



Mother & Child Health Coalition is a bi-state catalyst for improving maternal, child, and family health.

2018 Advocacy Priorities

Mother & Child Health Coalition supports the investment of health in all public policies. In choosing the 2018 advocacy priorities for the Coalition, the following factors were taken into consideration:

- Accurate public health data from respected, quality sources of information on national, state, and local levels, to be used in conjunction with Healthy People 2020 Goals and Objectives on Maternal, Infant, and Child Health, including those related to morbidity and mortality disparities by race, geography, and socio-economic status.
- Suggestions from the MCHC Board of Directors and committee chairpersons
- Recommendations from Legislative/Advocacy Committee members
- Priorities of MCHC programs, partner organizations, and advocacy organizations with similar areas of interest
- Legislative trends and realities in the U.S. Congress and the State Legislatures of Kansas and Missouri.

Primary Advocacy Priorities

Access to Care and Coverage

- **Access to Health Coverage**
 - MCHC supports the reauthorization and reappropriation of necessary funds for the Child Health Insurance Program.
 - We support policies and public funding of maternal and child health programs (including mental health) that maintain and improve quality of care and eligibility levels for underserved populations.
 - We support the implementation of appropriate federal and state plans in Kansas and Missouri to improve the coverage of health insurance and access to care for uninsured and underinsured children and families.
 - MCHC encourages states and the federal government to maintain and increase eligibility levels for vulnerable citizens, including children and their parents.
 - We support the public's access to fair and affordable insurance.
- **Access to Services**
 - We support fiscal policies that preserve and strengthen federal and state financial resources available for health and social service, through direct appropriations, grants and indirect support through tax exemptions and tax credits.
- **Access to Providers of Care**
 - We support reimbursements to providers of care at a sufficient level to ensure health professionals' participation in Missouri HealthNet and KanCare.
 - Considering the vast inaccessibility of oral health care for many, MCHC supports the creation of mid-level dental providers.

- **Strengthening of the Medical/Social Safety Net**
 - We support paid family/parental leave for new parents and caregivers
 - We support an increase in access to assistance for low-income families
 - We support tax credits in Kansas and Missouri that invest in working families, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Child Mortality and Safety

- We support the following:
 - Adequate appropriation for the Healthy Start Initiative and other early intervention programs
 - Policies related to infant mortality prevention initiatives
 - Birth defects prevention policies
- As the quality of child care can be related to infant death, we support access to high quality, affordable, infant/toddler care.
- We support policies promoting:
 - Motor vehicle safety
 - We encourage the inclusion of technology in vehicles that heightens the safety of its occupants and surrounding pedestrians
 - Violence reduction and prevention, including those regarding weapons and bullying
 - Prevention initiatives related to alcohol, tobacco, and substance use among youth.
 - A built environment in and around schools that encourages safety among the staff, students, and the surrounding community

Secondary Advocacy Priorities

Food Security

- **Breastfeeding**
 - We support breastfeeding as the primary source of nutrition for infants, due to the many health benefits it provides. We support, monitor, and educate regarding actual or proposed federal, state, and local policies that positively impact a mother's ability to breastfeed her child.
- **Childhood Obesity Reduction and Prevention**
 - We support policies, proposed legislation, and data collection on the federal, state and local levels that will positively impact the healthy food and fitness environments (including the built environment) of children and families in greater Kansas City.
 - We support an increase in access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Immunizations

- We support federal, state, and local legislative and policy initiatives that promote immunizations which have been scientifically proven to improve maternal, child, and family health.

Early Learning

- Quality early learning has been proven instrumental in advancing the public's health. We support access to high quality, affordable early learning for Kansas and Missouri.
- Child safety protocols and education for providers in infant/toddler care and early childhood care and education.