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HOW WE ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

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The California Center for Public Health Advocacy uses a combination of seven key strategies to build and support policy reforms at the state and local levels. CCPHA has applied these strategies to issues related to healthy eating, physical activity, childhood obesity, and diabetes. We also train organizations to use these strategies to support policy reforms addressing these and other public health issues.

I. Community Mobilization. We provide opportunities for individuals and organizations throughout the state to share their perspectives with policy makers about the need for policy reforms. We also bring advocates and policy makers together to work toward common policy objectives.

II. Research. We publish Policy Briefs and other materials describing health issues related to eating and physical activity in California and recommending specific policies to address these issues. These materials are designed to provide the general public, policy makers and other decision-makers, and advocates with tools to inform the policy development process.

III. State and Local Data. Our Policy Briefs often describe health-related data by city, county, and/or state legislative district, relating information to levels at which policy makers, their constituents, local advocates, and the media can more fully understand how health issues are affecting their communities.

IV. Scientific Advisory Panels. We establish scientific advisory panels to assist us in developing policy recommendations included in the Policy Briefs we publish. In 2001, we convened a National Consensus Panel that developed the nation's first recommendations for school nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold outside the school meal program.

V. Media Advocacy. We work with media advisors and local media spokespersons to ensure that our Policy Briefs and associated policy recommendations receive as much media coverage as possible. We also make ourselves available to the media as a source of information about the issues we address.

VI. Policy Maker Education. We develop relationships with state and local policy makers and educate local elected officials about the importance of establishing policies to promote healthy eating and physical activity. We provide state and local elected officials with personalized data and technical assistance to help them develop needed policy reforms.

VII. Partnership Building. We believe policy change only happens when a point of agreement is reached among various constituencies about the need for change. We consider partnership building—with local advocates, policy makers, funders, and health, education, social service and other organizations—to be the most critical component in building momentum toward policy change.

