

Children's Mental Health Ontario

Advocacy

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November 23, 2009

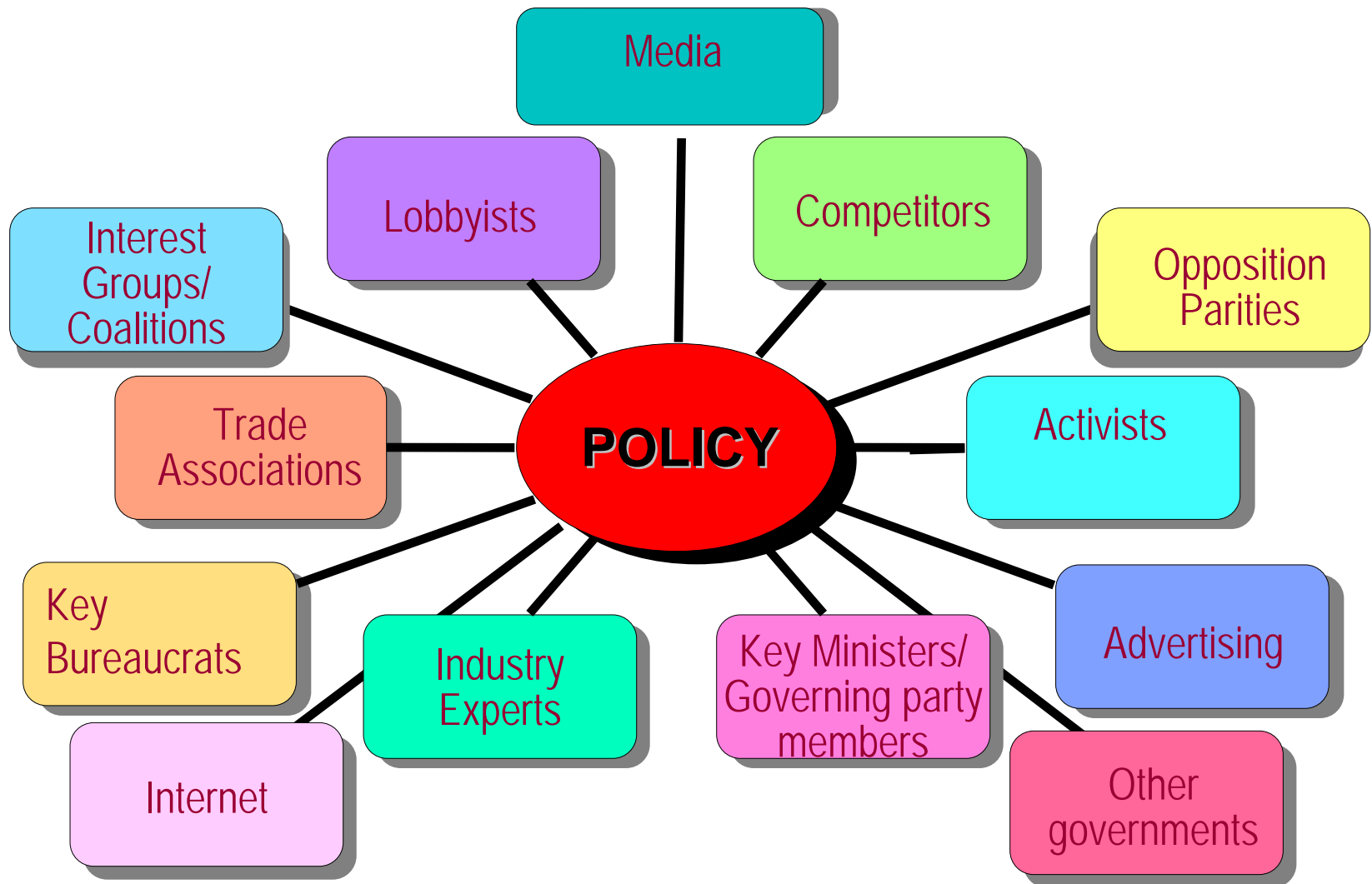
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Context

- **PUBLIC POLICY** – a set of ideas put into practice.
- **ADVOCACY/GOVERNMENT RELATIONS** – process of influencing those ideas.
- **YOU and PARENTS and YOUNG PEOPLE** are the best advocates.

Crowded field

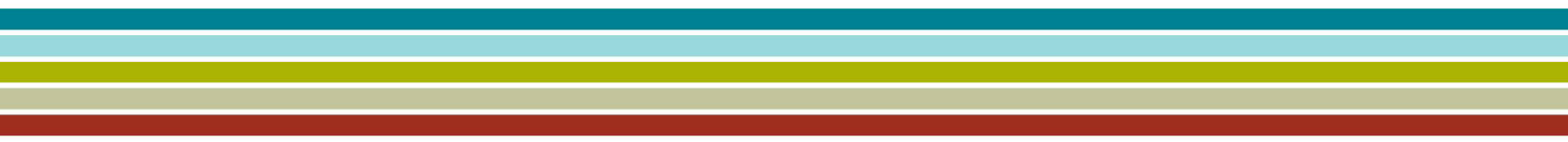


What's happening at Queen's Park

The People

- New Minister of Health
- Possible Cabinet Shuffle
- New Leaders of the Opposition

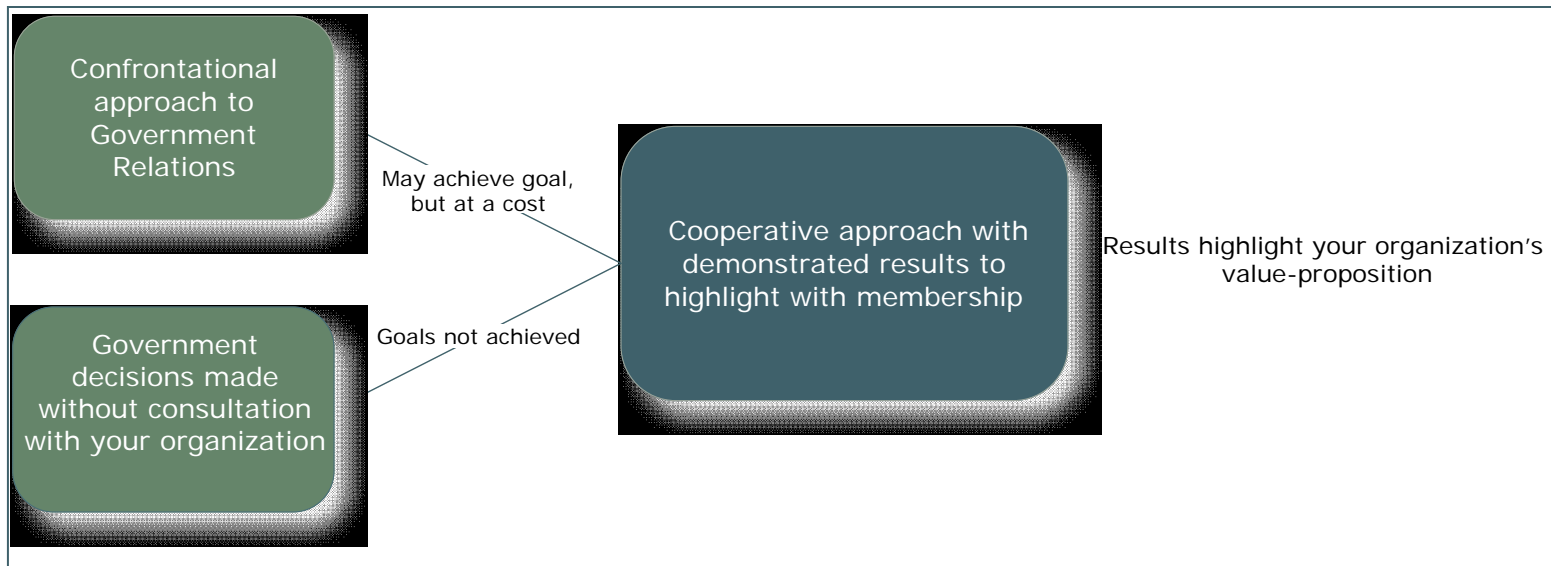
What's happening at Queen's Park – Political Agenda

- Mid term of 2nd mandate
 - Strong “attack” opposition in new PC Leader has changed the dynamics of Queen's Park
 - HST
 - Deficit
 - Handling of the economy
 - Green Jobs/Energy
- 

Mental Health is on the Agenda

- Very rare to have the amount of time and attention paid to one issue
- 16 Cabinet Ministers meet regularly to discuss mental health (including child and youth)
- Each carrying on their own consultations
- Select Committee on mental health

Cornerstone of Effective Advocacy



Cornerstone of Effective Advocacy

1. Win Win

- Match your priorities with the government's priorities.
- Governments have little time to go “off agenda” – thus it is critical to find alignment.

Cornerstone of Advocacy Model

2. Solutions Driven

- Highlight the issue and propose a solution.
- Demonstrate that you are willing partners in change.
- Take the first step in reforming your sector.

Cornerstone of Advocacy Model

3. Thank You

- For some organizations, this is the hardest tactic.
- You need to recognize government when they make an announcement, even if it wasn't everything you wanted.

Cornerstone of Advocacy Model

4. Volunteers, Board Members and kids

- Strategic engagement of volunteers can increase your advocacy (higher level access)
- Have others tell their story and yours
- Board members, families, young people

Cornerstone of Advocacy Model

5. Partner with other organizations

- Strengthens your efforts to influence public policy – don't work at cross purposes
- Other sector leaders
- Parents

Three fundamental tactics

1. Clear key messages and a clear ask
2. Relationship building
3. Thought leadership

Clear Key Messages and Clear Ask

- Key Messages
 - What is the story that is being told? Is it compelling? Will it have an impact? Can everyone tell the same story?
- Define your ask.
 - Show how your ask implements a government priority.
 - Move move beyond simply a dollar figure
 - Proof point your ask to show how it support more kids.

Relationship building

- Elected officials
 - Key to keep your MPP engaged and informed.
 - Engaging with Ministers moves your agenda forward.
- Bureaucracy
 - They are still there when the government changes.

Thought Leadership

- Establish yourself as a trusted advisor
- Participate on panels outside your policy area so you can increase your influence within government

What you should be working on now

- 2010 Budget
- Initiatives that implement the government's agenda
- Influencing the election platforms of all three parties

Conclusion

- Advocacy should relate to your mission and priorities but it must also be:
 - Responsive for emerging issues and changing gov't. agendas
 - Proactive to advance the needs of your members
 - Non-partisan; factual, adversarial and with a focus on finding effective solutions
 - Collaborative; aligned and developed in partnership with other