

Mira goes to Capitol Hill

Who would think that a 4-year-old could influence political decision making? But that is just what happened when Mira Raether visited Capitol Hill on June 14 for Family Advocacy Day. Mira, a triplet, was born early, at just 30 weeks. While Mira's brothers, Vincent and Luke, were born healthy, Mira struggled with health issues before she left the womb. When she defied doctors' warnings that she might not survive, her parents named her Mira Cale – miracle!



Mira and her brothers Vincent and Luke

When she was born, Mira immediately needed heart surgery and then was found to have renal acidosis. Her kidneys were not correcting the pH balance in her blood, which affects growth, heart, hormones and other functions. In 2009, Mira had a kidney transplant. She quickly hit her lifetime insurance maximum to pay all of her medical costs. While there is a Medicaid safety net, it only lasts for 36 months post transplant. Eventually, that would have left little Mira without health insurance.

Mira went to Washington to advocate on behalf of all children. The new health care reform law eliminates the lifetime maximum and pre-existing conditions, allowing Mira to continue to receive medical care and grow into a healthy little girl.



Because of advocacy efforts by Children's Advocacy Network members, the following pieces of public policy became law this year:

-  **Smoke-free Wisconsin!**
Wisconsin's smoke-free workplaces, restaurants, and bars law was enacted on May 18, 2009. Wisconsin went smoke-free on July 5, 2010.
-  **CAN advocates took action and helped pass CPR/AED instruction in schools law**
The new law requires all Wisconsin high schools to offer enrolled students instruction in lifesaving skills. These include CPR, cardiocerebral resuscitation (hands only) and automated external defibrillator. With this new law, young adults in Wisconsin will have the necessary tools to help save a life.

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Farm-to-School legislation signed into law

Farm-to-School programs provide locally grown food to schools. In addition to supporting local farmers, these programs get fresh fruits and vegetables to kids, providing alternatives to snacks and treats that are not so healthy.



Text messaging law protects all of us

CAN members supported legislation, prohibiting anyone from driving while composing or sending a text message.



Health care transparency law: Wisconsin consumers now can price-shop health care

Governor Jim Doyle signed the Health Care Transparency Bill at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, requiring health care providers to disclose the cost of the most common procedures they perform. It will help consumers get price estimates prior to a procedure, help make apples-to-apples comparisons on prices and help determine out-of-pocket costs prior to services occurring.



How you can help

Children often are impacted by local, state or federal policies that affect their health care. They need others to be their voice, which is why these efforts rely on the strength and action of people who want to make a difference for children.

Join Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's Children's Advocacy Network today and help us make a difference in the lives of children and families in our communities. Through CAN, you help ensure that children's concerns are heard when policies are being made. The network sends members action alerts and legislation updates and provides tools that you need to help you take action on issues important to children's health.

Join CAN at chw.org/can.