

2010 New York CAN Candidate Questions

New York's Children

25% of the State's Population and 100% of its Future

Are any of the candidates talking about kids? A child can't see through campaign promises but you can. We encourage you to use these questions when you have the opportunity to interview or ask a question of any candidate for state or national office.

1. What is your platform for (New York's) children?
2. How will you propose closing the achievement gap so that all children can reach their full potential? How do you propose to ensure adequate and equitable financing for all public schools?
3. Pre-recession, 48% of New York's children live below 250% of poverty (a more accurate reflection of the number of children whose families struggle to meet their most basic needs).. An estimated 3 million children nationally will enter poverty during this Great Recession resulting in an economic loss of \$1.7 trillion during the lifetime of these children. Approximately 60% of these children will experience persistent or intermittent form of poverty that causes long-term damage. What steps do you propose to help struggling families with children become more economically self-sufficient? Do you support strengthening tax and economic policies, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and minimum wage, which enable working families to have sufficient income to raise their children?
4. Access to affordable, comprehensive, high-quality health care is essential to children's healthy development. How do you propose supporting children's needs for a medical home, preventive care, oral health care, and mental health services?
5. Thousands of New York State families lack the prenatal and early childhood supports and services they need to assure their children's healthy development and safety. Their children are unprepared to learn in early childhood programs and school, and they comprise the majority of 79,000 cases a year of indicated child abuse and neglect. What is your position on assuring that all expectant and new parents receive information and support they need and that the most vulnerable have access to intensive home visiting services that improve children's health and development and reduce abusive and neglectful parenting?
6. Thousands of New York State's children lack access to early learning opportunities that focus both on the needs of young children and working families by providing high-quality, full-day, year-round services. What is your position on how New York can expand access to all children and families and support higher quality in all early care and education programs to better prepare children for school (and life)?

7. We all want children to be safe in their homes and communities from all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. Almost 165,000 Child Protective reports were received in 2008; an increase of 2.4% over 2007. Less than 1/3 of those reports are confirmed as an incident of maltreatment. Family Assessment Response is showing positive results in helping families cope with the stresses of living in poverty (unsafe neighborhoods, lack of ability to provide basics such as food, clothing, and shelter) while reducing recurrence and costly placements into foster care. What proposals will you make to keep all children safe from violence in their homes, schools, and communities?
8. In New York State, many of our children and youth in the care of the state (juvenile justice facilities, foster care, and mental health facilities) exit these systems only to enter another a short time later or to become disconnected from society; that is, out of work and not in school. What proposals do you have to offer these youth opportunities for growth and development so that they can lead productive adult lives?
9. For the past couple years, New York State elected officials have faced difficult choices when the budget is discussed and passed. As a result, cuts have been made in children's services and programs that are sure to compromise children's futures and the future of New York State and result in more costly problems in the long-term. Providing appropriate and effective prevention and intervention services early is a proven strategy. Yet these are the programs that have been cut. While adults can put their lives on hold for a couple of years during a recession, children cannot. The recession has dialed back gains made in children's well-being over the past 30 years. How do you plan to put children back on track so they have the opportunity to become productive, contributing citizens as adults?

From: Diane Mastin NYCAN

More information at www.winningbeginningsny.org