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Mayor's Preliminary Budget Leaves City Children and Working Parents Stranded

Advocates Say This Devastating Blow to Children's And Youth Services Will Undercut Mayor's "Legacy" Reform Agenda For Education And Economic Development

Advocates, Providers and Parents Call On Mayor To Revise Budget, Restore Child Care And After-School Programs For More Than 40,000 Children and their Families

New York, NY – In response to Mayor Bloomberg's announcement today that his preliminary budget for the Administration for Children's Services and the Department of Youth and Community Development fails to include funding for child care and after-school programs for more than 40,000 children currently enrolled, a coalition of advocates, providers and parents called on the Mayor to revise the budget and restore the funding for the children in danger of losing access to these essential programs. The Mayor's proposed budget, coupled with other recent changes, would eliminate child care for 15,900 children, and would cut Out-of-school Time (OST) after-school programs for 25,000 children – leaving 40,900 of New York's children and their families stranded without care.

These sweeping cuts would strike a devastating blow to New York City's working parents – who depend on these critical services to keep their jobs – and their children – who need these early education and after-school programs for future success. The cuts represent a dramatic departure from the Mayor's stated desire to make education reforms and economic development his top priorities and the foundation of his legacy as mayor.

"For a Mayor who has staked his legacy on creating economic opportunities for low-income New Yorkers, it's bewildering that his budget slashes the programs that set children up for success and allow working parents to keep their jobs," said **Nancy Kolben, Executive Director of Center for Children's Initiatives**. "Our children and families deserve better than this kind of double-talk. The Mayor must restore these devastating cuts to child care and after-school programs, and prioritize our city's working families."

"The Mayor's budget fails to invest the dollars needed to prevent the closing of half of the City's after-school programs, which will deprive thousands of young people of both a safe place to be after school as well as the enrichment programs they can access. It would also make it impossible for many low-income working parents to stay employed and take care of their families," said **Richard R. Buery, Jr, President and CEO of the Children's Aid Society**. "In 2005, Mayor Bloomberg launched this innovative after-school initiative, leading the nation in building a system to truly support children's healthy development and keep New York families working. The Mayor must take urgent action to maintain these essential programs and demonstrate his true commitment to New York City's working families, particularly during these difficult economic times."

“This program is so important to me because I’m a single parent and I work full-time. If I didn’t have a place for my daughter to go every day, I wouldn’t have any other option but to leave my job and stay home to take care of her. And if that happened, I would lose my apartment,” said **Tiffany Rodriguez, the parent of 3 year-old daughter who attends the Educational Alliance’s Day Care program at Lillian Wald.**

“On the Lower East Side, I have seen first-hand the great impact that these vital programs have on thousands of children of all ages,” said **Robin Bernstein, President & CEO of the Educational Alliance.** “We must invest in the quality of child care and after-school programs and ensure that these programs are available for all who need them. However, it can’t be at the expense of over 40,000 of our city’s children. Mayor Bloomberg must preserve commitment to New York’s working families – he must revise the budget to keep children learning.”

This broad coalition of advocates, providers, and parents consists of members of the **Emergency Coalition to Save Child Care** – Advocates for Children, Center for Children’s Initiatives, Children’s Defense Fund – NY, Citizens’ Committee for Children, Day Care Council of NYC, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, Head Start Sponsoring Board Council, United Neighborhood Houses, and UJA-Federation – and members of the **Youth Alliance** and **Campaign to Save Youth Services** – The New York City Youth Alliance, The After-School Corporation (TASC), The Children’s Aid Society, Citizens’ Committee for Children, Educational Alliance, Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, Good Shepherd Services, Human Services Council, Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club, Neighborhood Family Services Coalition, Partnership for After School Education (PASE), SCO Family of Services, Sports & Arts in Schools Foundation, UJA-Federation of NY, United Neighborhood Houses of New York, University Settlement, and YMCA of Greater NY.

BACKGROUND

As Mayor Bloomberg himself [recently stated](#), “what happens after the final school bell of the day rings is as important to students as what goes on in the classrooms.” Both child care and after-school programs provide children with critical educational opportunities that pave the way for future success, and allow parents to maintain jobs and support their families while their children receive safe, affordable care.

The Mayor’s recent changes to EarlyLearnNYC and Out-of-school Time (OST) mean an increase in the quality of these programs – as well as an increase in costs that is not supported by the current budget. The Mayor’s preliminary budget, coupled with these program changes, would slash Out-of-school Time after-school programs by 50% – so that 25,000 fewer children will be served come September – and eliminate child care slots for 15,900 children. All told, 40,900 children and their families will lose access to these essential programs.

The Mayor is taking notable steps to restructure the child care and after-school systems to increase the quality of the programs and alignment citywide through EarlyLearnNYC and OST – but is, at the same time, cutting funding significantly so that the programs serve a fraction of the children.

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