



Campaign for Children Statement on the FY21 Adopted Budget

NEW YORK – July 2, 2020 – In response to the adoption of the FY21 New York City budget, the Campaign for Children released the following statement:

Facing the unprecedented challenges of a public health and budgetary crises, the Campaign for Children is relieved that the Mayor and the City Council made meaningful restorations in the adopted budget. Following the proposed cuts to summer programs including all summer camps and the Summer Youth Employment Program, 175,000 New York City youth were facing a summer with no programming, no social-emotional supports, no academic enrichment opportunities, and no summer jobs to supply vital income. The \$115 million restoration to youth programs including COMPASS, SONYC, Beacon and Cornerstone programs, in addition to SYEP, will allow over 100,000 youth to participate in these vital programs and receive those benefits during a time when they need them the most.

However, as we celebrate this small victory, we must acknowledge that this budget process has wreaked havoc on the youth service sector resulting in thousands of staff layoffs and a dramatic reduction in the capacity and reach of programs at time when youth, families, and communities have profound and increased needs. These programs should never have been on the chopping block and the Administration's rhetoric of equity and investing in our youth is disconnected from what the budget did. We are concerned about the effects of lost capacity in the very organizations that the City is counting on to support communities in the recovery from COVID-19 and on the sector. We've lost considerable ground in the year-after-year fight for expanded summer slots and must now develop programming for an uncertain fall.

Furthermore, our current health and fiscal crises do not capture this moment alone. The murder of George Floyd and the protests that followed highlighted the obstacles youth, families and communities of color face in their attempts just to live, let alone thrive. We previously called on the Mayor and City Council to not only fund youth programs, but to do so within an equitable and justice-focused budget that confronts and addresses systemic racism. This budget takes steps in that direction, but there is so much more to do. We look forward to continuing to work with the Mayor, City Council, and all our elected officials to go farther and work toward achieving deep structural and equitable impacts that long-marginalized communities of color in this city deserve.

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About the Campaign for Children

The Campaign for Children is a coalition of 150 early childhood education and after-school advocacy and provider organizations, including Citizens' Committee for Children, Children's Aid, United Neighborhood Houses, Good Shepherd Services, FPWA, the Day Care Council of New York, UJA-Federation of New York, and the YMCA of Greater New York. The Campaign's successful advocacy saved child care and after-school programs for more than 47,000 children by securing more than \$120 million of one-year City Council discretionary funds for two consecutive years, which then were successfully baselined. The Campaign also advocated for the expansion of Universal Pre-K and middle school after-school programs in NYC and saved summer programs for over 34,000 children.