

Who's for Kids,
and Who's just
kidding

Children's Campaign Current

Mission
To engage citizens to
take action and hold
our leaders accountable
to deliver the 5
Promises to Florida's
Children

Free!

Weekly Review of Children's News

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Welcome to the **Children's Campaign Current**,
a weekly review of top news stories about children's issues across the state

This review keeps advocates up-to-date on challenges and events affecting Florida's children,
while providing a foundation for public policy advocacy.

To learn more about the work of the Children's Campaign, please visit our [website](#)

Promise 1 - Children's Health

Editorial: KidCare program expansion needed (*Southwest Florida's News-Press*) KidCare now reaches about 176,000 children, providing them with quality medical and dental coverage. With the passage of this bill Florida will see an increase in federal matching money, enough to cover an additional 46,000 Florida children.

Infant tooth decay brings neglect arrest (*Bradenton Herald*) White took her daughter to a dentist at the Lawton Chiles Children & Family Health Care Center and the dentist referred her to a specialist due to the child's advanced tooth decay. White told police she did not take her child to the specialist because the dentist did not take Medicaid.

Promise 2 - Child Protection

Changes reshape Northeast Florida foster care (*Florida Times-Union*) In two years, the number of kids in foster care in Northeast Florida has been cut in half. Adoptions surged, to 578 in one year, a record.

DCF makes its case for change in procedures (*Southwest Florida's News-Press*) Nadereh Salim, CEO of the Children's Network of Southwest Florida, the private organization that oversees children in state care, asked the voices of youth be included. "I just want to make sure children don't get lost in the big picture."

Suicide of foster child, 7, prompts review of DCF drug policy (*St. Petersburg Times*) The boy, 4 feet tall and 67 pounds, was taking two powerful psychiatric drugs at the time of his death, neither of which had been approved by his parent or a judge, as required by state law.

Promise 3 - Early Learning

Early Education Gets a Boost in Department of Education's FY 2010 Budget (*National Institute for Early Education Research*) The proposed budget eliminates Even Start, the 20-year-old program supporting family literacy through early childhood education and adult education. National evaluations have found that children and adults participating in the program made no greater literacy gains than non-participants. The Obama administration said the resources dedicated to Even Start (\$66.5 million in FY 09) would be better directed to other early childhood programs.

Promise 4 - After School

Symphony bound with Jump Start Strings (*The Florida Times Union*) The Jump Start Strings program, which is a collaboration between the the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra and Communities in Schools (a dropout prevention program), gives young students at three area elementary schools the

opportunity to experience music in a new approach to learning.

Promise 5 - Juvenile Justice

Justices Agree to Take Up Sentencing for Young Offenders (*Sarasota Herald Tribune*) The Supreme Court agreed on Monday to consider whether the reasoning that led it to strike down the death penalty for juvenile offenders four years ago should also apply to sentences of life without the possibility of parole.

All Promises

Florida Legislature gets a few things right (*St. Petersburg Times*) SB 1540 adds a touch of common sense to the zero tolerance policy in Florida schools, declaring that not every petty offense or misdemeanor has to be reported to law enforcement, and that schools should "consider the circumstances" before imposing a punishment. Let's hope this takes care of the "plastic butter knife left over from a picnic" cases.

Lawton 'Bud' Chiles: 'Worst to First' hopes to educate, inform, inspire (*Tallahassee Democrat*) Florida has more than 800,000 children who have no health insurance. Florida has 3.5 million family members that have no health insurance. Our overall health system is ranked 48th among the states. Florida has one of the worst high-school graduation rates in the country, as well as one of the worst teen felony and incarceration rates.

Children's Campaign News

Restorative Legislation Passes (*Legislative Connection*) Continuing her reign as pre-eminent child advocate, Sen. Nan Rich (D-Broward) fought for and passed milestone health legislation on the last day of session – the rehabilitation of Florida Kidcare.

DOC Use of Stun Guns on Visiting Children (*Breaking News*) In at least three separate correctional facilities across the state, Department of Corrections officers used 50,000 volt handheld stun guns on visiting children ages 8 through 14. The story was brought to the public by the *St. Petersburg Times*.

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