Leadership and Financing Strategies for Large-Scale Community Initiatives

Given crisis-level cutbacks in public funding for social services and competing claims on remaining funds, how can nonprofit groups that address urgent human needs secure a piece of the funding and policymaking pie? Does federal law prohibit nonprofit groups and coalitions from lobbying legislators to create and sustain support for social initiatives? How can advocacy coalitions keep from unraveling in the face of intense competitive and financial pressures? What smart political strategies can nonprofits and coalitions wield and what power bases can they mobilize to convince national, state, and local officials to meet the needs of low-income constituents?

The Urban Health Seminar held May 8–9, 2003, at Harvard University convened nonprofit leaders, researchers, legislators, and foundation officers to address those and other pressing questions. The seminar—held twice yearly as part of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's 10-year Urban Health Initiative (UHI), which aims to boost the health and safety of urban children—invites participants to share research results and lessons from the front lines in responding to human needs. Presenters at this spring's seminar—including a top federal policy advisor, two state lawmakers, a former New York City budget director, and researchers who study nonprofits' engagement in the public arena—prodded participants to rethink their assumptions and sharpen their strategies for grappling with today's enormous social policy challenges.

Finding Funding: Creating Dedicated Revenue Streams

State and local leaders "can make a strong case that they do not have the ability to pay" for new and even existing social initiatives, points out Dr. Carol O'Cleireacain, former budget and finance director of New York City, a Brookings Institution fellow, and the meeting's first presenter. Many initiatives, especially those addressing the needs of youth, will require "a huge commitment" of funds, partly because—formerly met through women's unpaid labor—they have only recently entered "public budgets and public policy debates." For example, a report by Public/Private Ventures puts the annual price tag for youth development, including after-school programs, mentoring, and preventive services, at $144 billion—some 20 percent of all federal discretionary spending and half the budget for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (1). Because no existing pot of money can meet such needs, advocates often turn to earmarked revenues such as lottery proceeds and tax surcharges to establish public priorities and help secure "first claim on the public purse."

Revenue shortfalls plus unfunded mandates make this the worst time in a generation to seek such dedicated funding. State and local officials rely heavily on federal funds to help foot the bill for health and welfare programs. However, federal budgeteers expect a deficit of some $347 billion in FY 2003, says O'Cleireacain, and project similar deficits for the foreseeable future. States, meanwhile, are facing $100 billion in shortfalls through FY 2004, and some governors are raiding trust funds dedicated to social needs, such as state tobacco settlements, to help balance their budgets.

Local governments, in turn, are facing the worst of all possible worlds as states shift responsibilities to them while slashing local aid. The result is that many public officials "would sooner put themselves in front of a moving train than agree to a new tax, fee, or fine that does not help close their budget gap," says O'Cleireacain.

Even in a bleak fiscal climate, advocates can win public and legislative support for dedicated funding streams. "If a program is broadly accepted and popular enough," then "voters are sometimes willing to support taxation if they know the taxes are going to . . . their priorities," says O'Cleireacain. She cited the example of Safe Streets, Safe City: Cops & Kids, New York's six-year, $1.8 billion quality-of-life initiative launched during the city's 1990-1991 fiscal crisis, which dedicated funding to both more and better criminal justice and crime prevention programs. A massive lobbying effort by the mayor convinced the city council, business community, and the press—and ultimately the governor and the state legislature—to back the initiative.

One of the "toughest fights" is whether legislation establishes a separate account for such funds to prevent public officials from raiding them, says O'Cleareacain. To succeed, dedicated funding streams also require clear policies and a buy-in from a broad spectrum of advocates who might otherwise compete for funding. In the case of children, one solution to these challenges is an agency dedicated to children's needs, which can help prevent erosion of public funds and link partners across jurisdictions. San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth, and Families, for example, merges education, social services, and correctional services.

A creative vision, social indicators, and a seat at the political table can expand the funding pie. O'Cleireacain suggests creating a children's budget at the federal level and enlisting the women's and urban congressional caucuses as constituencies. She also advises advocates to actively promote tax equity and the need to sustain public revenues; resisting pressure from those forces at all levels of government whose main purpose is a revenue reduction and tax-cutting strategy.

Advocates in Detroit have used all those tools to win more support for children's programs. Citing the fact that some 40 percent of kids in that city drop out of high school by the tenth grade while one of every three county employees works in corrections, the director of the UHI initiative solicited a former state budget director to create an after-school investment strategy and a "children's budget" showing the uses and outcomes of funds spent on youth. Such information helped convince the mayor of Detroit to back a 2 percent dedicated tax on casinos to finance youth recreation programs.

The Thorny Issue of Lobbying and Advocacy by Nonprofits

These activities imply a critical public policy role for nonprofits. Indeed, the United States is home to three-quarters of a million nonprofit groups—more than 1,700 per congressional district—with most involved in health care or other essential social services. "With leading citizens of the community serving on their boards, nonprofits are actually quite well connected to those in public office," notes Jeffrey M. Berry, professor

of political science at Tufts University, co-author of the forthcoming *A Voice for Nonprofits*, and the seminar's second presenter. Yet an "invidious socialization process" encourages nonprofits "to believe that they shouldn't be involved in the public policy process because such activity violates the law" (2).

The vast majority of nonprofits sharply restrict their advocacy or avoid it altogether. In an in-depth study of hundreds of nonprofits, Berry found that only one-third of their leaders believe they are allowed to lobby if they receive federal funds, while only half know they retain a "basic First Amendment freedom" to take a public stand on legislation. Indeed, most nonprofit leaders believe that they cannot discuss public policy with elected officials at all. "The result," says Berry, "is that the clients [nonprofits] serve, from the homeless to the homebound, have little representation in the political system" (2).

In reality the law allows considerable lobbying by nonprofits. "The law is woefully misunderstood and nonprofits lobby far less than they're allowed to," Berry says. He acknowledges that the guidelines governing 501(c)(3) organizations—those that accept tax-deductible contributions—are "complex and maddeningly ambiguous," specifying that they cannot do "substantial" lobbying. Because the meaning of "substantial" is unclear, Berry found, most executive directors avoid advocacy altogether. However, he points out, nonprofits can easily evade legal ambiguity by filling out a simple form choosing the federal 501(h) election, which specifies the portion of a nonprofit's budget it can devote to lobbying according to their size (20 percent for small nonprofits). Even more significant, nonprofits need expense only *time actually spent in legislators' offices* as "lobbying"; they may otherwise try to influence lawmakers without restriction. They may also spend up to 25 percent of their lobbying budget on grassroots lobbying—urging members of the public to contact their legislators.

Most nonprofits contend that advocacy is not their mission, and are reluctant to devote scarce resources to it. Many nonprofits believe they are "just supposed to be running clinics" and evince a "deep-seated fear of lobbying," one nonprofit executive director at the seminar attested. Nonprofit coalitions are also slow to take a stand on legislation that may critically affect the lives of their constituents, in her experience. Yet nonprofits cannot afford to overlook investing in advocacy, Berry maintains, as "Congress and state legislatures shape the programs that nonprofits administer and control the amount and kinds of grants that many 501)(c)(3)s depend on."

Funders often limit the political activity nonprofits can engage in. Berry noted that the more foundation funding a nonprofit receives, the more reluctant it is to lobby, and seminar participants agreed that funders need to rethink the strictures on lobbying they communicate to grantees. One foundation head noted that conservative foundations have reshaped the political landscape by supporting nonprofits that engage in advocacy, and that progressive foundations need to actively encourage their grantees to take "their rightful place at the public policy table." Conferees recommended that foundations include funds for advocacy and coalition work as line items in their grants, and that they loosen caps on administrative costs that now limit such efforts.

Nonprofits that assign a staff member to government relations, lobby often, and pursue research attract more calls from both public officials and the media. In his research, Berry found that the frequency of a nonprofit's advocacy activity rather than its size, along with its willingness to devote staff time, determines its political effectiveness. Government agencies are often thinly staffed and contract social services to nonprofits, so agencies rely on them for information on the number and needs of their clients, as well as on the outcomes of social programs. "Nonprofits provide critical support for an agency's endeavors," says Berry. "The strategic nonprofit doesn't wait for government to request information but looks for gaps in what agencies have at their disposal." Government officials also rely on outsiders to "think outside the box," he says. The goal for advocates is to think strategically about how "to jointly produce public policy," in the words of one nonprofit executive director.

Laura Pinkney, director of UHI's Oakland site, concurred that the goal is for advocates to think strategically about how "to jointly produce public policy" with public officials, who are seeking "outcome data from their nonprofit partners." Conferees cautioned that community organizations may have limited capacity to collect, analyze, and disseminate high-quality information, especially on the results of social programs, while large, traditional nonprofits sometimes resist such accountability because it may threaten their funding. However, if nonprofits cannot provide "the pros and cons" of social programs, Pinkney holds, public officials will simply regard them as special pleaders trying to ensure their own survival.

Hathaway Ferebee, director of UHI's Baltimore site, expressed frustration that powerful members of nonprofit boards are often willing to advocate for essential services for low-income communities but balk at confronting the larger inequities that drive those needs. She urges nonprofits and their boards to advocate for "opportunities" for people who are "systematically" excluded from the economy, such as by insisting that businesses pay living wages and locate in low-income neighborhoods, and by questioning a tax system that provides loopholes to wealthy companies and individuals.

Learning from Best Practice: Sustaining the Coalition

Nonprofits "must be clear about their political objectives and figure out ways to use organizational capacity strategically toward those ends," concurs Elizabeth Reid of the Urban Institute's Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, and the third presenter at the conference (3). Like Berry, she has found that nonprofits that participate actively in the public arena have several key attributes.

Nonprofits that routinely engage in advocacy are more likely to have policy-oriented mission statements, stable funding, and leaders with public policy experience. "Mission statements reinforce the public identity of organizations as policy actors and focus . . . competing demands for time and resources toward policy action," Reid notes. Stable and diverse funding, meanwhile, enables groups to "use resources strategically to build . . . capacities in communication and public education," and thus "to mobilize a

public response during policy decision making and elections." Executive directors with previous experience in politics (especially state government), economics, public policy, and community organizing are also keys to effective advocacy (3).

Strong channels of communication between board, staff members, and the broader community are important. "Partisan" boards push progressive research organizations toward public policy campaigns, says Reid. Because nonprofit boards and members are often reluctant to join the political fray she recommends training boards in the need for, and techniques of, effective advocacy. Nonprofit boards also influence the extent of community input, with grassroots involvement both propelling nonprofits toward advocacy and helping ensure their success by "incorporating input from a variety of stakeholders, . . .particularly communities of color and people directly affected by services."

Joining a coalition enables overburdened nonprofits to share resources and the costs of lobbying, research, and media relations. Because nonprofits often lack the capacity to sustain such activities, effective lobbying often requires an umbrella organization that merges the resources of numerous groups. Nonprofits may serve as lead organizations, partners, or support members of such coalitions, but whatever their level of commitment, they must "find common ground before taking their [proposals] to the legislature or the public," Reid cautions. Coalitions require careful nurturing: one conferee cited an umbrella group that secured $1.3 billion in additional state funds for education after members painstakingly built the organization and honed its strategy over five years.

Personal relationships and accountability underlie any successful coalition and public policy campaign. To promote values and goals across class, racial, and religious lines, coalition members need to foster one-on-one relationships to better understand each other's issues. Advocates also need to pursue personal contacts with their constituents, and with people "with their finger on the lever of power."

Finfer recounted the process by which the Great Boston Interfaith Organization (an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation, which unites labor and religious activists in public policy campaigns) chose its advocacy agenda. Rather than presupposing which issue to promote, volunteer leaders in the group organized hundreds of house meetings to encourage community members to relate their personal experiences with the policy challenges they considered most urgent. When housing emerged as a foremost concern, GBIO organized some 500 volunteers to gather over 100,000 signatures in support of a housing trust fund, and mobilized 2,000 constituents to attend 12 district "accountability meetings" with elected officials, asking them to commit to making housing a top priority. GBIO organized a metropolitan wide accountability meeting with the State Senate President and Mayor of Boston that 3,400 members of GBIO member congregations and organizations attended. To ensure internal accountability, member groups regularly reported on whether they had fulfilled specific commitments, and continually evaluated the effectiveness of the campaign. The result was a new $20 million state trust fund to build and renovate subsidized housing and commitments by Boston's mayor of $23 million in new funding for affordable housing.

According to Finfer, advocates need to build long-term relationships with public officials, depolarizing tensions by alerting them to the format and purpose of public meetings and soliciting their reactions afterward. If a group can demonstrate the ability to organize large numbers of people to participate in accountability meetings, public hearings, and/or voter turnout in elections, then public and private officials are more likely to take them seriously and give due diligence to their concerns and suggestions about ways to improve the well-being of the citizenry. However, good ideas are not enough; the power of organized numbers behind the good ideas gives advocates a chance to be the driving force behind instituting real change. But grassroots groups also need the power to hold officials who renege on their commitments accountable. "No better mechanism [for ensuring accountability] than the ballot box has ever been invented," in the words of one conferee, and indeed organizations such as Finfer's relentlessly emphasize voter registration and turnout. "Permanent levels of [public] participation [in the policymaking process] are critical to moving beyond episodic change," one foundation director commented.

Bill Walczak, director of Boston's Codman Square Health Center, agreed that relationships and grassroots support are critical to public advocacy, citing his group's experience in creating a multiracial coalition in the 1970s—"the worst time for cities"—to revitalize its distressed low-income neighborhood. Although organizers had received a modest foundation grant to tackle infant mortality, a community survey and first-ever neighborhood-wide meeting revealed violence, drugs, kids, and housing as residents' top concerns. Those findings, plus "personal relationships among the organizers," served as a springboard for an ambitious vision and action agenda that transformed the community's image and lured $40 million in public and private investment. However, when organizers later tried to launch a new funder-imposed program without consulting the community, the coalition fractured owing to infighting and lack of neighborhood support.

Besides offering essential services, nonprofits serve as a linchpin of local economies, particularly in low-income communities. When fighting to preserve state and local funding for human services, Walczak often cites data showing that the community nonprofit sector accounts for $2.5 billion of Boston's economy. Nonprofits are also major employers: some 26 percent of the region's employees work in that sector. Walczak's own study of the Dorchester and Mattapan areas of Boston showed that the community nonprofit sector supports thousands of jobs, with his $13 million-a-year multifaceted health center one of the largest employers. Walczak further estimates that his center attracts 16,000 people to the Codman Square commercial district every month, thereby supporting local mortgages and merchants. "In fact," he says, "when you look at low-income communities . . .we are the economy." The common argument that employment will shrink if taxes rise is unproven, Walczak points out, but "the neediest residents" definitely do lose jobs if public funding for social services—and thus nonprofits—declines.

He says he approached numerous health centers to find one that was willing to merge back-office operations with his center, thereby freeing a joint staff member to promote a

strong public message. To cultivate an advocacy culture, he encourages staff members to get to know their elected representatives so they can hear firsthand about the sort of work the health center is engaged in. To lure major nonprofit institutions such as hospitals and universities, as well as foundations and businesses, to support a local advocacy agenda, conferees recommended affording them firsthand exposure to low-income neighborhoods. Walczak, for example, conducts an annual tour of his community for medical residents from a prominent teaching hospital.

How to Influence Policy and Gain the Attention of Legislators

Ron Haskins—a Brookings Institution Senior Fellow, former domestic policy advisor to President Bush, and the conference's fourth presenter—likened the current squeeze on federal funding for social services to that of the 1980s. Although he foresees lean times ahead, he maintains that "it is not impossible that Congress will spend some money" in support of new initiatives geared toward youth, and he offered a primer on pressure points in the national legislative process where nonprofit advocates can push the levers of power.

The "markup" of legislation by committee chairs is the most significant step in the congressional legislative process. Some 90 percent of bills fail to move beyond their filing by members of Congress, says Haskins, but those that do must first secure a public hearing called by the majority party, which also decides who testifies. Because heads of federal agencies almost always weigh in, the president can "dramatically influence public policy" no matter which party holds legislative power. Once the public hearing has been held, the committee chair writes the bill. Because some 50 percent of that language will survive if legislation becomes law, "if you can influence the chair . . . you will start out with a very advantageous situation," says Haskins.

In the House, the marked-up bill next proceeds to the Rules Committee, which specifies every detail of the process that will occur on the House floor, including which amendments will come to a vote and the extent of any debate. Here the speaker's power is almost absolute, as members of the Rules Committee pledge allegiance to him or her. "Minority rights do not exist in the House," Haskins points out. "If the majority can hold its votes, it can pass any legislation."

The Senate, in contrast, has no Rules Committee, and indeed " few written or unwritten rules" of any kind, and senators can add as many amendments to a bill as they can convince colleagues to support. Thus legislation that takes four or five hours to move to a vote in the House may require four to five days in the Senate. The Senate also needs 60 votes to end a filibuster designed to ward off a legislative vote—a process that gives the minority party more influence than in the House.

Contacts with people on both sides of the aisle are essential. If advocates can convey the importance of a given social policy, "you might be surprised at the places you can get support," says Haskins. And never forget, he counsels, that "the guys who are down today could be up tomorrow." He contends that the Left made a fundamental mistake in

ignoring Republican members of Congress until—and even after—they became the majority party in 1994. Because social policy advocates "were bereft of contacts" on the Right, "the foundations of American social policy changed with the welfare reform bill and the Left played a pitiful role."

Effective advocates therefore forge relationships with members of Congress across the ideological spectrum, treating them with respect and including them in policy-related events. Elected officials "are used to disagreeing with people. . . .that's the nature of politics. Even if they don't agree with you, if you treat them well, they will like you, and they will listen to you," Haskins holds.

In seeking allies, effective advocates also solicit the support of junior members of Congress. If such members "are really committed . . . they'll drive everybody nuts and can actually have an influence," Haskins maintains. He also suggests working closely with the staff of congressional leaders and committees, because chairs and other members must address so many issues that they "usually believe whatever the staff tells them."

Congress divides public policy into "continents" that committees—and numerous lobbyists—zealously guard from outside interference, says Haskins. One such fiefdom is the Social Security Act, which encompasses welfare, child protection programs, Medicare and Medicaid, block grants, and maternal and child health programs.

"Values trump data," but research can exert a critical influence on public policy. Sound research on social needs and the outcomes of social programs can prevent funding cuts and help launch new initiatives, says Haskins. He cited a dozen specific books, reports, and journal articles that turned the social policy tide, putting teen pregnancy, welfare reform, and the effects of divorce on children on the public agenda. The steady stream of policy briefs on welfare reform, he maintains, has convinced legislators to sustain funding for that initiative.

Haskins also noted the effectiveness of several national advocacy groups that use high-quality research to sway the social policy debate, including the Heritage Foundation and American Enterprise Institute on the Right and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Center on Law and Social Policy on the Left. The National Governors Association also parlays formidable foundation funding, staff, and lobbyists into credible research and social policy positions.

Advocates must master a range of tools to transform research results into public influence. Haskins recommends using research reports as a springboard for public testimony (keep it brief and use a conversational style to gain legislators' attention), press conferences (hold them in places unfamiliar to many people, such as welfare offices), media seminars, and op-eds (emphasize only two major points and one major study).

State-level advocates need to understand the 1 percent of their government that is unique. Two Massachusetts legislators emphasized the importance of understanding the "policies, priorities, politics, and personalities" that determine their state's public policy.

If they don't, advocates will not have access to the "critical business that often occurs in the middle of the night," points out State Senator Jarrett Barrios of Cambridge. He also accented the need to become "bilingual": learning to think and talk like lawmakers. State Representative Byron Rushing of Boston recommends that advocates solicit advice on key pressure points from inside players, such as the leading lobbyist for social services or a centrist watchdog group, and that they ask sympathetic legislators to critique their lobbying skills.

Developing a long-term relationship with state legislators is critical. Like other presenters, Rushing advises developing relationships with lawmakers "before you need to ask for something." In particular, "you have two people who love you: your state representative and state senator," he claims. "Make them life members of your organization, inviting them to important functions and putting them on your communications list." And "never, never lie" to them, he warns: advocates must be honest about any given situation and their goals.

Barrios recommends that lobbyists for state legislation work closely with the bill's lead sponsor, other legislators who care deeply about the issue, staff members and key advisors to legislative leaders, and even with opponents. Advocates should also develop relationships with the heads of state agencies, as they are "extremely powerful," sometimes even take stands in opposition to the governor, and may even deploy administrative tools that achieve advocates' desired ends.

"Big ideas" propel public policy. Conference participants wrestled with how to marshall a children's agenda with staying power, much as public consensus formed around the need to support seniors. Haskins was adamant that Congress will never knowingly create an "edifice linking programs for children," as members look to states to ensure kids' well-being. However, he maintains that President Bush has provided two openings for expanding support for children: his proposal to fully fund Head Start, which implies universal preschool education; and the legislation reauthorizing welfare reform, which cites aiding children as its rationale. Haskins maintains that the public would support initiatives that spring from such openings if advocates create a "barometer"—measures that show, for example, that "kids in other states are reading better than those in mine." He also thinks the public would resonate with the notion that "all children, and perhaps all people, should have health insurance."

Preschool programs have succeeded in winning broad public support, conferees pointed out, and they suggested that advocates for youth development programs collaborate rather than compete with childcare providers by emphasizing the need to sustain preschool gains. Participants also recommended redirecting and dedicating public funding for youth "from a few kids to most," and suggested that the No Child Left Behind Act provides a window of opportunity.

Long-Term Lessons

Several central lessons emerged from the conference for ensuring that nonprofits with low-income constituencies gain access to the whole policymaking and funding pie—and that the pie continues to grow:

Nonprofits must devote an explicit portion of their mission, time, and budget to actively influencing the public policy agenda. Nonprofits would do well to view lobbying as a form of "prevention," in that fostering an advocacy culture enables them to effectively represent the needs of their constituents. And nonprofit advocates do have power, conferees insisted, especially if they begin to build a social movement.

Effective advocates create coalitions that are focused, organized, and willing to wield power. To promote a shared vision and secure an effective presence and voice on state and national stages, nonprofits must find ways to work together. Some coalitions emphasize legislative results while others aim to improve indicators of social well-being. Member groups may help sustain coalitions by holding joint board meetings and consulting other groups when selecting new leaders.

Effective advocates see the process of developing leaders as a critical project. Successful leaders listen, build relationships, and "organize others to come forward around shared goals," in the words of one community organizer. Besides fostering leaders within their own organizations and communities, effective advocates ensure that key legislative supporters attain leadership positions.

Personal relationships underlie all effective advocacy. One-to-one contacts among members of coalitions enable them to surmount tensions over issues, goals, strategies, and tactics, while respectful relationships with a diverse array of public officials enable coalitions to win and sustain political victories. In the words of one long-time organizer, "no one is permanently your opponent and no one will always be your ally."

To secure a piece of the policymaking pie, advocates must work closely with their constituents. Nonprofits that shortchange the grassroots process risk alienating their primary base of support. What's more, the stories people tell can reveal effective issues, strategies, and leaders, and become the grist of public testimony. Active grassroots involvement in advocacy campaigns also attracts the attention of elected officials, as such constituents can "walk the precinct" in campaigns for public office.

Victory is never permanent. Advocates who succeed in passing legislation or otherwise shifting public policy must show positive social outcomes, as partisans will inevitably try to reverse the change. Overall, to mobilize legislators and the public and sustain their initiatives, advocates must promote a "big idea" backed by significant indicators of social well-being.

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Other Named Presenters:
Carol O'Cleireacain, Non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution's Urban and Metropolitan Policy Center and an independent economic and management consultant in New York City.
Hathaway Ferebee, Executive Director of the Safe and Sound Campaign in Baltimore.
Laura Pinkney, Executive Director of Safe Passages in Oakland.
Lew Finfer, Director of the Organizing and Leadership Training Center in Boston.
Bill Walczak, Chief Executive Officer of the Codman Square Health Center in Boston.
Ron Haskins, Senior Fellow in the Economics Studies Program at the Brookings Institution and senior consultant at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore.
Jarrett Barrios, (D) Massachusetts State Senator.
Byron Rushing, (D) Massachusetts House of Representatives for the 9th Suffolk County District.

*The mission of the **Urban Health Initiative (UHI)** is to improve the health and safety of children and youth. Local campaigns in Baltimore, Detroit, Oakland, Philadelphia and Richmond participating in the UHI seek to change the major systems that serve children in order to improve youth and safety statistics throughout the entire city or metropolitan area. The UHI National Program Office is located at the University of Washington and is headed by former Seattle Mayor Charles Royer.*

***The Urban Seminar Series on Children's Health and Safety** brings together researchers, practitioners, and policy makers who have a common interest in improving the health and well being of urban children. The series is sponsored by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and directed by William Julius Wilson at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. The seminars are designed to complement RWJF's Urban Health Initiative.*

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