



**TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL
DIVISION OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2003**

Good afternoon. My name is Andrea Anthony and I am the Executive Director of the Day Care Council of New York, Inc. The Day Care Council of New York is the membership organization for 250 nonprofit organizations that sponsor 360 publicly funded child care programs throughout the five boroughs. These organizations are under contact with the City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) to provide daily education and care to young children aged 2.6 to 12 years old whose parents are either working or enrolled in school. The Council's member agencies sponsor 167 after school programs; there is a least one program in every City Council district.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg's proposal to transfer \$59 million of after school funding from ACS to the Division of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) will have a devastating impact on nonprofit agencies that sponsor such a program in a child care setting. In reviewing the scope of after school programming with staff at ACS, we know that there are approximately 20,000 after school slots. This funding transfer represents half of those slots or 10,000. Of the 10,000 slots, 6,000 are in center-based child care programs and 4,000 are in family child care homes. It is estimated the lost of 10,000 slots will mean the layoff of approximately 1,000 to 1,200 child care workers.

These workers provide a nurturing educational environment for young children aged 5 years old to 12 years old. After school staff are required to have specific education and work experience before assuming their positions. Directors and Assistant Directors are required to have a bachelor's degree or an associate degree and two years experience working as a group leader in an after school program. The Educational Director who supervises the after school staff are required to be state certified teachers. Many of the children enrolled in these after school programs attended the child care center before

entering elementary school. Participating in the after school program provides an important transition for very young children.

When I first learned of this funding cut, my initial reaction was – why? Why disrupt a service for thousands of young children and families? The answer I received was transferring the funds to DYCD will expand after school to service more children and save the city money. But how can it when the two program models are very different. The Day Care Council's member agencies provide year-round after school services from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. during the regular school term, and on some holidays. A meal is provided to the children; recreational activities are offered; and all programs include an educational component to assist the children with homework or to learn a new skill. Center-based child care after school programs are assessed bi-annually by the City's Health Department and annually by ACS.

After school programs offered by DYCD are offered 180 days per year; are closed on school holidays; do not provide a meal to the children; and are only opened two hours per day instead of three hours which is much more conducive to a parent's work schedule. In addition, many of the children enrolled in DYCD programs are older and are not designed for very young children.

In speaking with officials at ACS, I was told that 10 –20 child care centers would have to be closed because of this funding transfer. At this point, it is unclear what plans the Mayor's Office will put in place to ensure uninterrupted services for more than 10,000 families. If the goal is to provide after school services, then let's develop a plan that does just that, while providing a valuable and needed service for working families in our city. The funds are being transferred without a plan, without a well-developed agenda that includes the input of all parties involved.

We urge the City Council to stop the transfer of funding from ACS to DYCD and to work with child care advocates in developing a comprehensive plan for after school services in our city. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today.

Prepared by Andrea Anthony, Executive Director