



CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

A Voice for Washington's Children, Youth & Families

STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2015

(Adopted March 2010)

Our strategic plan will serve as an organizational guide providing balance between holding a clear direction and allowing for the flexibility necessary to serve our mission.

The VISION that guides the work:

We in Washington take better care of our children.

Thanks to the work of the Children's Alliance, fewer children go hungry, go to school unprepared, live without a stable home, or lack health care. Fewer children suffer the damaging effects of poverty and racism.

Fostered by the Children's Alliance, a growing movement holds our leaders and all of us accountable for how we succeed—or fail—in caring for children, especially those children with the most need and those most neglected by society.

People who care about the well-being of children look to the Children's Alliance for leadership, guidance, collaboration and action.

We remain committed to our MISSION:

To improve the well-being of children by effecting positive changes in public policies, priorities and programs.

Five key questions guide us as we choose our STRATEGIES:

- 1. Will it have a positive impact on children?*
- 2. Will it help us achieve our goals of race equity?*
- 3. Will it mitigate the impact of poverty and/or address the root causes?*
- 4. Will it help us achieve deeper and/or broader engagement among communities we serve, the general public, and policy makers?*
- 5. Will it strengthen our organizational capacity and help us develop a financially stable and flexible organization?*

We are increasing our focus on RACIAL EQUITY:

Almost every indicator of child well-being shows troubling disparities by race. Disparities are often created and maintained inadvertently through public policies and practices. It's possible-- and only possible-- to close equity gaps by using strategies determined through an intentional focus on race.

Focusing on racial equity is simply the best way to accomplish our mission. It is the right tactical approach --we cannot fix any system until we fix it for children of color. This approach makes economic sense. Until systems serve children of color well, taxpayers won't see the return on investment that they should in these systems. And, most of all, it is the right thing to do for our children. This is a matter of social justice – we are called to undo institutional racism by changing the embedded laws and practices that act against the best interests of children of color.



OUR FIVE YEAR GOALS (2010-2015)

WE WILL IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN THROUGH TARGETED, EFFECTIVE POLICY ADVOCACY...

- **All children benefit from policy solutions developed and advanced by the Children's Alliance:**
 - Children are healthier as a result of universal health care coverage and equitable access for every child.
 - Children are more ready for school as a result of increased access to high-quality early learning.
 - Children in foster care have significant and measurable improvements in their well-being and outcomes.
 - More children have access to three meals a day in the places where they live, learn and play and we are making major progress towards ending childhood hunger.
 - Children in poverty have access to needed services through a simple, accessible and respectful eligibility and enrollment process.

- **Children of color benefit from equity-oriented policy solutions:**
 - Policymakers are knowledgeable about racial disparities, the high cost of racial inequity and the needs of children of color.
 - More policymakers craft and introduce equity-oriented policies.
 - More children of color are ready for school through a measurable reduction of the "Preparation Gap."
 - More children of color have equitable access to health care and improved health outcomes.
 - Fewer children of color are inappropriately in the child welfare system; those who are in the system have improved outcomes.
 - There is a measurable decrease in food and nutrition disparities faced by children of color.

... CONDUCTED BY AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS WELL-KNOWN AND WELL-SUPPORTED WITH A WIDE REACH

- **The Children's Alliance continues to be visible and credible:**
 - We are known for getting the public policy results that children need. We are considered powerful and effective.
 - We come to everybody's mind statewide as the advocacy organization for children.
 - We have increased visibility and credibility in communities of color and among families directly impacted by the policies we seek to inform.
 - We continue to be considered credible, reliable and well-informed by policy makers and Washingtonians.

- **The Children's Alliance is building the movement for children in Washington:**
 - We have an active constituency in every legislative district of the state.
 - Our efforts are well-informed and guided by people who are directly impacted by child-serving systems, particularly families of color and families living in poverty.
 - Child advocates are effective and turn to the Children's Alliance to help facilitate their advocacy.
 - Child advocates can effectively respond to the greatest policy and budget threats and opportunities.



▪ **The Children’s Alliance has the capacity necessary to do effective advocacy :**

- We have the capacity to proactively identify the changing needs of children, communicate policy implications to policy makers and the public, and develop and implement an effective policy change agenda.
- We continue to attract and recruit excellent staff members. Our salary and benefits structure help us to retain good employees.
- Our administrative systems are sufficiently funded and staffed giving us the capacity to support a robust policy agenda.
- We have a high-performing and engaged board and volunteers. Service to the Children’s Alliance is attractive, engaging and rewarding.

THREE YEAR STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS (2010-12)

The Children’s Alliance’s strategic planning process identified promising strategies that would help us reach our five-year goals. The strategies reflect our best thinking at the time of the development of the plan (2009). It was our intention to build a flexible and reflective process that would ensure ongoing assessment of these and other strategies that are likely to bring us closer to our five year-goals.

1

STRATEGY: STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Improve our ability to sustain and effectively manage the work of the Children’s Alliance by strengthening our organizational capacity.

- Improve our ability to sustain and most effectively manage the work of the Children’s Alliance by strengthening our administrative and financial systems.
- Diversify, expand and increase our current funding base and increase the amount of flexible funding for the organization.
- Build and deepen our reach and support through recruiting and engaging a diverse set of volunteer leaders who effectively guide the organization’s efforts

2

STRATEGY: INCREASE OUR FOCUS ON RACIAL EQUITY

In all of our work, heighten our focus on racial equity and work to decrease the negative effects of racism on children.

- Adopt anti-racist organizational policies and practice.
- Increase awareness among our members, policy makers and the public about racial inequities and the impact on children.
- Reduce the negative impact of racial inequities in all of our policy areas.



3

STRATEGY: BROADEN AND DEEPEN OUR REACH

Broaden and deepen the reach of the Children’s Alliance in our advocacy to lawmakers, our mobilization efforts and in our strategic communications.

- Grow our powerful base of members who take action online – and in person -- to support Children’s Alliance policy campaigns and hold lawmakers accountable to the needs of children and families in Washington State.
- Strengthen our engagement and create broader and deeper support within communities of color for our work.
- Increase the number of and participation by Children’s Action Network members who are directly affected by the issues on which we work.
- Increase the number of and participation by Children’s Action Network members from Central Washington where child poverty rates and other indicators of need are very high.

4

STRATEGY: INCREASE OUR CAPACITY TO BE PROACTIVE AND RESPONSIVE

Increase our ability to be proactive & responsive to the changing policy environment by developing our capacity to identify, communicate and respond to the needs of children in Washington State.

- Expand the Children’s Alliance ability to improve child outcomes by adding the organizational capacity to improve responsiveness to short-term emergent issues
- Increase the Children’s Alliance ability to identify new advocacy needs
- Improve our capacity to incubate new longer-term advocacy campaigns or structures.

5

STRATEGY: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

Increase awareness of the Children’s Alliance among the public and policy makers and build our base of support

- Implement a branding “refresh”
- Develop an organizational communications and outreach strategy. The strategy will focus primarily on communities of color and individuals and families directly impacted by the policies we work to change.

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