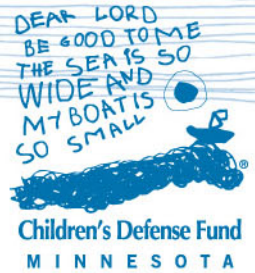


10-10-10 March for Children and Youth Because *All Children Need to be Healthy*



Access to health care and proper nutrition even before a baby is born are essential to building the solid foundation that children need to grow and thrive.

The health of the mother is critically important during pregnancy.

Adequate nutrition and pre-natal care of the pregnant mother is important to a child's development. In the womb, the immune system is developing strength to fight diseases and infections.

- Babies born to mothers who received no prenatal care are three times more likely to be born at low birth weight, and five times more likely to die than babies whose mothers received prenatal care.

Children can't learn if they are hungry.

Nutritious foods help children's physical growth, brain development, and cognitive functioning. Programs that provide free and reduced-price breakfasts and lunches allow children to stay focused and ready to learn during school hours. With adequate nutrition, children are better able to pay attention, miss fewer days of school due to sickness, and show fewer behavioral problems.

- Only 72 percent of low-income children eligible to receive free and reduced-price school meals were enrolled in 2007.
- 198,000 households were food insecure in Minnesota in 2007.
- The fastest population group in Minnesota using community food shelves is children.

Groundbreaking health care reform was passed, but there is more work to be done

Having health coverage is a key indicator of a child's well-being.

- Minnesota has 88,000 children living without health coverage.
- Without health care, a child is 20 to 30 percent more likely to go without needed immunizations, medications, and basic dental care.
- Persistent barriers such as complicated rules and applications, high cost of premiums, lack of information or language barriers often prevent access to health care.
- Uninsured children are more likely to miss school and to experience costly hospitalizations.
- The benefits of providing health care coverage for children would be paid back in future earnings, decreased health care expenditures, and improved health in adulthood.

Ensuring Every Child a Healthy Start is Possible.

Minnesota must provide outreach and assistance to connect every child to comprehensive affordable healthcare.

Questions for Candidates:

What role should the state play in ensuring the health of every child in Minnesota?

What are your plans to ensure all children in Minnesota get access to health care in wake of the new national legislation?