

Winning Beginning NY

an early care and education coalition

**Winning Beginning NY
Legislative Agenda 2010**
www.winningbeginningny.org

Winning Beginning NY, the state's early care and learning coalition, believes that New York State should:

- Restore funding for home visiting programs.
 - Restore funding for the Healthy Families New York (HFNY) program for a total of \$25 million.
 - Restore \$5 million in funding for the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program.
- Prevent the loss of child care subsidy funding for low-income families across the state.
 - Add \$40-\$50 million to the state child care block grant.
 - Restore Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding for SUNY/CUNY child care, migrant child care, and child care demonstration programs.
- Restore funding for afterschool programs to FY09-10 levels. This includes a restoration of Advantage Afterschool funding to \$30.5 million and Extended School Day /School Violence Prevention funding to \$27.8 million.

Winning Beginning NY also supports the implementation of QUALITYstarsNY, Pre-K reform, and paid family leave.

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Talking Points

Home Visiting Funding

Home visiting is a model that dates back to Victorian England and was endorsed by Florence Nightingale in the 19th century. It relies on home visitors—either nurses or other trained personnel—to provide regular home visits to educate expectant and new parents about prenatal care, infant care, child development and parenting skills.

Research shows that home visiting decreases infant mortality rates, helps prevent child abuse, and increases school readiness.

Home visiting programs work to promote the development of family self-sufficiency by enhancing financial management skills and building knowledge of employment, and quality early care and education options. These are critical points to ensure a family's participation in overall community economic development. Home visitors work with parents to ensure their continued family success throughout life, and have been proven to not only promote child well-being and development, but to lift families out of financial instability.

Healthy Families New York (HFNY) serves more than 5,000 families a year in some of New York's highest need communities, with a proven track record of better outcomes for children in high-risk families. The state's stringent randomized trial evaluation of HFNY demonstrated improved health and development, and decreased abuse and neglect. The program employs nearly 500 people in 39 communities across the state.

HFNY was funded at \$25 million just two years ago. The 2010 Executive Budget would cut funding to only \$15 million, effectively closing programs across the state. **We urge the state to restore funding to HFNY—to \$25 million.**

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program is active in New York City and in Monroe and Onondaga counties, serving an estimated 2,500 families. **We urge the state to restore funding for NFP—\$5 million.**

Child Care Block Grant Funding

Child care is a critical part of the daily lives of thousands of New Yorkers with young children. Parents rely on child care in order to go to work and, most importantly, to know that their children are well cared for and safe. For many families, especially low-income working families, cost places high quality care beyond their reach, leaving parents to make the difficult choice of giving up quality for affordability. This is particularly problematic because there is a persuasive body of research that has found that high-quality care is beneficial to young children, but poor quality care can be harmful. And the impact of quality early childhood experiences is pronounced for lower income children, who are more likely to start school behind higher income classmates.

Yet, child care funding in New York State has never kept up with need. There are 1.3 million young children in New York State, 40% of whom live in low-income families. Last year, the State used both roll-over funding from 2008-09 and new ARRA funds to fill gaps in county subsidy programs. Still, in FY 2009-10, counties ran out of child care funding and hundreds of families saw their child care subsidies eliminated, forcing them to pull their children out of child care programs and placing their own ability to work in jeopardy. However, child care funding is decreased in this year's Executive Budget. To maintain

the same number of children in child care programs this year as last, the state needs to add \$40 to \$50 million to the child care block grant.

Child care subsidies also help student parents who are seeking an education to better provide for their families and who may need child care subsidy assistance to be able to go to school while parenting a young child. The Executive Budget this year eliminates child care subsidies for SUNY and CUNY student parents. Also eliminated is a Facilitated Enrollment program that reaches out to low-income working families and helps them to obtain child care subsidy assistance. Both programs need to be restored.

We urge the state to add \$40-\$50 million to the state child care block grant.

We urge the state to restore Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding for SUNY/CUNY child care, migrant child care, and child care demonstration programs.

Afterschool Funding

Afterschool programs keep kids safe, improve school achievement, prevent crime, and help parents go to work every day. They also employ thousands of people across New York State. Proposed cuts to afterschool programs will eliminate access to programs for more than 10,000 children and between 1,000 and 3,000 adults will lose their jobs in afterschool programs. **We urge the State to restore funding for afterschool programs, including \$30.5 million for Advantage Afterschool Program through OCFS and \$27.8 million for SED's Extended Day/ School Violence Prevention Program.**

Research on after-school programs has shown:

- **After-school programs reduce the high school dropout rate.** Kids who attend high quality elementary and middle school after-school programs are less likely to drop out of high school than non-participants. An analysis of ninth grade students who, in middle school, formerly participated in afterschool programs showed that participants had higher daily attendance in high school and credit accumulation than matched nonparticipants.
- **After-school programs help prevent crime, drug use, and teen pregnancy.** Violent juvenile crime triples during the hours from 3:00 to 8:00 PM, and it is during these same hours that children face the most serious danger of becoming victims of crime. Law enforcement organizations endorse high-quality afterschool programs because they help reduce violence, theft, vandalism, gang activity, and other adolescent crimes.

Consistent participation in quality after-school programs helps reduce youth experimentation with alcohol and other dangerous drugs, and reduces the risk of teen pregnancy. A survey of New York teenagers conducted by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids found that teens unsupervised after-school were four times as likely to have smoked cigarettes, three times as likely to have had sex, and four times as likely to have used drugs than teens who were supervised.

- **After-school programs are cost-effective:** Every dollar invested in high-quality afterschool programs saves taxpayers roughly \$3, according to a study by the Rose Institute at Claremont McKenna College. Factoring in benefits from crime reduction raises that savings to \$8-\$12 for every dollar invested in an at-risk child.

The impact of these programs is proven but the state investment in these programs has declined in recent years and will reach a low point in FY 2011. Both Advantage Afterschool and the Extended Day School Violence Prevention program were already reduced by 12.5% in December of 2009. Further cuts to these programs will impact kids, families and their communities and will place additional burdens on other community social services that are already stretched dangerously thin.