



July 31, 2020

Children and families across our state and nation are struggling right now, with repercussions likely to last far into the future.

- The [Census reported](#) in late June that families with children have been the hardest hit, noting one in six adults in mortgaged households with children and one in four adults in rental households with children reported either a late or deferred payment.
- A Raising New York [survey of parents with young children](#) reports New York's parents of infants and toddlers are experiencing intense financial insecurity and skipping meals.
- Forty percent of [recently surveyed](#) New York State child care programs are certain that, without additional public assistance, they will close permanently.
- Schools have identified significant gaps between resources and needs in order to safely start a new school year.

Leading child and family advocacy organizations from across New York State: Children's Defense Fund-NY, Citizens' Committee for Children, Prevent Child Abuse New York, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, The Children's Agenda, and Westchester Children's Association, urge our national leaders and especially our New York State Congressional Delegation, to lift up children in need. We further urge the delegation to consider racial equity and child poverty implications when reviewing proposals. New York State child advocates detail action Congress must take to address significant and urgent needs of children and families in next COVID-19 relief package in a [letter to New York's U.S. Senators and Representatives](#), sent July 20, 2020.

The relief package introduced by the Senate Majority falls far short in meeting immediate or long-term needs or addressing structural and growing inequities facing New York families. It fails to respond to the millions of families struggling to pay rent, afford food, get and keep health care, and ensure children are learning and developing in safe and supportive environments. While the Senate Majority package does provide some aid for schools, much of it is for schools that reopen irrespective of health risks and cannot be used for expenses such as teacher salaries that the state and localities will have difficulty covering because of depleted revenues, further exacerbating inequities faced by our high poverty communities, schools, and the families they serve.

The plan does not raise SNAP food assistance levels, at a time when myriad surveys show families with children struggling to put food on the table. Nor does it include sufficient resources to prevent the nation's child care system from collapsing just as communities and parents will be needing more child care than ever as many schools reopen with staggered schedules. Full funding of the *Child Care is Essential Act*, passed with bipartisan support in the House of Representatives on July 29, 2020, should be included in the next relief package.

In the midst of a national public health crisis and recession, the Senate Majority plan provides no additional funding for Medicaid and no new broad-based fiscal relief for states and localities.

Our families are at a crossroads – the economic stability, educational attainment, health, and well-being of the next generation of children are at risk right now. It is not hyperbole to say that their future will depend on the decisions made by Congress in the next few weeks.

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