directly in their stories.
- **Establish the end.** Editors and reporters look for a “###” or a “-30-” at the end of a release signifying its end.

See Exhibit 5 on page 77 for an example of press release.
Radio and television are critical ways of delivering a message to a broad audience. And while legislators may typically pay more attention to newspapers than radio and television, local talk shows have become a significant force in politics. Positive television and radio exposure lends credibility to your advocacy position and can raise your issue to a new level of public awareness. As child advocates, you are uniquely situated to share your concern and knowledge on a local talk show. The following steps provide guidance on utilizing this form of the media:

- **Arrange an appearance.** Call or write the talk show host or producer. Explain your interest and experience in child abuse and neglect prevention, and outline why people in your community should care. Have a packet of materials ready to provide background information on your organization or coalition and the person interested in appearing on the show. It is preferable to have an upcoming event or a local angle to make your story more attractive.

- **Familiarize yourself with the program.** Learn the name of the host, the show, the station and names of other guests appearing on the day you will be there. Find out whether the interview will be live or taped, if there will be call-in questions, and the length of the interview. Listen to (radio) or watch (television) the program to become familiar with the style and positions of the host.

- **Know the format.** Make sure you know if it is a show where guests debate and who you will be debating. If you don’t like the format, ask if they can restructure. Otherwise, consider whether or not you will be comfortable on the show.

- **Prepare for the interview.** Write out the most important points you hope to make, including personal stories you want to share, questions you might anticipate, and answers to those questions. Practice communicating this information by role playing with a partner prior to the interview.

- **Conduct the interview.** Remember to dress professionally. Avoid flashy clothing and jewelry. You should bring a brief outline of notes. Speak in a natural, audible tone. When on television, try not to use your notes. Look directly at the host, and not at the camera. Relax and avoid nervous gestures or mannerisms. Sit up straight, but not stiff, and lean slightly forward. Use, but do not overuse, your smile and hand gestures.

- **Answer interview questions by stating your main message first.** Follow this with your supporting points. Use the questions as springboards into developing your message. Present your arguments as concisely and
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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE
March 31, 2000

Contact:
Melissa Pelletier
Mngr., Public Relations & Advertising
312.663.3520 ext. 146

New Survey Finds Child Abuse & Neglect At Top of Americans' Public Health Concerns
Seen as More Important than Drugs, Heart Disease, Cancer & AIDS

CHICAGO, IL, March 31, 2000 – A new survey shows that one-half of all Americans believe child abuse and neglect is the most important public health issue facing this country, compared to other public health issues like drug and alcohol abuse, heart disease, cancer and HIV/AIDS. (See table on page 3.)

Released on the eve of April’s annual observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month, experts hailed the survey results as evidence that the general public views child abuse and neglect as a significant public health issue and not as simply a series of dramatic but isolated incidents. More than 3 million children were reported to child protective service agencies as alleged victims of child abuse or neglect in 1998, and approximately 1 million of these reports were confirmed.

Commissioned by Prevent Child Abuse America, a non-profit organization with chapters in 39 states and the District of Columbia, the survey of 1,251 adult Americans was conducted in February by Schulman, Ronca and Bucavalas, Inc. of New York City, and is subject to a sampling error of +/- three percentage points.

“As a nation, we’ve tended to look at child abuse and neglect as a social welfare or juvenile justice issue,” said A. Sidney Johnson, III, president of Prevent Child Abuse America. “It’s only recently that the field has begun to approach the issue from a public health
perspective. Clearly, the American public is way ahead of us, since child abuse and neglect has risen to the top of their public health agenda.”

One possible explanation, according to Johnson, is the growing body of evidence linking child abuse and neglect with a host of other issues facing our country, including drug and alcohol abuse, juvenile and adult crime, and chronic health problems.

“I’m hopeful that people are beginning to understand that the effects of child abuse and neglect can be long-term, and that these effects can have a profound impact on our lives, our communities and our country,” said Johnson. “That’s why prevention of child abuse and neglect is so critical.”

The survey commissioned by Prevent Child Abuse America also showed that a vast majority of Americans – 83 percent – believe that child abuse prevention efforts can be most successful before such behavior has begun, as opposed to intervening later.

“The public seems to recognize that if you wait to identify and stop abusive or neglectful behavior, you’re already too late. The child has already become a victim and significant damage may have been done,” said Johnson. “The only way to stop the cycle of abuse once and for all is to prevent it from occurring in the first place.”

**NBA Launches New Prevention Program**

In its continuing efforts to draw public attention to the issue, Prevent Child Abuse America has launched a major public awareness program in partnership with the National Basketball Association (NBA), a long-time supporter of the organization’s prevention efforts. NBA Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Night 2000 events will be held in all 29 NBA stadiums in the United States and Canada during April. In addition to distributing blue ribbons, the symbol of child abuse prevention, the awareness nights will include the showing of a public service announcement and the distribution of materials providing tips on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.
The public awareness materials were originally produced by Cronin & Company, Inc. in collaboration with the Partnership to Prevent Child Abuse, a Connecticut initiative that includes Prevent Child Abuse Connecticut. In 1999, the materials were adapted for nationwide distribution by Prevent Child Abuse America.

Prevent Child Abuse America (formerly the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse) is the leading organization working at the national, state and local levels to prevent the abuse and neglect of our nation’s children. Headquartered in Chicago, Prevent Child Abuse America has approximately 40 state chapters and is supported by private and corporate donors. The organization is widely known for its public awareness, education, prevention programs, advocacy and research. More information about child abuse prevention is available by calling Prevent Child Abuse America at 1-800-CHILDREN or by accessing the organization’s website, www.preventchildabuse.org.

# # #

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Health Issues</th>
<th>Percent of Respondents Identifying Issue as “Most Important”</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Abuse and Neglect</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Abuse</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Illnesses like Heart Disease and Cancer</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually-Transmitted Diseases like HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:
enthusiastically as possible. Try to avoid jargon and acronyms. If you do not
know the answer to the question, just say so. Don’t get defensive or angry,
and do not argue with the host.

**Follow up.** Send a thank-you note to the host or producer of the program.
You can often request a taped copy or written transcript of the program
for your files.

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**Media Advocacy at Work:**

In 1997 PCA Indiana made the decision to implement new strategies for their advocacy efforts. The chapter recognized that their traditional legislative tactics were not resulting in the desired changes quickly enough. Chapter leaders asked themselves: “Who and/or what influences legislators?” Two obvious answers were “their constituents and public opinion.” Then they considered who or what influences voters and public opinion - “media” was one of the most frequent responses.

PCA Indiana dedicated significant time and resources to developing a media advocacy strategy and contracted with a public relations firm to help develop and implement a one-year action plan. The professional firm was able to open the doors and introduce PCA Indiana to established media contacts in print, radio and television, eliminating the difficult and time-consuming task of trying to connect in the first place. The result was over a 300% increase in media coverage during the year. Meeting with the editorial boards of every major newspaper in the state was probably the most critical objective achieved.

Financial limitations have prevented PCA Indiana from continuing to employ the firm but they have maintained and enhanced the media relationships formed in the first year. Media coverage continues to grow through appearances on radio and television talk shows, airing of public service announcements, letters to the editors, and editorials. The major change has been that the media sources are calling them for information, comments and assistance more than ever before. They are asking how they can help the chapter to educate the public about the issue(s).

The chapter’s advocacy efforts during the past three years have been twofold: increasing awareness and education about shaken baby syndrome; and establishing child fatality review teams to investigate unexpected and/or unexplained deaths. Legislation was passed to encourage doctors and hospitals to distribute and provide more information about shaken baby syndrome to expectant parents and families with young children.

During 1999 and 2000 PCA Indiana has served as the leader for the Fatality Review Task Force which produced and distributed a report recommending legislation to encourage and support the formation of child fatality review teams throughout Indiana. Representatives from the chapter and the Task Force have met with the key leaders of the House and Senate, have been assigned to and given testimony before a study committee, and are helping to draft the legislation for the committee to review in October 2000.

A public awareness and media plan will be initiated as soon as the final language for the legislation is complete. Candidates and elected officials will be asked through the media to explain their position on fatality review teams. Radio and television interviews will focus on how fatality review teams can help prevent future deaths by better identifying the causes of fatalities. Volunteers from the medical and legal fields will be major advocates and spokespersons in this effort with the media.

To date, the strategy to change from “lobbying” to using the media has been beneficial and effective for PCA Indiana.
Notes

1. *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress.*
5. *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress.*
10. Adapted from *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress* and the APHA Advocates’ Handbook.
16. The following information is adapted from the Children’s Defense Fund.
17. *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress.*
18. Adapted from: *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress* and APHA Advocates’ Handbook.
20. Adapted from: *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress* and APHA Advocates’ Handbook.
21. *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress.*
22. Adapted from: *How to Use the Media to Communicate with Congress* and APHA Advocates’ Handbook.
CHAPTER 7
ORGANIZING YOUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS

The first six chapters of this guide are intended to provide you with the tools necessary to be successful advocates. This chapter is intended to provide you with information about ways to organize your advocacy efforts. There has been much reference throughout the handbook to working with others to help you achieve your goals. Two of the best ways to collaborate with others are through coalition building and grassroots organizing. This chapter is broken down into two sections, one dealing with each of these organizing methods.

Coalition Building

Working in coalition with other organizations potentially strengthens your advocacy efforts. While some PCA America network members may already be involved in local, regional or statewide coalitions, some of you may not be. Many of the advocacy strategies discussed in this guide can be used by your individual organization alone, but may be more effective when used by a larger, broad-based coalition.

The following sections provide an overview on what a coalition is, why being part of a coalition is important, and how to form a coalition.

What is a Coalition?
Webster’s dictionary defines a coalition as “a temporary alliance of distinct parties, persons, or states for joint action.” A coalition is simply a group of organizations and individuals working together for a common purpose. Coalitions may have a “one issue” focus or a “multi-issue” focus. Most likely, many of you are involved in coalitions with a multi-issue focus, with many issues relating to child and family well being. Therefore, your coalition may not specifically focus on child abuse and neglect prevention per se, but may focus on broader issues, including child welfare, child and maternal health, child poverty, child safety, etc.

Why Coalitions Are Important
There is power in numbers! By joining forces with others with similar priorities, you are likely to get more accomplished than you would alone. Coalitions have several advantages including:

- Coalitions can achieve more widespread reach within a community than any single organization could attain.
- Coalitions generally have greater credibility than individual organizations alone due to the broader interest and breadth of coalitions. This reduces the suspicion of self-interest.
- Coalitions can create a public perception of tangible, broad community support.
Coalitions offer increased access to policy-makers and connections to influential decision-makers through a strong united voice. Coalitions create networking and partnership opportunities for your organization and programs. Coalitions provide economies of scale and cost efficiency, thereby conserving resources for each member organization. Coalitions have the potential to provide media attention and public profiles which member organizations may not otherwise achieve. Coalitions offer access to greater expertise by calling on a range of organizations and individuals.

Steps to Building a Coalition
If you are not a member of a broad-based children’s coalition or if there is not one in your state or region, maybe you should consider starting one. For example, for HFA programs, a broad-based coalition representing organizations and interests throughout your state will demonstrate the strength and breadth of support for home visitor services in your state and can help HFA work towards its national advocacy agenda. While the thought of creating a coalition may seem daunting, these guidelines should help you get started.

Step 1: Identify Potential Allies
To demonstrate broad support for your issues, work to cultivate support from a variety of groups and individuals. Throw the net wide! Think outside of the box of “likely suspects” and look to those groups or professions that are affected by child abuse and neglect. You are encouraged to think beyond the child welfare organizations in your community and include representatives of health care agencies, school systems, the courts, law enforcement, religious and business leaders. It is important to start reaching out – or continue to expand your efforts – to those who will share their knowledge, experience, and resources in health and children’s issues. Some of the best and most effective coalitions have unlikely partners working in harmony for the same cause! Seek representatives from all sectors so that the coalition reflects the community.

Use the coalition as an opportunity to build bridges and form new alliances. To develop your list of potential allies, start by considering the following questions:

- Who is affected by issues surrounding children and families, including child abuse and neglect prevention?
- Which groups and individuals have the most influence over key elected officials – local, state or federal?
- How do we gain the support of these key groups and individuals?
- Whom have we supported in the past who might now support our issues?
- Who are our opponents and how do we neutralize them?
After answering these questions and going through your entire list of potential contacts, start calling! For cold contacts (with those groups or organizations with which you have no previous relationship), consider starting your outreach efforts by mailing participants basic information on your organization and its purpose. Follow up with a phone call inviting them to a coalition planning meeting.

**Step 2: Define your Goals**

Determine your long- and short-term goals for the coalition. Why are you forming this coalition and what do you hope to accomplish? You need to come to agreement on some general guiding principles for the coalition’s work. Begin by creating a mission statement on which your coalition members agree. As the coalition is developing its goals, keep in mind that goals should be:

- **Believable**: They should describe situations or conditions that the coalition believes can be achieved.
- **Attainable**: It should be possible to achieve the goals in the designated time frame.
- **Tangible**: The goals should be concrete and capable of being fully understood.
- **On a Timetable**: A completion date should be included in the goal statement.
- **Win-Win**: The goals should allow all members of the coalition to experience some level of success.

Address issues up front, so that all perspectives can be brought to the table. Remember that this is a collaborative effort (that’s the whole point of a coalition!) and that means acknowledging and respecting differences, and being able to compromise. Always designate specific tasks to be done and set benchmarks for completion of coalition activities.

It’s also important to determine how often, when and where your coalition will meet, and who will attend each meeting. Once these logistics are worked out, consider announcing your coalition to the public. By releasing a joint statement or holding a press conference, the coalition can make policy-makers and the general public aware of its existence.
Step 3: Take Action and Keep the Momentum Alive

The advocacy coalition should meet regularly to coordinate strategies. Different members will contribute different strengths and it is important to capitalize on those strengths. You need to keep all coalition members informed about the ongoing advocacy efforts, so that they feel a sense of involvement and investment in the coalition. You may consider a regular newsletter to all coalition members. Email is also an easy and inexpensive way to stay in frequent contact. Encourage feedback and suggestions from coalition members.

The key to successfully mobilizing your coalition around a common agenda is to develop an action plan that is specific, measurable, achievable and focused directly on your goals. Your action plan should include a clear road map for:

What? Decide what actions need to take place step by step. Consider your resources and time-frame for action to achieve measurable results.

When? Develop a timetable for achieving each task and illustrate the tasks on a planning calendar with deadlines, which you distribute to all members of the coalition.

Who? Assign someone to each task you need to accomplish and keep records of who does what. Also assess who has access to or relationships with key decision-makers.

Where? Decide where activities will take place strategically and where you will meet to monitor progress and plan next steps.

How? Decide how you will be most likely to reach your goals, recruit activists, communicate, and maximize resources in the most cost-effective manner possible.

All of the strategies discussed throughout this tool-kit (such as legislative advocacy, campaign-year advocacy, regulatory advocacy and using the media) are viable advocacy options for your coalition. In fact, most of these strategies work best when used by a coalition! You can’t do it alone. By cultivating relationships (there’s that word we keep coming back to – relationships) and encouraging the involvement of other individuals and organizations, you will be able to make significant gains in improving the lives of children and families.
1. **Common Goals**  
The expressed need and the desired change should be understood by all involved in the coalition.

2. **Communication**  
Use common language that everyone can understand. Avoid professional jargon. Each member needs to know what is taking place and what is expected.

3. **Each Member is Important to the Coalition**  
Each participant should be able to perceive him- or herself as an important part of the whole, contributing to its success.

4. **Opportunity to Participate**  
Each member should have input into goals, methods and decisions.

5. **Ownership**  
By encouraging members to participate in the decision-making process, members feel a part of the coalition and feel responsible for action.

6. **Delegation**  
Consider delegating to each entity a part that they can control. This provides an opportunity for individual accomplishments and contributes to the overall success of the coalition.

7. **Efficient, Effective Meetings**  
Keep the meetings moving toward the agreed upon goals. Each meeting should update members on the progress towards these goals, so that members leave with some sense of accomplishment.

8. **Process and Pattern**  
Establish a format for conducting meetings and the decision-making process early in the development of the coalition.

9. **Shared Leadership**  
While one organization or individual may be responsible for initiating the coalition, it is important that several persons or groups share leadership responsibilities throughout the life of the coalition.

10. **Broad-Based Membership**  
Expand your membership to include organizations and individuals with diverse focuses and varying areas of expertise. This strengthens the coalition and allows you to reach a broader audience.
What, then, is community mobilization? Community mobilization involves organizing and convening a constituency of diverse stakeholders including parents, business leaders, social service organization members and the faith community to design an agenda for change within a community. While community mobilization does not, by definition, have to be geared towards a legislative or political goal, for purposes of this guide we will focus on how a grassroots movement can influence public policy.

Community mobilization is important for several reasons. Most importantly, community mobilization brings together all the key players – parents, professionals concerned about the well-being of children and families, business leaders, and service providers – to plan how their community can ensure that all children and families have the opportunity to thrive. Community mobilization and grassroots organizing strengthen the sense of community and encourage everyone to be involved and committed to the notion that we all benefit when communities support their children and families.

Purposes of Grassroots Organizing
As with all types of public policy advocacy discussed in this guide, the purpose is to ensure that the proper programs, policies, and laws are in place at every level to protect the children in our communities and to provide support to parents raising those children. Grassroots advocacy specifically attempts to organize communities to provide a voice for the children and families within them. Thus, grassroots advocacy attempts to:

- Create awareness among collaborators and consumers of how different government systems work;
- Empower individuals to participate in systems change;
- Enhance the knowledge and personal responsibility of individuals and communities that is transferred to state, local and individual action;
- Create a community norm that the well-being of children is the mutual responsibility of all members of the community; and
- Advocate for public policy and legislation that ensures the protection and nurturing of children and the support of families.
Goals of a Grassroots Movement

A key component of a successful grassroots movement is engaging both individuals and organizations to become part of the movement. Creating a community-based coalition is the basis of advocacy efforts at the grassroots level. With that in mind, the following list describes some of the goals you might hope to accomplish through your grassroots efforts:

- Provide information to your grassroots membership network. Up-to-date, accurate information is vital to any advocacy campaign.
- Provide the legislature with information about what matters to constituents.
- Educate the public about issues affecting children and families in their community.
- Build a movement in conjunction with allies around a particular issue – for example, home visiting.
- Strengthen important links to the legislative and executive branches of government and work in conjunction with these branches whenever possible.

Steps to Building a Grassroots Community Movement

► Step 1: Attract Supporters

Build support through public education activities, public relations events and other community-based initiatives. Work closely with other organizations to ensure continuity, singleness of purpose on behalf of children and families, and lack of duplication. Keep in mind that some of your most important supporters are the parents in the community. Families’ experiences and dreams should drive the community’s vision for change.

► Step 2: Business Involvement

Encourage local businesses to adopt child and family friendly positions by asking them to support local children’s initiatives. Having businesses involved in community mobilization efforts benefits the community by adding new perspectives on issues, bringing new contacts and connections to the effort, and by providing greater availability of and accessibility to business leaders’ expertise, experience and resources.

► Step 3: Participation of Faith Communities

Religious communities are the backbone to many communities and are often already involved in projects that impact children and families. Mobilize faith communities by educating them about the well-being of children in local communities. Host a series of breakfast meetings with religious leaders of various faiths to strategize the role that the faith community can play in influencing policymakers on issues that affect the lives of children and families in your community.

► Step 4: Focus Your Effort

By sharing information throughout your grassroots network you can identify the immediate needs of the children in your community. Discuss programs that provide quality services to children, including home visiting programs, and create your focused advocacy agenda. This agenda should be created from the people in your community – the grassroots!
Using the Internet
Building a successful coalition or grassroots movement depends largely on your ability to communicate efficiently and effectively with your members. Consider using the internet to help meet this need. Your coalition or grassroots movement might want to create a web site containing up-to-date details on current children’s issues, upcoming events, status of relevant legislation, and other important information. This is a great way to keep your network informed and potentially reach out to others interested in helping you achieve your advocacy goals.

You may also consider creating a listserv to communicate with your coalition or grassroots network. This will allow you to send out information via email to a large group of people with the touch of a button. Most organizations and individuals have access to the internet – you are encouraged to take advantage of it!
In the fall of 1998, child advocates throughout Maine attended a meeting of the Maine Children’s Alliance, a statewide child advocacy organization with which Prevent Child Abuse Maine (PCA Maine) is affiliated, and discussed options for expanding prevention services throughout the state. They recognized that they had a unique opportunity to work with the new legislative leadership to get funding for programs for children and families because of the leadership’s strong interest in children and families. In fact, some legislators had approached individuals asking for help in propelling a children’s agenda, particularly in the areas of childcare, home visiting and health care. Their allies included the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, and most of the chairs of Appropriations, Health and Human Resources, Education, and Judiciary. Additionally, the Minority Leadership was also very “child-friendly” and wanted to endorse children’s initiatives.

The group decided that to create a legislative agenda that would enjoy widespread support it was important to convene all the players in Maine who may have a stake in expanding early childhood programs. This meant including ALL home visiting programs (not just Healthy Families), child care providers, Headstart, Public Health, United Way Community Outreach staff, businesses, and anyone else interested in early childhood issues. The resulting “Start ME Right” coalition for home visiting and early childcare promoted a continuum of care of prevention services that would assure children a healthy start. The Start ME Right coalition is focused on bridging organizations and individuals concerned with the wellbeing of children and families and creating a unified voice for action.

Start ME Right fought for a package of legislation that included funding for both home visiting and early child care programs. From the beginning, those involved agreed not to compete for funding but to share proportionately whatever they could get.

Also helpful in their efforts was the fact that two task forces – one on home visiting and one on early child care – were already drafting legislation that would eventually be sponsored by the Speaker of the House. The Start ME Right coalition focused on advocacy and community awareness strategies to ensure that this and other proposed legislation was passed. Their strategy was to organize at the grassroots level; to involve the people throughout the state who are impacted by home visiting and early child care programs; and to include parents, child care providers, home visiting recipients and administrators, teachers, health care professionals, businesses, law enforcement organizations, and others concerned with the wellbeing of children and families.

By engaging members of the community, the Start ME Right coalition was able to build strong relationships with legislators in most districts in Maine. Designated individuals in each district were responsible for keeping legislators informed and updated on relevant issues. Many of these individuals had relationships with legislators prior to this campaign, and were able to build upon these. Others took the opportunity of this campaign to meet and get to know the legislators both in their home district and the district their program was in.

Coalition organizers relied heavily on email to keep members informed of recent developments and to communicate quickly and efficiently. The coalition regularly distributed postcards via the legislative mail system throughout the session, reminding legislators of one key prevention concept and the presence of Start ME Right. When legislative hearings were conducted, the network brought parents and service providers, and others mentioned above to testify. Throughout the session, members of the network throughout the community were in constant communication with their policy-makers. This was a true grassroots effort! This network’s advocacy efforts resulted in $14 million of ongoing funding for the Start ME Right programs, allocated out of a total sum of $53 Million in Tobacco Settlement money!

For more info:
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Notes

1 Adapted from web sites: www.cypresscon.com and www.preventioninstitute.org.
3 Adapted from the Children’s Defense Fund, An Advocate’s Tool Kit for the State Children’s Health
4 Children’s Defense Fund, An Advocate’s Tool Kit for the State Children’s Health Insurance Program
5 Information adapted from web site: http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu.
6 Children’s Defense Fund, An Advocate’s Tool Kit for the State Children’s Health Insurance Program
7 Adapted from Children’s Defense Fund, Child Care Now! Organizer’s Kit.
8 Information adapted from the web site of http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu.
10 Ibid
11 Adapted from information from Lucky Hollander of Prevent Child Abuse Maine.
12 Ibid
13 Ibid
We have spent a significant amount of time discussing legislative advocacy and how you, as an advocate, can influence the law-making process. However, there is another equally important avenue for advocacy available to child advocates. Federal, state, and local regulatory and administrative entities play an important role in setting policy, administering programs, and interacting with the public. The regulatory process provides an excellent opportunity for child advocates to influence outcomes of the deliberations of these agencies. This chapter provides a brief overview of the regulatory process and describes how you can participate in this process.

The information in this chapter will cover the federal regulatory process. These procedures are drawn largely from the federal Administrative Procedure Act, the federal statute that specifies the guidelines that federal agencies must follow in making rules. Most states have their own versions of the federal Administrative Procedure Act, which are usually very common to the federal version.

**What is a Regulatory Body?** While legislative bodies determine general program scope and program funding levels, regulatory agencies have the responsibility for operationalizing programs and regulations – they are the ones who implement the programs authorized by the legislature. It is critical as advocates to be aware of activities within these regulatory agencies. The work done in these agencies can significantly modify and change passed legislation.

Most states have their own versions of the federal Administrative Procedure Act, which are usually very common to the federal version.
Why a Regulatory Agency Acts

There are three basic reasons why an agency decides to take regulatory action:

**Congressional Mandate or Executive Order.** Sometimes Congress or a state legislature determines that an agency must address a particular issue. Congress will then enact legislation that requires the agency to draft, implement and enforce rules regarding the issue. The agency is bound by law to follow the dictates of that requirement, whether or not the agency agrees or disagrees with the congressional or Executive provision. Thus, even if the agency has no particular interest in the issue at hand, it is required by law to act.

**The Agency's Own Authority.** The agency may determine on its own that a regulation is needed to address a particular issue. As long as the issue is within its jurisdiction or general responsibilities, as defined by Congress, an agency can act on its own initiative and begin the regulatory process described below.

**The Public May Petition an Agency.** Any individual or group has the right to petition an agency to issue, amend or repeal a rule. The agency must act promptly when responding to such a petition and must provide its reasons if it denies the request.
Steps to Agency Rule-Making

There are essentially five steps that agencies must follow in order to develop rules. These steps typically include:

► **Step 1: Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule-Making**  
At the federal level, agencies publish notices of rule-making activity in the Federal Register. The Federal Register is a document published daily that reports activities of the federal Government. Most states have similar publications. In addition to being in the Federal Register, the notice is available from the agency’s public affairs office or through a toll-free number. You can find this information on the Internet at www.access.gpo.gov.

   The first notice an agency publishes announces to the public that the agency will begin a rule-making process on a given issue. At the federal level, this notice is called the Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule-Making (ANPR). The ANPR explains the agency’s rationale for the rule-making and requests comments from the public. This is an excellent time for advocates to influence the process. The comment period generally lasts from 30 to 90 days.

► **Step 2: Notice of Proposed Rule-Making**  
After a further review of the issue and the consideration of comments received as part of the ANPR, the agency drafts a proposed rule. This Notice of Proposed Rule-Making (NPR) is published in the Federal Register along with the agency’s rationale for moving forward with the rule-making. The public then has the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule, again usually for a period of 30 to 90 days. The agency reviews all comments and submissions to the official record - the docket - and makes any necessary changes to the proposal. While the agency is not required to actually make suggested changes, it is required to demonstrate that it at least has considered all comments received.

► **Step 3: Notice of Public Hearing**  
Although federal and state agencies often are not required to hold public hearings, agencies can provide public forums at their discretion. This provides another opportunity for advocates to articulate their position. Hearings can be held either before or after the NPR. Opinions expressed at public hearings are recorded, transcribed, and become part of the official record along with all the written comments that are received.
Step 4: Notice of Final Rule
After hearings, the public comment period, and reg-neg (see section on Federal Advisory Committees below for clarification of “reg-neg”) have taken place, the Final Rule is published by the agency in the Federal Register. Keep in mind that even after the final rule is published, any interested party may petition the agency to repeal or amend the final rule.

Step 5: Agency Implementation and Enforcement
Each agency is charged with the responsibility of implementing and enforcing its rules. If it is determined that a regulated industry or entity is not complying with the enacted rules, the agency has the authority to impose a penalty.

Federal Advisory Committees
More and more, agencies are pursuing a variety of methods to elicit early input from the public into the rule-making process. One format that has been increasingly utilized is called regulatory negotiation or “reg-neg.” Reg-neg brings together various interest groups and stakeholders to create what is called a Federal Advisory Committee. Federal laws apply to Federal Advisory Committees to ensure open proceedings and adequate representation of diverse stakeholders. In a reg-neg, the Federal Advisory Committee plays an active role in drafting the proposed rule and in resolving points of contention.

These forum and stakeholder meetings offer excellent opportunities for advocates to impact policies affecting children and families. Federal Advisory Committees can also be utilized for virtually any other purpose where an agency desires advice from outside experts.
When Can I Influence the Process?

This section highlights some things that you can do as an advocate throughout each of the five steps outlined above.

▸ **Step 1: Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule-Making**
  ▶ This is one of the earliest opportunities for advocates to be involved. The earlier you get involved, the more you help shape the direction of the regulatory processes.
  ▶ Develop individual relationships with agency leadership and staff.
  ▶ Prepare written comments for the regulatory agency. Your comments will be taken into account as initial proposed rule language is introduced.
  ▶ Encourage colleagues and partner organizations to provide comments – the more individuals and organizations weighing in the better.

▸ **Step 2: Notice of Proposed Rule-Making**
  ▶ This again is a time when advocates have the opportunity to provide technical comments based on their expertise in issues affecting children and families.
  ▶ Call on the agency to provide public forums for experts and advocates to share their knowledge.

▸ **Step 3: Notice of Public Hearing**
  ▶ Testify at a public hearing.
  ▶ Provide a written statement if you are unable to attend the hearing.

▸ **Step 4: Notice of Final Rule**
  ▶ Commend the agency if you are pleased with the outcome of the rule.
  ▶ Write and visit the agency leadership and staff if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the rule; provide background and substantive data and evidence to support your position.
  ▶ Share the results of the rule-making process with colleagues and partner organizations to help generate action.
  ▶ Petition the agency to reconsider the rule.
  ▶ Remain involved in the process!

▸ **Step 5: Agency Implementation and Enforcement**
  ▶ Monitor the implementation and enforcement of the rules, acting as a watchdog to ensure that the agency is doing its job.
  ▶ Involve the media in investigating implementation and enforcement by writing a letter to the editor or holding a press event.
  ▶ Draw together the connection between the regulatory and legislative processes by encouraging legislators to be active participants in the regulatory oversight.
  ▶ Call on the agency to impose penalties and fines for violators, and repeal or reassess a particular rule if it proves inappropriate or harmful to the safety and well-being of children and families.
Federal Advisory Committees
If an agency calls for public input by forming a Federal Advisory Committee, you can:
- Represent a stakeholder position by participating in and speaking before the Federal Advisory Committee.
- Contact the agency and indicate your interest and willingness to participate in the Federal Advisory Committee process.
- Even if you are not officially involved in the Federal Advisory Committee process, attend the hearings and participate in the period dedicated to public comment.
- Establish a relationship with those individuals and organizational stakeholders representing your issues and interests in the process.

Advocacy at the administrative/regulatory level is often overlooked. To ensure that programs and policies are carried out as intended when passed by the legislature, it is crucial to be involved throughout this process. Regulatory agencies operate year-round and should be monitored regularly – this is a great place to focus your effort when the legislature is not in session. Keep in mind that advocacy at the regulatory level creates an opportunity for you to effect great change! And as always, remember the importance of developing relationships with those members of regulatory agencies. After all, it’s all about relationships!

Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky:
When CAPTA was reauthorized by Congress in 1996, one part of the reauthorization required that all states create up to three citizen review panels to monitor their child protection systems by July 1999. Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky (PCA Kentucky) sent the Kentucky child protection agency a letter notifying them that PCA Kentucky was aware of this recently passed requirement and offered their assistance on the implementation of the mandate. The child protection agency declined the assistance offered by PCA Kentucky, which led to periodic inquiries by PCA Kentucky about any progress being made in the planning process.

In the early fall of 1998, PCA Kentucky followed up with the child protection agency, recognizing that no headway had been made to meet the citizen review panel requirement. This panel was to be up and running within nine to 10 months, yet little had been done to prepare for this. Again, PCA Kentucky offered its assistance, but it was clear that this project was on the agency’s back burner.

Leaders from PCA Kentucky contacted staff from the Kentucky legislature and informed them of the federal requirement and the status of Kentucky’s preparations. This topic was put on the Health and Welfare Committee agenda, at which time a member of PCA Kentucky provided testimony on the issue. PCA Kentucky also met with the Secretary of the Cabinet for Families and Children, which houses the Kentucky Child Protection Agency.

As a result, the Cabinet for Families and Children created a panel of outside advocates to help create these review boards. After a considerable amount of follow up by PCA Kentucky between then and the federal deadline, the panels were established in time. The child protection agency contracted with PCA Kentucky to provide training and orientation to the citizen review panel members. Additionally, PCA Kentucky was appointed a seat on one of the panels.

Because PCA Kentucky was monitoring the implementation of this federal mandate at the agency level, they were able to advocate for proper procedure and a quality system, and helped ensure that the congressional intent was met.
This chapter is adapted from the APHA Advocates’ Handbook:
A Guide for Effective Public Health Advocacy.
Advocacy During Election Years

n election year offers a unique opportunity to influence the agendas of our future policy-makers by educating the candidates running for public office about child abuse and neglect prevention strategies. And while there are many exciting advocacy activities that you can initiate, keep in mind that there are some guidelines about what a tax-exempt, non-profit organization can and cannot do related to a political campaign. The most basic rule of electioneering is that a non-profit organization cannot endorse, contribute to, work for or otherwise support a candidate for public office. It follows that neither can a non-profit organization oppose a candidate.¹

This chapter will focus on what you, as child advocates, can do to promote your cause within the context of a political campaign. The discussion of each advocacy technique includes a summary of the legal guidelines within which you must operate as a 501(c)3 organization.

It is worth noting that the following advocacy activities are generally more effective when organized and sponsored by a coalition of child advocates rather than by any single organization. Look to working with your larger, statewide or regional coalitions for children and families. There is strength in numbers! See Chapter 7 on Building Coalitions for more details.

It is important to have a focused advocacy effort and a well-defined advocacy agenda. When working with candidates, it is imperative to be clear about what it is that you are promoting. The more specific you are about what you want from your candidates, the more likely it is that you will get a positive response. Often a larger coalition will have an established children’s advocacy agenda, which may include a piece on child abuse and neglect prevention. If you are working on your own, it is important to develop a clear advocacy agenda from which to apply the tools described in this chapter.

The tactics outlined on the next page – mailing campaigns, candidate forums, candidate questionnaires, candidate interviews and briefings, and asking candidates to make a pledge – are important at the local, state and federal levels.
Candidates for public office – including city councils, state legislatures and Congress – depend on their constituents for support and for votes. Thus, as a constituent, you have the right and the obligation to communicate your concerns and expectations to the candidates who will ultimately be serving you! Candidates need to know what is on the minds of their constituents. One way to communicate with your candidates is through the mail.

Initiating a letter-writing campaign will help ensure that your candidates hear your voice. In general, it is inexpensive, relatively efficient and easy to organize. The primary goals of a letter-writing campaign are:

- To encourage candidates to create a children’s agenda; and
- To let candidates know that a large, broad constituency is concerned about the health and safety of children and the support of families.

Hints for Letter-Writing
Guidelines for writing letters to candidates are very similar to those guidelines for writing letters to local, state or federal elected officials (see Chapter 2 on Legislative Advocacy).

- Make sure that the writer’s complete name and street address appear on the letter.
- Letters may be typed or written in longhand. Longhand is every bit (and maybe even more) effective as long as letters are legible!
- Writers should individualize their letters by using their own words.
- Letters should be clear, concise, direct and straightforward. The purpose should be stated in the first paragraph. The rest of the letter should be brief.
- Letters should explain why the issue matters to the writer – make it personal! Never threaten, nag, bully or berate.
- Writers should tell candidates that they are concerned voters. They should not tell the candidate that they will not vote for him or her if he or she does not support their views.
- End the letters by thanking the candidates for considering the points raised.
- Make certain that the letters are signed.

See Exhibit 1 on page 91 for an example of a letter to candidates.
Steps to Take

1. **Compile a mailing list of all municipal, county, state, and national candidates’ campaign headquarters with addresses and phone numbers.** You can do this by contacting your local voter registrar’s office or your local Democratic and Republican headquarters.

2. **Distribute this list to your organization’s mailing list along with instructions of what to do with the list.**

3. **Consider setting up tables to organize a postcard or letter-writing campaign.** Seek permission to have tables at offices, local shopping centers or the lobbies of public buildings. Make it easy for people to sit down and write a letter while their attention is focused. Once they walk away, they may not take the time to write.

4. **Set up postcard and letter-writing campaigns in conjunction with other activities with which you or your coalition may be involved – such as voter registration drives and candidate forums.**
Individualized, handwritten letters tend to be most effective with candidates because they realize that these letters take more time and effort on the part of citizens. However, pre-printed letters or postcards are easy and can force candidates to think about children’s issues. These can be very simple and effective when sent in large quantities. The following is an example that might be adapted and sent to your candidates.

(Date)

(Name of Candidate)

(Title of Candidate)

(Street Address)

(City, State, Zip Code)

Dear (Insert Candidate’s Name):

We as a nation must commit ourselves to addressing the needs of children. Child abuse is a national tragedy that affects more than 1 million children every year. In 1998, 14 out of every 1,000 children were victims of confirmed child maltreatment. In considering for whom I will vote in this election, I am requesting a copy of your children’s platform. Please send me your detailed plans for safeguarding the health and safety of our children and the support of families in need.

Sincerely

Name___________________________________________________________

Address_________________________________________________________

City___________________________State __________ Zip_____________________

91 Advocacy During Election Years
A candidate forum gives you the opportunity to bring together candidates and voters to discuss children’s issues. A variety of formats can be used that give voters the opportunity to question candidates, and candidates the opportunity to communicate their views on children’s issues. You have the option to open your forum to the media to raise awareness of the issues being discussed (see Chapter 4 on Media Advocacy for tips on contacting the media). A media presence also helps to hold the candidates accountable for their promises. The goals of a candidate forum are to:

- Educate voters on the candidates’ platforms for children;
- Encourage candidates to commit to a children’s agenda for which they may be held accountable; and
- Encourage forum attendees to become more involved in community action for children.

**Getting Started**

Your organization or coalition, if you are working with a broader network of organizations, should create a team responsible for organizing the forum. This steering committee should appoint a forum coordinator, whose duties may include:

- Developing a timeline;
- Facilitating and scheduling steering committee meetings;
- Serving as a liaison to all involved organizations;
- Serving as point person for negotiating with candidates and/or campaigns;
- Acting as media spokesperson for the steering committee;
- Maintaining adherence to deadlines;
- Coordinating activities;
- Assisting as other concerns arise;
- Ensuring attention to legal guidelines; and
- Documenting and archiving all activities for evaluation and future forums.

The team should create an organizational structure from which to work and from which to assign responsibility. It is helpful to divide responsibilities to ensure that the diverse talents of the various members will be utilized and that the burden will be shared. The table below identifies matters to consider when planning a candidate forum:

**Facilities:**
- Site selection;
- Furniture and technical requirements;
- Video taping requirements;
- Accessibility for disabled persons; and
- Immediate needs on the day of the event.
Program: Moderator, panelists, opening and closing speakers; Written confirmations of attendance and thank-you notes; Confirm details of the program; Requirements for the day of the event; and Timekeeper.

Media: Press releases; Talk radio, news stories and events calendars; Editorial board meetings; Commitments for pre/post media coverage of children’s issues; and Live broadcasts.

Audience: Format/rules for participation; Questions to ensure a broad range of issues are addressed; Invitations to experts to ask substantive questions; Volunteer enlistment and training; Translators if the community is predominantly non-English speaking; and Sign language services.

Candidates: Invitations and thank-you notes; Recruiting candidate participation; Terms of participation; Briefings on the issues; Written commitments; Candidates’ needs the day of the event; and Rules for candidate materials.

Issues for Discussion: Questions for candidates; and Pre-forum issues survey for candidates.

Research: Audience evaluation of the forum; and Pamphlet on children’s issues/supportive data.

Finance: Budget; and Fund-raising strategy.

Outreach: Video distribution in the community.

Legal: Legal advice from experienced attorney.

Oversight: Legal approval for candidate selection, format, publications, speakers and other forum aspects.
Selecting a Format

There are several different formats from which you can choose for your candidate forum. Regardless of which format you decide works best for your forum, remember that the purpose is to promote a dialogue about the issues with which you are concerned. As such, the questions presented to candidates should be very clear and concise to keep the candidates focused on the present issues. The following list provides a brief overview of several different accepted formats:

Equal Time Format: An impartial moderator and panelists question candidates, who are all granted an equal response time. Candidates are usually unaware of the exact questions ahead of time, but do know the general focus of the forum. Questions to the candidates need not be the same, as long as each candidate is given equal time to present his or her viewpoint.

Follow-Up Format: The moderator and panelists ask the candidates the questions. Follow-up questions are permitted to prevent evasive answers by candidates. These follow-up questions force candidates to provide exact answers to the questions at hand.

Town Meeting Format: Members of the audience pose all of the questions, but the moderator has the discretion to screen questions to avoid redundancy. One way to facilitate comprehensive questioning is to invite experts in child abuse prevention and related child welfare issues to attend and participate in the forum. This helps educate candidates about their constituents’ concerns.

Pro and Con Format: The moderator begins the forum reading a statement or position on an issue. Sponsoring organizations and/or candidates may submit positions ahead of time, and the planning team selects a representative sampling of all issues. Each candidate responds, either pro or con, detailing his or her position on the statement. The opponents have time for rebuttal. This format allows only three or four propositions and encourages prepared or rehearsed responses. To create some spontaneity, you may allow candidates to question each other.

Prepared and Spontaneous Format: Before the forum, you give candidates several prepared questions constructed to elicit specific, detailed responses. You then ask a selection of these questions at the forum. In addition, you allow panelists, opponents or the audience to ask some questions which candidates will respond to spontaneously.

Equal Opportunity Format: Questions are presented to all candidates. Each candidate can choose to answer, pass, or simply indicate agreement or disagreement. By their choice, candidates may have differing amounts of time to express their positions.
**Discourse Format:** A strong nonpartisan moderator is essential for this forum design. The moderator asks a question, and then candidates discuss the issue. The moderator must be comfortable and able to control candidates who try to dominate the discussion. The idea is to hear every candidate’s views in a discussion format.

**Feedback/Hearings Format:** Focus the forum on your coalition’s agenda, or on the agenda of your organization if you are organizing the forum independently. For each of your agenda items have an expert or a family present concerns and suggest solutions. After an expert-family presentation, the moderator or panelists will ask the candidates to respond with specific program proposals to address the presented concerns. Allow candidates to make closing remarks after discussion of all agenda items. This is an opportune time to educate candidates about program initiatives such as HFA.

**Forum Site Selection**
Location, location, location! Location is everything. Where you hold your forum event can determine the forum’s success. Legally, you must select your forum site based on non-political considerations. For example, you should not choose to hold your forum on the grounds of an organization that is affiliated with a political party. Here are some considerations when deciding on your location:

- **Accessibility:** Convenient access for the physically disabled, public transportation and parking.

- **Size:** You need a space big enough to comfortably accommodate the numbers you expect.

- **Layout:** A forum is designed to be participatory. You want to ensure that the physical layout of the space is conducive to audience participation and that there is adequate space for audience and media viewers.

- **Neutrality:** You should choose a location in which the community near the site favors no particular candidate.

- **Miscellaneous:** Necessary security, insurance, reception area, rest rooms and furniture.
Selecting the Moderator and Panelists

Your moderator and panelists will largely set the tone for the forum. It is very important to give this careful thought when making your selection. The moderator’s responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the format works fairly for all candidates;
- Managing the time;
- Enhancing the discussion during lulls or tense moments;
- Enforcing rules of the forum; and
- Coping with the unexpected.

When selecting your moderator, you should look for someone who:

- Is very comfortable in front of large groups of people;
- Possesses audience appeal;
- Has extensive knowledge of the issues;
- Is acceptable to the participating candidates;
- Has no partisan affiliation;
- Is flexible; and
- Has broadcast experience.

When selecting your panelists, you should look for people who:

- Are confident in front of an audience;
- Are skillful at posing questions;
- Are credible and acceptable to candidates and the audience;
- Represent a broad range of points of view;
- Exhibit independence in questioning candidates;
- Know the issues; and
- Adhere to the guidelines.
**Incorporating Your Audience**

The format you choose for your forum will determine the kind of participation you will get from your audience. You want to make sure that the candidates hear the views of their constituents. Thus, you want to encourage audience participation as much as possible. Here are some tips for encouraging participation:

- Ask co-sponsors or coalition members to submit the names of potential speakers.
- Consider tickets or reservations if seating space is limited.
- Promote outreach to a broad-based audience with diverse political perspectives.
- This ensures that you do not appear partisan. If invitations are going to be limited to specific organizations, candidates must agree to this in writing in advance.
- Instruct the audience members who want to ask questions during the forum to write and submit them. This allows you to screen them for a broad array of topics and to avoid endorsements of or attacks on candidates. Return the questions to the audience members to indicate that they can ask them.
- Consider distributing a printed program providing information on the issues to be discussed. Members of the audience can refer to this when considering the candidates’ platforms. The program can also provide community recognition for sponsoring agencies and serve as a resource for those interested in making future contacts, either for volunteering or further information.
- Enlist volunteers to collect written questions and evaluations, to staff literature tables and to be ushers, greeters and ticket takers. Volunteers should not wear campaign buttons from individual candidates or otherwise express support for or opposition to candidates.

**Approaching the Candidates**

It is important for your planning committee to develop written criteria for inviting the candidates to participate in the forum. If there are several announced candidates for a particular office, you must invite all viable candidates of all parties. One standard for determining a “viable candidate” is one who has at least 5% in major public opinion polls.

As soon as you have determined the date, time and format of the forum, you should contact the candidates. First, send a formal invitation. It is then advisable to meet with the candidates or their staffs in person to present the details of the forum. See Exhibit 2 on page 101 for a sample letter to invite candidates to participate in a forum. Exhibit 3 on page 103 provides a sample thank-you letter to those candidates who participate in the forum. Here are some other things to consider:

**Schedule:** Be as flexible as possible about the date, recognizing that candidates have full schedules during an election season.

**Negotiations:** Selecting a balanced format from the beginning will help you avoid needless negotiations. Doing so protects the interests of all candidates and provides equal opportunity for each to state his or her views.
**Agreement:** Once the candidates have agreed on the details, have them all sign an agreement document. A written agreement will help avoid most last-minute complaints.

**Partisan Literature:** Avoid background material and voting records that describe candidates’ positions unless all candidates have an equal chance to provide their own literature.

**Providing Documentation**
Provide the moderator and panelists with a general outline of the topics you wish to cover during the forum. The topics should be specific enough to make certain that the candidates have the opportunity to describe their points of view or solutions to a problem. You might also consider the following suggestions for providing information to both your candidates and audience:

- Many candidate forums provide nonpartisan publications on the issues for the audience. You may want to prepare a pamphlet including child abuse statistics and local prevention efforts.
- Prior to the forum, develop a simple candidate questionnaire and send it to the candidates. You may be able to distribute the results at the forum (However, there are strict legal guidelines for distributing questionnaire results. See Candidate Questionnaires on page 106 and legal guidelines for Candidate Questionnaires on page 106). A checklist of specific issues with space for notes may help participants, if they want to record the stated positions of the candidates.
- Sponsoring organizations may display nonpartisan literature about their agencies or programs. This will give the audience a chance to contact you for more information.
- Any written information available to the audience should also be made available to the candidates, moderator and panelists. Consult with your attorney first to make sure that all information meets legal requirements.
- Ask members of the audience and the planning committee to complete an evaluation survey to provide you with feedback.
**Timeline for Planning the Forum**

How much time you need to prepare for your forum depends largely on who will be included in the forum. Consider the following:

- Look at the number of offices you’ll include, as well as the level of the office(s) and the number of candidates seeking office. In any case, allow four to six months to plan and implement the forum.
- If the forum will be held before the primary election, invite candidates as soon as they announce their intentions to seek the office. If the candidate forum will target the general election, invite candidates as soon as you know the results of the primary election.

**Regulations for Non-Profits**

Non-profit organizations are free to invite candidates to meetings or public forums in order to get the candidates’ views on relevant issues. The invitation should be extended to all serious candidates. It is best to invite them all simultaneously and to use identical language in the invitations. The non-profit should not state its views or comment on those of the candidates. If there is a question-and-answer component, each candidate should be given adequate time to answer.
Sample Letter to Invite Candidates to Participate in a Candidate Forum

(Date)

(Name of Candidate)
(Title of Candidate)
(Street Address)
(City, State, Zip Code)

Dear (Insert Candidate’s Name):

According to a recent poll, American voters ranked issues affecting children as their first and second priorities in deciding how to cast their votes, and we want to know where you stand on these important issues. We would greatly appreciate your participation in an upcoming candidate forum on (insert date and time) sponsored by (insert the name of your organization and other forum sponsors).

Voters in (insert name of community or state) are eager to learn about (insert name of office) candidates’ commitment to our children. The forum will be open to the public and widely publicized (if this is in fact the case). The forum will be publicized on (name of organization) web sites, which receive an average of more than (insert number) hits each week. Invitations to the forum have been sent to:

- Local and statewide media (print, radio and television)
- Employees of (sponsoring organization and partners)
- (Include all groups who will be invited)

( Name of organization) in (city, state) and (names of other forum sponsors) are working together to ensure voters in (name of community or state) are fully aware of your position on a range of issues impacting children. The candidate forum will give you an opportunity to address children’s needs in a range of areas, including (insert areas that you plan to focus on in forum).

We are looking forward to working with you. (Name of contact) from (name of organization) will be calling you to follow up, answer any questions you may have, and confirm your participation in the forum. (Name of community or state)’s voters are eager to learn about your positions on the range of issues that affect America’s children. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Organization CEO Organization Board Chair Coalition Chair
Sample Thank-You Letter for Candidates’ Participation in Candidate Forum

(Date)

(Name of Candidate)
(Title of Candidate)
(Street Address)
(City, State, Zip Code)

Dear (Insert Candidate’s Name):

On behalf of (name of organization and other sponsors), thank you for your participation in the children’s issues (name of office) candidate forum. Your expressed views help voters make a much more informed decision about which candidate they will support in the upcoming elections.

Our public access cable station recorded the event and will re-broadcast the forum throughout the election cycle. In addition, (name of newspaper) will reprint the transcript of the forum in an upcoming, special election edition. Throughout the broadcasts and the printed transcripts, voters in (community or state) will be made fully aware of your positions on the issues that affect our (nation’s, state’s, community’s) children.

Thank you again for your participation in the children’s issues (name of office) candidate forum and for helping voters better understand your position on the range of issues that impact our children.

Sincerely,

Organization CEO Organization Board Chair Coalition Chair
Steps to Take

1. Bring together a coalition of diverse and politically savvy child-focused agencies to sponsor the candidate questionnaire. This will show candidates the broad community interest in their positions on children’s issues. As noted on page 119 in Regulations for Non-profits, it is best for the sponsor of the questionnaire to have a broad focus.

2. Design a questionnaire for each race (senate, governor, school board, President, etc.) selected by the sponsoring coalition. Limit your questionnaire to between five and eight questions.

3. Define the issues. Draft and redraft the questions. Ask candidates to give their positions on the issues that are in the domain of the office that they are seeking. Give the same questionnaires to all candidates running for the same office.

4. Compile a list of campaign headquarters for declared candidates, using information available at the registrar of voters.

5. Write a cover letter for the questionnaire, explaining to the candidates its purpose and intended use in the community. Be sure to include information on what your organization plans to do with the results of the questionnaire.

6. Send out the questionnaire, then follow up to make sure candidates received it. This will encourage their response. If you distribute the questionnaire prior to the candidate registration deadline, be sure to send it to any candidates who register later.

7. Keep a careful log of each contact you make with a candidate’s office. Record the date and time of each call, and the name of the person with whom you spoke. Should you not receive responses from all candidates, it is good to have this record to demonstrate that you made a “good faith effort” to secure all responses.

8. Compile the results. Format results in an easy-to-follow format and print them. Do not indicate approval or disapproval of candidates’ responses.

9. Publish the results and disseminate the publication. (See Regulations for Non-profits below for guidelines for publishing questionnaire results). Mail it to your newsletter mailing list, newspapers and other press, and distribute it at candidate forums.
Candidate Questionnaires

Candidate questionnaires provide a way to let constituents know how their candidates feel about certain issues – for our purposes, issues affecting children and families. The goals of creating a candidate questionnaire are:

- To help voters distinguish among candidates’ views on child and family issues;
- To make issues concerning children and families influence the voting choices of a growing number of citizens;
- To persuade candidates to consider (and hopefully commit to) these issues; and
- To lay the foundation for holding elected officials accountable on decisions affecting children and families.

Helpful Hints

- Consider using fewer open-ended questions and more yes/no questions. This makes answers easier to compile and read, and more readily shows differences between candidates.
- In your published results, you may note a candidate’s failure to complete a questionnaire.
- List the candidates’ campaign headquarters’ phone numbers, so citizens can call and inquire further about the candidates’ platforms.
- Avoid questions on “candidate experience with children’s issues.” These answers tend to be self-serving.
- Consider purchasing a special insert in the local newspaper to publish questionnaire results. Be sure to alert candidates in the cover letter of any planned advertising. This will provide extra incentive to complete the survey.
- If a candidate does not respond, list the questions in full and note “no response” for that candidate.

Timeline for Candidate Questionnaires

You should begin preparing the questionnaire and dissemination strategy up to six months before the election. Four months before election or immediately following the primary election, send questionnaires to the candidates. Give a specific deadline for returning responses.

Regulations for Non-Profits

For non-profits with a narrow focus, candidate questionnaires pose some problems. The IRS feels that a narrowness of focus implies endorsement of those candidates who reply favorably to the questions asked. Therefore, it is advised that if your focus is narrow, you should avoid disseminating the results of candidate questionnaires. If you want to publish the results of your questionnaire, it is best to send the questionnaire under a broader coalition instead of a single organization.

For an example of a candidate questionnaire, see Exhibit IV on page 107. This is Prevent Child Abuse America’s 2000 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire and accompanying cover letter.
Sample Cover Letter
to Send with Candidate Questionnaire

[This was used by PCA America for Presidential Campaign 2000]

(Date)

(Name of Candidate)

(Title of Candidate)

(City, State, Zip Code)

Dear (Insert Candidate’s Name):

In 1997 it was estimated that more than 1,000 children died as a result of abuse and neglect; every day in America, 13 children are killed by guns and despite the country’s booming economy, one out of every five children live in poverty. The time for change is now.

As a presidential candidate, we at Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) hope you share our concern for the safety and well being of our nation’s children. We are writing to ask you to provide your viewpoint on issues critical to the prevention of child abuse and neglect, and to the healthy development of children by completing the enclosed Candidate Questionnaire.

Prevent Child Abuse America is a national, non-partisan, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to preventing the abuse and neglect of our nation’s children. Since 1972, PCA America has been working to prevent child abuse and neglect through parent education, public awareness campaigns, research and advocacy. Currently, we have 40 statewide chapters, and over 400 Healthy Families America® (HFA) program sites, which serve as many as 53,000 families throughout the country. At the close of the 20th Century, children continued to suffer from child abuse and neglect at staggering rates. In 1998, more than 3 million children were reported abused or neglected and more than 1 million of these reports were confirmed. In addition, more than three children died each day from abuse or neglect.

As we strive to eradicate the abuse and neglect of our nation’s children, PCA America is working to ensure that child abuse prevention is a priority for key national leaders and the American public. By completing the enclosed questionnaire, you will be able to help us shape the national policy debate on how this country can best support children and families.

This questionnaire will be distributed to members of our chapter network. Please feel free to contact our office with any questions you may have. In addition, PCA America is available to assist you in your efforts to help prevent child maltreatment and support children and families. Thank you for your time and attention to this crucial matter.

Respectfully,

A. Sidney Johnson, III
President and CEO

Maura Somers Dughi
Chairman of the Board

© Registered Trademark of Prevent Child Abuse America
Name:_______________________________________________________________________________________
Address:______________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
Phone:____________________________________________ Fax: ______________________________________
Email:_______________________________________________________________________________________
Contact Name:_________________________________________________________________________________

Instructions:
Please return your completed copy of the Candidate Questionnaire;
Via mail: Kathleen Lowe, Policy Analyst
Prevent Child Abuse America
200 S. Michigan Ave., 17th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604
Via e-mail: klowe@preventchildabuse.org
Via fax: (312) 939-8962

As a non-partisan 501(c)3 organization, Prevent Child Abuse America has provided the attached questionnaire in order to seek your commitment to the prevention of child abuse and neglect, and to the promotion of healthy children and families.
Thank you for your time and attention to this crucial matter. If you have any questions regarding this Candidate Questionnaire, please contact Kathleen Lowe at (312) 663-3520 ext.107.

1. What do you identify as the three biggest challenges facing children today?
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

2. Please describe how programs to support children and families rank among your priorities.

3. How have you in your personal, professional or political life worked to prevent child abuse and neglect?
4. Please describe briefly your agenda to prevent child abuse and neglect in this country.

5. Research shows that voluntary home visiting and family support programs help parents more effectively access health services for themselves and their children; increase positive parent-child interaction; increase child immunizations; and decrease parental stress levels, which have led to a decrease in reports of child abuse and neglect. What steps would you take to ensure continued support for such programs?

6. Abused and neglected children suffer poor prospects for success in school. Research has shown that abuse affected learning and emotional behavior in school age children. Do you support proposals that would incorporate child abuse and neglect prevention efforts such as parenting education, voluntary home visiting and family support services within legislation that addresses support for public education?

Please Circle: Support / Oppose
Please Comment:

7. The National Institute of Justice reported that child abuse increased the incidence of future delinquency and adult criminality by more than 40%, and that 68% of incarcerated adult male felons reported being victim of some form of child abuse. Given these findings, do you support proposals that would include child abuse and neglect prevention as an allowable expenditure within legislation that addresses youth violence and adult criminal activity?

Please Circle: Support / Oppose
Please Comment:

8. Nationally recognized experts in the field of child maltreatment have long been aware of the link between domestic violence and child abuse. Even children who witness acts of violence in the home can be affected in the same way as children who are physically and sexually abused. Do you support proposals that would link child abuse and neglect prevention efforts to legislation that addresses domestic violence?

Please Circle: Support / Oppose
Please Comment:
9. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) represents the federal and state partnership to prevent child maltreatment at the state and community levels. Despite the large number of children who are reported abused each year, funding has never been fully appropriated at its authorized level. Currently, it is authorized at $166 million and is only appropriated at $72 million. Do you support full funding for CAPTA? If so, what measures will you take to ensure that full funding is appropriated for these community-based efforts?

Please Circle: Support / Oppose
Please Comment:

10. As the nation's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) caseload has declined, the amount of TANF funds needed to provide cash assistance payments to recipients has also declined, leaving many states with TANF surpluses. This surplus has been crucial in funding a variety of prevention programs to help families, including child care, job-training and home visiting services. Some public officials have suggested that TANF funding be reduced from the levels agreed to when the law was passed. Do you believe that TANF should or should not be reduced?

Please Circle: Should be reduced / Should not be reduced
Please Comment:

11. Would you be willing to add the strategies on preventing child abuse and neglect you have identified in this questionnaire to your party's platform?

Additional Comments:

Candidate Interviews and Briefings

Meeting face-to-face with candidates is one of the most effective ways to communicate with candidates about the child and family issues on which your organization or coalition is focused. The candidate interview is a meeting between the candidate and a small group of advocates, service providers or volunteers. The purpose of the interview is to question the candidate on his or her views of child abuse prevention and to raise the “child awareness” of the candidate’s campaign. The candidate briefing is similar to the candidate interview, but usually consists of a larger group of advocates who lead the dialogue on the critical issues of child safety and protection. The goals of a candidate interview or briefing are:

- To educate candidates for local, state, or federal offices on issues important to children and their families; and
- To encourage candidates to include children’s issues in their campaign literature.

Steps to Take

1. In following nonpartisan policies, it is not appropriate to interview one candidate for a specific office and not another. In races in which there are several candidates for office, you will most likely want to interview or brief all of the candidates, or at least the major ones.

2. Form a team of advocates who will plan and conduct the candidate meetings. If you are part of a broad-based children’s coalition (concerned with children’s issues beyond child abuse and neglect), you will probably want to include at least one advocate from each area of concern – such as child poverty, education, health, and abuse and neglect.

3. Decide what issues you want to address with your candidates. Questions should be prepared and a spokesperson designated.

4. Get names, addresses and phone numbers of the candidates’ campaign headquarters, as well as the names of the scheduling secretaries and campaign managers.

5. Call candidates’ campaign headquarters, explain the event you are planning, and ask to speak with the scheduling secretary.

6. Explain that your group would like to meet with the candidate to discuss his or her views and positions on issues of concern to children and their families.

- Continued on next page -
7. Agree on a date, time, and place for the meeting and who will attend. Let them know that the meeting will last no longer than an hour.

8. Follow up your phone calls with letters of invitation. Letters should be addressed to candidates, with attention to the campaign staff arranging the meetings. The letters should include the following:
   - Date, time and place of the meeting;
   - Restatement of the purpose of the meeting;
   - List of the issues to be discussed. Do not send the candidates the actual questions you plan to ask;
   - A statement of whether all comments will be “off the record” or “on the record.” “On the record” means that you can use the candidate’s response in the media;
   - List of the participants who will be present and their titles; and
   - A single fact sheet on the status of children in your community or state.

9. Call campaign or scheduling secretaries a few days before interviews to confirm appointments. This is a good opportunity to ask if there are any questions about the meeting.

10. Call campaign or scheduling secretaries the morning of the events to reconfirm.

11. Call the other advocates a few days before the briefing to confirm their attendance. Ask them to arrive 15 minutes early. Your group should use the following as ground rules to convey a sense of unity and organization:
   - Decide on the lead spokesperson;
   - Anyone may ask follow-up questions;
   - All must speak with a single voice on public policy issues; and
   - After priority issues have been discussed, feel free to open the discussion to other state or local issues.

12. Foster a friendly atmosphere. Never threaten and do not become upset by a certain amount of disagreement. It is healthy and to be expected. If you sense hostility around an issue, try a different approach or move on to another subject. You want to keep the door open between candidates and your advocacy community.

13. Try to cover as many issues as possible in the time you have scheduled. Do not hesitate to politely interrupt a candidate who begins to ramble, skirts an issue or switches to a different topic.

14. If you don’t feel comfortable or competent about some of the questions or issues, skip them. But remember to skip the same ones and ask the same set of prepared questions of other candidates.

15. Always send candidates and their staff a thank-you note.
Helpful Hints

✶ Know the issues and the candidates’ previous statements or activity on children’s issues.
✶ When planning interviews or dialogues, allow plenty of time for issues to be discussed and developed in some depth.
✶ Your meeting team should rehearse some key points prior to your interviews or briefing:
   1. Prepare opening statements and pointed follow-up questions;
   2. Decide who will handle introductions;
   3. Assign someone to restate what will happen with the information given by the candidate and the goals of the meeting;
   4. Decide who will ask what questions and follow-up questions; and
   5. Assign someone to watch the time.

Timeline for Candidate Interviews and Briefings

✶ Conduct the interviews/briefings early in the candidates’ campaigns to encourage them to call on you for more information as the campaign progresses and to increase the chances that they will speak out on your issues during the campaign. It is also easier to gain access to the candidates early in the campaign.
✶ Allow three weeks prior to the activity to prepare the spokespersons who will represent the issues.
### Steps to Take

1. **Generate a mailing list of all candidates for each office for which you want to seek pledges.** Include phone numbers for follow up. Get the candidates’ addresses from the Board of Elections or from each campaign party's headquarters.

2. **Draft a pledge.**

3. **Visit personally with the candidates or their staffs to brief them on relevant issues.** This can be done through a candidate briefing as discussed above or a meeting specifically to discuss making a pledge.

4. **If you cannot arrange a personal visit, mail the pledge materials to the candidates.** Include a cover letter with your mailing that explains:
   - Who you are (either an individual organization or a coalition of groups);
   - The purpose of the pledge (to solicit support for your children’s agenda from candidates and to help ensure accountability after the election);
   - Some key facts about children in your community;
   - Whether or how the pledge will be shared with the public; and
   - Your request that the candidate sign and return the pledge.

5. **Be prepared to follow up by phone with those candidates not willing to meet with you and those that do not return the pledge.**

6. **Send the pledge signers a thank-you note.**

7. **Make yourself available for candidates who may want to speak with you about ideas for developing a children’s agenda.**

8. **Publicize the existence of the pledge and encourage voters to ask candidates whether they have signed the pledge and why.**
Ask Candidates to Make a Pledge

The candidate pledge is a great tool to generate commitment to a children’s agenda both during an election campaign and for post-election accountability. Your pledge should be designed around the issues on which your coalition or organization is focused. For example, if your organization is part of a larger children’s coalition, your pledge may include a range of child welfare initiatives. However, if you create a pledge as a single organization, your pledge may be more focused on child abuse and neglect prevention initiatives. The crucial first step is defining exactly what you want your pledge to include, based on your advocacy agenda. The goals of asking candidates to make a pledge are:

- To focus candidates’ attention on developing a children’s agenda;
- To provide a post-election accountability tool; and
- To meet the candidates prior to the election.

Timeline for Asking Candidates for a Pledge

- Start early in the campaign year, sending the pledge to each candidate as soon as his or her campaign becomes official.
- Ask for the candidates’ responses at least six weeks before the primary or general election.

See Exhibit 5 on page 121 for an example of a Candidate Pledge.

Regulations for Non-Profits

It is entirely proper for a non-profit organization to educate candidates about your position on certain issues and to urge candidates to support this position. Further, it is proper to ask candidates to go on record pledging support of these positions. However, as a non-profit you do not have the ability to publish and distribute candidate responses to your requests for support. You cannot distribute a candidate’s statement to the media, general public or to other non-profit organizations. The candidate has the freedom to distribute his or her response, but you do not.

There is one final note on non-profit campaign regulations. It is very common for non-profits to keep track of how members of a legislature vote on key issues and disseminate this information to their members. This is an important tool to know which legislators to thank, who needs to be convinced, and to show how well or how poorly the proposal fared. There is no problem with this practice, as long as the information is presented and disseminated during the campaign in the same way that it is at other times. When presenting results, do not use language such as “voted for us” or anything similar. Just note if the legislator voted for or against the measure.

If you are in the practice of disseminating information as relevant votes occur throughout the year, then it is fine to continue to do so during a campaign. However, if you haven’t published records throughout the year, it would not be prudent to publish a recap of the legislative votes throughout the year during the campaign.
I believe in our nation’s children and the power of prevention. I believe that our children are the foundation of the future. I believe that all children should be healthy and safe, and that all families should be supported to provide a healthy and safe environment in which to raise their children. I believe that children should be a top priority of government.

To this end, I pledge my support to:

- Meet at least once with representatives of (your organization or coalition).

- Listen to your concerns for our children.

- Learn more about child abuse and neglect and efforts being made to prevent abuse and neglect.

- Create a children’s platform, with the health and well-being of children and families as a top priority.

When elected, I pledge to continue these efforts to understand child abuse and neglect and support policies and programs that can help prevent child abuse and neglect before it begins.

______________________________________________
Signed

____________________________________________________________________________________________
Name Office Sought

____________________________________________________________________________________________
Mailing Address City Zip

____________________________________________________________________________________________
Campaign Contact Person Phone

For more information, please contact (name of contact person) at (name of organization and phone number).
The months following an election present an ideal time for you to develop relationships with newly elected officials and their staff members. This is a great time for you to introduce your organization to policy-makers (if you have not already done so) and strengthen these alliances. As has been mentioned before, so much of your legislative advocacy work depends on establishing relationships. By making the effort early in your public officials’ term, you have the opportunity to firm-up these connections before you show up with a specific request. Spending time with your legislators and their staff in low-pressure settings helps to create strong ties that can go a long way down the road. Many of these suggestions overlap with those in Chapter 2, Legislative Advocacy, in the section on Advocacy Outside of the Legislative Session on page 30.

- Set up a meeting with your newly elected official to introduce yourself and your organization. Offer yourself as a resource on child abuse and neglect, and encourage your newly elected official to call you with questions.

- Provide information on child abuse and neglect, and your organization’s prevention efforts. Send organizational materials to your newly elected officials. Providing something in writing helps officials remember who you are and what your organization does for the community.

- Add newly elected officials to your mailing list for periodic newsletters and other mailings. This will provide continuous information on your organization and your efforts in child abuse prevention.

Invite your newly elected officials for a site visit of one of your prevention programs. This is a great way to educate policy-makers about your organization.
Notes


2 Unless otherwise noted, the information in this section is adapted from:

3 Unless otherwise noted, the following sections on Candidate Forums, Candidate Questionnaires, and Candidate Interviews and Briefings are adapted from the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions, Campaign 2000 Hospital Mobilization Kit.


5 B. Smucker

6 Adapted from the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions Campaign 2000 Hospital Mobilization Kit.

7 Adapted from the National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Institutions Campaign 2000 Hospital Mobilization Kit.

8 B. Smucker

9 Information in this section is adapted from “The Children’s Advocates Campaign Strategy Book,” unless otherwise noted.

10 B. Smucker.
APPENDIX C:

STATE CONTACT INFORMATION

ALABAMA

General State Government Information  334.242.8000
Official State Web Site  www.state.al.us

Contact Information:
Governor  334.242.7100
Lt. Governor  334.242.7900
Speaker of the House  334.242.7608
Attorney General  334.242.7300
Secretary of State  334.242.7200
Office of Budget and Planning  334.242.7230
Commissioner of DHR  334.242.1310
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  334.206.5675
House Information Office  334.242.7600
Clerk of House  334.242.7609
Senate Information Office  334.242.7800
Secretary of Senate  334.242.8819
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  334.832.1290

Legislative Organization:
★ Both houses together are called the Legislature.
★ House of Representatives – 105 members elected to four-year terms.
★ Senate – 35 members elected to four-year terms

Legislative Session:
Annual sessions with different starting times depending on the year.
★ Election Year: second Tuesday in January until near the end of April.
★ Year following election: second Tuesday in January for an organizational session,
then reconvenes on the first Tuesday in March through June.
★ Years three and four of the four-year election cycle: first Tuesday in February
and meets until mid-May.

The Alabama constitution limits sessions to 30 legislative days within 105 calendar days.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

State Ethics Commission
Suite 104
100 N. Union
P.O. Box 4840
Montgomery, AL 36103.4840
334.242.2997 phone

Clerk of the House
Room 504
State House
Montgomery, AL 36130
334.242.7609 phone
334.242.7609 fax

Secretary of the Senate
Room 707
State House
Montgomery, AL 36130
334.242.7803 phone
334.242.8819 fax

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General State Government Information  907.465.2111
Official State Web Site  www.state.ak.us

Contact Information:
Governor  907.465.3500
Lt. Governor  907.465.3520
Speaker of the House  907.465.4930
Attorney General  907.465.3600
Secretary of State  907.465.3520
Office of Budget and Planning  907.465.4660
Commissioner of DHR  907.465.3720
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  907.465.3030
House Information Office  907.465.4357
Clerk of House  907.463.4700
Senate Information Office  907.465.4648
Secretary of Senate  907.465.3755
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  907.465.2212

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the Legislature.
- House of Representatives – 40 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 20 members elected to four-year term.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts third Tuesday in January.
- Normally meets until mid-May of each year.
- There is a statutorily imposed 120 calendar day limit on the number of days the Legislature may meet in regular session.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Alaska Public Offices Commission
Room 201
240 Main Street
P.O. Box 110222
Juneau, AK 99811.0222
907.465.4864
904.465.4832 fax
ARIZONA

General State Government Information 602.542.4900
Official State Web Site www.state.az.us

Contact Information:
Governor 602.542.4331
Speaker of the House 602.542.5735
Attorney General 602.542.4266
Secretary of State 602.542.4285
Office of Budget and Planning 602.542.6041
Commissioner of DHR 602.542.5735
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 602.542.5678
House Information Office 602.542.4221
Clerk of House 602.542.3032
Senate Information Office 602.542.3559
Secretary of Senate 602.542.4231
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 602.542.3987

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the Legislature.
- House of Representatives – 60 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 30 members elected to four-year term.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts second Monday in January and normally lasts until near the end of April.
- Legislative rules provide that the Legislature adjourn no later than Saturday of the week in which the 100th day of the session falls.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division, Secretary of State
Seventeenth Floor, West Wing, State Capitol
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007
602.542.8683 phone
602.542.6172 fax
877.843.8683 toll free
General State Government Information 501.682.3000
Official State Web Site www.state.ar.us

Contact Information:
Governor 501.682.2345
Lt. Governor 501.682.2144
Speaker of the House 501.682.7771
Attorney General 501.682.2007
Secretary of State 501.682.5070
Office of Budget and Planning 501.682.1941
Commissioner of DHR 501.682.1010
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 501.682.8398
House Information Office 501.682.7771
Clerk of House 501.682.7771
Senate Information Office 501.682.6107
Secretary of Senate 501.682.5951
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 501.340.8300

Legislative Organization:
* Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
* House of Representatives – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
* Senate – 35 members elected to four-year term.

Legislative Session:
* Biennial session starts second Monday in January of odd-numbered years and normally lasts until mid-March of that year.
* The constitution limits the session to 60 calendar days.
* Special sessions are sometimes held in the even-numbered year.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division, Secretary of State
Room 026, State Capitol
Little Rock, AR 72201.1094
501.682.5070 phone
501.682.3408 fax
General State Government Information 916.322.9900
Official State Web Site www.state.ca.us.

Contact Information:
Governor 916.445.2481
Lt. Governor 916.445.8994
Speaker of the Assembly 916.225.0600
Attorney General 916.445.9555
Secretary of State 916.653.7244
Office of Budget and Planning 916.445.5202
Commissioner of DHR 916.445.4171
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 916.654.1540
Assembly Information Office 916.319.2856
Clerk of Assembly 916.319.2856
Senate Information Office 916.445.4251
Secretary of Senate 916.445.4251
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 916.875.5000

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the Legislature.
- Assembly – 80 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 40 members elected for four-year terms, half at each biennial general election.

Legislative Session:
- Biennial session starts the first Monday in December of even-numbered years and adjourns sine die on midnight, November 30 of the next even-numbered year.
- The session recesses and returns the first Monday in January of the odd-numbered year.
- The Legislature recesses again near the end of the year and reconvenes on the first Monday of the following even-numbered year.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Political Reform Division
Secretary of State
Room 495
1500 Eleventh Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
916.653.6224 phone
916.653.5045 fax

Fair Political Practices Commission
Suite 450
428 J. Street
P.O. Box 807
Sacramento, CA 95812
916.322.5660 phone
916.322.3711 fax
COLORADO

General State Government Information  303.866.5000
Official State Web Site  www.state.co.us.

Contact Information:

Governor  303.866.2471
Lt. Governor  303.866.2087
Speaker of the House  303.866.2346
Attorney General  303.866.3611
Secretary of State  303.894.2200
Office of Budget and Planning  303.866.3317
Commissioner of DHR  303.866.5700
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  303.866.4207
House Information Office  303.866.2904
Clerk of House  303.866.2345
Senate Information Office  303.866.2316
Secretary of Senate  303.866.2316
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  303.866.7980

Legislative Organization:

- Both houses are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 65 members elected to two-year terms.
- Senate – 35 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:

- Annual session starts no later than the second Wednesday of January.
- Sessions are limited to 120 calendar days by the state’s constitution.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Licensing Division
Secretary of State
Suite 200
1560 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202
303.894.2680 ext. 308
303.894.7732 fax

House of Representatives
Room 271
State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203
303.866.2904 phone
303.866.2291 fax
CONNECTICUT

General State Government Information
Official State Web Site

Contact Information:
Governor 860.566.4840
Lt. Governor 860.524.7384
Speaker of the House 860.240.8500
Attorney General 860.424.5255
Secretary of State 860.509.6000
Office of Budget and Planning 860.418.6200
Commissioner of DHR 860.509.7101
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 860.424.5255
House Information Office 860.240.0100
Clerk of House 860.240.0400
Senate Information Office 860.240.0500
Secretary of Senate 860.240.0500
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 860.566.8160

Legislative Organization:
* Both houses are called the General Assembly.
* House of Representatives – 151 members elected to two-year terms.
* Senate – 36 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
* Odd-numbered years: session starts Wednesday after first Monday in January
and normally meets until first week in June.
* Even-numbered years: session starts Wednesday after first Monday in February
and normally meets until first week in May.
* Uses fairly frequent special sessions.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

State Ethics Commission
20 Trinity Street
Hartford, CT 06106
860.566.4472 phone
860.566.3806 fax
### General State Government Information

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<td>Governor</td>
<td>302.739.4101</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lt. Governor</td>
<td>302.739.4151</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speaker of the House</td>
<td>302.739.4128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney General</td>
<td>302.577.8338</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td>302.739.4111</td>
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<td>Office of Budget and Planning</td>
<td>302.739.4204</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commissioner of DHR</td>
<td>302.739.4502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Department of Children and Family Services</td>
<td>302.577.4800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Information Office</td>
<td>302.739.4114</td>
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<td>Clerk of House</td>
<td>302.739.4087</td>
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<td>302.739.5086</td>
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<td>302.739.5086</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts</td>
<td>302.739.6500</td>
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### Legislative Organization:

- Both houses are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 14 members elected to two-year terms.
- Senate – 21 members elected to four-year terms.

### Legislative Session:

- Annual session starts second Tuesday in January and lasts until June 30.
- Normally meet three days a week.
- Averages one or more special sessions per year.

### Lobbying Information and Registration:

Must register annually with the following:

State Public Integrity Commission
Ground Floor, Tatnall Building
150 William Penn Street
Dover, DE 19901
302.739.2399 phone
302.739.2398 fax
General State Government Information  202.727.1000
Official State Web Site  www.state.dc.us

Legislative Organization:

* The District has a single house legislature called the Council.
* Council – 13 members elected to four-year staggered terms.
* Five, including the chairperson, are elected at-large and eight are elected from wards.

Legislative Session:

* Biennial session: January 2 of odd-numbered year and lasts through January 1 of following odd-numbered year.
* The Council generally meets the first Tuesday of each month.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Office of Campaign Finance
Suite 420
2000 14th Street,
N.W., Washington, DC 20009
202.671.0547 phone
202.939.7160 fax
General State Government Information  302.739.4000
Official State Web Site               www.state.fl.us

Contact Information:
Governor                        850.488.4441
Lt. Governor                   850.488.4711
Speaker of the House           850.488.1450
Attorney General               850.487.1963
Secretary of State             850.488.3680
Office of Budget and Planning  850.488.0968
Commissioner of DHR            850.487.2945
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 850.922.9590
House Information Office       850.488.1157
Clerk of House                 850.488.1157
Senate Information Office      850.487.5270
Secretary of Senate            850.487.5270
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 850.488.1850

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the Legislature.
• House of Representatives – 120 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 40 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts Tuesday after first Monday and lasts 60 calendar days.
• Legislature meets each even-numbered year in organizational session the 14th day after the November general election.
• Standing committees meet all during the year.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Lobbyist Registration
Office of Legislative Services
Room G-68
111 W. Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399.1425
850.922.4990 phone
850.921.5345 fax
General State Government Information 404.656.2000
Official State Web Site www.state.ga.us

Contact Information:
Governor 404.656.1776
Lt. Governor 404.656.5030
Speaker of the House 404.656.5020
Attorney General 404.656.4585
Secretary of State 404.656.2881
Office of Budget and Planning 404.656.3820
Commissioner of DHR 404.657.2700
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 404.657.3851
House Information Office 404.656.5082
Clerk of House 404.656.5015
Senate Information Office 404.656.5040
Secretary of Senate 404.656.5040
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 404.657.5841

Legislative Organization:
✱ Both houses together are called the Legislature.
✱ House of Representatives – 70 members elected for two-year terms.
✱ Senate – 35 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
✱ Annual session starts the Monday on or nearest January 9
  and normally lasts until mid-March.
✱ There is no constitutional limit on the length of the session.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division
Secretary of State
Suite C
8440 Courthouse Square East
Douglasville, GA 30134
770.920.4385 phone
770.920.4395 fax
gaethics@onramp.net email
General State Government Information 408.568.2211
Official State Web Site www.state.hi.us

Contact Information:
Governor 808.586.0034
Lt. Governor 808.586.0255
Speaker of the House 808.586.6100
Attorney General 808.586.1282
Secretary of State 808.586.0255
Office of Budget and Planning 808.586.4403
Commissioner of DHR 808.586.4403
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 808.587.3700
House Information Office 808.586.6400
Clerk of House 808.586.6400
Senate Information Office 808.586.6720
Secretary of Senate 808.586.6720
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 808.539.4494

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the Legislature.
• House of Representatives – 51 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 25 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the third Wednesday in January and normally lasts 60 legislative days, generally concluding in April.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

State Ethics Commission
Suite 970
Pacific Tower Building
1001 Bishop Street
Honolulu, HI 96813
808.587.0460 phone
808.587.0470 fax
General State Government Information 208.334.2411
Official State Web Site www.state.id.us

Contact Information:
Governor 208.334.2100
Lt. Governor 208.344.2200
Speaker of the House 208.332.1111
Attorney General 208.334.2400
Secretary of State 208.334.2300
Office of Budget and Planning 208.334.3304
Commissioner of DHR 208.334.5945
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 208.334.5710
House Information Office 208.334.2475
Clerk of House 208.332.1140
Senate Information Office 208.332.1309
Secretary of Senate 208.332.1309
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 208.334.5100

Legislative Organization:
* Both houses together are called the Legislature.
* House of Representatives – 51 members elected for two-year terms.
* Senate – 25 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
* Annual session starts the third Wednesday in January and normally lasts 60 legislative days, generally concluding in April.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division
Secretary of State
Room 203
State Capitol
Boise, ID 83720
208.334.2852 phone
208.334.2282 fax
elections@idsos.state.id.us email
ILLINOIS

General State Government Information  217.782.2000

Official State Web Site  www.state.il.us

Contact Information:

Governor  217.782.6830
Lt. Governor  217.782.7884
Speaker of the House  217.782.4014
Attorney General  217.782.1090
Secretary of State  217.782.2201
Office of Budget and Planning  217.782.4520
Commissioner of DHR  217.782.4977
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  217.524.4602
House Information Office  217.782.5810
Clerk of House  217.782.8223
Senate Information Office  217.782.5715
Secretary of Senate  217.782.5715
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  217.786.6950

Legislative Organization:

- Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 118 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 59 members elected.

Legislative Session:

- Annual session starts second Wednesday in January and lasts until the end of May.
- In odd-numbered years the General Assembly returns in early October to consider vetoed bills and other matters.
- In even-numbered years the veto session starts in mid-November after the general elections.

Lobbying Information and Registration:

Must register annually with the following:

Index Department
Office of Secretary of State
111 E. Monroe
Springfield, IL 62756
217.782.7017 phone
217.524.0930 fax
GENERAL STATE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

General State Government Information 317.232.3140
Official State Web Site www.state.in.us

Contact Information:
Governor 317.232.4567
Lt. Governor 317.232.4545
Speaker of the House 317.232.9628
Attorney General 317.232.6201
Secretary of State 317.232.6531
Office of Budget and Planning 317.232.5610
Commissioner of DHR 317.233.1325
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 317.233.5437
House Information Office 317.232.9600
Clerk of House 317.232.9608
Senate Information Office 317.232.9400
Secretary of Senate 317.232.9400
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 317.926.6100

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
• House of Representatives – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 50 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• The General Assembly meets each year in organizational session
  the third Tuesday after the first Monday in November.
• The session normally reconvenes the second Monday in January
  and last until April 29 in odd-numbered years and until March 14
  in even-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Indiana Lobby Registration Commission
Suite 975
251 N. Illinois
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317.232.9860 phone
317.233.0077 fax
General State Government Information  515.281.5011
Official State Web Site  www.state.ia.us

Contact Information:
Governor  515.281.5211
Lt. Governor  515.281.5211
Speaker of the House  515.281.5566
Attorney General  515.281.5164
Secretary of State  515.281.5204
Office of Budget and Planning  515.281.3322
Commissioner of DHR  515.281.5605
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  515.281.5580
House Information Office  515.281.5381
Clerk of House  515.281.5381
Senate Information Office  515.284.5307
Secretary of Senate  515.284.5307
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  515.286.3000

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 50 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts second Monday in January and normally lasts until the end of April or early May.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives  515.281.5381 phone
Second Floor
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Secretary of the Senate  515.284.5307 phone
Second Floor
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319
General State Government Information 785.296.0111
Official State Web Site www.state.ks.us

Contact Information:
Governor 785.296.3232
Lt. Governor 785.296.2213
Speaker of the House 785.296.2302
Attorney General 785.296.2215
Secretary of State 785.296.2236
Office of Budget and Planning 785.296.2436
Commissioner of DHR 785.296.0461
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 785.296.3237
House Information Office 785.296.6111
Clerk of House 785.296.7633
Senate Information Office 785.296.2456
Secretary of Senate 785.296.2456
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 785.296.4213

Legislative Organization:
※ Both houses together are called the Legislature.
※ House of Representatives – 125 members elected for two-year terms.
※ Senate – 40 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
※ Annual session starts second Monday in January and lasts approximately 125 to 145 calendar days.
※ The state constitution limits sessions in even-numbered years to 90 calendar days, but in recent years that provision has been regularly overridden as provided for in the constitution.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division
Secretary of State
Room 234-N
State House
Topeka, KS 66612
785.296.4561 phone
785.291.3051 fax

Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission
Room 504
109 West Ninth
Topeka, KS 66612
785.296.4219 phone
785.296.2548 fax

Appendix C State Contact Information
KENTUCKY

General State Government Information  502.564.2500
Official State Web Site  www.state.ky.us

Contact Information:
Governor  502.564.2611
Lt. Governor  502.564.2611
Speaker of the House  502.564.3366
Attorney General  502.696.5300
Secretary of State  502.564.3490
Office of Budget and Planning  502.564.7233
Commissioner of DHR  502.564.3970
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  502.564.2285
House Information Office  502.564.8100
Clerk of House  502.564.3900
Senate Information Office  502.564.5320
Secretary of Senate  502.564.5320
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  502.573.3747

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
• House of Representatives – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 38 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Biennial session starts the Tuesday after the first Monday in January of even-numbered years and normally lasts until mid-April of that year.
• Organizational session: meets up to 10 days the Tuesday after the first Monday in January of odd-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Legislative Ethics Commission
22 Mill Creek Park
Frankfort, KY 40601
502.573.2863 phone
502.573.2929 fax
LOUISIANA

General State Government Information 225.342.6600
Official State Web Site www.state.la.us

Contact Information:
Governor 225.342.7015
Lt. Governor 225.342.7009
Speaker of the House 225.342.7263
Attorney General 225.342.7013
Secretary of State 225.922.1000
Office of Budget and Planning 225.342.7005
Commissioner of DHR 225.342.1532
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 225.342.4780
House Information Office 225.342.6945
Clerk of House 225.342.7259
Senate Information Office 225.342.2040
Secretary of Senate 225.342.2040
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 225.389.3000

Legislative Organization:
* Both houses together are called the Legislature.
* House of Representatives – 105 members elected to four-year terms.
* Senate – 39 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
* In odd-numbered years: session starts the last Monday in March and is limited to 60 legislative days in an 85 calendar day period.
* In even-numbered years: session begins the last Monday in April and is limited to 30 legislative days in a 45 calendar day period.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Ethics Administration
Louisiana Board of Ethics
Suite 200
8401 United Plaza Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
225.922.1400 phone
225.922.1414 fax
MAINE

General State Government Information
207.624.9494

Official State Web Site
www.state.me.us

Contact Information:
Governor 207.287.3531
Lt. Governor 207.287.2531
Speaker of the House 207.287.1300
Attorney General 207.626.8800
Secretary of State 207.626.8400
Office of Budget and Planning 207.287.7790
Commissioner of DHR 207.287.3201
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 207.287.2886
House Information Office 207.287.1692
Clerk of House 207.287.1400
Senate Information Office 207.287.1540
Secretary of Senate 207.287.1540
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 207.822.0792

Legislative Organization:
*A* Both houses together are called the Legislature.
*A* House of Representatives – 151 members elected for two-year terms.
*A* Senate – 35 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
*A* Annual session starts the first Wednesday in December following
the November election in an even-numbered year and normally adjourns
the third Wednesday in June of the odd-numbered year.
*A* The next session starts the Wednesday after the first Tuesday in January
of the even-numbered year and normally adjourns the third Wednesday
in April of that year.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Commission on Governmental Ethics and Election Practices
242 State Street
135 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
207.287.4179 phone
207.287.6775 fax
General State Government Information 410.841.3000
Official State Web Site www.state.md.us

Contact Information:
Governor 410.974.3901
Lt. Governor 410.974.2804
Speaker of the House 410.841.3800
Attorney General 410.576.6300
Secretary of State 410.974.5521
Office of Budget and Planning 410.260.7041
Commissioner of DHR 410.837.6220
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 410.767.7109
House Information Office 410.841.3995
Clerk of House 410.841.3999
Senate Information Office 410.841-3908
Secretary of Senate 410.841.3908
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 410.230.3100

Legislative Organization:
⭐ Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
⭐ House of Delegates – 141 members elected to four-year terms.
⭐ Senate – 47 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
⭐ Annual session starts second Wednesday in January and normally lasts 90 calendar days, adjourning in early April.
⭐ Special sessions are not common.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

State Ethics Commission
Suite 301
300 East Joppa Road
Towson, MD 21286
410.321.3636 phone
General State Government Information 617.727.7030
Official State Web Site www.state.ma.us

Contact Information:
Governor 617.727.6250
Lt. Governor 617.727.6250
Speaker of the House 617.722.2500
Attorney General 617.727.2200
Secretary of Commonwealth 617.727.9180
Office of Budget and Planning 617.727.2040
Commissioner of DHR 617.727.7600
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 617.577.7200
House Information Office 617.722.2356
Clerk of House 617.722.2356
Senate Information Office 617.722.2356
Secretary of Senate 617.722.2356
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 617.788.6550

Legislative Organization:
✦ Both houses together are called the General Court.
✦ House of Representatives – 160 members elected for two-year terms.
✦ Senate – 40 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
✦ Biennial session starts the first Wednesday in January of odd-numbered years ends December 31 of the following even-numbered year.
✦ The General Court meets formally from the first Wednesday of January in odd-numbered years through November and from the first Wednesday in January in even-numbered years through July.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Division of Public Records
Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth
Room 1719
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108
617.727.2832 phone
617.727.5914 fax
General State Government Information 517.373.1837
Official State Web Site www.state.mi.us

Contact Information:
Governor 517.373.3400
Lt. Governor 517.373.6800
Speaker of the House 517.373.1774
Attorney General 517.373.1110
Secretary of State 517.373.2510
Office of Budget and Planning 517.373.4978
Director of DHR 517.373.0267
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 517.373.7570
House Information Office 517.373.0135
Clerk of House 517.373.0135
Senate Information Office 517.373.2400
Secretary of Senate 517.373.2400
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 517.335.3489

Legislative Organization:
✦ Both houses together are called the Legislature.
✦ House of Representatives – 110 members elected for two-year terms.
✦ Senate – 38 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
✦ Annual session starts second Wednesday in January and lasts all year.
✦ Usually meets through mid-June and returns in mid-September.
✦ Breaks again for Christmas.
✦ Normally meets three days per week when in session.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Disclosure Division
Bureau of Elections
Department of State
Fourth Floor, Mutual Building
208 N. Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 20126
Lansing, MI 48901.0726
517.373.8558 phone
517.373.0941 fax
MINNESOTA

General State Government Information 651.296.6013
Official State Web Site www.state.mn.us

Contact Information:
Governor 651.296.3391
Lt. Governor 651.296.3391
Speaker of the House 651.296.2273
Attorney General 651.296.6196
Secretary of State 651.296.3266
Office of Budget and Planning 651.296.5900
Commissioner of DHR 651.215.5806
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 651.296.2542
House Information Office 651.296.2146
Clerk of House 651.296.2314
Senate Information Office 651.296.2344
Secretary of Senate 651.296.2344
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 651.266.8500

Legislative Organization:
★ Both houses are called the Legislature.
★ House of Representatives – 134 members elected for two-year terms.
★ Senate – 67 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
★ Annual session normally meets from the Tuesday after the first Monday in January in odd-numbered years until mid-May.
★ The Minnesota Constitution provides for a biennial session starting on Tuesday after the first Monday in January in odd-numbered years.
★ The Legislature may not meet for more than 120 legislative days during the biennium or past the fourth Monday following the third Saturday in May of any year.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Campaign Finance and Public Disclosures Board
First Floor South
Centennial Building
658 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55155
651.296.5148 phone
651.296.1722 fax
MISSISSIPPI

General State Government Information 601.359.1000
Official State Web Site www.state.ms.us

Contact Information:
Governor 601.359.3100
Lt. Governor 601.359.3200
Speaker of the House 601.359.3300
 Attorney General 601.359.3680
Secretary of State 601.359.1350
Office of Budget and Planning 601.359.3402
Commissioner of DHR 601.576.7400
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 601.359.4863
House Information Office 601.359.3360
Clerk of House 601.359.3360
Senate Information Office 601.359.3202
Secretary of Senate 601.359.3202
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 601.359.4434

Legislative Organization:
* Both houses together are called the Legislature.
* House of Representatives – 122 members elected to four-year terms.
* Senate – 52 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
* Annual session starts Tuesday after the first Monday in January
  and lasts approximately 90 calendar days, adjourning in mid-April.
* The state constitution places a 90 calendar day limit on sessions, however
  in the first year of a governor’s term of office the session may last 125
  calendar days.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division
Office of Secretary of State
First Floor, Heber Ladner Building
401 Mississippi Street
P.O. Box 136
Jackson, MS 39205
601.359.6357 phone
601.359-5019 fax
MISSOURI

General State Government Information 573.751.2000
Official State Web Site www.state.mo.us

Contact Information:
Governor 573.751.3222
Lt. Governor 573.751.4727
Speaker of the House 573.751.2700
Attorney General 573.751.3321
Secretary of State 573.751.2379
Office of Budget and Planning 573.751.2343
Commissioner of DHR 573.751.6400
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 573.751.4301
House Information Office 573.751.3659
Clerk of House 573.751.3829
Senate Information Office 573.751.3766
Secretary of Senate 573.751.3766
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 573.751.4144

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 163 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 34 members elected to four-year terms, half each biennial general election.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts the Wednesday after the first Monday in January.
- Each session adjourns on May 30 with no consideration of bills after 6:00 p.m. the first Friday following the second Monday in May.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Missouri Ethics Commission
221 Metro Drive
P.O. Box 1254
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2020 phone
573.526.4506 fax
800.392.8660 toll free
General State Government Information 406.444.2511
Official State Web Site www.state.mt.us

Contact Information:
Governor 406.444.3111
Lt. Governor 406.444.5551
Speaker of the House 406.444.4815
Attorney General 406.444.2026
Secretary of State 406.444.2034
Office of Budget and Planning 406.444.3616
Commissioner of DHR 406.444.5622
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 406.442.7278
House Information Office 406.444.3064
Clerk of House 406.444.4822
Senate Information Office 406.444.4844
Secretary of Senate 406.444.4844
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 406.447.8228

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the Legislature.
• House of Representatives – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 50 members elected to four-year terms, half at one general election and half at the following biennial general election.

Legislative Session:
• Biennial session starts first Monday in January of odd-numbered years unless the first Monday falls on January 1 in which case the session begins on the first Wednesday.
• Normally the session lasts until near the end of April.
• The state constitution limits the session to 90 legislative days.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Commissioner of Political Practices
1205 8th Avenue
P.O. Box 202401
Helena, MT 59620.2401
406.444.2942 phone
406.444.1643 fax
NEBRASKA

General State Government Information 402.471.2311
Official State Web Site www.state.ne.us

Contact Information:

Governor 402.471.2244
Speaker of the Legislature 402.471.2726
Attorney General 402.471.2682
Secretary of State 402.471.2554
Office of Budget and Planning 402.471.2526
Commissioner of DHR 402.471.3121
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 402.479.5555
Legislature Information Office 402.471.2226
Clerk of the Legislature 402.471.2271
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 402.441.6928

Legislative Organization:

- Nebraska has a one house, or unicameral legislature, called simply the Legislature.
- Legislature – 49 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:

- Annual session start Wednesday after the first Monday in January and lasts until early June in odd-numbered years and until mid-April in even-numbered years.
- The Nebraska Constitution limits the Legislature to 90 legislative days in odd-numbered years and 60 legislative days in even-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:

Must register annually with the following:

Clerk of the Legislature
Room 2014
P.O. Box 94604
State Capitol
Lincoln, NE 68509.4604
402.471.2271 phone
402.471.2126 fax

Accountability and Disclosure Commission
Eleventh Floor
P.O. Box 95086
State Capitol
Lincoln, NE 68509.5086
402.471.2522 phone
402.471.6599 fax

Appendix C State Contact Information
General State Government Information 775.687.5000
Official State Web Site www.state.nv.us

Contact Information:
Governor 775.684.5670
Lt. Governor 775.684.5637
Speaker of the Assembly 775.463.2868
Attorney General 775.687.4170
Secretary of State 775.687.5203
Office of Budget and Planning 775.684.0222
Commissioner of DHR 775.684.4200
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 775.687.4744
Assembly Information Office 775.684.0222
Clerk of Assembly 775.687.8555
Senate Information Office 775.684.1402
Secretary of Senate 775.684.1402
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 775.455.5230

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the Legislature.
- Assembly – 42 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 21 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- Biennial session starts the first Monday in February of odd-numbered years
  and lasts 120 calendar days.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Administrative Division
Legislative Counsel Bureau
Room 1199
Legislative Building
401 S. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701.4747
775.684.6800 phone
775.684.6600 fax
NEW HAMPSHIRE

General State Government Information  603.271.1110
Official State Web Site  www.state.nh.us

Contact Information:
Governor  603.271.2121
Speaker of the House  603.271.3661
Attorney General  603.271.3658
Secretary of State  603.271.3242
Office of Budget and Planning  603.271.3204
Commissioner of DHR  603.852.3345
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  603.271.4427
House Information Office  603.271.3242
Clerk of House  603.271.3242
Senate Information Office  603.271.3420
Secretary of Senate  603.271.3420
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  603.271.5949

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the General Court.
- House of Representatives – 400 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 24 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts the Wednesday after the first Tuesday in January and lasts 45 legislative days or until July 1, whichever comes first.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Secretary of State
Room 204
State House
Concord, NH 03301
603.271.3242 phone
603.271.6316 fax
NEW JERSEY

General State Government Information 609.292.2121
Official State Web Site www.state.nj.us

Contact Information:
Governor 609.292.6000
Speaker of the General Assembly 609.292.3633
Attorney General 609.292.4925
Secretary of State 609.984.1900
Office of Budget and Planning 609.292.6746
Commissioner of DHR 609.292.8051
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 609.588.2385
General Assembly Information Office 609.292.4625
Clerk of General Assembly 609.292.5135
Senate Information Office 609.292.5199
Secretary of Senate
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses are called the Legislature.
• General Assembly – 80 members elected in odd-numbered years for two-year terms.
• Senate – 40 members elected in odd-numbered years to four-year terms, except that terms beginning in January of the second year following the U.S. decennial census are for two years only.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the second Tuesday in January and normally lasts the entire year.
• Special sessions rarely held.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Election Law Enforcement Commission
13th Floor
28 W. State Street
P.O. Box 185
Trenton, NJ 08625.0185
609.292.8700 phone
609.633.9854 fax
## NEW MEXICO

### General State Government Information
505.827.9632

### Official State Web Site
www.state.nm.us

### Contact Information:
- **Governor** 505.827.3000
- **Lt. Governor** 505.827.3050
- **Speaker of the House** 505.986.4790
- **Attorney General** 505.827.6000
- **Secretary of State** 505.827.3601
- **Office of Budget and Planning** 505.827.3640
- **Commissioner of DHR** 505.827.2613
- **Director of Department of Children and Family Services** 505.827.7200
- **House Information Office** 505.986.4600
- **Clerk of House** 505.986.4751
- **Senate Information Office** 505.986.4714
- **Secretary of Senate** 505.986.4714
- **Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts** 505.827.7629

### Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the Legislature.
- House of Representatives – 70 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 42 members elected to four-year terms.

### Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts the third Tuesday in January.
- In odd-numbered years meets until late March, limited to 60 calendar days.
- In even-numbered years meets until late February, limited to 30 calendar days.

### Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

**Ethics Administration**
**Secretary of State**
Suite 300
325 Don Gasper
Santa Fe, NM 87503
505.827.3600 phone
505.827.4954 fax
800.477-3632 toll free
General State Government Information 518.474.2121
Official State Web Site www.state.ny.us

Contact Information:
Governor 518.474.8390
Lt. Governor 518.474.4623
Speaker of the Assembly 518.455.3791
Attorney General 518.474.7330
Secretary of State 518.474.4750
Office of Budget and Planning 518.473.9389
Commissioner of DHR 518.474.2011
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 518.447.7390
Assembly Information Office 518.455.4100
Clerk of Assembly 518.455.4242
Senate Information Office 518.455.4218
Secretary of Senate 518.455.2800
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 518.474.6110

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the Legislature.
- Assembly – 150 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 61 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts the Wednesday after the first Monday in January.
- Major portion of work is done from January through June, however officially meets year round.
- Special sessions, if held, are taken up within the framework of regular sessions.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

New York Temporary State Commission on Lobbying
Suite 1701
Two Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12223
518.474.7126 phone
518.473.6492 fax
General State Government Information 919.733.1110
Official State Web Site www.state.nc.us

Contact Information:
Governor 919.733.5811
Lt. Governor 919.733.7350
Speaker of the House 919.733.3451
Attorney General 919.716.6400
Secretary of State 919.733.4161
Office of Budget and Planning 919.733.7061
Commissioner of DHR 919.733.4534
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 919.571.4120
House Information Office 919.753.7760
Clerk of House 919.753.7760
Senate Information Office 919.733.7761
Secretary of Senate 919.733.7761
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 919.733.3388

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 120 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 50 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session normally meets from mid- to late-January until late July in odd-numbered years.
- In even-numbered years session meets for four to six weeks in the early summer.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Secretary of State
Suite 302
Legislative Office Building
300 N. Salisbury
Raleigh, NC 27626.0622
919.733.5181 phone
919.733.9146 fax
NORTH DAKOTA

General State Government Information 701.328.2000
Official State Web Site www.state.nd.us

Contact Information:
Governor 701.328.2200
Lt. Governor 701.328.2200
Speaker of the House 701.328.3526
Attorney General 701.328.2210
Secretary of State 701.328.2900
Office of Budget and Planning 701.328.2680
Commissioner of DHR 701.328.2372
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 701.328.2582
House Information Office 701.328.2916
Clerk of House 701.328.3527
Senate Information Office 701.328.3364
Secretary of Senate 701.328.3364
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 701.328.6390

Legislative Organization:
❖ Both houses together are called the Legislative Assembly.
❖ House of Representatives – 98 members elected to four-year terms.
❖ Senate – 49 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
❖ In odd-numbered years: biennial session starts the first Tuesday after January 3, and normally lasts until the first part of April.
❖ In even-numbered years: meets for a three-day organizational session in December.
❖ The Legislative Assembly has the option of using 80 days during the two-year biennium. However, with one exception, they have met only in odd-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Licensing Division
Secretary of State
First Floor, State Capitol
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505.0500
701.328.3665 phone
701.328.1690 fax
General State Government Information 614.466.2000
Official State Web Site www.state.oh.us

Contact Information:
Governor 614.466.3555
Lt. Governor 614.466.3396
Speaker of the House 614.466.4384
Attorney General 614.466.4320
Secretary of State 614.466.4980
Office of Budget and Planning 614.466.6674
Commissioner of DHR 614.466.2253
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 614.752.6561
House Information Office 614.466.3357
Clerk of House 614.466.3357
Senate Information Office 614.466.4900
Secretary of Senate 614.466.4900
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 614.466.4314

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 99 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 33 members elected to staggered four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- In odd-numbered years: annual session starts the first Monday in January, or on the succeeding day, if the first Monday in January is a legal holiday.
- In even-numbered years: session begins on the same day it did the prior year.
- Each session officially lasts all year.
- However, in odd-numbered years the General Assembly usually finished most of its work by July; in even-numbered years by June.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Joint Legislative Ethics Committee
Suite 1308
50 W. Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215.5908
614.728.5100 phone
614.728.5074 fax
OKLAHOMA

General State Government Information 405.521.2011
Official State Web Site www.state.ok.us

Contact Information:
Governor 405.521.2342
Lt. Governor 405.521.2161
Speaker of the House 405.557.7100
Attorney General 405.521.3921
Secretary of State 405.521.3911
Office of Budget and Planning 405.427.8651
Commissioner of DHR 405.271.5600
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 405.522.5871
House Information Office 405.521.2711
Clerk of House 405.521.2733
Senate Information Office 405.524.0126
Secretary of Senate 405.524.0126
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 405.841.0700

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the Legislature.
• House of Representatives – 101 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 48 members elected to four-year terms, half of which are elected every two years.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the first Monday in February and is to adjourn no later than the last Friday in May.
• Organizational meeting on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January of odd-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Ethics Commission
Room B-5
State Capitol
Oklahoma City, OK 73105
405.521.3451 phone
405.521.4905 fax
General State Government Information 503.378.1180
Official State Web Site www.state.or.us

Contact Information:
Governor 503.378.3111
Speaker of the House 503.986.1200
Attorney General 503.378.6002
Secretary of State 503.378.4139
Office of Budget and Planning 503.378.3106
Commissioner of DHR 503.731.4000
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 503.373.7300
House Information Office 503.986.1870
Clerk of House 503.986.1870
Senate Information Office 503.986.1600
Secretary of Senate 503.986.1600
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 503.373.7205

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the Legislative Assembly.
• House of Representatives – 60 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 30 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Biennial session starts second Monday in January of odd-numbered years
  and normally meets until June or July of that year.
• There is no limit on the number of days the Legislative Assembly can meet.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Joint Legislative Ethics Committee
Suite 220
100 High Street, S.E.
Salem, OR 97301.3607
503.378.5105 phone
503.373.1456 fax
General State Government Information 717.787.2121
Official State Web Site www.state.pa.us

Contact Information:
Governor 717.787.2121
Lt. Governor 717.787.3300
Speaker of the House 717.787.4610
Attorney General 717.787.3391
Secretary of Commonwealth 717.787.7630
Office of Budget and Planning 717.787.3429
Commissioner of DHR 717.724.3258
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 717.787.3672
House Information Office 717.787.2372
Clerk of House 717.787.2372
Senate Information Office 717.787.5920
Secretary of Senate 717.787.5920
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 717.787.6910

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
• House of Representatives – 203 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 50 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the first Tuesday in January and normally meets most of the year.
• The Pennsylvania General Assembly meets for a two-year session starting the first Tuesday in January of odd-numbered years and meets until November 30 of even-numbered years.
• Special sessions rarely held.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

State Ethics Commission
Room 309
Finance Building
P.O. Box 11470
Harrisburg, PA 17108.1470
717.783.1610 phone
717.787.0806 fax
GENERAL STATE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

General State Government Information 401.222.2000
Official State Web Site www.state.ri.us

Contact Information:
Governor 401.222.2080
Lt. Governor 401.222.2371
Speaker of the House 401.222.2466
Attorney General 401.274.4400
Secretary of State 401.222.2357
Office of Budget and Planning 401.222.6300
Commissioner of DHR 401.222.2466
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 401.222.2847
House Information Office 401.222.2466
Clerk of House 401.222.6580
Senate Information Office 401.222.6655
Secretary of Senate 401.222.6655
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 401.458.3290

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
• House of Representatives – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 50 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the first Tuesday in January and meets until late summer or early fall.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Public Information Center
Secretary of State
Room 38
Providence, RI 02903
401.222.3983 phone
SOUTH CAROLINA

General State Government Information 803.896.0000
Official State Web Site www.state.sc.us

Contact Information:
Governor 803.734.9400
Lt. Governor 803.734.2080
Speaker of the House 803.734.3125
Attorney General 803.734.3970
Secretary of State 803.734.2158
Office of Budget and Planning 803.734.2280
Commissioner of DHR 803.898.3300
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 803.737.5820
House Information Office 803.734.2010
Clerk of House 803.734.2010
Senate Information Office 803.212.6200
Secretary of Senate 803.212.6200
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 803.896.9749

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
• House of Representatives – 124 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 46 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the second Tuesday in January and normally meets until the first week in June.
• The House meets for a two or three organizational session on the first Tuesday following the certification of general election results in even-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

State Ethics Commission
Suite 250
5000 Thurman Mall
Columbia, SC 29201
803.253.4192 phone
803.253.7539 fax
SOUTH DAKOTA

General State Government Information
605.773.3011

Official State Web Site
www.state.sd.us

Contact Information:

Governor
605.773.3212
Lt. Governor
605.773.3662
Speaker of the House
605.773.3830
Attorney General
605.773.3215
Secretary of State
605.773.3537
Office of Budget and Planning
605.773.3411
Commissioner of DHR
605.773.3361
Director of Department of Children and Family Services
605.773.3641
House Information Office
605.773.3251
Clerk of House
605.773.3842
Senate Information Office
605.773.3825
Secretary of Senate
605.773.3825
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts
605.773.6521

Legislative Organization:

• Both houses are together are called the Legislature.
• House of Representatives – 70 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 35 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:

• Annual session starts the second Tuesday in January and meets until mid-March in odd-numbered years and the end of February in even-numbered years.
• The state constitution places a 40 legislative day limit on sessions in odd-numbered years and a 35 legislative day limit on sessions in even-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:

Must register annually with the following:

Secretary of State
Room 204
State Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501
605.773.3537 phone
605.773.6580 fax
General State Government Information: 615.741.3011
Official State Web Site: www.state.tn.us

Contact Information:
- Governor 615.741.1001
- Lt. Governor 615.741.2368
- Speaker of the House 615.741.3774
- Attorney General 615.741.3491
- Secretary of State 615.741.2817
- Office of Budget and Planning 615.741.4378
- Commissioner of DHR 615.741.3111
- Director of Department of Children and Family Services 615.313.4880
- House Information Office 615.741.2901
- Clerk of House 615.741.2901
- Senate Information Office 615.741.1552
- Secretary of Senate 615.741.1552
- Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 615.741.3980

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
- House of Representatives – 99 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 33 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session normally meets from mid-January to April or May.
- The Tennessee Constitution requires that the General Assembly meet for an organizational session the second Tuesday of January in odd-numbered years.
- The organizational session is limited to 15 calendar days.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Registry of Election Finance
Suite 1614
404 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243.1360
615.741.7959 phone
615.532.8905 fax
General State Government Information 512.463.4630
Official State Web Site www.state.tx.us

Contact Information:
Governor 512.463.2000
Lt. Governor 512.463.0001
Speaker of the House 512.463.1000
Attorney General 512.463.2100
Secretary of State 512.463.5701
Office of Budget and Planning 512.463.1200
Commissioner of DHR 512.458.7111
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 512.460.6000
House Information Office 512.463.0845
Clerk of House 512.463.0845
Senate Information Office 512.463.0100
Secretary of Senate 512.463.0100
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 512.424.6700

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses are called the Legislature.
• House of Representatives – 150 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 31 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Biennial session: second Tuesday in January in odd-numbered years and normally meets until about the end of May.
• The state constitution limits regular sessions to 140 calendar days.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Texas Ethics Commission
Tenth Floor, Sam Houston Building
201 East 14th Street
P.O. Box 12070
Austin, TX 78711.2070
512.463.5800 phone
512.463.8808 fax
UTAH

General State Government Information 801.538.3000
Official State Web Site www.state.ut.us

Contact Information:
Governor 801.538.1000
Lt. Governor 801.538.1041
Speaker of the House 801.538.1930
Attorney General 801.538.1015
Secretary of State 801.538.1040
Office of Budget and Planning 801.538.1027
Commissioner of DHR 801.538.6003
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 801.538.8300
House Information Office 801.538.1029
Clerk of House 801.538.1029
Senate Information Office 801.538.1035
Secretary of Senate 801.538.1035
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 801.538.7700

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the Legislature.
• House of Representatives – 75 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 29 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the third Monday in January and meets for 45 calendar days.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Election Division
Office of Lieutenant Governor
Room 115
State Capitol
Salt Lake City, UT 84114
801.538.1041 phone
801.538.1133 fax
VERMONT

General State Government Information 802.828.1110
Official State Web Site www.state.vt.us

Contact Information:
Governor 802.828.3333
Lt. Governor 802.828.2226
Speaker of the House 802.828.2245
Attorney General 802.828.3171
Secretary of State 802.828.2363
Office of Budget and Planning 802.828.2376
Commissioner of DHR 802.828.7280
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 802.241.2319
House Information Office 802.828.2231
Clerk of House 802.828.2247
Senate Information Office 802.828.2241
Secretary of Senate 802.828.2241
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 802.828.3275

Legislative Organization:
★ Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
★ House of Representatives – 150 members elected for two-year terms.
★ Senate – 30 members elected for two-year terms.

Legislative Session:
★ In odd-numbered years: biennial session starts on Wednesday after
the first Monday in January.
★ In even-numbered years: session starts on a date set by the General Assembly.
★ Both sessions normally meet until about the end of May.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division
Secretary of State
Redstone Office Building
26 Terrace Street, Drawer 09
Montpelier, VT 05609
802.828.2363 phone
802.828.5171 fax
General State Government Information 804.786.0000
Official State Web Site www.state.va.us

Contact Information:
Governor 804.786.2211
Lt. Governor 804.786.2078
Speaker of the House 804.698.1510
Attorney General 804.786.2071
Secretary of Commonwealth 804.371.9733
Office of Budget and Planning 804.786.7455
Commissioner of DHR 804.786.3561
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 804.371.9741
House Information Office 804.698.1500
Clerk of House 804.698.1619
Senate Information Office 804.698.7400
Secretary of Senate 804.698.7410
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 804.371.0700

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the General Assembly.
- House of Delegates – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 40 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
- Annual session starts the second Wednesday in January and normally lasts until mid-February in odd-numbered years and until mid-March in even-numbered years.
- The General Assembly then recesses for about six weeks and reconvenes for a one or two day wrap up.
- Sessions are constitutionally limited to 30 calendar days in odd-numbered years and to 60 calendar days in even-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Secretary of the Commonwealth
14th Floor
830 E. Main Street
P.O. Box 2454
Richmond, VA 23219
804.786.2441 phone
804.371.0017 fax
General State Government Information 360.753.5000
Official State Web Site www.state.wa.us

Contact Information:
Governor 360.753.6780
Lt. Governor 360.786.7700
Speaker of the House 206.720.3052
Attorney General 360.753.6200
Secretary of State 360.753.7115
Office of Budget and Planning 360.902.0555
Commissioner of DHR 360.236.4016
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 360.664.5000
House Information Office 360.786.7750
Clerk of House 360.786.7750
Senate Information Office 360.786.7550
Secretary of Senate 360.786.7550
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 360.407.0151

Legislative Organization:
* Both houses together are called the Legislature.
* House of Representatives – 98 members elected for two-year terms.
* Senate – 49 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
* Annual session starts the second Monday in January and normally meets until the last part of April in odd-numbered years and until the middle of March in even-numbered years.
* The state constitution places a 105 consecutive day limit on sessions in odd-numbered years and a 60 consecutive day limit in even-numbered years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Elections Division
Secretary of State
Room 403
711 Capitol Way
P.O. Box 40908
Olympia, WA 98504.0908
360.753.1111 phone
360.753.1112 fax
WEST VIRGINIA

General State Government Information 304.558.3456
Official State Web Site www.state.wv.us

Contact Information:
Governor 304.558.2000
Lt. Governor 304.558.2000
Speaker of the House 304.340.3210
Attorney General 304.558.2021
Secretary of State 304.558.6000
Office of Budget and Planning 304.558.0040
Commissioner of DHR 304.558.0684
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 304.558.3780
House Information Office 304.340.3200
Clerk of House 304.340.3200
Senate Information Office 304.357.7800
Secretary of Senate 304.357.7800
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 304.558.6029

Legislative Organization:
• Both houses together are called the Legislature.
• House of Delegates – 100 members elected for two-year terms.
• Senate – 34 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
• Annual session starts the second Wednesday in January and normally meets until mid-March.
• In the first year of a governor’s four-year term, the Legislature meets for one day and recesses until the second Wednesday in February.
• This session normally ends in mid-April.
• The state constitution limits an annual session to 60 calendar days unless extended by two-thirds vote of the Legislature.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Ethics Commission
Fourth Floor
Litton Building
1207 Quarrier
Charleston, WV 25301
304.558.0664 phone
304.558.2169 fax
General State Government Information 608.266.2211
Official State Web Site www.state.wi.us

Contact Information:
Governor 608.266.1212
Lt. Governor 608.266.3516
Speaker of the Assembly 608.266.3387
Attorney General 608.266.1221
Secretary of State 608.266.8888
Office of Budget and Planning 608.266.1736
Commissioner of DHR 608.266.8471
Director of Department of Children and Family Services 608.266.9909
Assembly Information Office 608.266.1501
Clerk of Assembly 608.266.1501
Senate Information Office 608.266.2517
Secretary of Senate 608.266.2517
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts 608.266.1880

Legislative Organization:
bullet Both houses together are called the Legislature.
b bullet Assembly – 99 members elected for two-year terms.
b bullet Senate – 33 members elected to four-year terms.

Legislative Session:
bullet Meets annually during biennial session according to the schedule adopted by joint resolution.
b bullet The session begins on the first Tuesday after January 8 in the odd-numbered year.
b bullet Special sessions have been held at the rate of two or three per biennium in recent years.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

State of Wisconsin Ethics Board
Suite 601
44 E. Mifflin Street
Madison, WI 53703
608.266.8123 phone
608.264.9309 fax
General State Government Information  307.777.7011
Official State Web Site  www.state.wy.us

Contact Information:
Governor  307.777.7434
Lt. Governor  307.777.7378
Speaker of the House  307.777.7716
Attorney General  307.777.7841
Secretary of State  307.777.7378
Office of Budget and Planning  307.777.7301
Commissioner of DHR  307.777.7613
Director of Department of Children and Family Services  307.635.3365
House Information Office  307.777.7881
Clerk of House  307.777.7330
Senate Information Office  307.777.7881
Secretary of Senate  307.777.7733
Office of Juvenile Courts/Family Courts  307.777.6285

Legislative Organization:
- Both houses together are called the Legislature.
- House of Representatives – 64 members elected for two-year terms.
- Senate – 30 members elected to four-year staggered terms.

Legislative Session:
- In odd-numbered years: annual session starts the second Tuesday in January and normally meets until the end of February.
- In even-numbered years: session starts the third Monday in February and normally meets until the first part of March.

Lobbying Information and Registration:
Must register annually with the following:

Election Division
Secretary of State
Room B-38
State Capitol
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307.777.5333 phone
307.777.7640 fax
## Government Internet Resources

### Government/Policy Resources
- Department of Health and Human Services: [www.dhhs.gov](http://www.dhhs.gov)
- Federal Register: [www.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html)
- Library of Congress: [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)
- Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation: [http://aspe.hhs.gov](http://aspe.hhs.gov)
- Supreme Court Decisions: [www.law.cornell.edu/supct](http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct)
- The U.S. Senate: [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)
- THOMAS: [http://thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov)
- White House: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

### State Information
- Council of State Governments: [www.csg.org](http://www.csg.org)
- Directory of State Agencies: [www.yahoo.com/Government/U_S_States](http://www.yahoo.com/Government/U_S_States)
- National Conference of State Legislators: [www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org)
- National Governors Association: [www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org)
- National Association of State Budget Officers: [www.nasbo.org](http://www.nasbo.org)

### Other Child Advocacy Organizations and Networks
- American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)
- The American Bar Association: [www.abanet.org/child](http://www.abanet.org/child)
- Center on Children and The Law: [www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)
- Child Welfare League of America: [www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)
- Children’s Defense Fund: [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)
- Children Now: [www.childrennow.org](http://www.childrennow.org)
- Connect for Kids: [www.connectforkids.org](http://www.connectforkids.org)
- Court Appointed Special Advocates: [www.nationalcasa.org](http://www.nationalcasa.org)
- Families USA: [www.familiesusa.org](http://www.familiesusa.org)
- Family Support America: [www.familysupportamerica.org](http://www.familysupportamerica.org)
- Fight Crime, Invest in Kids: [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org)
- Kids Campaign: [www.connectforkids.org](http://www.connectforkids.org)
- Kids Count: [www.aecf.org/kidscourt/index.htm](http://www.aecf.org/kidscourt/index.htm)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>National Call to Action</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nationalecalltoaction.com">www.nationalecalltoaction.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>National Association of Child Advocates</td>
<td><a href="http://www.childadvocacy.org">www.childadvocacy.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>National Association of Children’s Hospitals and Related Organizations</td>
<td><a href="http://www.childrenshospitals.net">www.childrenshospitals.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>The National Children’s Alliance</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nncac.org">www.nncac.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevent Child Abuse America</td>
<td><a href="http://www.preventchildabuse.org">www.preventchildabuse.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand for Children</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stand.org">www.stand.org</a></td>
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**Other Resources**

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<tr>
<td>Center on Budget and Policy Priorities</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cbpp.org">www.cbpp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition on Human Needs</td>
<td><a href="http://www.chn.org">www.chn.org</a></td>
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<td>Electronic Activist</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ifas.org/activist/index.html">www.ifas.org/activist/index.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HandsNet</td>
<td><a href="http://www.handsnet.org">www.handsnet.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Sector</td>
<td><a href="http://www.independentsector.org">www.independentsector.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Institute</td>
<td><a href="http://www.urban.org">www.urban.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A:
GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

The White House
www.whitehouse.gov
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
202.456.1414 phone
202.456.2461 fax

U.S. House of Representatives
www.house.gov
www.house.gov/writerep (to identify and contact your Representatives)
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
202.224.3121 phone

U.S. Senate
www.senate.gov
www.senate.gov/contacting/index.cfm (to identify and contact your Senators)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
202.224.3121 phone

Thomas: Legislative Information on the Net
http://thomas.loc.gov
This web site allows you to track the progress of federal legislation.

Government Agencies and Departments

Administration for Children and Families
www.acf.dhhs.gov
Administration for Children and Families
370 L’Enfant Promenade SW
Washington, DC 20447

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov
1600 Clifton Rd.
Atlanta, GA 30333
404.639.3311 phone
Government Printing Office
www.access.gpo.gov

Health Resources and Services Administration
www.hrsa.dhhs.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
www.hhs.gov
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201
202.619.0257 phone
1.877.696.6775 toll free

Library of Congress
www.loc.gov
101 Independence Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20540
202.707.5000 phone

National Conference of State Legislators
www.ncsl.org
449 North Capitol St., NW
Suite 515
Washington, DC 20001
202.624.5400 phone

National Governors Association
www.nga.org
Hall of States
444 North Capitol Street
Washington, DC 20001.1512
202.624.5300 phone

The United States Conference of Mayors
1620 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
202.293.7330 phone
202.293.2352 fax

National Association of Counties
www.naco.org
440 First Street, NW
Suite #800
Washington, DC 20001
202.393.6226 phone
202.393.2630 fax