



TEXANS CARE
for **CHILDREN**

Advocacy Tips for Parents

The **PUT KIDS 1ST** Pledge

A pledge to keep Texas:

- **STRONG**, by supporting children's health and development;
- **SAFE**, by protecting children from harm;
- **PREPARED**, by ensuring the next generation has the education to succeed;
- **PROSPEROUS**, by acting so today's youth can solve the problems of tomorrow; and
- **WHOLE**, by giving children the love and security the need to grow.

Join the Movement!
Take the Pledge at
www.putkids1st.org



Since 1985, a grassroots network of Texans has promoted making our state's future—children—a top priority. Texans Care for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that leads policy advances for Texas kids. We act as a:

- **voice for children**, speaking out and getting results with laws that improve kids' lives,
- **source on children**, providing research and analysis on children's issues in Texas, and
- **network for people who put kids first**, mobilizing advocacy coalitions for change.

To champion what Texas kids need today and what our state needs for a better tomorrow, here are ten advocacy tips to help you make the case.

1. **Create an "elevator speech."** Be able to describe in 1 minute who you are, your experience with a given issue, and what you want from your lawmaker.
2. **Get to know who represents you and the law-making process.** It's key to knowing where to direct your ruckus-raising and when to make some noise.
3. **Join an advocacy group's email list** to get tips on who to call, when on your issue.
4. **Write, call, and email your elected leaders.** Always start with, "I'm a constituent."
5. **Send a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.** Letters are one of the most influential pages. Clip and send your letter to a lawmaker once it's published.
6. **Set up a meeting with your state legislator** or a member of his or her staff in the Capitol or district office near you. That's what they are there for!
7. **Ask a question at a town hall meeting or candidate forum** that highlights your issue.
8. **Vote.** Get your friends and loved ones to the polls, too.
9. **Start an online advocacy network** via Facebook, Twitter, MeetUp, or your blog.
10. **If you work at a nonprofit organization, learn the rules on lobbying.** Much that's done in the policy sphere is not true lobbying, and nonprofits can lobby without risking their tax-exempt status. Be sure to follow federal and state guidelines.

LEARN MORE: For tips on each of the activities above, visit our online Advocacy Center at www.txchildren.org/Advocate.