



children's

action

agenda

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I'm not big on litmus tests but I will have one litmus test for every bill that comes to my desk, one challenge for you: How does this create a better future for our children and our children's children?"

—Governor Bill Ritter, *The Colorado Promise*

Dear Partners in creating a better future for our children,

We are pleased to present you with the *Children's Action Agenda*, a legislative agenda prepared by a coalition of children's organizations and advocates. We hope this agenda will provide a guiding framework for the 2008 Colorado State legislative session to benefit Colorado's children.

This initiative was born out of the realization that we do not currently have a comprehensive litmus test for introducing or measuring policies that serve future generations of Coloradans. When it comes to education, Colorado spends \$1034.00 less per pupil annually than the national average.¹ Nearly one in six — 180,000 children — are without health care coverage. We currently have the second highest estimated prevalence of asthma in the nation. And despite having the 5th highest rate of per capita income in the US, we have the 8th highest rate of children living in poverty. As partners, we have a powerful opportunity to create a better world for the children of Colorado.

The comprehensive agenda consists of five categories: poverty, health care, environment, education, and at-risk (abuse/neglect, juvenile justice, mental illness). During the development process, we have taken great care to support the excellent work already being done by commissions and policy developers around the state. We have also tried to ambitiously and courageously carry forward a vision for a children and a future built with integrity and intention.

The Children's Action Agenda is not a formal organization; we are simply a coalition of children's workers and support agencies. You — legislators, pastors, business leaders, parents, and citizens — are invited to become part of this partnership. Real change will come only from collaboration and collectively putting our best ideas forward. You can support the Children's Action Agenda by signing on as a supporter and then spreading the message far and wide. It is our single shared objective that Colorado's children are the big winners in the 2008 legislative session. Please join us!

In spirited partnership,

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¹Education Week, "Quality Counts at 10", January 5, 2006

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