MCAAP Statement on the Chapter’s Role in Combating Poverty

The American Academy of Pediatrics adopted Health Equity as a Universal Principle in 2009. The MCAAP fully endorses this principle and is committed to the promotion of health equity for Massachusetts’ children.

We support our members in providing the highest quality care to ALL Massachusetts’ children. Furthermore, as pediatricians, we recognize that EVERY child needs:

- Healthy nutrition and activities,
- Stable, nurturing relationships,
- A safe environment to grow up in, and
- Education necessary to become happy, productive adults.

Poverty and social disadvantage are major threats to the ability of children to have these needs met.

In its 2013 Agenda for Children, the AAP identified poverty as a key leverage point for improving child wellbeing. Although Massachusetts is America’s 6th wealthiest state, it is also one of the most unequal. The Commonwealth ranks 4th in income disparity and more than one in five Massachusetts children live in poverty. In its ongoing activities, therefore, the MCAAP will respond to health disparities and the impact of poverty on Massachusetts children by advocating in the following areas:

1. Economic policies that reduce poverty
2. Proper nutrition and reduction in food insecurity
3. Safe and affordable housing
4. Occupational support for parents
5. High quality public education not focused on high-stakes testing

The Executive Board would love to hear from the MCAAP membership on this topic.