



# **Early Care and Education Health and Safety and Public Policy:**

*Informing Stakeholders,  
Educating Policymakers  
and Encouraging Action*

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## Introduction

The California Childcare Health Program (CCHP) is supported by various state and federal grants and it is, therefore, outside our mandate to lobby lawmakers or try to persuade them to vote one way or another. Nonetheless, public policy has a significant impact on both the early care and education, and public health fields, and thus on CCHP’s mission and goals.

CCHP engages in the public policy process in three ways:

- Informing early childhood professionals and health care providers, families of children in group care settings, and other stakeholders about the impact of public policy on their ability to ensure high quality early care and education for their young children.
- Educating policymakers regarding the impact of legislation and regulations that affect health and safety standards in early care and education settings.
- Encouraging everyone involved in ensuring quality early care and education to be active in the public policy process, regardless of what any one person might support or oppose.

This guide is divided into the following sections:

Informing Stakeholders	page 3
Encouraging Action	page 4
Getting Information	page 5
Contacting Policymakers at the National Level	page 6
Contacting Policymakers at the State Level	page 8
Contacting Policymakers at the Local Level	page 10
Getting Your Message Across	page 11
Communication Protocols	page 11
High Impact Communication	page 11
Meeting with Lawmakers	page 12
About California Childcare Health Program	page 13

## **Informing Stakeholders**

The impact of public policy on all aspects of health and safety in early care and education is tremendous, influencing everything from playground safety to the profession's ability to recruit and retain top quality early childhood professionals. The sheer volume of topics and issues under consideration at any one time can be overwhelming, which probably prevents more people from getting and staying involved. One way to manage the vastness is to discriminate and focus—decide which issues are most important to you, and track the bills and initiatives affecting your issues.

For the latest information on national and state legislation and policy initiatives that affect the field of early care and education or health, visit the Web sites listed below, and do a bill and/or law search. For additional information, you can also visit the Web sites listed under *Encouraging Action*.

### **Policy at the Federal Level**

United States Senate: [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

United States House of Representatives: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

### **Policy at the State Level**

The California State Assembly: [www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov)

The California State Senate: [www.sen.ca.gov](http://www.sen.ca.gov)

## Encouraging Action

“Think globally, act locally” is more than just a buzz term: decisions made in Washington about billion-dollar block grants have an impact on early care and education settings and other places where services are delivered to children and families. That’s where most of us live our real lives day after day.

The important thing to remember is our elected representatives do not always know what life is like at the point of service. That’s why CCHP encourages everyone who cares about quality early care and education to get involved with the policy process.

- If you are an early childhood professional, parent, or health care provider who works with children, you have first-hand knowledge that is very valuable to the policymaking process. Elected representatives need this knowledge in order to represent you effectively.
- Policy decisions affect not only the quality of care provided to the children to whom we are deeply committed, but also affect your ability, as a provider or parent, to access resources. Policy can impact your compensation as a professional and your ability to enhance your professional skills.

There are many different ways to get involved, and not all of them require a huge time commitment. Writing letters is probably the easiest action you can take, and has the greatest impact for the time and energy you invest: state lawmakers consider one letter to represent the opinion of 300 Californians, and that number is even higher for national lawmakers. Faxes, telephone calls, emails, and visits to a lawmaker’s office are also effective (see High Impact Communication, below).

At the next level of involvement you can join a variety of organizations and participate in their policy-related activities. As a volunteer you will be able to commit as much or as little time as you wish. The types of activities are quite varied. You may attend conferences, take part in rallies and marches, stuff envelopes or sit on a steering committee.

Wondering where to start? Contact some of the organizations listed in the “Getting Information” section of this document. They will tell you what they offer and how you can help—and they will deeply appreciate your assistance.

## Getting Information

**Action Alliance for Children:** [www.4children.org](http://www.4children.org)

**California Association for Family Child Care (CAFCC):** [www.cafcc.org](http://www.cafcc.org)

**California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC):**  
[www.caeyc.org](http://www.caeyc.org)

**California Budget Project:** [www.cbp.org](http://www.cbp.org)

**California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (CCCRRN):** [www.rrnetwork.org](http://www.rrnetwork.org)

**Center for the Child Care Workforce:** [www.ccw.org](http://www.ccw.org)

**Child Care Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:**  
[www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/index.htm](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/index.htm)

**Child Welfare League of America:** [www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)

**Children's Defense Fund:** [www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)

**Children NOW:** [www.childrennow.org](http://www.childrennow.org)

**Family Voices of California:** [www.familyvoicesofca.org](http://www.familyvoicesofca.org)

**National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):** [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

**National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC):** [www.nafcc.org](http://www.nafcc.org)

**National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRA):**  
[www.naccrra.org](http://www.naccrra.org)

**National Center for Education:** <http://nces.ed.gov>

**National Family Voices:** [www.familyvoices.org](http://www.familyvoices.org)

Please visit [www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org/webpages/campaigns.htm](http://www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org/webpages/campaigns.htm) (from where you downloaded this document) frequently to check for expanded public policy and advocacy listings.

## Contacting Policymakers at the National Level

(TDD/TTY indicates a telephone line equipped for use by the hearing impaired)

### California Senators of the 108th Congress

#### **Barbara Boxer (D-CA)**

112 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, D.C., 20510  
(202) 224-3553

Email: [Senator@Boxer.senate.gov](mailto:Senator@Boxer.senate.gov)

Web site: <http://boxer.senate.gov>

#### *Local Offices:*

Sacramento  
501 I Street, Suite 7-600  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 448-2787  
(916) 448-2563 fax

San Francisco  
1700 Montgomery Street, Suite 240  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
(415) 403-0100  
(415) 956-6701 fax

Los Angeles  
312 N. Spring Street, Suite 1748  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 894-5000  
(213) 894-5042 fax

Fresno  
1130 O Street, Suite 2450  
Fresno, CA 93721  
(559) 497-5109  
(559) 497-5111 fax

San Diego  
600 B Street, Suite 2240  
San Diego, CA 92101  
(619) 239-3884  
(619) 239-5719 fax

Inland Empire  
201 North E Street, Suite 210  
San Bernardino, CA 92401  
(909) 888-8525  
(909) 888-8613 fax

#### **Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)**

331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20510  
(202) 224-3841

Email: [senator@feinstein.senate.gov](mailto:senator@feinstein.senate.gov)

Web site: <http://feinstein.senate.gov/email.html>

#### *Local Offices:*

San Francisco  
One Post Street, Suite 2450  
San Francisco, CA 94104  
(415) 393-0707

Los Angeles  
11111 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 915  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
(310) 914-7300

San Diego  
750 "B" Street, Suite 1030  
San Diego, CA 92101  
(619) 231-9712

Fresno  
1130 "O" Street, Suite 2446  
Fresno, CA 93721  
(559) 485-7430

To find contact information for your U.S. Representative, go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). The site features a search engine that uses your zip code to find your Representative.

**President of the United States**  
**The Honorable George W. Bush**  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
Phone: (202) 456-1414  
TDD/TTY: (202) 456-6213  
Fax: (202) 456-2461  
Email: [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)  
Web site: [www.whitehouse.gov/president](http://www.whitehouse.gov/president)

**Secretary of Health and Human Services**  
**Tommy G. Thompson**  
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
Phone: (202) 619-0257  
Toll Free: 1-877-696-6775  
Web site: [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

**Secretary of Education**  
**Rod Paige**  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202  
Phone: (202) 401-3000  
Fax: (202) 401-0596  
Email: [Rod.Paige@ed.gov](mailto:Rod.Paige@ed.gov)  
Web site: [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ose/index.html?src=oc](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ose/index.html?src=oc)

**Chair of Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee**  
**Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA)**  
315 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
phone: (202) 224-4543  
Email: [senator@kennedy.senate.gov](mailto:senator@kennedy.senate.gov)  
Web site: [www.senate.gov/~kennedy](http://www.senate.gov/~kennedy)

**Chair of Senate Appropriations Committee**  
**Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK)**  
522 Senate Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
Phone: (517) 224-3004  
TDD: (202) 224-2354  
Email: [senator@stevens.senate.gov](mailto:senator@stevens.senate.gov)  
Web site: <http://stevens.senate.gov>

**Chair of House Committee on Education and the Workforce**  
**Representative John A. Boehner (R-OH)**  
U. S. House of Representatives  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-4527  
TDD/TTY: (202) 226-3372  
Web site: <http://edworkforce.house.gov>

**Chair of House Appropriations Committee**  
**Representative C. W. Bill Young (R-FL)**  
2407 Rayburn Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-5961  
Web site: <http://appropriations.house.gov>

## Contacting Policymakers at the State Level

### **Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger**

State Capitol Building  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 445-2841  
Fax: (916) 445-4633  
Email: [governor@governor.ca.gov](mailto:governor@governor.ca.gov)  
Web site: [www.governor.ca.gov/state/govsite/gov\\_homepage.jsp](http://www.governor.ca.gov/state/govsite/gov_homepage.jsp)

### **California Department of Education**

#### **Jack O'Connell, Superintendent of Public Instruction**

721 Capitol Mall  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 319-0800  
Email: [joconnell@cde.ca.gov](mailto:joconnell@cde.ca.gov)  
Web site: [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)

### **California Department of Education, Child Development Division**

#### **Michael Jett, Director**

1430 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2720  
Phone: (916) 324-0730  
Fax: (916) 323-6853  
Email: [mjett@cde.ca.gov](mailto:mjett@cde.ca.gov)  
Web site: [www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd](http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd)

### **California Department of Health Services**

Vacant, Director  
P.O. Box 942732  
Sacramento, CA 94234-7320  
Web site: [www.dhs.ca.gov](http://www.dhs.ca.gov)

### **California Department of Social Services**

Vacant, Director  
744 P Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 445-6951  
Web site: [www.dss.cahwnet.gov](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov)

### **First 5 California (California Children and Families Commission)**

#### **Rob Reiner, Chairman**

501 J Street, Suite 530  
Sacramento CA 95814  
Phone: (916) 323-0056  
Fax: (916) 323-0069  
Email: [info@ccfc.ca.gov](mailto:info@ccfc.ca.gov)  
Web site: [www.ccfc.ca.gov](http://www.ccfc.ca.gov)



To find contact information for your California Senator using your address, go to:  
[www.sen.ca.gov/~newsen/senators/senators.htm](http://www.sen.ca.gov/~newsen/senators/senators.htm)

To find contact information for your California Assembly Representative using your address, go to:  
[www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset9text.htm](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset9text.htm).

### **California Senate Committees**

A complete list of state Senate committees can be found at [www.sen.ca.gov/~newsen/committees/committees.htm](http://www.sen.ca.gov/~newsen/committees/committees.htm)

#### **Chair of the California Senate Education Committee**

##### **Senator John Vasconcellos (D-San Jose)**

State Capitol, Room 5108

Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 445-9740

Fax: (916) 324-0283

Email: [senator.vasconcellos@sen.ca.gov](mailto:senator.vasconcellos@sen.ca.gov)

Web site: <http://democrats.sen.ca.gov/senator/Vasconcellos>

#### **Chair of the California Senate Health and Human Services Committee**

##### **Senator Deborah Ortiz (D-Sacramento)**

State Capitol, Room 5114

Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 445-7807

Fax: (916) 323-2263

Email: [senator.ortiz@sen.ca.gov](mailto:senator.ortiz@sen.ca.gov)

Web site: <http://democrats.sen.ca.gov/senator/ortiz>

#### **Chair of the California Senate Appropriations Committee**

##### **Senator Dede Alpert (D-San Diego)**

State Capitol, Room 5050

Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: (916) 445-3952

Fax: (916) 327-2188

Email: [senator.alpert@sen.ca.gov](mailto:senator.alpert@sen.ca.gov)

Web site: <http://democrats.sen.ca.gov/senator/alpert>

## California State Assembly Committees

A complete list of state Assembly committees can be found at [www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset8text.asp](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/acsframeset8text.asp).

### **Chair of the State Assembly Education Committee**

#### **Assemblywoman Jackie Goldberg (D 45th)**

2003 State Capitol Building

Sacramento, CA 94249-0001

Phone: (916) 319-2045

Fax: (916) 319-2145

Email: [assemblymember.goldberg@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:assemblymember.goldberg@assembly.ca.gov)

Web site: [www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=6](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=6)

### **Chair of the State Assembly Health Committee**

#### **Assemblywoman Rebecca Cohn (D-24th)**

State Capitol

P.O. Box 942849

Sacramento, CA 94249-0024

Phone: (916) 319-2024

Fax: (916) 319-2124

Email: [Assemblymember.Cohn@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:Assemblymember.Cohn@assembly.ca.gov)

Web site: [www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=10](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=10)

### **Chair of the State Assembly Appropriations Committee**

#### **Assemblywoman Judy Chu(D-49th)**

State Capitol

P.O. Box 942849

Sacramento, CA 94249-0049

Phone: 916-319-2049

FAX: 916-319-2149

Email: [Assemblymember.chu@assembly.ca.gov](mailto:Assemblymember.chu@assembly.ca.gov)

Web site: [www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=43](http://www.assembly.ca.gov/acs/newcomframeset.asp?committee=43)

## Contacting Policymakers at the Local Level

To find contact information for your local policymakers, consult your local phone book or your city or county's Web page. Start with your city hall. You can attend meetings of your city council, your county board of supervisors, your local child care planning and development council, and your local board of education, just to name a few. Most of these meetings include a scheduled time for the public to address the assembled policy and decision makers.

# Getting Your Message Across

## Communication Protocols

Elected officials will take your communication more seriously if you follow a few simple guidelines.

1. In the address of a letter, email, or fax, use “The Honorable” in front of the name, such as “The Honorable George W. Bush,” or “The Honorable Barbara Boxer.”
2. In the salutation of a letter, email, or fax, use the individual’s title and name; “Dear Senator Lott,” “Dear Governor Davis.”
3. In face-to-face conversation, use the individual’s title and name (“Assembly Member Chan,” or “Commissioner Reiner”). Exceptions: the US President is always addressed “Mr./Madame President.” If you are addressing an individual in the context of their role as chairperson of a committee, you should use “Mr. Chairman” or “Madame Chairwoman.”
4. Include your full name and mailing address, regardless of the type of communication you send. Lawmakers tend to pay more attention to communication from their own constituents, especially in emails.

## High Impact Communication

Whether you’re zipping off an email or are meeting a lawmaker in person, you’re more likely to be persuasive if you invest a little time focusing your message.

- Keep your communications brief and to the point—lawmakers are very busy, and they are disinclined to read long, rambling letters.
- Keep the topic narrow enough to propose concrete action. For example, “Safety in Child Care” is a very broad topic, and “Playground Safety” still covers a lot of issues. “Ensuring Safe Playground Surfaces” is a more manageable topic. State your message clearly and right off the bat; if you need to include background information, do so after stating your main message.
- Propose explicit action(s). Examples: “I urge you to vote yes on AB XXX,” or “Please ask your staff to research community resource options,” or “Consider sponsoring a fundraiser.”
- Break your message down into two or three key points that support it. At least one of your points should focus on “what’s in it for me?” for the lawmaker. Returning to the safe playground surfaces example, you could propose a public ceremony at a playground with civic leaders and media invited—photo opportunity! Determine the most logical and persuasive sequence for presenting each point, and be sure to make it clear how each point supports the main message.
- Do a little homework before drafting your message. How has this lawmaker voted on related issues in the past? Have they expressed a commitment to children, to education, to health? If so, explain how your point of view supports a position the lawmaker already has taken.
- Keep the communication positive and constructive—confrontation, accusations, and criticisms are likely to be counter-productive. Think in terms of how your group and this lawmaker can work together.

## Meeting with Lawmakers

The most effective communication is face to face, and it is easier to get an appointment with an elected representative than you might think. The official's office might suggest that you meet with a staff member instead. This doesn't necessarily mean they're not taking you seriously—just make sure you're meeting with a staff member who focuses on your issue. Meeting with that staff member could be very productive.

Some good strategies for a meeting with an elected official or their staff person:

- Review High Impact Communication (above) for tips on focusing your message.
- Go with one or two others who support your point of view. If possible, form a delegation (no larger than four total) with people who represent organizations with a stake in the issue. For example, if you're meeting with your state assembly representative about playground safety, your delegation might include representative from the local parks and recreation department, local health department, and parent groups. This will help the lawmaker see that diverse interest groups (voters) share a common point of view.
- Organize a meeting with your delegation before you meet with the lawmaker to ensure that everyone is "on the same page." Everyone who goes should speak, so you might assign each individual a specific point to present; ideally, each individual's point will relate to the group they represent.
- Prior to the meeting, send a few relevant materials to the lawmaker's office for them to have a chance to review ahead of time.
- Politicians tend to be most comfortable talking about topics for which they have prepared or about which they are knowledgeable; moreover, they are often adept at steering a conversation away from one topic onto a topic that's comfortable for them. If you find this happening, respectfully suggest that "we get back to the subject of our meeting." Remember, your goal is to inform your representatives so they can represent you effectively; lawmakers want you to inform them, too, although sometimes they forget.

## About California Childcare Health Program

The California Childcare Health Program (CCHP) is a community-oriented, multidisciplinary team dedicated to enhancing the quality of child care for California's children by initiating and strengthening linkages between the health, safety, and child care communities and the families they serve.

For more information, contact:

California Childcare Health Program  
1333 Broadway, Suite 1010  
Oakland, CA 94612-1926  
(510) 839-1195 Phone  
(510) 839-0339 Fax  
(800) 333-3212 Healthline  
[www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org](http://www.ucsfchildcarehealth.org)