

Keiki Caucus Meeting June 23, 2005

The first Keiki Caucus meeting to prepare for the 2006 Legislative Session was held at the State Capitol in Room 329 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sen. Chun Oakland and Rep. Arakaki chaired the meeting. A variety of public and private agencies providing services for children and youth were represented.

The Keiki Caucus plans to meet monthly in room 407 at the Capitol from 11:30a.m. to 1:30p.m. on the following dates:

Tuesday, July 19th.

Wednesday, August 17th.

Wednesday, September 21st.

Tuesday, October 11th.

Tuesday, November 15th.

Wednesday, December 14th. (Christmas Party, Pot-Luck)

The following significant dates were also established:

Sunday, October 2nd, **Children and Youth Day.**

Friday, October 21st, 9:30 am to 2:00 pm and Saturday, October 22nd, 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, **Keiki Caucus Summit.** At this meeting the issues to be made into bills for the 2006 session will be chosen based on the research and discussion from previous meetings.

Friday, October 28th, Advocate of the Year award luncheon to be held at Washington Place.

Initially in today's meeting, we made a list of all the positive things which have happened in the past year to benefit children and youth. This long list included bills passed such as the graduated drivers licensing bill, the fact that there are more varied recreational programs offered in our city parks than ever before and the fact that use of drugs by adults and children is down.

Next a list just as long of harmful situations impinging on children and youth was drawn up. This list included the harmful effects of cuts in Medicaid, the lack of specialists such as obstetricians and mental health services in neighbor islands and rural areas of Oahu, the inadequate number of school health nurses to staff the school complexes and public health nurses in the DOH to carry out their programs.

From these lists, a tentative list of issues to be presented and discussed at future meetings was made as follows:

- The current health, education and welfare status of children in Hawaii as shown in statistics such as Kids Count.
- The status of Act 51 and the plight of the immigrants from Micronesia with regard to education access.
- Report of the Quality Early Childhood Education Task Force by Good Beginnings Alliance.
- The current status of our Medicaid, Med-Quest and SCHIP programs in terms of categories served, numbers served, expenditures by categories and more.
- The links between DOE, Police and CPS with regard to reporting and follow-up on children who do not appear in school and are presumed to be at home.

This list will be expanded as our meetings proceed.

Stay Tuned