



NEW ENGLAND ALLIANCE FOR
Children's Health

*Healthy Children: A Quality Investment
A Business Community Outreach Project*

OUR GOAL

To strengthen the New England Alliance for Children's Health's ability to influence public policy and expand our reach by engaging new business partners in our children's health care advocacy work.

OUR RATIONALE

Engaging business leaders in children's health access and quality issues is extremely powerful. When business leaders who are generally respected for their fiscal responsibility, conservative views and investment-savvy argue for long-term investments in children, legislators are likely to view this as a credible message and positively respond to their suggestions.

The business community in New England has been highly interested and actively involved in children's causes, particularly those related to education and early childhood issues. In addition, the business community has, in some states, been engaged in health care matters related to the cost of insuring employees. There is, however, still work to be done to try and to build bridges with the business community around children's health care issues.

OUR STRATEGY

The Alliance recognizes that the child advocacy community too often communicates problems and opportunities regarding children's health care coverage in ways that are off-putting to the business community. In order to build stronger working relationships with the business community, we need to better understand the way business leaders think about children's health care and also understand the barriers to collaboration between the business and advocacy communities. The Alliance and the New England Council have co-sponsored focus groups in each of the New England states where we asked questions and heard from business leaders about how we can better frame our issues and most productively engage business leadership.

The Alliance is now working on analyzing our findings and using the information to create a business case for supporting children's health care. The Alliance will disseminate the business case and use it as a tool for engaging business leaders. During this process, the Alliance will work with our advocacy partners from each state and help them better understand issues raised by the business community with the goal of cultivating relationships with business leaders.

The Alliance and the New England Council will then take this new information and develop strategies for a collaborative effort for business leaders, advocates and health care providers to work together to address pediatric quality of care issues within New England.

OUR PARTNERS

This project is a collaboration of the Alliance and the New England Council, the nation's oldest regional business organization. Paul Harrington, Associate Director of the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, is moderating the focus groups and analyzing the results. It has been made possible with leadership support from the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Inc. Additional funding for this project has been provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, Children's Hospital Boston, Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Connecticut Health Foundation, Endowment for Health, Massachusetts Medical Society, and Packard Foundation.