



A partnership of The Emergency Coalition to Save Child Care and the NYC Youth Alliance.

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In Advance of Mayor’s Final Budget, Advocates Demand Long-Term Investments in Child Care and After-School Programs

In [New Report](#), Providers Describe How Instability and Uncertain Funding Hurt NYC’s Most Vulnerable Children and Families

We Need a Plan for Stability: Coalition Calls on Mayor and City Leaders to Stop Putting These Programs on the Budget Chopping Block

New York, NY – Members of the Campaign for Children, a coalition of over 150 non-profit organizations, gathered on the steps of City Hall today to call on City leaders to make a long-term investment in child care and after-school programs – programs that are vital to children and working families yet are constantly on the budget chopping block. Heads of these organizations were joined by child care and after-school providers in calling on the Mayor, City Council, and candidates for office to make these essential programs a top priority in this budget and beyond.

According to a [new report](#) released by the Campaign today, child care and after-school programs that rely on City funding face constant uncertainty and instability, which negatively impacts programs that are meant to be a lifeline to New York City’s most vulnerable children and families. The report is based on first hand accounts of child care and after-school providers representing nearly 400 programs citywide. According to their testimony, **underfunded contracts and the constant need for the City Council to save programs with one-year funding gives providers no way to plan for the future, and causes children and families to suffer.** [Read the full report [HERE](#)].

The economic and social benefits of investing in high quality early childhood education and after-school programs, particularly for low-income children, are well known – yet the City has failed to make long-term investments to fund stable, high-quality systems. As the report states, “while the need for services increases, fewer children are being served; parents are living under the constant threat of losing care for their children; parents and providers at child care centers will once again receive letters in January telling them their center will be closing in June; children are being shuffled from program to program, trying to find an open slot; providers are constantly unsure whether they’ll have the promised funding to open their doors; and more.”

In their own words, child care and after-school providers described the struggles involved in providing high-quality care without stable funding:

- “Not knowing is so difficult - **the level of stress among all is overwhelming** - it makes it very difficult to ensure quality care for our community.”
- “The hiring of qualified staff in the midst of turmoil has been difficult since **staff do not want to work for agencies that can’t guarantee them long term positions.**”
- “Families will not know about their child care options until the last minute, **creating a great deal of anxiety and confusion and challenging transitions for children.**”
- “Having the child care center funded for one year has a great impact on the future goals and plans for the programs. **The classrooms have been cut and staff had to be terminated in order to operate on the funds given by the discretionary funds.**”
- “Parents and children were very aware that their after-school program was on the line and could potentially lose all funding. **Many parents were panicked about what they would do for next year.** Both parents and children took part in our advocacy efforts wanting our elected officials to understand the urgency of the situation.”
- “Going year to year is difficult. **Staff is anxious about jobs. Parents are anxious about services.**”

In 2012, the Campaign for Children formed to fight proposed unprecedented budget cuts to child care and after-school programs, which are proven to help children succeed while parents work to support their families. Following over 30 rallies, 60,000 letters and 4,500 phone calls to city leaders, the Campaign’s efforts resulted in a historic victory – the City Council and Administration restored \$150 million to prevent the elimination

of programs for more than 47,000 children. While this was an enormous victory for children and families, **\$120 million of the restored money is one-year, discretionary money that runs out in June – leaving parents and advocates to fight once again just to maintain the status quo, not to mention expanding services for more children in need.**

“Investing adequately in quality education programs for children in low income households, starting from a very young age through high school, must be a top priority,” said **Jennifer Jones Austin, Executive Director of the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies.** “High quality programs serve as a spring board for children by providing the educational and social engagement all children need to thrive.”

“By adequately funding vital, proven early childhood and after-school programs, we put children on the path to success as adults,” said **Richard R. Buery, Jr., President & CEO of The Children’s Aid Society.** “We call on our leaders to end the uncertainty of year-to-year funding, stabilize these systems and help us keep our promise to New York City’s children with a permanent plan for their education and care.”

“Not-for-profits that provide core community services like child care and after-school are the bedrock of a healthy community’s social infrastructure. These programs both stabilize and strengthen struggling communities,” said **Nancy Wackstein Executive Director of United Neighborhood Houses.** “But, the funding that supports these core services is unstable and constantly at risk. This impacts the children, families and communities whom non-profits serve. We call on both current and aspiring city leaders to implement a plan to stabilize child care and after-school.”

“This upcoming budget is Mayor Bloomberg’s final opportunity to stabilize the child care and after-school systems,” said **Jennifer March-Joly, Executive Director of Citizens Committee for Children.**” In baselining \$120 million, the Mayor could secure his legacy as the education mayor and strong fiscal steward, ensuring that thousands of NYC children continue to benefit from programs that prepare them school success and ensure that while they learn, their parents remain stably employed.”

The Campaign for Children kicked off their new phase of 2013 organizing with a series of town hall meetings in each borough during the month of January. The meetings attracted hundreds of parents, providers, and community members who are concerned about the City’s lack of investment in child care and after-school programs, and who together will call on City leaders and candidates for office to have a long-term plan to stabilize the systems.

ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

The [Campaign for Children](#) is a coalition of over 150 child care and after-school advocacy and provider organizations, who united in 2012 to fight the proposed budget cuts. Following over 30 rallies and press events, 60,000 letters and 4,500 phone calls to city leaders, the Campaign's efforts resulted in an unprecedented victory – the City Council and Administration restored \$150 million to prevent the elimination of programs for more than 47,000 children.

Despite this victory, the child care and after-school systems in New York City are fundamentally under-funded and unstable. With the belief that every child in NYC deserves access to a safe, high-quality, affordable, and educational child care and after-school program, the Campaign for Children calls for current elected officials, as well as candidates for Citywide office and City Council, to have a plan to make long-term investments in stable, reliable, and sustainable child care and after-school systems for New York's children and families.

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