



Testimony of

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Before the  
New York City Council  
Health Committee

Regarding the New York City  
Preliminary Plan Budget Proposals for FY12

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Good Afternoon. My name is Joan Siegel and I am the Senior Policy Associate for Health and Mental Health at Citizens' Committee for Children of New York (CCC). CCC is a 67-year-old, privately supported, independent, multi-issue child advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring New York City's children are healthy, housed, educated and safe. I would like to thank Chairman Arroyo and members of the Council Committee on Health for holding this hearing on the City's Preliminary Budget for City Fiscal Year 2012 (CFY12).

While we appreciate the negative impact that the State's proposed cost shifts would have on the City's budget, we believe that it is unacceptable for the City's children to continue to bear a disproportionate burden of balancing the budget, particularly in light of the City's improved revenue forecast for CFY12 (an additional \$1.1 billion projected for CFY12).

Before discussing the details of the Preliminary Budget for CFY12, it is important to remember that this Financial Plan represents the 10<sup>th</sup> round of budget cuts. New York City's children have already lost thousands of slots in child care centers, after school programs, school-based dental clinics, mental health programs, and the Summer Youth Employment Program. In addition, the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) has repeatedly been held to a higher budget cutting standard than any of the uniform services, despite being the City's emergency responder for children.

With regard to the specific proposals outlined in the Mayor's Preliminary Budget Plan for FY12 regarding **children's health**, CCC urges the City Council and the Mayor to work together to restore and baseline the following critical initiatives and programs that address the health needs of New York City's children:

- **Child Health Clinics (\$5.0 million and \$286,986):** The Preliminary Budget fails to fund the \$5 million Child Health Clinic City Council Initiative. In addition, the Preliminary Budget reduces the amount of intra-city monies that pass through DOHMH to HHC for child health clinics by \$286,986. Child Health Clinics provide primary care for children ages 0 to 19. Located in low-income neighborhoods, these clinics fill a vital role for children needing primary health care in their communities. At a time when the economy is suffering, parents are losing jobs (and thus health insurance) and there are increases in the number of children insured through Medicaid and Child Health Plus, maintaining current funding levels for these public health clinics for children is imperative.
- **Infant Mortality Initiative (\$3.0 million):** The Mayor's FY12 Preliminary Budget fails to restore the City Council's long-standing, critical Infant Mortality Initiative. Citywide, the rate of infant mortality for all children in 2009<sup>1</sup> was 5.3 infant deaths per 1,000 live births. The rate for infants born to teen mothers was even higher, at 7.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births<sup>2</sup>. The rate for black infants was far higher, a rate of 9.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.<sup>3</sup> In light of the citywide infant mortality rate and the great disparity among teenage mothers and black children, it is essential that funding for this critical service remain intact to support home visiting and provide critical supports and guidance to new mothers.

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<sup>1</sup> City of New York, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, *Annual Summary of Vital Statistics* (December 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Id.

<sup>3</sup> Id.

- **Obesity Prevention (\$1.27 million):** The Mayor's FY12 Preliminary Budget fails to restore the City Council's Obesity Prevention Initiative, which includes funding for the NYU Body Project, SPARK and Health Corps. At a time when the City is investing in access to healthy foods, it is counterintuitive cut funding for the Obesity Prevention Initiative. Mayor Bloomberg stated on March 4, 2009 that obesity is "probably the only public health issue that is getting worse." DOHMH states that 39% of elementary-middle school children are obese or overweight.<sup>4</sup> Research suggests that children who are overweight or obese are less likely to be engaged in school, more likely to repeat a grade, and more like to miss more than two weeks of school in a school year.<sup>5</sup> We urge you to restore funding for obesity prevention.
- **Asthma Control Initiative (\$500,000):** The Mayor's FY12 Preliminary Budget fails to restore the Asthma Control Initiative. According to DOHMH's 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, among public high school students, 32% reported have an asthma attack in the past 12 months. Asthma was the leading cause of hospitalizations for children ages 1 to 14.<sup>6</sup> It was the second most prevalent cause of hospitalizations for both children under age 1 and children ages 15 to 17.<sup>7</sup> Restoring funding to the Asthma Initiative is essential as it helps combat pests that lead to asthma in high need areas (such as cockroaches) and provides prevention and screening at Pre-K and Head Start programs.
- **Family Planning via Planned Parenthood (\$325,000):** The Mayor's FY12 Preliminary Budget fails to restore funding for the Family Planning Initiative. This program is geared toward uninsured and high-risk teens. In 2007, the teen birth rate for girls 15-19 years of age was 30.5 per 1,000.<sup>8</sup> As with many statistics in New York City, teen birth rate varies tremendously by racial and ethnic groups. While whites and Asians have lower teen birth rates than the citywide rate, at 8.6 and 7.5 births per 1,000 girls (age 15 to 19), the teen birth rate for black girls is higher than the citywide rate at 34.6 births per 1,000 girls (age 15 to 19) and the teen birth rate for Latinas was 52.8 births per 1,000 girls (age 15 to 19), a full 73% higher than the citywide rate<sup>9</sup>. Clearly the statistics suggest that restorations to family planning services are needed.
- **Two School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) (\$182,000):** The Mayor's FY12 Preliminary Budget proposes to cut the funding for 2 school-based Health Centers, which would impact two schools in high need areas: Thurgood Marshall Academy in Harlem and Wingate High School Campus in Crown Heights Brooklyn. There currently is no school nurse in either of the schools. Wingate High School Campus received funding through Speaker Christine Quinn's Primary Care Initiative just last year for low-income areas needing more primary care. The SBHC reports enrollment of 1,310 students, which is 75% of the student population, 820 of whom do not have an outside primary care provider. Thurgood Marshall Academy is smaller and yet the SBHC reports a high

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<sup>4</sup> NYC Vital Signs, *Childhood Obesity is a Serious Concern in New York City* (June 2009)

<sup>5</sup> C. Bethall, L. Simpson, S. Stumbo, A.C. Carle, N. Gombojav. *National, State and Local Disparities in Childhood Obesity*, March 2010 29:3 Health Affairs.

<sup>6</sup> Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc., *Keeping Track of New York City's Children: 2010* (2010) page 121.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at page 121.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at page 285.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.* at page 173.

enrollment rate of 94% (538 students). The proposed budget cuts to city funding for these two SBHCs will further limit the number of resources and support for the youth living in these high need communities.

Finding the revenue needed to restore these detrimental cuts will require a balanced approach. CCC suggests that all revenue producing options must be on the table, including, but not limited to, sin taxes, income taxes, and pension reform.

We understand that the City deficit is so significant that some budget reductions will be made. As you work with the Mayor and fellow Council members on the budget, we urge you to be strategic and deliberate. Funding for cost-effective programs and services that prevent child abuse, keep children safe, ensure children are housed, fed and clothed, and healthy, and funding that goes directly to classrooms must be preserved. It is critical that the actions the City Council takes with the Mayor protect the city's ability to ensure that our children remain healthy, housed, educated and safe.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Attached is a chart detailing the full \$161.5 million cuts to children's services, as well as the elimination of 17,000 child care subsidies and the Advantage Program.



**Fiscal Year 2012 Preliminary Budget for New York City  
Proposes \$161.5 Million in Net Reductions to  
Human Services for Children and Families and the  
Loss of Over 16,000 Child Care Subsidies**

On February 17, 2011 Mayor Bloomberg issued his Preliminary Budget for City Fiscal Year 2012. While CCC was pleased to see that the City's revenue has been increasing and the Mayor was able to offset the anticipated loss of state funds for mandated services, the Preliminary Budget reduces funding for critical services for children by \$161.5 million, including 2,900 preventive service slots, homemaking services, school based mental health centers and after school programs. In addition, the City is planning to eliminate over 16,000 child care subsidies for low-income working families.

Below please find the list of Preliminary Budget Human Services proposals that would impact children:

**CHILD CARE**

Program	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
<b>Restoration of 72 child care center classrooms</b>			<b>(\$11.26 million)</b>
<b>Restoration of child care centers slated for closure</b>			<b>(\$6.68 million)</b>
<b>Increase in child care co-payments</b>		<b>(\$13.0 million)</b>	
Sub-Total	\$0	(\$13.0 million)	(\$17.94 million)

\*In addition, due to a structural budget deficit, ACS is planning to eliminate 16,462 child care subsidies, which would require \$91 million annually to restore.

**CHILD WELFARE**

Program	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
2900 Preventive Service slots			(\$11.7 million)
202 Child Protective Staff positions			(\$5.9 million)
Child welfare staff			(\$1.9 million)
CONNECT Domestic Violence program			(\$270,000)
Child Advocacy Centers			(\$500,000)
Homemaking services		(\$5.1 million)	
Child and Family Specialists		(\$1.0 million)	
Administrative and support function layoffs (118 staff)		(\$2.8 million)	
Staff reductions in the Division of Child Protection through attrition (80 supervisors and managers)		(\$2.7 million)	
Sub-Total	\$0	(\$11.6 million)	(\$20.27 million)

**CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES**

Program	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
Asthma Control Initiative			(\$500,000)
Child Health Clinics			(\$5.0 million)
Family Planning Initiative			(\$325,000)
2 School-Based Health Centers		(\$182,000)	
CEO: Expand Access to Healthy Foods	\$182,000		
HHC Unrestricted City Subsidy		(\$7.14 million)	
Infant Mortality Reduction Program			(\$3.0 million)
Obesity Prevention Programs			(\$1.27 million)
NYU Mobile Dental Vans/Dental Clinic			(\$268,000)
Primary Care Capacity Initiative			(\$669,000)
Sub-Total	\$182,000	(\$7.3 million)	(\$11.03 million)

**HOUSING AND HOMELESS SERVICES**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12</b>	<b>Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12</b>	<b>Failure to Fund Council Restoration</b>
Shared Rooms for Families with Children		(\$1.67 million)	
Reducing Advantage Broker's Fees		(\$1.58 million)	
New Family Intake Center (maintenance and security costs)	\$2.44 million		
Furnish a Future Contract (DHS)			(\$400,000)
Citywide Task Force on Housing Court (HPD)			(\$500,000)
Partial restoration of Community Consultants (HPD)			(\$415,000)
Restore the Housing Preservation Initiative (HPD)			(\$1.5 million)
Partial restoration of Anti-Eviction Legal Services			(\$2.0 million)
Citywide Homeless Prevention Fund			(\$250,000)
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$2.44 million</b>	<b>(\$3.25 million)</b>	<b>(\$5.07 million)</b>

**\*In addition, the City is planning to eliminate the Work Advantage Program, which is the only subsidy available to help families transition out of the shelter system.**

**LEGAL SERVICES**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12</b>	<b>Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12</b>	<b>Failure to Fund Council Restoration</b>
Citywide City Legal Services			(\$1.5 million)
Partial restoration for Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT)			(\$485,000)
Legal Services for the Working Poor			(\$1.05 million)
Legal Services NYC- Keeping Families Together			(\$300,000)
MFY Legal Services			(\$100,000)
SSI-UI Legal Advocacy Program			(\$1.3 million)
Legal Services to Prevent Evictions			(\$2.3 million)
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$7.04 million)</b>

**CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Program	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
Autism Awareness Initiative			(\$1.25 million)
Mental Health Treatment for Children Under Five			(\$1.25 million)
Mental Hygiene Contracted Services including MR/DD clinics		(\$4.86 million)	
Suicide Prevention Hotline			(\$247,150)
Mental health, substance abuse and mental retardation/developmental disability services (HHC)			(\$800,000)
Mental health contracts (non HHC)			(\$450,000)
Sub-Total	\$0	(\$4.86 million)	(\$3.99 million)

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

Program	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
Playground Associates			(\$1.0 million)
Funding to keep all city pools open for the last 2 weeks of the pool season			(\$891,000)
Close 4 Pools and Shorten Outdoor Pool Season			(\$546,000)
Sub-Total	\$0	\$0	(\$2.44 million)

**SOCIAL SERVICES**

Program	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'11	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'11	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
Teen Relationship Abuse Prevention Program (Teen RAPP)			(\$2.5 million)

Food Stamps at Farmer's Markets			(\$420,000)
Food Pantries			(\$1.9 million)
Sub-Total	\$0	\$0	(\$4.82 million)

### YOUTH SERVICES

Program	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
Out of School Time Reduction- Option I (33 programs)			(\$5.95 million)
OST Option I- Reduction in School Holiday Availability (from 20 to 14)		(\$6.05 million)	
Reduce Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) by 2,140 summer jobs		(\$3.2 million)	
Shelter Beds for At-Risk Homeless Youth			(\$5.99 million)
Runaway Homeless Youth Services (5 drop in centers and elimination of City funds for street outreach)		(\$330,000)	
City Council Beacon Restoration			(\$4.1 million)
Reduce Beacon Contracts by 10%		(\$2.63 million)	
New York Junior Tennis League			(\$800,000)
Cultural After School Adventure (CASA)			(\$4.08 million)
City Council Member Discretionary Funds			(\$7.7 million)
Street Outreach/Neighborhood Youth Alliance			(\$1.0 million)
The After-Three Program			(\$3.8 million)
YMCA After School Program			(\$500,000)
Sports and Arts in the School Foundation			(\$1.2 million)
OST Option II			(\$3.05 million)
NYCHA Cornerstone Program Reductions in holidays (20 to 14) and 632 slots		(\$1.1 million)	
Sub-Total	\$0	(\$13.31 million)	(\$38.17 million)

TOTAL

PROGRAM	Proposed Expenditure Increase FY'12	Proposed Expenditure Decrease FY'12	Failure to Fund Council Restoration
ALL HUMAN SERVICES FOR CHILDREN	\$2.62 million	(\$53.32 million)	(\$110.77 million)