

November 14, 2006

Dearest Advocates:

Rally Update:

On Saturday, we had our Healthcare for Kids Rally at the State Capitol. The Rally was fantastic! Very informative, entertaining and inspirational! We had a respectable turn out of people (estimates are at 700+ participates) given the time of the day and low temperatures. We truly appreciate those that attended and wanted to make healthcare a priority in our state!

Unfortunately, we could have sent a stronger message if more people would have attended. What's more important than your child's healthcare? WE as parents CAN NOT rely on others to advocate for our children or the State will win this battle.

I also want to publicly thank all the **Rally committee members (Leanne, Marty, Jennifer, Julie, Kyron, Sharon, Rebecca, Betsy, Laura, Valerie, Dawn, Susan, Cindy, Justine, Robin, Kim, John, Bob, Deborah, Daina, Kathy, Patrice, Maurice, Bill, Pam, Robert, Becky, Hillary, Jennifer, Susan, Sharon, Rev. Tim, Jim, Judy, Phil, Bob, Laura, Cynthia, Bob, Jennifer, Mike, Bruce, Willis, Santa and Mrs. Claus, Lori, James and Bryan** AND this doesn't even include the additional volunteers the day of the event!) for their devoted energy and time making this one of the most professionally run and educational grassroots Rallies this state has EVER seen.

We did receive a lot of media attention over the last three weeks regarding our Rally in radio, TV and newspaper! We are continuing to educate our State on what the "real" issues are the impacts to those decisions!

In addition, we did have the following legislators attend our Rally:

Lt. Governor Mark Taylor, Senator Steve Thompson, Senator Steve Henson, Senator David Adelman, Rep. Sean Jergusson, Rep. Nan Orrock, and Former Governor Roy Barnes

We would also like to thank those who donated to help make this Rally a success:

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ACTION ITEMS:

1. Continue to check our website at www.kidshealthcarega.org for further updates on what you can do help make a difference in healthcare for kids. Also please check out our new webpage "Important Information" that includes flyers that were given out at the Rally: Facts on Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) and a Babies Can't Wait informational flyer
2. Before the legislative session begins (January 2007), I highly recommend you start to develop relationships with your State Senator and State Representative for your area (go to www.vote-smart.org to find out your legislators by putting in your zip code). We need to start discussing our concerns with our legislators prior to the start of the legislative session.
3. Sign up to be on our distribution list so you can keep up with the latest news. <http://www.kidshealthcarega.org/Add%20your%20name.html>

More Media Coverage of Rally:

1. **Atlanta Journal-Constitution Newspaper**- Saturday, November 4th article: <http://www.ajc.com/search/content/meshmedicaid1104a.html>

The article in the AJC on Saturday, once again shows us that we need to do a better job of educating not only our elected officials on what are the "facts" but also the media. In the article it stated that the September 1st prior authorization changes were for 8 therapy sessions per month NOT 8 units per month. This is not correct information. 8 units is approximately 2 visits per month. This is off by a factor of 4!

I can understand why our elected officials don't understand our issue when this information is misreported. I do plan on sending an e-mail to the AJC helping them know what the "true facts" are in this matter and the impact it has on our families, providers and taxpayers!

Sunday, November 5th – two pictures in Metro Section of the Rally.

2. **Atlanta Parent Magazine**- November issue. They had two articles in their magazine regarding healthcare issues. Page 38 article titled: "Advocating for Change- Parents Inspired to Action by Their Children's Challenges". Page 44 article titled: "Parents Rally for Changes to Healthcare System". (A list of locations where the magazine can be found is at : <http://www.atlantaparent.com/findatparent.html>)

Please send Liz White the Editor of Atlanta Parent Magazine a quick e-mail thanking them for their continued support of this important issue...healthcare for kids! Her email address is: lwhite@atlantaparent.com

3. **TV CBS 46** did cover the Rally as well last night on their 11:00pm news.

Overall, we are very pleased with the amount of media attention we received and the dedication our families, providers and concerned citizens of Georgia regarding this issue, BUT, I can not stress enough.....We must work together!

PLEASE do not rely on others to advocate for your child. We need to work together in order to resolve this issue. I hope in the future more families will get involved and stand up for what is right in this state. Healthcare must be a priority.

I will have further updates regarding advocacy efforts in the coming weeks as we determine the next step in our efforts. At this time, I need to slow down and take more time out for my family over the holiday season. Please remember that I'm only a volunteer parent trying to make a difference in our children's lives.

United...WE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Heidi J. Moore
Rally Director and Parent Advocate