



Keiki Focus

News

January 13, 2009



Healthy Start: Why We Need to Keep Funding Secure

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Hawaii's Healthy Start Program has been cut by the Department of Health in response to the State's current economic woes. What does Healthy Start provide and why should we do everything we can to ensure that it does not disappear?

The goals of Healthy Start are to reach out and provide support to troubled and overburdened parents prenatal, or from birth. Services are designed to reduce the stresses of families, develop their parenting skills and capacity, and help them to be more self sufficient in providing a home and productive life for themselves and their children.

Healthy Start is an important part of the **safety net for families**. By helping to set a path of positive child development and **averting abuse and neglect of vulnerable infants**, Healthy Start helps **break the cycle** of adverse childhood experiences which often lead to poor outcomes in adolescence and adulthood.

Get Involved

Your support is appreciated in whatever form it takes: contacting your legislator, passing news on to family and friends, or rolling up your sleeves and volunteering.

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

Mahalo!

Where will these clients go? Is there a comparable service out there?

There simply are no comparable services out there. Children who miss the Healthy Start safety net may not be seen again unless in a physician's office, a pre-school at age three or four, or when they enter kindergarten or first grade. **The first three years of life are the most critical in regard to development of emotional stability and early cognitive development.** A large number of young children in Hawaii reach kindergarten and first grade not ready to learn and function in school, socially or cognitively. A long term critical issue in eliminating a program like Healthy Start, in addition to increasing costs across many service areas, is loss of productivity of the children as they mature. **Without emotional stability it is difficult for children to succeed.**

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ACTION: What Can We Do To Help?

- Encourage current and former Healthy Start families to write and visit legislators, Department of Health Director, and Governor Lingle to tell of the importance of Healthy Start.

- Policy makers need to know that this program REALLY makes a difference.
- Send letters of support for Healthy Start to legislators, Department Of Health, and Governor Lingle.
- Join a [phocused](#)-organized rally in support of Healthy Start and other Health and Human Services cuts, at 10:00 AM on Monday, January 26th at the State Capitol.
- Learn More: [Healthy Start Program Info](#), [Healthy Start Issue Paper](#), [Letter to the Governor](#), [Letter to the Editor](#), [Margery Stein Article](#)

If You Read One More Thing...

about the Economic Crisis, Make it this: A Rough, Refreshing Take on Hawai`i in these Economic Times [Rough Take! - Our Approach to the Economic Crisis](#) by Andrew Aoki of [Kanu Hawai`i](#)

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