

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**NEW YORKERS ASK THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE FOR A BUDGET  
THAT OFFERS SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS PLAGUING NEW YORK'S CHILDREN**

(ALBANY, NY) **March 2, 2004** – While the Executive Budget proposals fund some important children's programs in the area of mental health with the creation of a bipartisan *Blue Ribbon Commission for the Closure of State Psychiatric Centers* and the restoration of funding to Advantage Schools for afterschool programming, there are significant areas of vulnerability that need to be addressed in the adopted budget. In particular, cuts to Education, Medicaid, Early Intervention, Public Assistance and Child Welfare, the Executive Budget pose serious threats to New York's children.

“Keeping in mind the extraordinary economic pressure that New York now faces and the vast unmet needs of children who are failing in school, homeless, abused or neglected and counting on Public Assistance and Medicaid, Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc. (CCC) urges the Governor and the Legislature to consider legislative and budget priorities that will improve child well-being and maintain vital services for children. We are also asking our state leaders' to consider ways to reduce the tax burden for low-wage earning families and renters through a New York City Earned Income Tax Credit and a New York City Child and Dependent Care Credit,” said Gail B. Nayowith, Executive Director of CCC

“Improving outcomes for children calls for budget and legislative actions to ensure that every child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. Solutions to the problems plaguing children must be reflected in the state's budgets, programs and policies supporting them and their families,” said Ms. Nayowith.

Advocating for children's program restorations and investments and tax policies that support low wage earning families, New Yorkers met today with Legislators and policymakers in the Governor's office who play a key role in budget negotiations and decision-making on behalf of children and families. Highlights of their agenda for action by the Governor and the Legislature in SFY2004-05, contained in CCC's *Kids First New York: New York State Budget and Legislative Priorities* include:

# **Kids First New York™**

## **New York State Budget and Legislative Priorities Fiscal Year 2004-05**

### **Early Care and Education**

- Provide stable predictable funding to provide a sound basic education as mandated by the Court of Appeals; expand Early Grade Class Size Reduction and Universal Pre Kindergarten; make funding for New York City's extended day permanent; and address inequities in the state's building aid formula
- Expand quality child care subsidies and resources to build and renovate facilities

### **Children's Health and Mental Health**

- Invest in Children's Outpatient Treatment
- Restore Medicaid coverage for children 6-19 years of age
- Improve health insurance coverage for children in and aging-out of foster care
- Restore Early Intervention Services to ensure that children 0-2 years receive medically necessary services

### **Youth Development and Juvenile Justice**

- Restore Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention, Summer Youth Employment Special Delinquency Prevention and Extended Day/Violence Prevention funding for a range of youth programs and employment opportunities
- Support the Detention Block Grant and invest in community-based alternatives

### **Child Welfare**

- Restore investments in and funding transfers to services that prevent child abuse and neglect
- Fully fund the state share of foster care costs

### **Income Security**

- Reject Article VII language that will terminate or reduce public assistance benefits and services for families and children
- Enact legislation to increase the minimum wage to \$7.25 an hour

### **Housing and Homelessness Prevention**

- Restore the Supplemental Housing Intervention Program; prevent homelessness
- Expand operating funds for Supportive Housing for homeless families

### **Tax Policy**

- Support a local Earned Income Tax Credit, a Child and Dependent Care Credit and relief for renters
- Reinstate two sources of revenue, the Stock Transfer Fund and Commuter Tax

### **Human Service Workforce**

- Raise base salaries for front-line human service workers

*Founded in 1944, CCC works to improve the well being of all New York City children and ensure that they are healthy, housed, educated and safe. CCC's activities and programs combine the best features of public policy advocacy with a long tradition of citizen activism. Many of CCC's activities directly affect the lives of individual children but most of our efforts are spent identifying the causes and effects of vulnerability and disadvantage; promoting the development of services in the community, and working to make public and private institutions more responsive to children. CCC is a non-profit organization supported by individuals, Foundations and Corporations. CCC neither solicits nor accepts government funds.*

