

From Philadelphia ...



PCCY

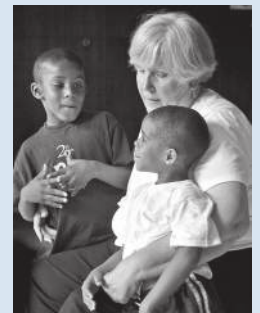
Public Citizens for
Children and Youth

Annual Report
2007

... to the Region

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From June 2007 through May 2008, PCCY organized and advocated to improve the lives of children in the region by focusing on increasing support for quality child care programs and public education, increasing the number of children who secured oral, behavioral and physical health care, and protecting children and families from efforts to weaken the safety net. The results, with a lot of help from our friends and a lot of organizing and op-eds and coalition building, were a new state budget that included \$75 million for pre-k and an increase of \$125 million for child care and a new city budget that included increased support for public education by transferring millage for schools.

During the year, we focused on public education by leading the regional coalition effort to increase state funding. The results were in at the end of June - the new state budget included an historic increase of education funding for public education and the promise of more support! We also worked on increasing funding and support at the state and city levels for early childhood funding. The results again were good as state funding for child care showed marked increases and locally the new City administration and Council supported the Child Care Facilities Fund!

At the Federal level, PCCY continued its leadership in working with the region's federal office holders to oppose efforts to restrict health care for children and to increase family awareness of programs and services to strengthen the safety net and the health and well being of children.

During the year, we spoke up and spoke out on health issues, education and child care issues, organized coalitions and events, provided trainings and assistance to families, worked with the new City administration on strategies to lower the drop out rate and to increase the number of children who have a better chance in life and reached out regionally to help families secure behavioral and oral healthcare.

Last fall, we released the fifth edition of our report *'The Bottom Line Is... Children'*, an examination of the condition of children living in the five county region. We took it on the road, presenting our findings to legislators in Harrisburg, a business group in Philadelphia, a neighborhood association in Center City, and the Delaware Valley Grant-makers. *'The Bottom Line Is... Children'* continues to be a thought-provoking report that, hopefully, stimulates attention, problem-solving and commitment to change the life trajectory of many children and families living in this region.

Our work at the state and city level supporting the welfare coalition continued, merging into a new coalition advocating increased attention to the actual content and availability of meals for children. This coalition has focused on food stamp support, improving the nutrition and meal availability in school breakfast and lunch programs and after-school programs. Together with The Food Trust and Community Legal Services, PCCY worked to respond to the nutritional needs of children, hoping to increase the number and quality of breakfasts served in our schools. We also spread the word about the vital role food stamps play in many families' survival and organized information sessions about the nutritional needs of low-income children.

PCCY's day-to-day work is about speaking and reaching out, writing and issuing reports, and building public awareness and commitment to make a big difference in the lives of children. The year has been marked by some successes but the lives of too many children are fragile. We can and must do better! Join us as we continue to work on all of these issues and more in the year ahead.

Do What You Can For Kids!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Garrett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

In health care, we were able to support and secure health insurance and access to physical, dental and behavioral health care for thousands of children. We stimulated increases in lead poison prevention and raised awareness of the health and educational needs of the region's children. We joined with other advocates in working to prevent restrictive regulations from being enforced at the federal level. We have completed much of the research to prepare a report on the eye care needs of Philadelphia's children and anticipate publishing it shortly.

Child Healthwatch Helpline

PCCY's Child Healthwatch Helpline continued our record of assisting parents and guardians by connecting nearly 1,000 children with health insurance and access to health care over the year. Our helpline staff also trained 587 school nurses, counselors and support staff, and child care workers in the five-county region.

Behavioral Health Resource Guides



PCCY published a pair of behavioral health care resource guides for Bucks and Delaware counties. (Next year, we will develop guides for Chester, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties.) The **'Where To Go For Help'** guides are broken down into two groups - birth through age 5 and children and adolescents - and are available in hard copy and online.

We provided regular advocacy sessions to the residents at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children and organized visits and interviews with key decision makers stressing the importance of CHIP and Medicaid. We also arranged newspaper interviews with key informants to tell their story of the value of these programs.

Our work on the Behavioral Health Task Force (The Compact) last year and this year has been important in advancing efforts that will provide child care programs

with behavioral health consultants, develop more and earlier behavioral health supports, and increase behavioral health attention and services in schools and communities.

Dental

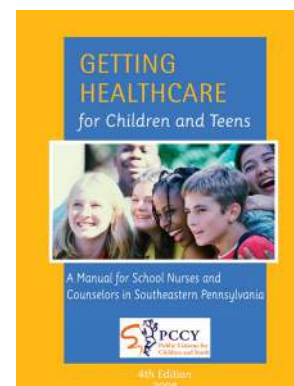
PCCY's fourth annual 'Give Kids a Smile Day' secured dental care for more than 450 children in the region this year. The School District of Philadelphia sent out an automated recorded phone message about 'Smile Day' to city households that generated 400 calls to PCCY seeking referrals for free and low-cost dental care. A record 23 dental practices throughout the city opened their doors this year, providing no cost exams, x-rays, cleanings, sealants and treatment for oral health problems. We issued a dental resource guide and publicized the oral health needs of children because of the expressed need for information.

Lead

Our work on preventing lead poisoning continues to be groundbreaking: more children are being screened, more homes are being treated preventively for decreasing lead hazards and the city has agreed to reinvest in this effort. We published two reports about lead poisoning in Philadelphia this year and continue to sponsor the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning in the city and state. We are supporting lead removal initiatives at the national level and have been asked to help plan hearings around the state for legislation to prevent lead poisoning.

School Nurse Health Manual

PCCY published and disseminated over 3,500 copies of the fourth edition of our 'Health Manual for School Nurses and Counselors'. We provided trainings throughout the region on the use of the manual and how schools can help families access the free and low cost health insurance options in Pennsylvania.





Every young child deserves a great beginning and a strong foundation for learning. The research is clear: high quality early

education provides this foundation, increasing a child's chances of succeeding in school and later in life. This year, PCCY continued to advocate for more access to high quality early care and education at the state, regional and local levels.

PCCY played a leading role in statewide coalitions that sought increased funding for pre-kindergarten, quality improvement and child care subsidies for low-income working families. We helped develop state budget requests, analyzed the budget, coordinated legislative visits, cultivated champions within the legislature, and expanded public support through a public forum, e-advocacy and news stories, letters to the editor and op-ed pieces. These efforts helped to increase Pennsylvania's investment in early care and education by more than \$62 million this year.

We coordinated the Southeastern Pennsylvania Early Childhood Coalition, which brings together child care providers, advocates and members of the public sector from Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties to advocate for increased access to quality child care. The Coalition was active in efforts to increase state funding, to pass new state child care regulations, establish Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts and eliminate barriers to the child care licensing process. Our input on child care quality was sought by local and state lawmakers.

Child Care Facilities Fund

We were pleased that in a year with so many economic pressures, the City of Philadelphia's budget included \$1 million for the Child Care Facilities Fund, which provides grants and loans to improve the quality of local child care programs.

PCCY spearheaded efforts to secure these funds; we testified, brought 200 young children to City Council to emphasize the need for safe child care facilities, briefed Council members, generated media coverage, and flooded members' offices with letters that underscored the importance of the fund. We were asked to convene the Mayor's Early Learning Advisory Committee, which is developing a comprehensive plan to improve outcomes for Philadelphia's youngest children.

We continued to monitor the need and availability of child care in the five county region, and noted that the lack of availability of subsidized care is a major barrier to teen parents graduating from high school.

We published a brief on this issue, worked with officials at the School District of Philadelphia to extend the maternity leave policy for teen parents, and stimulated a policy to have subsidized child care set aside for the children of teen parents who attend school.



PCCY's work on education continues to be broad and deep, focusing on the goal of ensuring that all children have access to quality education. As the school year came to a close, a broad coalition of advocates was able to celebrate victory as the state's contribution to public education grew significantly and the language of the education law reflected the desire of the legislature to support increased funding to meet the funding adequacy needs of the school districts of the state.

Positive Behavior Supports

In the last year, we completed and disseminated our report on school climate and hosted a large forum about Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS). This forum led to a major initiative with the School District and United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania to introduce this strategy to a large number of Philadelphia schools. We recently received a fellowship to advance our Positive Behavior Supports effort, and we are collaborating with School District personnel, another education advocacy group, civic leaders and the United Way in pursuing this initiative at both the state and city levels.

Beating The Odds

We also gathered together a small group to examine the characteristics of high poverty schools that are "beating the odds." We published this report and are sharing our findings with leadership and highlighting (and hopefully spreading!) best practices.

Picasso Project



Our work in bringing the arts to public schools continued to expand as we provided eight grants to schools ranging from \$1,500 to \$5,000 that helped support the integration of arts projects into the lives of the students. In addition, the Picasso Project released one arts policy report and became engaged in several citywide coalitions to bolster arts for youth in Philadelphia.

Our work in bringing the arts to public schools continued to expand as we provided eight grants

Over the last few years, we have advocated for an increased presence of the arts and music in the public schools, and are pleased to report that the School District is planning to hire more arts teachers and change its policies to expand supports for the arts in a variety of ways.

Alternate Pathways

PCCY led task forces to recommend more non-disciplinary, alternative pathways for students for whom the traditional high schools have proved an ineffective setting for their academic progress. We testified many times at City Council and the School District, urging greater investment in education, smaller class size, more counselors, nurses and librarians, better professional development, and more transparency in decision making.

Parkway Northwest High School for Peace and Social Justice

"The Peace School," begun at the urging of PCCY, continued to advance as it celebrated its third successful year. PCCY's advocacy has been critical to the school's success.

Dropout Prevention and Project U-Turn

Our dropout prevention efforts brought us to Harrisburg and City Hall to testify about a variety of issues. We were part of a successful ad-hoc coalition that increased summer jobs for youth. As a result of our identifying the problems of young mothers in securing adequate child care, the School District has promised to change its maternity leave policy while the state has mandated set-aside dollars for teen mothers in the subsidy program.

Schools-Related Issues

In addition to speaking at the School Reform Commission public meetings, PCCY testified regarding school-related issues several times this year in City Council at Budget Committee hearings, in Harrisburg at a meeting of the Education Committee of the House of Representatives, and at meetings with Pennsylvania legislative leadership including the state Secretary of Policy, Secretary of Education and the Deputy Secretary of Education. Together with the Education Law Center, we helped author legislation to increase the number of counselors in troubled schools, presenting the idea to the Secretary of Education and the Chair of the Education Committee of the House of Representatives.

2007 - 2008: A Closer Look at Juvenile Justice

PCCY continued to serve as a watchdog for children in trouble by speaking out and advocating for a new Youth Study Center, testifying at zoning hearings and in City Council, and now expects that at last, the facility is on its way to being built.

Courtwatch

We released our Courtwatch report, which was the culmination of last year's Courtwatch project, and began to develop an initiative about first-time offenders.

'*The Bottom Line Is... Children*' report identified the large number of African-American youth who are arrested for minor offenses in the suburbs; we will begin to work on this issue next year.

The drug treatment diversion program that PCCY helped bring about has been replicated citywide. PCCY explored the challenges facing Family Court Probation Officers and the handling of their first-time offender caseloads at three focus groups. The findings will be published in a report next year.

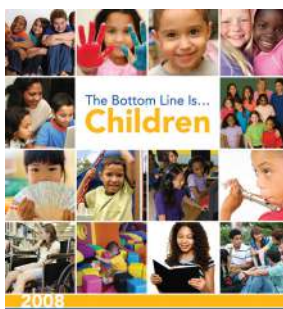
AND on the radio, television, and in major news outlets, we spoke up for, stood up for, and urged more public commitment to improve child care, child welfare, food and nutrition and education for all our children.

We met with editorial writers of major news outlets, providing background information and encouragement to focus on the news and issues pertinent to children and families in our region. We issued many reports and policy briefs on critical issues that were sent to our stakeholders in an effort to increase the number of informed and outspoken child advocates.

We wrote several articles for the Public School Notebook and been featured in key media on education, child care and pre-k. We hosted a monthly television show with reporters, covering topical education news and exploring issues about schools, and engaging the public interest.

We celebrated the announcement of free public transportation to and from school for children in Philadelphia and we served on the transition team for the School District's new superintendent/CEO and we were represented on the candidate selection team.

The Bottom Line is... Children



Public Citizens
for Children and Youth



PCCY published the fifth edition of, '*The Bottom Line is... Children*' a report on the status of children and families in our region and the services they receive.

The report contains good news and bad news. The good news is that the whole region is doing better with regard to child welfare: fewer kids are being

reported abused, fewer of them are going into placement and more are being adopted; there is improvement in most of the region's school students' performance and more families are able to get support for child care and quality of child care has improved.

Yet, more babies are being born at low birth weight, more families are falling into poverty and African-American kids are overwhelmingly over-represented in the juvenile justice system.

Just like the changing landscape, none of these conditions is permanent. The fortunes of families and the kids in them can change abruptly, turning a life of plenty into one that relies on the much maligned social safety net, a frayed net that in some areas has not been strengthened in many years. The report urges that we think more regionally and notes the advances made as well as the trouble signals that must be heeded. The Bottom Line reminds us to strengthen our determination to work toward a supportive community that is committed to improving the lives of children and families.

Conclusion

Last fall we changed our name but not our mission or our initials. As we extend our work in the region we will continue to keep our eyes focused on the children who are most dependent on good public policy. This year, we sent the new Mayor a report on the condition of the city's children, saw the inauguration of the first Philadelphia Youth Commission and continued to build on gathering information, increasing public awareness and making a major difference for the region's children.

We counted a victory for kids in every area – health care, child care, education, transportation, fighting childhood hunger, increasing jobs and job possibilities for youth, decreasing lead in children's lives, and securing dental care for hundreds of kids – while providing them real experiences in the arts and improving their engagement with school.

The board and staff at PCCY remain strong and committed advocates for children, helping to improve their lives and life chances. We said goodbye to some long-time friends on the Board of Directors. **Helen Dennis** and **Beth McDaid** who have served on and off the board for more than 16 years will take leaves of absence.

Leann Ayers, Carleton Lee, Laval Miller-Wilson, Miguel Ramirez and Amber West have gone off the Board this year and joining the Board is former board member **Wanda Mial** along with new board members **Naomi Alper, Evelyn Eskin, Mark Goldstein, Stephanie Korber, Yvette Nunez and Jerilyn Radcliffe.**

We said goodbye to **Alisa Simon**, who for six years served as Health Policy Director, and is heading north to Canada for a new challenge as the Senior Policy Analyst at the Association of Ontario Midwives.

We welcomed **Louise Pangborn**, as our new Development Director, **Joshua Cohen** as our Health Strategist and **Sid Holmes** as Communications Director.

We also welcomed Stoneleigh Center Fellow, **Kelly Siegel** who will help PCCY advance the implementation of Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) within the Philadelphia School District and **Melissa Berrios** who will work on child welfare issues and our Parenting Project.

There is still so much to do as we keep our collective eyes – and hopefully those of the public – on the bottom line, which is of course ... children.



In Health, we...

- secured health insurance and access to physical, dental and behavioral health care for thousands of children;
- stimulated increases in lead poison prevention;
- raised awareness of the health and educational needs of the region's children;
- joined with many others in preventing restrictive regulations from being enforced at the federal level;
- provided school nurses, counselors and staff of child-serving organizations in our region with the necessary information and connections to help families secure treatment for behavioral health issues and connect them with health insurance.

In Early Childhood, we...

- significantly increased state support for pre-k and early childhood;
- secured city support for child care facilities;
- stimulated a change in the maternity leave policy to support teen mothers, and include a mandate to have child care support set aside for infants and teen mothers who would attend school.

In Education, we...

- successfully advocated for and saw increased funding for public education at the state & city levels;
- successfully advocated for new strategies for improved school climate;
- won free public transportation for Philadelphia public school kids to get to and from school;
- successfully advocated for all schools to have some art/music education exposure and increased arts in schools;
- helped get an increased commitment to non-disciplinary alternative education, and the beginnings of a positive behavioral supports movement in schools;
- urged the SRC to look more closely and individually at the progress made by education management organizations and charter schools, and to make their contracts more transparent, and;
- advanced efforts to lower the dropout rate in our schools.

And we...

- continued to advocate for a new Youth Study Center, and;
- celebrated the inauguration of the first Philadelphia Youth Commission.



PCCY Presents the 2008 “True Friend of Children” and “Community Spirit Founders” Awards

With our theme of ‘Wins for Kids’, PCCY held our annual Super Party in April 2008 at the Please Touch Museum. Judy Borie (left) received the Lucy Sayre, “Community Spirit Founders” award for demonstrating outstanding volunteer achievements on behalf of children, youth and families and Sara Nerken received the Wilbur Hobbs, “True Friend of Children” award for demonstrating concern for children, youth and families in our region. The event was bittersweet as it will be our last party at the museum’s 21st Street location - they are moving to Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park in October 2008. Our first party there should really be... “SUPER!”

Foundations & Corporations

We acknowledge with gratitude, heartfelt thanks and appreciation the generosity of our donors in the past fiscal year (June 1, 2007 thru May 31, 2008) and we look forward to your continued support! Thank you for making this year an extraordinary success.

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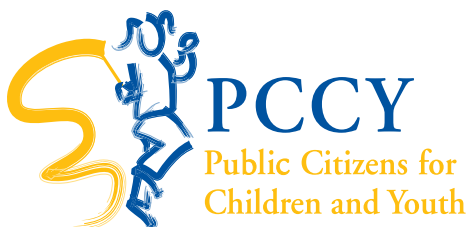
Gail Smith
Office Manager, Bookkeeper

Steven E. Fynes
IT & Events Coordinator

Colleen McCauley-Brown
Assistant Health Policy Director

Roxy Woloszyn
Behavioral Health Coordinator

Deborah Zubow
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