



Keiki Focus

News

25 November 2008



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If you wish to support GBA financially in its efforts at policy advocacy or data collection, please visit our [Donation Page](#) today.

Mahalo!

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Aloha Kit,

With Thanksgiving approaching, Good Beginnings Alliance is taking some time to reflect. With much to be thankful for, there is also so much more work to be done on behalf of children in Hawai`i and beyond.

Plentiful Bounty

Among many other things, GBA is thankful for work like that of Nalani Galariada and Jan I`i who help strengthen some of Hawaii's most vulnerable families through classes and play & learn groups at homeless shelters and public housing projects across Oahu.

We are thankful for the work like that of Anna Peters on Kauai and Ka'ina Bonacorsi on Maui, GBA County Coordinators, who partner with groups such as Neighborhood Place, Legal Aid and a variety of other organizations to aid and support grandparents and other extended family members caring for young children.

Every day, so many focused and successful efforts really make a difference in the lives of individuals and improve children's lives here in Hawaii.

Plentiful Need

Yet...in the United States:

Over 13 million children live in poverty, and the number of those children under the age of 3 is growing.

9 million children are uninsured.

Millions of children have no access to early learning programs.



Good Beginnings Alliance is a member of [Voices for America's Children](#) which released the information above as part of a [press release](#) filled with useful and compelling information, calling for the new administration of President-elect Barack Obama to take action on behalf of children.

And Finally...The Pre-K Pinch

Did you know that...in the majority of states, the average annual cost of child care for a four year old exceeds the tuition and fees for public four-year colleges and universities?

If you've heard of "the gap group" and wondered who they are, look for lots more about these families in the middle who are making too much to qualify for various supports and assistance but not enough that their spending and choices aren't each a kind of sacrifice.

While most state-funded pre-k programs focus primarily on low-income children, we must not forget about our middle-income "gap group" as the Keiki First early learning system is developed.

Libby Doggett, Executive Director of Pre-K Now says, *"A quiet tragedy is occurring across the country, one that is straining families and preventing children from getting the early learning opportunities they need. In spite of their commitment to education and valiant efforts to stretch the household budget, a huge number of families are still locked out of the rooms that would prepare their children to thrive in school and in life."*

Read more:

[The Pre-K Pinch report](#)

[The Pre-K Pinch press release](#) provides a quick summary of the pertinent facts and recommendations of this report.

In Hawai`i, approximately **27% (9,500) of the 35,500 children ages 3 and 4 benefit from some type of subsidized program** (e.g., Head Start, Department of Human Services Child Care Connection Hawaii/Preschool Open Doors, Kamehameha Schools Preschools).

While we and the qualifying families are **thankful** these subsidies make preschool available for them, there are many others who lack the opportunity. We are hopeful that one day, all of Hawaii's keiki can experience quality early learning.

Good Beginnings Alliance is a nonprofit organization working in partnership with families, communities, policy makers, early childhood providers and advocates to shape community will and public policy, mobilize action and maximize resources for Hawai`i's children. Good Beginnings Alliance is a member of [Voices for America's Children](#)

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Good Beginnings Alliance | 33 S. King Street, Suite 200 | Honolulu | HI | 96826