ACT IN-DEPTH RECAP

A County Health Rankings & Roadmaps Webinar

RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT

Stephanie Geller, Project Director for the Roadmaps to Health community grant Healthy Futures: Cradle to College, and Policy Analyst with Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, shared how they were able to successfully advocate for implementation of policies supporting pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten state-wide. Stephanie shared lessons they’ve learned from their advocacy work, which they’re now incorporating into further work on children’s issues. Some of the lessons she shared included:

- Communicating the “why” to both policy makers and grassroots supporters is critical. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT clearly articulated why pre-K and kindergarten is important for children, what the benefits are, and how it’s a win-win for everyone to support these policies.
- There need to be multiple voices articulating the message--not just Rhode Island KIDS COUNT.
- Use media and publications to get the message across.
- Expect setbacks--and go to work on converting decision makers via personal, one-on-one conversations.
- Work incrementally. It’s ok to advocate for a bill that doesn’t include funding at first. (For example, the first Pre-K bill supported a pilot but not ongoing funding. The next bill added the funding incrementally.)

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Kids Count Data Sources
2012 KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Trends in Child Well-Being
2012 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook indicators

Legislative Bills
Pre-K Education Act
Foundation Level School Support
Full Day Kindergarten Accessibility Act

Media Coverage
Lawmaker introduces legislation to expand full-day kindergarten
Rhode Island Kids Count Executive Director and two legislators talk about the full day Kindergarten bill on Feb 2012 Cable show

Link to slides from this webinar can be found here.
ACT ON WHAT’S IMPORTANT GUIDES

Visit the Roadmaps to Health Action Center to find guidance and tools for acting on what’s important, whether you’re just beginning your health improvement journey or are well along the way.

START – We need to plan for taking action on selected policies and/or programs.

ACT - We are coordinating among members of our community to actively implement selected policies and/or programs.

TAKE ACTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- You’ll find the archived video and handouts from the September 11th Act on What’s Important webinar here.
- Nine Questions: A Strategy Planning Tool for Advocacy Campaigns (PDF from the Advocacy Institute) can be found here.
- Sphere of Influence (PDF from Kitty Jerome, kjconsulting) can be found here.

TAKE-AWAYS

We asked participants for one thing that they were taking away. Here’s a sampling of what we heard:

- Inspired from the speakers and the links to the tools!
- Like the tools—will research them more and take them back to my team.
- Change takes time and perseverance.

NEXT STEPS

✔ Register for our upcoming Take Action webinars here.
✔ Contact us via email or phone. We’re here to help!

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