



# Advocacy in Public Health: How, Why and What Works?



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# Effective Advocacy

C.A.N.



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY NETWORK

- Why Advocate?
- What is Advocacy?
- What do Legislators REALLY Say?
- Real Stories/Roadmap to Success

# Why Advocate?



# Why Advocate?





# What is Advocacy in Public Health?



Using our collective voice to improve the health status and social well being of citizens (children & families) in Wisconsin.

If not YOU, then who will speak for public health? For children?



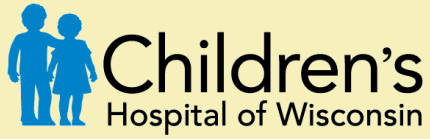
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CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY NETWORK

# What is Legislative Advocacy?

1. Contacting decision-makers
2. Influencing decision-makers
3. Leveraging collective voice
4. Using the tools:
  - Direct lobbying
  - Grassroots
  - Media
    - Public Awareness
    - Public Support



# Legislative Contacts





# Statistics Show....



The vast majority of constituents:

**ALWAYS**

**OCCASIONALLY**

**NEVER**

Contact their legislators.....





# NEVER

- ■ ■ **So, what an opportunity to make a difference!**

# What do most Legislators REALLY Say?

- A. Very welcome the contact; I want/need to hear what you think.
- B. An interruption to my day, but okay I will listen to what you have to say.
- C. An unnecessary disruption to my day. I know how I will vote and can seek out input from constituents, interested parties if I need more information.

# Answer:

**A.** Welcome the  
contact; want to hear  
what you think....

....really



# Impact?

State Legislators say for most issues it takes the following number of contacts to make a difference in their decision:

- A. 50 or more
- B. 25-30
- C. 5-10

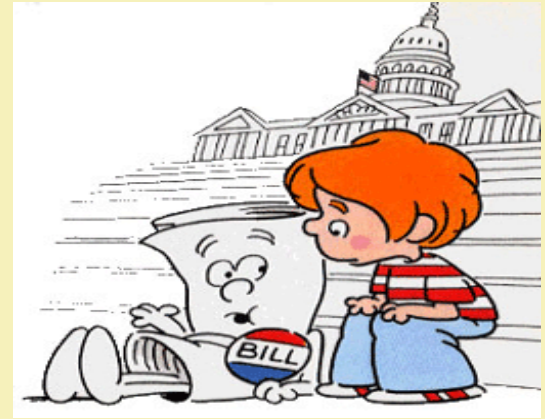
# ANSWER

C. 5-10

- Many complain when they do not hear from constituents.
- Several **ASK** to hear from constituents.
- MANY blame absence of hearing from constituents!

# Why engage in public policy?

- YOUR expertise
- Public influence
- Status in community
- Strong link between policy and improved health status.
- Public policy influence can be one of your most impactful professional encounters.
- If not YOU, who will speak for these issues?



# Why engage in public policy?

- Last session the number of pieces of legislation introduced:
  - A. 800
  - B. 1300
  - C. 1700

# Why engage in public policy?

- Legislators deal with thousands of bills/issues so if they do not hear from you, they assume you are okay on those issues.
- To a legislator, silence means everything is okay.



# Why engage in public policy?

- Constituents matter most to legislators.
- Most legislators want to get re-elected and filter through what their district thinks about an issue.
- Therefore, how legislation impacts the district is a great way to relay your position on a piece of legislation.

# What is effective?

- In person meeting
  - Constituent
  - Expert
- In person testimony
- Phone call, e-mail
- Written testimony
- Form letter; sign petition





## What Works

- Develop relationship
- Establish expertise
- Positive; on message
- Use data/reasoning
- Use personal experience
- Make an “ask”
- Leave issue paper behind
- Listen; Thank for time

# What works and what does not?

## What Does NOT WORK

- Get angry, name-call, cut-off discussion
- Partisan
- Send angry email
- Threaten



# Examples of Past Successes

## ✓ Youth Sports Concussion Legislation

### 1. Coalition lead effort

- Meeting Legislative Authors;
- Committee testimony
- Editorial Board; Press Conferences

### 2. Statewide advocacy



# Coalition

- American Family Children's Hospital
- Association of WI School Administrators
- Brain Injury Association of WI
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin-Fox Valley
- Green Bay Packers
- Marshfield Clinic
- Medical College of Wisconsin
- Ministry Health Care
- National Football League
- Safe Kids Wisconsin
- UW Health
- University of Wisconsin Madison
- Wisconsin Academy of Family Physicians
- Wisconsin Association of School Boards
- WI Association of School District Administrators
- Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials
- Wisconsin Athletic Trainers Association
- WI Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
- WI Council for Administrators of Special Services
- WI Council on Children and Families
- WI Interscholastic Athletics Association
- Wisconsin Medical Society
- Wisconsin Psychiatric Association
- Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association
- Wisconsin Youth Soccer Association

# What does it take?



- Legislative Campaign Strategy:
  - Coalition Building
  - Ground Game
    - Direct lobbying
    - Grassroots contacts
  - Air Game
    - Media stories
    - Editorials
  - Special Tools
    - Leverage NFL & Packers
- Legislative Campaign Target:
  - Senators

# Past Success (cont)

- ✓ Statewide Smoking Ban
  - Testimony, calls, emails
  - More than 16 years of advocacy
  - Medical and public health community lead effort



# QUESTIONS?

