



**THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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****NEWS RELEASE****

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***COUNCIL MEMBER MARGARET CHIN STANDS WITH
CHINESE-AMERICAN PLANNING COUNCIL IN OPPOSITION
TO CUTS TO DAYCARE AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS***

New York, NY – Today, Council Member Margaret Chin and Council Member Rosie Mendez joined Chinese-American Planning Council to protest cuts to OST and child care funding as called for in the 2013 executive budget. Council Members Letitia James, Melissa Mark-Viverito, Jessica Lappin, Robert Jackson and Jumaane Williams also spoke against the cuts.

Council Members Chin and Mendez were joined by David Chen, Executive Director, Chinese-American Planning Council; Virginia Kee, Board Member, Chinese-American Planning Council; Wayne Ho, Coalition for Children and Families; May Chen, Former Vice President of UNITE HERE and Manager of Local 23-25, representatives from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, as well as students and parents from Chinese-American Planning Council programs.

Mayor Bloomberg's executive budget calls for \$170 million in cuts to children's services, including after-school programs child care centers and an educational initiative for young children known as Head Start. These cuts will have a disproportionate impact on the Lower East Side and Chinatown, where 13 after-school programs and 486 city-subsidized child care slots will be lost.

For over 40 years, the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC) has provided an array of social services to communities in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. Due to cuts in this year's budget, CPC will be forced to close two after-school programs at P.S. 2 and P.S. 124, on the Lower East Side and Chinatown, respectively. CPC's four child care programs: Chung Pak, Little Star, Garment Industry Day Care, and Jacob Riis Child Care Center, will also be forced to close as a result of the cuts. Combined, these programs serve 586 children.

These programs are also in high demand. At CPC programs alone, over 800 children are waitlisted for child care and after-school.

"In lower Manhattan, we stand to lose a disproportionate number of child care and after-school seats," **Council Member Margaret Chin** said. "These cuts will have a devastating impact on our communities and on the community-based providers who have served our neighborhood for decades. We are losing services for all ages, but especially for teens and the very young."

“I am deeply concerned about cuts to child care services in our city, but I am especially concerned about cuts to culturally competent programs in our community,” **Council Member Margaret Chin** said. “Providers like CPC offer bilingual and culturally appropriate care in predominately immigrant neighborhoods. We deserve to have child care and after-school programs led by organizations that have roots in our community and that understand the nuances of caring for children from diverse backgrounds.”

“Today we stand together for the well-being of our community and our city,” **Council Member Rosie Mendez** said. “We cannot stand by and watch when over 400 child care slots are eliminated from Council Districts 1 and 2. We cannot stand by and watch while low income and immigrant families living in gentrifying communities suffer because the data indicates that certain zip codes do not need services. We cannot stand by and watch while community organizations offering culturally competent care are stripped of funding and denied the opportunity to provide needed services in our district. Today we stand together to demand the restoration of funding for our children and neighborhoods.”

“The City's numerous afterschool programs, such as the Chinese-American Planning Council at P.S. 20 provide a safe and compassionate refuge in which our children can continue to work hard, learn, and stay active, often while simultaneously serving their local communities,” **Council Member Peter Koo** said. “Let us make sure that as we move forward we continue to provide our bright young men and women with the valuable experiences they need to one day become our future leaders.” *CPC's after-school program at P.S. 20 in Flushing will also close as a result of the cuts. This program serves 200 students.*

“These cuts are simply unacceptable,” **Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY)** said. “They penalize working families with children, in some instance forcing parents to choose between keeping their job and ensuring their children are cared for after-school.”

"We must not abandon our working families by cutting the after-school programs that are so vital for parents and their children." **Speaker Sheldon Silver** said. "After-school programs are not a luxury reserved for flush times, they are an absolute necessity for thousands of families here in Lower Manhattan and throughout the city."

"Failure to invest in OST and child care is nothing short of a failure to invest in our children and families," **Senator Daniel Squadron** said. "These programs are especially critical on the Lower East Side and Chinatown where thousands of working families rely on the enrichment and child care provided by CPC and other groups -- yet it's our community that's hit hardest by these cuts. Restoring these cuts means supporting children, families and extraordinary organizations like CPC. It must happen."

"New York City's daycare centers provide critical services to working families, and we cannot stand on the sidelines and watch as these programs are dismantled," **Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer** said. "Forcing parents to choose between holding down a job or taking care of their children is no choice at all, and we're sending a message to City Hall today that the drastic cuts proposed for such services will not stand. More than 43,000 children have lost access to affordable childcare and after-school programs in the last three years, and this systematic destruction of the safety net for hard-working families cannot be tolerated. We all

lose when children are denied access to day care, and that's why these crippling budget cuts must be taken off the table once and for all."

"Increasingly, the issues favors big organizations and uproot long established neighborhood organizations," **David Chen, Executive Director of CPC** said. "The reason why so many come to us is due to their comfort level and their affinity with our organization and Chinatown neighborhoods. With this cut, **exemplary services are left out** of the system."

"The Chinese word for crisis is made up of two characters: Danger and Opportunity," **Virginia Kee, Board Member, Chinese-American Planning Council**, said. "The Danger is that this Executive Budget will be remembered for turning its back on immigrant children, minority children and working families. We have the Opportunity to show the world that even in hard times, we can find the will and the way to provide child care so that working families can continue to work and children can continue to learn. In this way we have put our money where our heart is."

"The budget cuts to afterschool and child care programs have been devastating not only to Asian Pacific American families but also to Asian-led organizations serving these families," said **Wayne Ho, Executive Director of the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families and co-lead of the 13% and Growing Coalition**. "While Asian Pacific Americans make up 13% of New York City, our community receives less than 1% of social service contract funding. Any budget cut will disproportionately and negatively impact children, youth, and families in our community. We urge the Mayor to restore funding to afterschool and child care programs and to ensure that CPC and other Asian-led organizations receive this funding."

Barbara Pitts, a teacher at CPC noted, "This is a gem in the midst of an amazing community... this place serves a very vital part because many children don't have any place to go. As a special education teacher, that window between (ages) 0-5 is the most important window in a human being's life. The mold is set. What children learn between those ages, they take with them for the rest of their lives."

Catherine Lee, Director of School Age Child Care Division added, "1,300 Children will be impacted – those ages 2 to 4 years old will have no place to prepare for elementary school. Those ages 5 to 12 years old will be out in the streets after-school at 3:00PM."