

FY '05-06 Budget Recommendations

FLEXIBLE FUND FOR FAMILY SERVICES

Ensure that social services for children, youth and families are adequately funded. The SFY'05-06 Executive Budget includes a \$1 billion appropriation for the Flexible Fund for Family Services (FFFS) that blends into a block grant, funding for children's services including child care, work-related supports, child welfare, Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS), supportive housing services, homelessness prevention and Summer Youth Employment, with other TANF-funded programs. While the FFFS promises county flexibility, it does not require maintenance of current year program funding levels. Additionally, it reduces available funds and causes children to compete with adults for essential social services.

CHILD WELFARE

Fund \$447.5 million in appropriations for foster care to maintain current year base funding and support the \$1.5 million phase-in rate increases. Eliminate the foster care block grant and establish a new funding stream, formula and rate structure for foster care services that supports quality care, timely reunification and adoption and aftercare services.

OCFS should seek a federal waiver to create a subsidized guardianship program to assist over 5,000 children now in kinship foster care in New York State.

Fund \$617 million in appropriations for family support services (preventive, after-care and independent living) to maintain current year base funding and support the \$4.5 million increase. Keep children safe and families together by allowing all county investments in family support services to draw down the 65% state match.

FAMILY COURT

Enact permanency legislation to improve outcomes for children and families and conform state law to federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) guidelines and IV-E requirements.

CHILD CARE

Fund \$1 billion in appropriations for child care to maintain current year base funding level of \$929 million to serve 186,900 children statewide, support the \$40 million increase and add \$100 million to serve an additional 22,200 children statewide, in regulated child care programs. In New York City, over 100,000 children age 0-5 are eligible for but not receiving subsidized child care.

Add \$20 million to continue to provide training and professional development grants to child care workers, to improve child care safety and quality and extend the current Child Care Professional Retention Program through March 31, 2007.

Require affordable housing development projects to build on-site child care facilities.

EDUCATION

Fund \$5.63 billion more for school operating aid over four years and \$9.2 billion more for school facilities over five years to provide New York City public school students with a sound, basic education.

Fund \$301 million in appropriations for the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program, increasing by \$100 million the Executive Budget proposal, to serve an additional 21,000. There are 219,000 four-year olds in New York State who are eligible for but not receiving UPK.

Securing Every Child's Birthright

HEALTH

Oppose changes in the Early Intervention Program that impose parent fees and oppose provisions that allow counties to reimburse providers below state established minimum rates, and restore \$4.6 million and \$4 million respectively. Support the proposal to off-set EI costs by collecting reimbursements from commercial health insurance and extend the initiative to publicly subsidized health insurance.

Add \$5.5 million to create a new Universal Home Visiting Program, in New York City for first-time parents. The initiative would promote child safety, link newborns with medical providers, and provide information on early care and education opportunities, tax credits and other community resources to assist them in returning to work. (The cost to serve the cohort of 54,000 newborns to first-time city parents is \$11 million of which \$5.5 million represents state funding.)

Maintain presumptive enrollment in Child Health Plus (CHP) for Medicaid eligible children to ensure continuous health insurance coverage as children await eligibility determination. Support continuous CHP coverage for 12 months.

MENTAL HEALTH

Support \$2.3 million to add 245 Home and Community-Based Waiver slots for children with SED who are in foster care or who are at-risk of institutional placement.

Support a \$6 million increase for Article 31 outpatient mental health clinics to improve the quality and availability of outpatient mental health treatment for children and adults.

Support a \$6.5 million increase for supportive housing programs to address the rehabilitative and support needs of priority populations - including children with serious emotional disturbance.

Improve Medicaid coverage for children in foster care and enable foster care agencies to secure comprehensive, coordinated, and high quality health and mental health services for children. Develop a foster care health and mental health clinic license and replace the Medicaid per diem with a specialty health and mental health rate for children in foster care.

Provide continuous health insurance coverage to 18 to 21 year-olds leaving foster care for independent living.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Support the expansion of community-based alternatives for at-risk youth, including: the requirement that counties exhaust community-based alternatives prior to the use of detention for Persons in Need of Supervision (PINS); a \$5.2 million allocation for PINS preventive and diversion services; and a \$1.25 million increase for the Evidenced-based Community Initiative (EbCI) which provides family-focused interventions for delinquent youth.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Fund \$30.1 million in appropriations for the Extended Day/Violence Prevention Program increasing by \$1.5 million, the Executive Budget Proposal to provide high-need school districts with academic support and after school programs for youth who are at-risk of dropping out of school or entering the juvenile justice system.

Fund \$8.5 million in appropriations for Runaway and Homeless Youth programs increasing by \$3 million, the Executive Budget Proposal to extend these services to PINS youth and to pay for additional care days in Transitional Living Programs.

Fund \$41.5 million in appropriations for Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention and \$13.9 million for Special Delinquency Prevention increasing by \$13 million and \$4.5 million respectively, the Executive Budget Proposal to provide more youth with OST programming in recreation centers, after-school programs, summer camps, sports leagues and community service opportunities. In New York City over 450,000 children now need OST services.

Fund Summer Youth Employment appropriation at \$35 million to maintain current year base funding of \$15 million and add \$20 million to serve approximately 28,000 youth.

Healthy • Housed • Educated • Safe

INCOME SECURITY

Oppose the full family sanction and automatic notification to Child Protective Services. This plan will: impoverish children; promote inappropriate intrusion by government into family life; and redirect scarce resources away from investigation of actual cases of child abuse and neglect. In New York City, there are approximately 16,500 sanctioned households with an estimated 30,000 children and an additional 16,000 households "in sanction process".

Oppose a decrease in the Eamed Income Disregard to 25% for households that have received public assistance for more than five years. Over 13% of New York City families receiving public assistance work and receive a small public assistance grant because of low earnings.

Oppose a 50% work participation-rate requirement that is linked to a 5% reduction in administrative funding to counties.

Support a \$3 million increase to establish a five-county Demonstration Project to provide intensive employment and related services to non-custodial parents.

HOUSING POLICY

Authorize New York City to establish a New York City Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Dedicated revenue streams may include: Battery Park City surplus funds; a Mortgage Recording Tax on co-ops; and revenue generated from new municipal capital projects in New York City.

Expand the New York State Low Income Housing Trust Fund by establishing a dedicated and recurring revenue source. Revenue streams may include: a set-aside of the Mortgage Recording Tax (MRT) on residential homes and condominiums and Housing Finance Agency (HFA) insurance fees.

Add \$21.8 million (state share) to create and phase-in a Housing Allowance Program for 5,000 New York City working families. The program would be available to families earning up to 80% of the Area Median Income (\$45,216 for a family of three) who pay more than 50% of their income on rent or mortgage and prevent families from losing their housing and supported with 50% city and 50% state funds.

TAX POLICY

Support \$16 million to increase the NYS Eamed Income Tax Credit (EITC) for non-custodial, young, parents.

Lift the provision that prohibits concurrent filing for the EITC and the household credit, to allow families to receive an additional \$90.

Authorize the creation of a refundable Child and Dependent Care Credit (CDCC) for New York City to help 155,000 families pay for quality, safe child or dependent care.

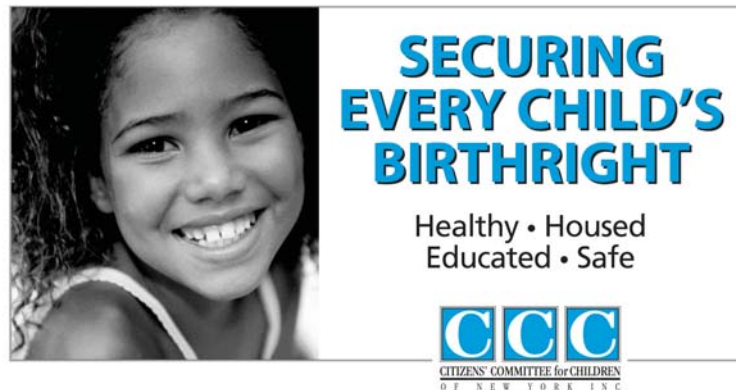
Add \$74 million for a statewide School Tax Relief (STAR) Renters Credit targeted to families with annual earnings under \$60,000. The STAR programs (Co-STAR and STAR-Plus) shortchange 65% of NYC taxpayers who are renters.

Extend the exemption on the year-round state sales tax on clothing and footwear under \$110 at a cost of \$456 million. The exemption was set to expire on June 1, 2005.

Generate \$190 million in revenue by continuing the Temporary Personal Income Tax on persons earning above \$150,000 set to expire in December 2005.

FACTS ABOUT NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN:

- 1.9 million children live in New York City
- 542,000 children live in poverty
- 98,000 children have no health insurance coverage
- 16,000 children are homeless
- 18,000 children have been abused or neglected
- 27,000 children are hospitalized for preventable illnesses
- 215,000 elementary and middle school students read below state and city standards
- 100,000 young children 0 - 5 years need child care
- 450,000 youth age 5 - 19 years need out-of-school time services
- 22.7% of New York City renters spend more than 50% of their income on housing



Imagining innovative solutions to complex problems affecting children has been at the heart of CCC's work for six decades. Despite notable gains, too many children still face a future where achievement and economic security are out of reach. *Securing Every Child's Birthright* is a CCC campaign to harness the power and commitment of New Yorkers to insure that every child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. The campaign champions bold policies and initiatives to inspire community leaders, elected officials and fellow New Yorkers to create a brighter future for our children.

ABOUT CCC

Since 1944, Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc. (CCC) has convened, informed and mobilized New Yorkers to make the city a better place for children. CCC's unique approach to child advocacy is fact-based and combines the best features of public policy advocacy with a tradition of citizen activism. Casting light on the issues, engaging allies, fueling civic discourse, identifying improvements and envisioning. CCC is supported by individual foundations and corporations.

Securing Every Child's Birthright
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CITIZENS' COMMITTEE for CHILDREN
OF NEW YORK, INC.

**Budget
Recommendations
to the Governor
and New York
State Legislature**

Fiscal Year 2005-06

Securing Every Child's Birthright
Healthy • Housed • Educated • Safe

Citizens' Committee for Children (CCC) calls on the Governor and Legislature to develop a budget for SFY'05-06 that *Secures Every Child's Birthright* to be healthy, housed, educated and safe.

The already complex state budget-making process is further complicated this year by three factors: revenue shortfalls and a growing state deficit; proposals to collapse and consolidate funding for essential children's social service programs into a block grant funded at levels far below the actual cost of care; and the recent New York State Court of Appeals decision that redefines and limits legislative authority in the budget process.

These constraints make even more urgent this year, the need for state officials to work together to develop a negotiated budget that reflects the interests of all New Yorkers-- especially the children and families who call New York their home.

We call on the Governor and the New York State Legislature to find common ground and begin the serious work of budget talks to arrive at a negotiated budget that works to *Secure Every Child's Birthright* by promoting economic, housing and developmental security.