



Protect Investments for Children in the 2010 Westchester County Budget

In recent years, Westchester County has made important investments in the well being of children and youth, investments that result in long term savings because they prevent future problems at a fraction of the cost of later treating those problems.

We urge the Board of Legislators to support the following initiatives in 2010 to secure a bright future for all our children:

- **Invest in Kids:** Supports dozens of community based youth programs serving thousands of children and teens each year. Maintain funding at \$2,034,399.
- **Early Step Forward:** Innovative, well-researched, preventive mental health program for children in early childhood centers (currently in Mount Vernon, Yonkers and Port Chester). Mental health professionals work directly in the centers with children, parents and staff to improve social, emotional and behavioral health of young children. Expand funding from \$637,000 to \$768,470.
- **Independent Living Fund:** Makes grants of up to \$3,000 to each young adult who is leaving foster care and is establishing an independent household, separate from his or her family. Maintain funding at \$100,000.
- **Parenting/Home Visiting Support** Support Westchester's Home Visiting Workgroup to increase the number of Pre-natal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs (HVPs) in the county.

