



BCAC Supports

State Budget

- Pursue and adopt new revenue enhancements to the state budget

State Assistance and Job Growth

- Preservation of state-funded education and early care programs, health care, housing and other basic needs to ensure security, stability and safety for children and families
- Investment in job development, job training and placement to put Connecticut's families back to work

Education

- A more equitable formula for the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant to better reflect the costs of delivering high-quality education
- Legislation to implement those recommendations from the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement that close the achievement gap for Bridgeport's students
- Creation of a Department of Early Care and Education

Health Care

- Legislation to keep SustiNet moving forward
- HUSKY for low-income children and their parents with no cuts in eligibility or benefits
- Current Medicaid reimbursement rates for dental care services

To Contact Your Legislator

House Democrats (800) 842-1902

House Republicans (800) 842-1423

Senate Democrats (800) 842-1420

Senate Republicans (800) 842-1421

**or check the Connecticut
General Assembly website
www.cga.ct.gov**

Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition (BCAC) is a coalition of organizations, parents and other concerned individuals committed to improving the well-being of Bridgeport's children through research, advocacy, community education, and mobilization.



2470 Fairfield Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605
(203) 549-0075
FAX (203) 549-0203
www.bcacct.org

2011 Children's Legislative Agenda

SPEND SMART TO BUILD CONNECTICUT'S FUTURE

- ✓ Adopt a state budget that ensures security, stability and safety for children and families.
- ✓ Preserve state-funded education and early care, health care, housing and other basic needs.
- ✓ Job creation is the cornerstone of financial stability. Support investments that put parents to work.



Safety Net

Recession takes a toll on families

Parents must have jobs that pay a meaningful wage to provide for their families. Despite thousands of job losses over the year, there are sectors that have seen job growth. These sectors should be fostered to ensure that parents have the skills that employers need.

The economic recession is far from over and is rapidly spilling over into the suburbs. Families throughout the region, who have never had to ask for help before, are relying more and more on state-assisted early care and education, health care and housing programs.

\$1.16

spent per person on incumbent worker training in Connecticut, compared to \$6.54 in Massachusetts

\$23.35

per hour needed in earnings to afford 2-bedroom apartment in greater Bridgeport area.

8,600

unemployed persons in Bridgeport in November 2010, an increase of 9% in one year.

28%

increase in Bridgeport children on food stamps from June 2009 to June 2010.



Education

Students need a solid education foundation to compete in the job market

Early education sets the underpinning for academic success. Children who participate in quality early childhood programs are less likely to be held back in school or referred to special education. They are more likely to perform better academically, graduate high school, find a job and earn a higher income.

To close the achievement gap, the Bridgeport public schools need additional resources and funding to support quality teaching, reduce class size and engage parents and community organizations across the district.

1 in 3

children entering kindergarten has no preschool experience.

68%

of grades K-3 and 38% of grades 4-8 classrooms are overcrowded.

14,196

students attend the 19 Bridgeport schools that failed to make adequate yearly progress on either the CMT (Connecticut Mastery Test) or CAPT (Connecticut Academic Performance Test).

1 in 4

high school freshmen drops out of school before graduating.



Health Care

Health care coverage is an economic issue

Compared to two years ago, 50,000 more Connecticut residents under the age of 65 are without health insurance. Over the past 10 years, the number of persons with employer-sponsored health insurance declined significantly.

SustiNet, Connecticut's health care law, was passed in July 2009. SustiNet will work hand-in-glove with federal health reform and positions the state to receive significant federal dollars. SustiNet needs to keep moving forward so that good, affordable health care options are available to Connecticut's individuals, families and small business owners.

377,000

Connecticut residents under the age of 65 do not have health insurance.

10%

decline in Connecticut residents with employer-sponsored health insurance.

60%

of employees working in small businesses do not have health benefits through their jobs.

1 in 4

of the uninsured do not go to the doctor even if they are sick.

We Urge Legislators To...

- Preserve state-funded education and early care programs, health care, cash assistance, housing and other basic needs to ensure security, stability and safety for children and families
- Invest in job development, job training and placement to put Connecticut's families back to work

We Urge Legislators To...

- Develop a more equitable formula for the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant to better reflect the costs of delivering high-quality education
- Support legislation to implement those recommendations from the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement that close the achievement gap for Bridgeport students
- Support creation of a Department of Early Care and Education

We Urge Legislators To...

- Support legislation to keep SustiNet moving forward
- Maintain HUSKY for low-income children and their parents with no cuts in eligibility or benefits
- Maintain current Medicaid reimbursement rates for dental care services