

The Governor's Budget Flunks the Basic Test of Government: It Hurts Our Children.

The California State PTA is opposing the Governor's proposed budget for 2008-09 because it would harm the youngest and most vulnerable in our state: our children. The proposed budget would make across-the-board cuts to education, healthcare and other programs that have a direct impact on the safety and well-being of California's children. Below is a list of budget cuts as proposed by the Governor. As the budget gets debated in Sacramento, we must make sure our children's voices are heard.

Cuts to Schools

Given that California has among the lowest per-pupil funding and largest class sizes in the country, the Governor's proposed budget reductions would make a bad situation even worse, and they are fundamentally inconsistent with the state's goal of improving student achievement. The Governor is proposing a \$4.4 billion cut to school funding. This could result in the loss of tens of thousands of teachers and increased class sizes throughout the state, not to mention a further erosion of programs and the support system for students provided by special education aides, reading specialists, counselors and other support personnel.

Cuts to Foster Care Programs

Current foster care reimbursement rates are already woefully inadequate. The proposed cuts would ultimately hurt children and lead to fewer families taking in children who have been abused and neglected.

Cuts to Child Welfare Services

The proposed 10% reduction to funding for child welfare services would cause an accompanying loss of federal funds, thus compounding the negative impacts. These cuts would endanger the health and safety of thousands of neglected and abused children. It would mean the loss of more than a thousand social workers whom children now rely on to investigate reports of abuse and neglect, provide family maintenance services and reunite families.

Cuts to CalWORKs Program that Supports Low Income Families

Research links outcomes for children to the types of sanctions proposed by the administration. Enacting policies that drop children from CalWORKs and reduce the amount of resources available to their families would exacerbate the situation and reduce the likelihood of these families becoming self-sufficient.

Cuts to California Children's Services (CCS) Health Care Program

The proposed cuts to CCS could drastically affect the health care services provided to the severely ill children served by this program. Medical Therapy cuts would result in longer waiting lists for children to receive physical therapy. Delays in providing timely medical care to CCS children could result in greater emergency room usage.

Cuts to Medi-Cal Administrative Cuts

Nearly 160,000 Medi-Cal children would be required to re-apply for eligibility every three months, instead of the current annual requirement. While increasing the administrative burden, the budget proposal would at the same time reduce administrative funding. The result would be gaps in – or the loss of -- healthcare coverage for some of the most vulnerable and needy children in California.

Cuts to Juvenile Rehabilitation Facilities and Crime Prevention Grants

The proposed \$20 million reduction in funds for the Juvenile Probation and Camps program could mean closure or service reduction of county-operated residential facilities. Displaced wards would be placed in group homes, thereby increasing impacts on the foster care program. The \$11.9 million proposed cut to the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Grant program would cause gaps in the continuum of services that counties have established to prevent, control and treat juvenile offenders.

Cuts to Early Childhood Education/Child Care

The proposed \$198.9 million reduction for child development programs, as well as subsidy criteria changes, translates into nearly 106,000 children losing access to pre-school and after-school programs, and services that assist with disabilities.

Please take action today to give California's children a voice in Sacramento. Log onto www.capta.org – Flunk the Budget.

- Let your State Assembly and Senate representatives know this budget is unacceptable.***
- Forward this message to your PTA unit, council and district to alert parents and community members.***

Our children did not create this financial crisis. Their future should not be undermined because of it.