

Bills in the legislature

Early care and education

- **Training for license-exempt providers.** AB 975 (Solorio)
- **Training on including children with special needs.** SB 680 (Ridley-Thomas)
- **Training for working with English learners**—three-county pilot program. AB 1052 (Torricono)
- **Licensing visits every three years** to licensed child care programs (now five years). AB 978 (Benoit)
- **Child care rating system**—give child care programs letter grades based on health and safety inspections and “quality” and post these grades on the internet. AB 313 (Benoit)
- **Child care training**—expand support for training of child care teachers who work with children receiving subsidized care. AB 1059 (DeLeon)

Health

- **Universal health insurance for all children in California,** AB 32 (Steinberg), AB 1 (Dymally)
- **Shaken baby syndrome**—fund pilot prevention program. SB 468 (Padilla)
- **Immunizations**—create system for deciding which to require for school entrance. SB 676 (Ridley-Thomas)

Nutrition

- **Food stamps**—provide easier access to food stamps for Medi-Cal recipients, change the name of the program to reflect its importance for health and nutrition. AB433 (Beall)
- **Cut food stamp red tape.** AB 1060 (Laird)
- **End fingerprint requirement** for food stamps. AB 1382 (Leno)
- **Improve school and child care meals,** increase funding. AB 1503 (Fuller) and SB 20 (Torlakson)
- **Nutrition information**—require restaurants to provide it. SB 120 (Padilla)

Schools

- **Preschool available to all four-year-olds** through the public school system; school attendance compulsory at age five (now six) AB 1236 (Mullin)
- **Age requirements for kindergarten and first grade**—children would have to be five by Sept. 1 to enter kindergarten, six by Sept. 1 to enter first grade by the school year 2012-13. AB 683 (Runner)
- **Before-school programs**—increase state support. AB 1658 (Garrick)

First 5

- **First 5 funds** could not be spent on media campaigns without approval by the legislature. SB 688 (Cox)

Poverty

- **Create a state Earned Income Tax Credit.** AB 21 (Jones)
- **End CalWORKs payments to children** if 1) their parents are being “sanctioned,” 2) their parents have reached their 60-month time limit, or 3) the children are on “child-only” grants and have reached the 60-month time limit. SB 58 (Hollingsworth)

First 5 planning its future

ACTION: Communicate your priorities to the state First 5 Commission.

BACKGROUND: The California First 5 Commission is now working on a strategic plan to guide funding decisions for the next few years.

Will the current balance of programs continue? Will all the funds shift to providing health care, as some advocate? Will the commissioners continue the highly successful CARES program, which provides support to child care teachers and providers who increase their education?

Make your views known at your county commission hearings and at meetings of the state First 5 commission: **May 17, Oakland; July 19, Eureka; September 20, Fresno; November 15, Sacramento.**

FOR INFORMATION: Contact your county First 5 commission. Contact info at www.cffc.ca.gov

Sacramento: Lobby days in May

MAY 2: Stand for Children with Parent Voices for quality early childhood programs, Parent Voices, 415-882-0234

MAY 8: Hunger Action Day, California Food Policy Advocates, 415-777-4422, www.cfpa.net/2007HADregistration.htm

MAY 15: ENACT, for better nutrition and physical activity, California Center for Public Health Advocacy, Alyssa Walker, 530-297-6000, www.cfpa.net/ENACT2007/index.htm

MAY 24: California Afterschool Challenge, California School-Age Consortium, Annie Nogg, 415-957-9775, http://calsac.org/events_page.asp?eventID=546

Health care for all kids in US

ACTION: The Children's Defense Fund is spearheading a campaign for a federal program to provide health care to all children in the U.S. whose families make less than 300% of the poverty level (about \$60,000 a year for a family of four). (Higher-income families could buy into the program.)

BACKGROUND: This year the federal State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) must be renewed. This program provides 2/3 of the money for California's Health Families program, low-cost health

insurance for children in low- and moderate-income families with incomes too high for Medi-Cal. The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) sees SCHIP renewal as a time to create a program that would provide comprehensive, quality health care for all children.

Children's Defense Fund California is mobilizing support for this campaign. To see how you can help, go to www.cdfca.org.

FOR INFORMATION: 510-663-3224 or 213-749-8787

Statewide campaign for educational justice

ACTION: A coalition of educational justice organizations is mobilizing parents and community leaders to campaign for big changes in California's school system.

BACKGROUND: A major report on California public education, *Getting down to the Facts*, released in March by Stanford University, pointed to serious problems including:

- **low student achievement** and serious racial and economic "achievement gaps"
- **overly complicated and ineffective systems** of running and paying for schools
- **ineffective teacher recruitment and training policies**

- **unfair distribution of resources** among schools and school districts
- **inadequate resources**—the report says we need to spend 40% more on schools to achieve our educational goals.

In response, ACORN, Californians for Justice, PICO California, and Public Advocates are calling on policymakers to recruit effective principals, reduce class size, increase mentoring and collaboration for teachers, distribute experienced teachers fairly, and reform school finance.

INFORMATION: ACORN, Corina Vasaura at 510-834-4222, caaisj@aisj.org, <http://acorn.org/?4321>

Early learning "foundations"

ACTION: Contribute your views to the development of California's expectations for preschoolers.

BACKGROUND: The California Department of Education is developing "early learning foundations," describing what typically developing children can be expected to be able to do at ages three and four (see p. 12). The first set of "foundations" will be on:

- Social/emotional development
- English learners
- Language and literacy
- Mathematics

(Draft foundations are at www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp)

In April and May the public can comment on this draft at dozens of regional "input sessions" around the state and at four public hearings: at the state Department of Education in **Sacramento May 11** and at county offices of education in **Fresno (May 16)**, **San Mateo (May 17)** and **LA (May 22)**, all from 9 am to 12 pm. You can also provide feedback through the web site.

This is a crucial opportunity for people who know and care about young children to influence the expectations that will shape California's preschool educational policies.

FOR INFORMATION: 916-319-0800. For times and places for the input sessions: [www.sonoma.edu/cihs/cpin/pdf/All%20Region%20Input%20Sessions%20%20\(3\).pdf](http://www.sonoma.edu/cihs/cpin/pdf/All%20Region%20Input%20Sessions%20%20(3).pdf)