



A broad-based coalition of organizations and individuals committed to protecting California's abused and neglected children.

The Alliance for Children's Rights

American Federation of State,
County, and Municipal
Employees, AFL-CIO

California Alliance for Child
and Family Services

California State Association
of Counties

California State PTA

California Youth Connection

Children's Advocacy Institute

Children's Law Center
of Los Angeles

County Welfare Directors
Association of California

John Burton Foundation
for Children Without Homes

Laborers' Local 777

Laborers' Local 792

National Association
of Social Workers, California Chapter

SEIU California State Council

Urban Counties Caucus

Youth Law Center

March 15, 2010

Dear Friends:

California's safety net for abused and neglected children is shredding. Last year, Governor Schwarzenegger unilaterally cut \$120 million (\$80 million General Fund) from the Child Welfare Services program. By doing so the State has turned its back on abused and neglected children, and the consequences for these children are severe.

We are a coalition of concerned organizations and individuals, including elected officials, county agencies, legal representatives, current and former foster youth, social workers, and community-based organizations, known as "Protect our Children, Protect our Future." **We ask you to join us in protecting abused and neglected children in California by urging the Legislature and Governor to restore funding cuts in the Child Welfare Services program.**

Cutting \$120 million from services to abused and neglected children means dire consequences for these children. It slashes funding for nearly 400 child welfare social workers who are on the front lines of providing services to vulnerable children and families. It shreds the safety net and increases worker caseloads, leaving local agencies struggling to staff their child abuse hotlines and investigate allegations of child abuse. It severely curtails efforts to prevent the removal of children from their homes and work with families to safely reunify children or otherwise help children find permanent, loving homes. And it abandons foster youth as they "age out" of the foster care system.

Ultimately, this cut will cost California taxpayers far more due to greater reliance on services throughout these children's lives and into adulthood. Importantly, in cutting the program the State is abandoning the very children it is responsible for protecting.

You can help. Join us in urging the Legislature to restore funding to the Child Welfare Services program and to hold the line against any further cuts to this critical safety net of services for abused and neglected children.

As a community of individuals and organizations, together we can send a strong message that California's children will foremost be safe, surrounded by loving family, and have an opportunity to thrive.

Please contact Diana Boyer of CWDA at dboyer@cwda.org or (916) 443-1749 to be added to the list of organizations in support of this effort. **You can further support this effort by encouraging other organizations to sign on as supporters.**

Thank you for joining us in this important effort to protect California's children.

Sincerely,

The Coalition to Protect Our Children. Protect Our Future.

Attachment: Fact sheet