

Children and young people— the key campaign issues



THIS MONTH'S ISSUE OF *HSCNEWS* LOOKS AT THE ADVOCATES WHO WORK IN ONE OF THE FASTEST-GROWING SEGMENTS OF THE HEALTH CAMPAIGNING MOVEMENT—CHILD HEALTH. THE ISSUE DESCRIBES HOW CHILD-HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUPS HAVE RECENTLY FORMED TO SUPPLEMENT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MORE LONG-STANDING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND WELFARE MOVEMENT. CHILD HEALTH ADVOCATES ADOPT THE SAME RIGHTS-ORIENTED APPROACH ESPOUSED BY THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS GROUPS, BUT SPECIALISE IN DISEASE, TREATMENTS, AND HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS [PAGES 8-11].

CHILD HEALTH GROUPS ARE MULTIPLYING IN NUMBER. THEY ARE TYPICALLY FOUNDED EITHER BY CHILDREN THEMSELVES, BY PARENTS, BY DISENCHANTED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, BY PHILANTHROPISTS, OR BY ANY INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN CHILD AND FAMILY HEALTH [FOR CASE STUDIES FROM CANADA, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN, THE UK, AND THE US, SEE PAGES 12-17]. THE EXPANSION IS, IN PART, DRIVEN BY A PERCEIVED DETERIORATION IN THE HEALTH OF THE YOUNG WORLDWIDE, AND BY THE FACT THAT POLICYMAKERS ARE STILL ONLY STRUGGLING TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE TREND [FEATURE 2, PAGES 32-33]. MANY CHILD HEALTH ADVOCACY GROUPS ARE FORGING INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES AND PARTNERSHIPS, SOMETIMES WITH OTHER HEALTHCARE STAKEHOLDERS [PAGES 17-19]. A LIST OF 34 PAN-EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY GROUPS DEDICATED TO CHILD HEALTH IS ALSO AVAILABLE [FEATURE 1, PAGES 29-31].

ANALYSIS OF *HSCNEWS* DATASETS HAS ALLOWED THE VARIOUS TYPES OF CAMPAIGNS RUN BY THE CHILDREN'S HEALTH MOVEMENT TO BE QUANTIFIED. EXAMPLES ARE PROVIDED [PAGES 19-26, AS WELL AS PAGES 6-7, MEMBER'S NEWS, AND EVENTS]. CASE STUDIES IN THIS ISSUE INCLUDE DESCRIPTIONS OF TWO EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIMENTS THAT AIM TO BRING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE POLITICAL AND HEALTHCARE DEBATE. THE FIRST IS THE PORSGRUNN PROJECT—A NORWEGIAN TOWN'S SUCCESSFUL ENDEAVOURS TO INCORPORATE DISAFFECTED YOUTH INTO LOCAL POLITICAL PROCESSES [FEATURE 3, PAGES 34-35]. THE SECOND IS AN EU WEBSITE AIMED AT HELPING SCHOOLCHILDREN UNDERSTAND HOW THE EU'S COMPLEX DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES FUNCTION [PAGE 47-48; AND WEBSITES].

FINALLY, A GUATEMALAN ORGANISATION, FUNDANIER (A SUPPORT GRUP FOR CHILDREN WITH RENAL DISEASE), SEEKS YOUR INPUT AND COMMENT ON A NEW WEBSITE THEY ARE BUILDING [PAGE 49].