Early Care and Education
Health and Safety and Public Policy:

Informing Stakeholders, Educating Policymakers and Encouraging Action

Revised March 2004
Introduction

The California Childcare Health Program (CCHP) is supported by various state and federal grants and it is, therefore, outside our mandate to lobby lawmakers or try to persuade them to vote one way or another. Nonetheless, public policy has a significant impact on both the early care and education, and public health fields, and thus on CCHP’s mission and goals.

CCHP engages in the public policy process in three ways:

• Informing early childhood professionals and health care providers, families of children in group care settings, and other stakeholders about the impact of public policy on their ability to ensure high quality early care and education for their young children.

• Educating policymakers regarding the impact of legislation and regulations that affect health and safety standards in early care and education settings.

• Encouraging everyone involved in ensuring quality early care and education to be active in the public policy process, regardless of what any one person might support or oppose.

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Informing Stakeholders

The impact of public policy on all aspects of health and safety in early care and education is tremendous, influencing everything from playground safety to the profession’s ability to recruit and retain top quality early childhood professionals. The sheer volume of topics and issues under consideration at any one time can be overwhelming, which probably prevents more people from getting and staying involved. One way to manage the vastness is to discriminate and focus—decide which issues are most important to you, and track the bills and initiatives affecting your issues.

For the latest information on national and state legislation and policy initiatives that affect the field of early care and education or health, visit the Web sites listed below, and do a bill and/or law search. For additional information, you can also visit the Web sites listed under Encouraging Action.

Policy at the Federal Level

United States Senate: www.senate.gov

United States House of Representatives: www.house.gov

Policy at the State Level

The California State Assembly: www.assembly.ca.gov

The California State Senate: www.sen.ca.gov
Encouraging Action

“Think globally, act locally” is more than just a buzz term: decisions made in Washington about billion-dollar block grants have an impact on early care and education settings and other places where services are delivered to children and families. That’s where most of us live our real lives day after day.

The important thing to remember is our elected representatives do not always know what life is like at the point of service. That’s why CCHP encourages everyone who cares about quality early care and education to get involved with the policy process.

- If you are an early childhood professional, parent, or health care provider who works with children, you have first-hand knowledge that is very valuable to the policymaking process. Elected representatives need this knowledge in order to represent you effectively.

- Policy decisions affect not only the quality of care provided to the children to whom we are deeply committed, but also affect your ability, as a provider or parent, to access resources. Policy can impact your compensation as a professional and your ability to enhance your professional skills.

There are many different ways to get involved, and not all of them require a huge time commitment. Writing letters is probably the easiest action you can take, and has the greatest impact for the time and energy you invest: state lawmakers consider one letter to represent the opinion of 300 Californians, and that number is even higher for national lawmakers. Faxes, telephone calls, emails, and visits to a lawmaker’s office are also effective (see High Impact Communication, below).

At the next level of involvement you can join a variety of organizations and participate in their policy-related activities. As a volunteer you will be able to commit as much or as little time as you wish. The types of activities are quite varied. You may attend conferences, take part in rallies and marches, stuff envelopes or sit on a steering committee.

Wondering where to start? Contact some of the organizations listed in the “Getting Information” section of this document. They will tell you what they offer and how you can help—and they will deeply appreciate your assistance.
Getting Information

Action Alliance for Children: www.4children.org

California Association for Family Child Care (CAFCC): www.cafcc.org

California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC):
www.caeyc.org

California Budget Project: www.cbp.org

California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCCRRN): www.rrnetwork.org

Center for the Child Care Workforce: www.ccw.org

Child Care Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/index.htm

Child Welfare League of America: www.cwla.org

Children’s Defense Fund: www.childrensdefense.org

Children NOW: www.childrennow.org

Family Voices of California: www.familyvoicesofca.org

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): www.naeyc.org

National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC): www.nafcc.org

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRAA):
www.naccrra.org

National Center for Education: http://nces.ed.gov

National Family Voices: www.familyvoices.org

Please visit www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org/webpages/campaigns.htm (from where you downloaded this document) frequently to check for expanded public policy and advocacy listings.
Contacting Policymakers at the National Level
(TDD/TTY indicates a telephone line equipped for use by the hearing impaired)

California Senators of the 108th Congress

Barbara Boxer (D-CA)
112 Hart Senate Building
Washington, D.C., 20510
(202) 224-3553
Email: Senator@Boxer.senate.gov
Web site: http://boxer.senate.gov

Local Offices:
Sacramento
501 I Street, Suite 7-600
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 448-2787
(916) 448-2563 fax

San Francisco
1700 Montgomery Street, Suite 240
San Francisco, CA 94111
(415) 403-0100
(415) 956-6701 fax

Los Angeles
312 N. Spring Street, Suite 1748
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 894-5000
(213) 894-5042 fax

Fresno
1130 O Street, Suite 2450
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 497-5109
(559) 497-5111 fax

San Diego
600 B Street, Suite 2240
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 239-3884
(619) 239-5719 fax

Inland Empire
201 North E Street, Suite 210
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 888-8525
(909) 888-8613 fax

Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510
(202) 224-3841
Email: senator@feinstein.senate.gov
Web site: http://feinstein.senate.gov/email.html

Local Offices:
San Francisco
One Post Street, Suite 2450
San Francisco, CA 94104
(415) 393-0707

San Diego
750 “B” Street, Suite 1030
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 231-9712

Los Angeles
11111 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 915
Los Angeles, CA 90025
(310) 914-7300

Fresno
1130 “O” Street, Suite 2446
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 485-7430

To find contact information for your U.S. Representative, go to www.house.gov. The site features a search engine that uses your zip code to find your Representative.
President of the United States
The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
Phone: (202) 456-1414
TDD /TTY: (202) 456-6213
Fax: (202) 456-2461
Email: president@whitehouse.gov
Web site: www.whitehouse.gov/president

Secretary of Health and Human Services
Tommy G. Thompson
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201
Phone: (202) 619-0257
Toll Free: 1-877-696-6775
Web site: www.hhs.gov

Secretary of Education
Rod Paige
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
Phone: (202) 401-3000
Fax: (202) 401-0596
Email: Rod.Paige@ed.gov
Web site: www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oosee/index.html?src=oc

Chair of Senate Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions Committee
Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA)
315 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-4543
Email: senator@kennedy.senate.gov
Web site: www.senate.gov/~kennedy

Chair of Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK)
522 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (517) 224-3004
TDD: (202) 224-2354
Email: senator@stevens.senate.gov
Web site: http://stevens.senate.gov

Chair of House Committee on Education and the
Workforce
Representative John A. Boehner (R-OH)
U. S. House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-4527
TDD /TTY: (202) 226-3372
Web site: http://edworkforce.house.gov

Chair of House Appropriations Committee
Representative C. W. Bill Young (R-FL)
2407 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-5961
Contacting Policymakers at the State Level

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-2841
Fax: (916) 445-4633
Email: governor@governor.ca.gov
Web site: www.governor.ca.gov/state/govsite/gov_homepage.jsp

California Department of Education
Jack O’Connell, Superintendent of Public Instruction
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 319-0800
Email: joconnell@cde.ca.gov
Web site: www.cde.ca.gov

California Department of Education, Child Development Division
Michael Jett, Director
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 94244-2720
Phone: (916) 324-0730
Fax: (916) 323-6853
Email: mjett@cde.ca.gov
Web site: www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd

California Department of Health Services
Vacant, Director
P.O. Box 942732
Sacramento, CA 94234-7320
Web site: www.dhs.ca.gov

California Department of Social Services
Vacant, Director
744 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-6951
Web site: www.dss.cahwnet.gov

First 5 California (California Children and Families Commission)
Rob Reiner, Chairman
501 J Street, Suite 530
Sacramento CA 95814
Phone: (916) 323-0056
Fax: (916) 323-0069
Email: info@ccfc.ca.gov
Web site: www.ccfc.ca.gov
To find contact information for your California Senator using your address, go to:
www.sen.ca.gov/~newsen/senators/senators.htm

To find contact information for your California Assembly Representative using your address, go to:
www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset9text.htm.

California Senate Committees
A complete list of state Senate committees can be found at www.sen.ca.gov/~newsen/committees/committees.htm

Chair of the California Senate Education Committee
Senator John Vasconcellos (D-San Jose)
State Capitol, Room 5108
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-9740
Fax: (916) 324-0283
Email: senator.vasconcellos@sen.ca.gov
Web site: http://democrats.sen.ca.gov/senator/Vasconcellos

Chair of the California Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Senator Deborah Ortiz (D-Sacramento)
State Capitol, Room 5114
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-7807
Fax: (916) 323-2263
Email: senator.ortiz@sen.ca.gov
Web site: http://democrats.sen.ca.gov/senator/ortiz

Chair of the California Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Dede Alpert (D-San Diego)
State Capitol, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-3952
Fax: (916) 327-2188
Email: senator.alpert@sen.ca.gov
Web site: http://democrats.sen.ca.gov/senator/alpert
California State Assembly Committees
A complete list of state Assembly committees can be found at www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset8text.asp.

Chair of the State Assembly Education Committee
Assemblywoman Jackie Goldberg (D 45th)
2003 State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 94249-0001
Phone: (916) 319-2045
Fax: (916) 319-2145
Email: assemblymember.goldberg@assembly.ca.gov
Web site: www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=6

Chair of the State Assembly Health Committee
Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn (D-24th)
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0024
Phone: (916) 319-2024
Fax: (916) 319-2124
Email: Assemblymember.Cohn@assembly.ca.gov
Web site: www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=10

Chair of the State Assembly Appropriations Committee
Assemblywoman Judy Chu(D-49th)
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0049
Phone: 916-319-2049
Fax: 916-319-2149
Email: Assemblymember.chu@assembly.ca.gov
Web site: www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=43

Contacting Policymakers at the Local Level
To find contact information for your local policymakers, consult your local phone book or your city or county’s Web page. Start with your city hall. You can attend meetings of your city council, your county board of supervisors, your local child care planning and development council, and your local board of education, just to name a few. Most of these meetings include a scheduled time for the public to address the assembled policy and decision makers.
Getting Your Message Across

Communication Protocols

Elected officials will take your communication more seriously if you follow a few simple guidelines.

1. In the address of a letter, email, or fax, use “The Honorable” in front of the name, such as “The Honorable George W. Bush,” or “The Honorable Barbara Boxer.”

2. In the salutation of a letter, email, or fax, use the individual’s title and name; “Dear Senator Lott,” “Dear Governor Davis.”

3. In face-to-face conversation, use the individual’s title and name (“Assembly Member Chan,” or “Commissioner Reiner”). Exceptions: the US President is always addressed “Mr./Madame President.” If you are addressing an individual in the context of their role as chairperson of a committee, you should use “Mr. Chairman” or “Madame Chairwoman.”

4. Include your full name and mailing address, regardless of the type of communication you send. Lawmakers tend to pay more attention to communication from their own constituents, especially in emails.

High Impact Communication

Whether you’re zipping off an email or are meeting a lawmaker in person, you’re more likely to be persuasive if you invest a little time focusing your message.

• Keep your communications brief and to the point—lawmakers are very busy, and they are disinclined to read long, rambling letters.

• Keep the topic narrow enough to propose concrete action. For example, “Safety in Child Care” is a very broad topic, and “Playground Safety” still covers a lot of issues. “Ensuring Safe Playground Surfaces” is a more manageable topic. State your message clearly and right off the bat; if you need to include background information, do so after stating your main message.

• Propose explicit action(s). Examples: “I urge you to vote yes on AB XXX,” or “Please ask your staff to research community resource options,” or “Consider sponsoring a fundraiser.”

• Break your message down into two or three key points that support it. At least one of your points should focus on “what’s in it for me?” for the lawmaker. Returning to the safe playground surfaces example, you could propose a public ceremony at a playground with civic leaders and media invited—photo opportunity! Determine the most logical and persuasive sequence for presenting each point, and be sure to make it clear how each point supports the main message.

• Do a little homework before drafting your message. How has this lawmaker voted on related issues in the past? Have they expressed a commitment to children, to education, to health? If so, explain how your point of view supports a position the lawmaker already has taken.

• Keep the communication positive and constructive—confrontation, accusations, and criticisms are likely to be counter-productive. Think in terms of how your group and this lawmaker can work together.
Meeting with Lawmakers

The most effective communication is face to face, and it is easier to get an appointment with an elected representative than you might think. The official’s office might suggest that you meet with a staff member instead. This doesn’t necessarily mean they’re not taking you seriously—just make sure you’re meeting with a staff member who focuses on your issue. Meeting with that staff member could be very productive.

Some good strategies for a meeting with an elected official or their staff person:

• Review High Impact Communication (above) for tips on focusing your message.

• Go with one or two others who support your point of view. If possible, form a delegation (no larger than four total) with people who represent organizations with a stake in the issue. For example, if you’re meeting with your state assembly representative about playground safety, your delegation might include representative from the local parks and recreation department, local health department, and parent groups. This will help the lawmaker see that diverse interest groups (voters) share a common point of view.

• Organize a meeting with your delegation before you meet with the lawmaker to ensure that everyone is “on the same page.” Everyone who goes should speak, so you might assign each individual a specific point to present; ideally, each individual’s point will relate to the group they represent.

• Prior to the meeting, send a few relevant materials to the lawmaker’s office for them to have a chance to review ahead of time.

• Politicians tend to be most comfortable talking about topics for which they have prepared or about which they are knowledgeable; moreover, they are often adept at steering a conversation away from one topic onto a topic that’s comfortable for them. If you find this happening, respectfully suggest that “we get back to the subject of our meeting.” Remember, your goal is to inform your representatives so they can represent you effectively; lawmakers want you to inform them, too, although sometimes they forget.
About California Childcare Health Program

The California Childcare Health Program (CCHP) is a community-oriented, multidisciplinary team dedicated to enhancing the quality of child care for California’s children by initiating ad strengthening linkages between the health, safety, and child care communities and the families they serve.

For more information, contact:

California Childcare Health Program
1333 Broadway, Suite 1010
Oakland, CA 94612-1926
(510) 839-1195 Phone
(510) 839-0339 Fax
(800) 333-3212 Healthline
www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org