



WHO'S FOR KIDS AND WHO'S JUST KIDDING?

How to make your vote count for Arizona's children.

This November, we will elect a new Governor, all 90 state legislators, all 8 representatives in Congress, and other statewide officials. These elections will profoundly affect the lives of Arizona's children. But kids can't vote. It is up to you to be their political voice. You can tell the politicians that kissing babies is not enough.

Arizona ranks a dismal 43rd in the nation on key measures of child well-being. Despite our dramatic growth, more and more children in Arizona are growing up poor. To build a better quality of life, we need specific, realistic plans that will help parents give their children the health, education, safety and security they need to make tomorrow's Arizona second to none.

This election season, ask candidates tough questions and check their answers. Vote for candidates who put children at the top of their agenda. One of the most important responsibilities of our elected leaders is to provide opportunities for the next generation. This brochure can help you find out *Who's for Kids and Who's Just Kidding?*

Find the candidates who vote for kids

This brochure presents specific facts and questions you can use to find out the candidates' positions on issues affecting children. Use these questions at candidate forums and in letters, emails, and telephone calls to the candidates.

BE SURE TO VOTE BY NOVEMBER 5 TO MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT FOR KIDS!

BOX 1:

Important Dates

September 10	Primary Election
October 1	2002 Gubernatorial Forum for Arizona's Children Herberger Theatre, Phoenix
October 3	Early voting begins for General Election
October 7	Deadline to register to vote for General Election
November 5	GENERAL ELECTION

BOX 2:

Vote from Home

Now, voting is as easy as picking up the telephone! Call your county recorder's office to request that an early ballot be sent to your home. Fill out your ballot, mail it in, and your vote will count for kids!

In Maricopa County, early ballot requests also may be made on-line at www.recorder.maricopa.gov by clicking on "elections."

Arizona County Recorders' Office Phone Numbers

Apache	928-337-7515
Cochise	520-432-9776
Coconino	928-779-6585
Gila	928-425-3231, extension 8738
Graham	928-428-3560
Greenlee	928-865-2632
La Paz	928-669-6136
Maricopa	602-506-1511
Mohave	928-753-0701
Navajo	928-524-4190
Pima	520-623-2649
Pinal	520-868-7101
Santa Cruz	520-761-7800
Yavapai	928-771-3248
Yuma	928-373-6034

Not Registered to Vote?

You can do that by phone and mail, too! Call the Secretary of State's Office at 602-542-8683 or 1-877-THE-VOTE, and ask to have a voter registration form sent to you today! You can also print a voter registration form from the Secretary of State website at www.sos.state.az.us/election/VoterRegistration.htm.



TEN WAYS YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR ARIZONA'S KIDS!

Before the Election

- ★ **Register to Vote** : To vote in this year's election, you must register by October 7.
- ★ **Contact the candidates directly**. Ask candidates about their positions on issues that matter to you and on specific plans they have to help children and families.
- ★ **Make your donations count**. Give your dollars to candidates who share your stand on children's issues.
- ★ **Volunteer** for events that help others register to vote or learn about the issues affecting families.

On Election Day

- ★ **Vote!** More than one quarter of registered voters in Arizona didn't vote in the November 2000 election.
- ★ **Volunteer** your time to help a candidate or initiative you support at the polls.

After Election Day

- ★ **Hold candidates accountable** for campaign promises they made on issues relating to children and families.
- ★ **Stay informed and involved**. The Children's Action Alliance website – www.azchildren.org - is an excellent source of information and updates on critical issues.
- ★ **Write to newspaper editors and call radio shows**. Speak out about what parents and children need. Share your perspective and talk about how community action can make a difference.
- ★ **Contribute** your personal and financial resources to organizations that make a real difference in the lives of real children. Homeless shelters, schools, mentoring programs and community centers are always looking for support.

QUIZ THE CANDIDATES AND GET COMMITMENTS!

Use these facts and questions to ask candidates about their positions. Attend candidate forums, call and email candidates. Write letters. Don't be fooled by snappy sound bites and empty rhetoric. Expect

candidates to be true champions for children before they get your vote.

Child Abuse and Neglect

- During the month of September, 2001, almost 2,000 children in foster care never saw their caseworker at all. Yet, state policy requires a personal visit at least once a month so that caseworkers can make sure children are safe and help move them into permanent homes.
- A child in foster care waits more than 3 years, on average, to be adopted. Many wait much longer.
- State contract rates to private shelter and foster care providers and reimbursement rates for foster parents are far below actual costs of caring for children.
- Nearly half of the juveniles released from Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections institutions in 1996 reported that they had been victims of abuse in the past; 20% had substantiated cases of physical or sexual abuse.

Question: What changes would you make to help Child Protective Services do a better job in ensuring that abused and neglected children have safe, permanent homes?

Tax Reform for Families

- During the 1990s, Arizona led the nation in state tax cuts. But we also led the nation in the poverty rate among working families and in falling incomes for low- and middle-income families with children.
- Census data show that no state in the nation spends less per person than Arizona on state and local government operating expenses. Arizona spends about 25% less than the national average.
- Tax cuts passed by the legislature during the past ten years now total over \$1.25 billion per year. No accountability measures were included to ensure that tax cuts achieved their desired goals.
- The establishment of Students FIRST shifted an annual \$450 million cost to the state general fund for building and repairing schools, with no identified source for the funds.

Question: How would you propose to strengthen Arizona's tax system? How would you find a reliable funding source for the costs of Students FIRST?

Children's Health

- Arizona has the third highest rate of uninsured children in the country and the vast majority have parents who work but aren't offered or can't afford family health coverage.
- Uninsured children don't get the health care they need when they need it. Compared to children with health insurance, they are less likely to see a doctor and dentist regularly, less likely to be immunized, and less likely to be in good health.
- Many working parents don't know their children may qualify for AHCCCS or KidsCare health coverage. Other parents need help to complete the enrollment forms and paperwork requirements.

Question: What should the state do to keep families enrolled in AHCCCS or KidsCare? What else should the state do to provide health care options to families who can't get private coverage?

Early Care and Education

- Landmark brain research confirms that a child's earliest years dramatically shape lifelong learning capacity and behavior.
- Quality preschool and early childhood programs have been proven to prevent child abuse; reduce juvenile

- crime, drug use, school dropout, and smoking; improve family income; and promote school success.
- Preschool and child care teachers in Arizona earn less than telemarketers, street vendors, animal caretakers, and parking lot attendants. They don't have to have any prior training before they begin work.
- In 2000, the price of full time child care in Arizona ranged from \$3,600 to \$7,000 per year, as much or more than a year's tuition at Arizona's state universities, and more than many working families can afford.

Question: How can Arizona bridge the gap between what quality child care costs and what working parents can afford to pay? How would you help child care businesses increase the qualifications, compensation and retention of teachers? What plans do you have to help more children start school healthy and ready to learn?

Family Income

- About 30 percent of working parents in Arizona earn less than \$8.70 per hour. Of the top 50 occupations in the state employing the most Arizonans, only eight have median wages higher than \$15 per hour.
- Arizona's median income for families with children is 40,300 -- 16% below the national average.
- Arizona has among the lowest unemployment insurance benefits (UI) in the nation and among the lowest percentage of workers getting benefits. At the same time, we have one of the healthiest UI trust funds in the country (\$1 billion).

Question: What policies would you support to help working families climb the ladder of opportunity? How would you improve Arizona's unemployment insurance system to help more families avoid financial crisis?

CHILDREN'S ACTION ALLIANCE

Children's Action Alliance is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and advocacy organization dedicated to opening the doors of opportunity for all of Arizona's children. We do not support or oppose individual candidates. We educate and inspire voters to elect public officials of any party who will make children a top priority. We educate candidates about the needs and concerns of Arizona's children and families.

For more information on how to make your vote count for kids, call us at 602-266-0707 or visit our website at www.azchildren.org.

CHILDREN'S ACTION ALLIANCE

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