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Opinion

## LETTER: Foresight missing in decision to 'save' by Care4Kids cutback

Tuesday, June 29, 2010

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I am clarifying the article "Grants make child care more accessible" in regard to the Care4Kids program.

Care4Kids assists low-wage working parents in accessing child care, an expense that can be a major barrier to employment. In addition to allowing parents to work, the program introduces children to early learning that improves their social, emotional and intellectual development, which benefits everyone in the long run.

In 2009, Connecticut received \$13.7 million in federal Child Care Development funds and was required to spend \$93 million to demonstrate the state's commitment to these programs.

When the state Department of Social Services closed Care4Kids for six months, resulting in fewer children receiving early care and education, the state fell \$7 million short of the required \$93 million. The state would have had to return nearly \$14 million to the federal government had it not spent this \$7 million by the end of the fiscal year, June 30. The state decided issuing stimulus checks was the most expedient way to use the money.

The Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance believes children would have benefited more from a stable Care4Kids program than from one-time stimulus checks. We know there are greater outcomes for children and their families when they have access to reliable and stable early childhood programs.

**Ann Pratt**

**Hartford**

**Editor's note: Ann Pratt is executive director, Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance.**

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