



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MAYOR ANNOUNCES LARGEST CUT TO EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES IN DECADES
More than 16,000 children to lose child care

Mayor Bloomberg’s plans to cut subsidies for 16,624 children in the coming year is a devastating blow to the city’s children and working families, the biggest single cut to child care services since the 1970’s. It represents a dramatic reversal of the Mayor’s promise to expand early learning opportunities for the city’s children and a retreat from his public statements in support of the city’s working families.

Cutting 16,624 additional subsidies – on top of the 14,000 already lost since 2006– creates a serious hurdle in preparing all the city’s children for school. Tens of thousands of young children who need to be prepared for school will enter kindergarten behind, and stay behind. Thousands of families will be left scrambling for a safe place for their children while they are at work.

As leaders in early childhood education, we are profoundly disappointed in the Mayor’s proposal and deeply concerned about the setback it represents in ensuring that every child enters school ready to succeed and all parents who want to work can get to their job each day. These cuts are the epitome of penny-wise, pound foolish decisions that that will cost taxpayers more in the long run.

We urge the Mayor to reverse these proposals and support children and families. Every dollar invested in early childhood services saves taxpayers \$4 to \$7 in the long run, and also stimulates the local economy immediately.

The hard-working New Yorkers now receiving these subsidies are the people we all rely upon to keep our communities running—they are teacher’s aides, crossing guards, cashiers at supermarkets, assistants at doctor’s offices and security guards in office buildings, and they are the child care providers and teachers who currently care for and teach the children impacted by these proposals. The child care teachers and workers, as well as working parents are likely to spend their paychecks quickly and locally, spurring neighborhood economies. Studies of New York show the payback is as much as \$2 for every \$1

invested in child care. In the midst of the nation's most serious economic downturn, now is not the time to eliminate that local stimulus.

The low-income families who lose the subsidies will be forced to make terrible choices about their children's care, their family budgets and economic security. Without a subsidy, they may turn to makeshift, underground arrangements, often unreliable and even unsafe. Without subsidies, some will also face tough choices about how to pay utilities, the rent and buy food.

The Mayor's proposal to eliminate 16,000 subsidies is all the more crushing because it comes on the heels of serious reductions in child care services already enacted during the current economic crisis. Today, almost 6,000 fewer children from working families are receiving child care than in 2008. Overall, there are 14,000 fewer subsidies available and more than 30 centers have been closed since 2004.

We are aware that federal and state support for subsidized child care has not kept up with the city's increasing costs of providing child care services. Yet until now, we were proud to live in a city that did its best to close the gap with local funding and make early childhood services a priority. We now urge the Mayor to step up for children, families and our communities. At a time of great economic dislocation, we should be focused on the dual goals of supporting working families and preparing children for school. Cutting 16,000 additional subsidies is exactly the wrong policy. Early childhood education is recognized as absolutely crucial to children's success in school, parents' success at work and overall family economic security. We urge the Mayor to keep his commitment to expand early learning and to make good on his statements of support for the working families of New York City.

Our organizations stand together to strongly oppose these cuts. We have been and remain willing to work with the city to identify ways to streamline and strengthen the child care system, but we cannot tolerate any additional cuts to the already under-resourced child care system.

Supporting Organizations and Contacts:

Brooklyn Kindergarten Society, James Matison 718-623-9803 x112

Center for Children's Initiatives, Nancy Kolben 212-381-0024

Children's Defense Fund – NY, Jennifer Rojas 212-697-2323

Citizens Committee for Children, Stephanie Gendell 212-673-1800 x17

Day Care Council of New York, Andrea Anthony 212-206-7818

Head Start Sponsoring Board Council, Gwen McEvilley 718 858-7575

Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, Liz Accles 212-801-1393

United Neighborhood Houses, Nancy Wackstein 212-967-0322

FOR FAMILY STORIES PLEASE CONTACT LISA CASWELL AT THE DAY CARE COUNCIL AT lcaswell@dcnyinc.org or (212) 206-7818 x107.

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