



August 25, 2009

## Open letter to the Governor and members of the Connecticut General Assembly

With each passing day of the state budget impasse, early care and education programs that serve children throughout Connecticut are being forced to remove children from their rolls or risk financial collapse.

The Governor's allotments for July and August have zeroed out some early childhood programs and underfunded others, forcing the closure of many early childhood classrooms and services. Children enrolled in Head Start, School Readiness and Family Resource Center programs have been hit hardest. The attached document, from Connecticut Voices for Children, outlines the impact of the Governor's actions.

The members of the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance, organizations that teach and care for over 20,000 of Connecticut's young children, are deeply concerned about the impact the funding shortage has on children and their families. In addition, the allotments have injected a significant measure of instability that may precipitate the collapse of many programs. It is critical to recognize that families need accessible, affordable, and safe childcare so they can continue to work or seek employment if laid off.

These programs have long been supported by the Governor and the Legislature as wise investments in our children, families, and a future skilled workforce. Research shows that early childhood programs improve outcomes for children, and also have enduring positive impacts on the family, the community and the economy. Cutting funding for early childhood programs at this time of economic uncertainty will negatively impact the child, and their family, and have long-lasting and far-reaching cascading effects.

For the sake of Connecticut's children, we respectfully ask that early childhood programs are kept whole, whether in a negotiated budget or, in lieu of a budget, in the September monthly allotment.