

Campaign to Save Child Care!

California Child Care/Early Care and Education now placed on the endangered species list

The Governor's Budget May Revision 2010-11 proposes an unprecedented \$2.3 billion combined elimination of CalWORKS and General Fund support for California's neediest children and families (\$1.1 billion CalWORKS and \$1.2 billion General Fund). Additionally, this could result in the loss of significant federal funding. Although his proposals exempt the state's part-day preschool and ASES afterschool programs, the overall proposal will destroy California's long-established system of child care services that support the dual goals of helping parents earn and children learn. Since the end of WWII, California has recognized the value and importance of providing child care services to working families and their children. Our 68-year-old system has evolved to provide care to young children in a variety of settings – home and center based – that meet the needs of our diverse working families.

As parents, providers, directors, teachers, resource and referral programs, alternative payment providers, local planning councils, and organizations committed to quality, accessible, affordable child care, we are outraged that the Governor has proposed this massive dismantling of a child care system that provides jobs for:

- 100,000 parents¹ working and contributing to California's struggling economy
- More than 130,000 child care providers², including licensed family child care homes and paid assistants; center staff (directors, teachers, and assistants); and license-exempt child providers³ serving low-income families

The proposed massive elimination of child care services will result not only in lost employment for low income working parents and their child care teachers and providers, but also in endangered child safety and lost learning opportunities for the 200,000 young children⁴ who would be jerked from their child care programs beginning July 1, 2010. Brain research demonstrates that early education experiences – from birth to age five – are critical in determining whether a child's brain develops a proper foundation for learning and success in school and later life. Eliminating child care and early learning opportunities literally imperils our children's capacity for learning.

Rome was not built in a day, nor was our child care system. Our centers and home-based providers – the foundation of our system – cannot put their programs on pause while we wait for California’s economy to pick up. This radical budget surgery will result in the permanent loss of child care facilities, teachers and staff throughout the state, leaving California even less prepared for the economic rebound forecasted for the not-so-distant future.

The threat to dismantle the entire child care system is not only outrageous in its scope but irresponsible, leaving the child care field in limbo. This kind of anxiety pulsing throughout the state will result in hiring freezes, staff layoffs, and frozen enrollment beginning in the next few weeks. Employment opportunities for parents will be jeopardized without the guarantee of subsidized child care, creating further economic insecurity in the state. Equally devastating, our youngest children will lose access to our highest quality child care programs.

Our organizations (see attached list) stand united in our opposition to this wholesale dismantling of our child care system. We will not allow this proposal to become a negotiation tool for accepting the Governor’s January budget proposals. Beginning today, we will document and share the impact of this proposal on children, parents, providers and the communities we serve, and bring it to the immediate attention of our Assembly members and Senators. We cannot accept corporate tax breaks at the expense of young children. This is a campaign for California’s future – a future that must address economic equity and close examination of who wins and who loses in this budget scheme.

For more information about the **Campaign to Save Child Care** contact: Patty Siegel, California Child Care Resource and Referral Network (415)882-0234 patty@rrnetwork.org

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¹ Estimated by dividing the total number of children in threatened programs served by two. This estimate assumes an average family size of three with one adult and two children being served.

² Number of licensed family child care home and center-based program staff impacted was calculated by applying the percentage of licensed programs serving children receiving vouchers reported in the 2006 California Early Care and Education Workforce Study to updated 2008 supply data. These estimates were combined with the number of CDE, General Child Care state-contracted centers published in the 2009 *California Child Care Portfolio* to estimate the overall number of child care providers serving children receiving vouchers or in state-contracted programs impacted by proposed budget cuts.

³ Number of license-exempt providers impacted was calculated by first applying the percentage of children served in license-exempt settings in cut programs to the total number of children losing care. Total number of providers was calculated by dividing the total number of children in license-exempt care by two. This estimate assumes license-exempt providers serve an average of two children.

⁴ Difference between maximum enrollment for FY 2009-10 revised budget and 2010-11 May Revise proposed maximum enrollment.

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Initial Supporters

Advancement Project
California Alternative Payment Program Association
California Child Care Coordinators Association
California Child Care Resource and Referral Network
California Child Development Administrators Association
California Community College Early Childhood Educators
California School Age Consortium
Campus Kids Connection, Inc.
Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley
Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
Child Development Policy Institute
Children Now
Community Voices
Northern Directors Group
Parent Voices
Preschool California
Service Employees International Union
The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
The Link to Children
ZERO TO THREE Western Office

If your organization would like to sign-on in support of this document, please contact Sarah Moore at (415) 882-0234 or sarah@rrnetwork.org