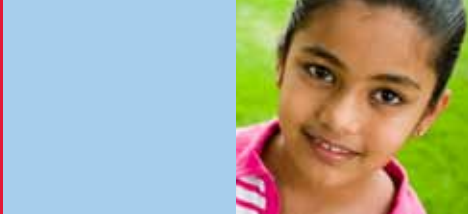
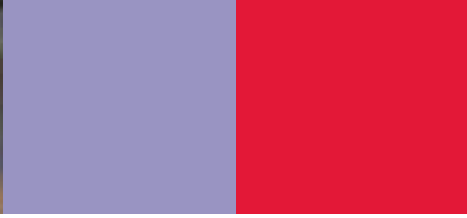




KEEPING THE
promise
TO KANSAS KIDS





“Each of us puts in *one little stone*, and then you get a great *mosiac* at the end.”

— Alice Paul

Dear friends,

As parents, leaders and believers in the power and potential of children, we talk a lot about promises. We talk about the promises made to keep our families and communities safe, the promises made to prepare our children for lifelong success and the promise to leave our state a little better than we found it. Each promise, each person and each child is one tile that comprises the Kansas mosaic.

ADVOCACY *by the numbers*

Here are a few of the ways you helped us complete the mosaic for Kansas kids this year:

Kansas Promise Bus Tour ralliers	531
New Facebook fans.....	460
30th Anniversary attendees	396
Trained advocates	96
Early Learning Day participants	142
Personal visits with legislators.....	130
Advocate e-mails to legislators.....	2,431

Today, I am writing to talk with you about promises fulfilled. At Kansas Action for Children, we work daily to keep the promise to our next generation. Our premise is simple: we want to make Kansas the best place to live, work and raise a family.

When we started our work for the 2010 Legislative Session, 1 in 3 child care facilities were never inspected ... Kansas had one of the highest infant mortality rates in the country ... and early childhood programs — like Parents as Teachers and Early Head Start — faced millions of dollars in cuts that would have devastated services for the nearly 340,000 Kansas children they serve.

But, through the course of this year, our mosaic took shape with each person playing a part. We have highlighted two stories — those of Kim and Bryan Engelman and Barry Downing — who are two pieces of this picture. However, they are just two examples, two mosaic tiles, of what helped make this picture complete. **Our team is comprised of thousands of people, including you, from across Kansas who made this year’s Legislative Session a success for Kansas children.**

In this document, we have outlined the key accomplishments that we were able to achieve on behalf of Kansas children this Session. None of these would have happened without you! As we celebrate the successes of this Legislative Session, we also look forward to next year and another very difficult environment for Kansas children. We hope you will take a moment and help us continue our work by making your contribution today.

Together, with your support, we will continue to give voice to Kansas children and ensure that they have the tools necessary to be successful. Your tax-deductible contribution today will help us to make that happen.

Sincerely,

Shannon Cotsoradis
President and CEO

Ryan Wright
Director of Development

P.S. We have enclosed a contribution envelope inside this mailing. We hope you will consider making a tax-deductible contribution of \$5,000, \$1,000, \$500, \$100, \$50 or whatever you can afford in support of Kansas kids.



Our 2010 Legislative Successes

CHILD CARE. Families in most other states rely on a child care system that has adequate checks and balances. But, until now, that hasn't been the case for many Kansas families. In fact, our state ranks 47th in the nation when it comes to child care oversight because, until now, 1 in 3 child care facilities have never been inspected. This Session, we helped bring our child care system up to date by passing Lexie's Law (*House Bill 2356*). With this, all child care facilities in the state will now be inspected, stronger supervision standards will be established for the care of infants and toddlers, and parents will have access to the information they need to make informed decisions about child care.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE. For more than a decade, HealthWave has been an effective and fiscally responsible way to protect the health of our next generation. Because lawmakers maintained their commitment to children's health this Session, more than 221,000 Kansas children can get the health care they need at a price their parents can afford. And, Kansas will continue to bring more than \$50 million in federal funds into our economy for children's health.

TAX TRANSPARENCY. The democratic process works best when citizens have transparent access to information about how their tax dollars are being spent. Legislation passed this year will provide the public with details on indirect spending made by the state through tax exemptions and credits. By

increasing transparency, we can increase accountability in our state spending and, ultimately, ensure that taxpayer dollars are being invested in areas, like early childhood, that achieve the greatest return on our investment.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. We know that when children have access to quality early learning programs — like Early Head Start, Pre-K, Smart Start and Parents as Teachers — they are more likely to succeed in school and in life. Legislators kept their promise to Kansas kids this Session by protecting the state's investment in the Children's Initiatives Fund (CIF). By protecting the CIF, which funds most of the state's successful early childhood programs, we can ensure that today's children will be equipped to lead Kansas toward a more prosperous future.

INFANT MORTALITY. Until now, Kansas policymakers lacked the data to make informed decisions about the infant mortality problem facing our state. By collecting more comprehensive data on infant deaths, neighboring states like Iowa, Nebraska and Colorado have been able to leverage federal dollars and implement solutions that have significantly reduced their infant mortality rates. Kansas took the first step this Session (*House Bill 2454*), which will give policymakers the information they need to understand the state's high infant mortality rate and to do something about it.

ADVOCACY IN ACTION | *Barry Downing*

What does a revolution look like? Meet Wichita businessman **Barry Downing**, president of Northrock, Inc., and unsung hero to hundreds of Kansas children. Ten years ago, drawing from his own experiences of growing up in poverty, Barry and his family began looking for a way to use their financial success to help others. After exploring numerous options, they concluded that early childhood education offered the most dramatic way to make a difference in their community. And, **The Opportunity Project (TOP)** was born, focusing on improving school readiness for children living in poverty.



Barry didn't break the mold; he had to create it first. He and his team literally traveled the globe building an early learning model that worked.

The result was a unique public-private partnership that has raised more than \$11 million from private donors and built two TOP facilities that serve 400 of the city's most vulnerable kids.

With more than 90 percent of a child's brain developed by the age of five, the results speak for themselves. To date, nearly 700 children have graduated from TOP early learning centers. And, a recent study shows that children graduating from TOP increased (on average) their proficiencies from the 30th percentile to the 80-90th percentile range, significantly reducing special education placement rates and ensuring that kids are ready to enter kindergarten and life.

According to Barry, "Early childhood education is a smart financial investment, and also a moral responsibility. We owe it to these children to have a chance, to arrive at school prepared to succeed."

What began as a simple desire to give back to his community has turned into a revolution — a revolution in thinking, in attacking generational poverty, providing educational accountability, and harnessing civic responsibility.

But, what Barry really did was open the door to opportunity and provide hope ... and when you have hope, you have everything.



ADVOCACY IN ACTION | *Kim and Bryan Engelman*

It was a typical day in August 2004 when **Kim and Bryan Engelman** found their lives changed forever. The couple received a call one afternoon saying there had been a terrible accident with their 13-month-old daughter, Lexie. Kim and Bryan discovered that their home-based child care provider had left the children unattended in a basement. When the provider returned, Lexie was unconscious, not breathing and pinned between a support beam and a child playpen. After spending time in a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, Lexie was pronounced dead on the evening of August 10.

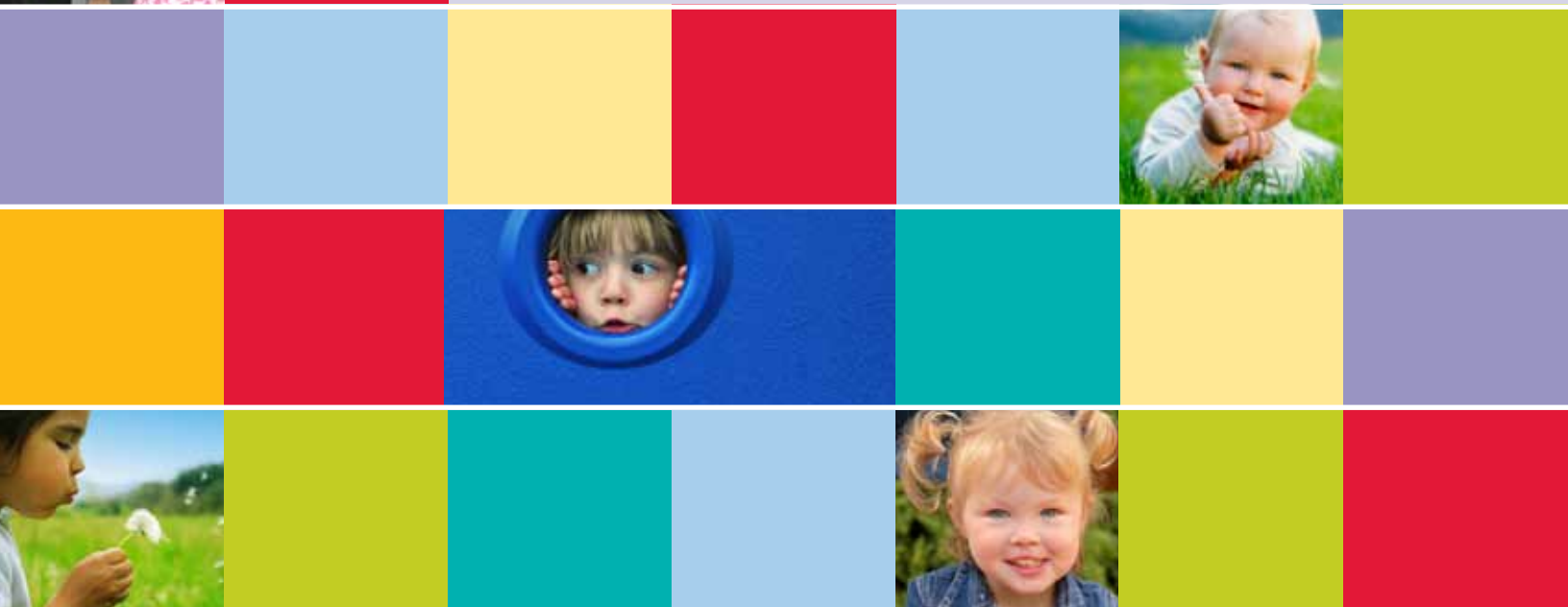


What Kim and Bryan later learned was that Kansas had some of the weakest child care standards in the country. In fact, Kansas ranks 47th in the nation when it comes to child

care oversight, which has contributed to nearly 30 deaths in Kansas child care settings. Kim and Bryan later joined forces with another Kansas family, **Alecia and Steve Patrick** whose 18-month-old daughter Ava had also died in a child care home. The parents turned their pain into resolve and began to organize, raise awareness and fight for the 135,000 kids in Kansas child care.

Kansas Action for Children joined their fight this year launching a statewide "Inspect the Rest" awareness campaign and throwing our 30 years of advocacy experience behind it. And, at 2:30 a.m. on May 11, the parents' long fight came to an end when the Legislature passed Lexie's Law, which calls for inspections of all Kansas child care facilities and establishes stronger supervision standards for the care of infants and toddlers in our state.

Thanks to these parents, children's lives will be saved and countless other parents in Kansas will not have to endure the pain and tragedy associated with losing a child.



Kansas Action for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to shaping health, education and economic policy that improves the lives of Kansas children and their families. Since 1979, KAC has worked to make Kansas the best state in the nation to raise a child.

As a 501(c)(3), contributions to Kansas Action for Children are tax-deductible for our donors as allowed by law. KAC maintains the highest degree of security and confidentiality of donor information. The renting, selling or trading of donors' personal information is strictly prohibited.



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