

Sample Questions for State and Local Candidates

Children's Issues - General

- Our state budget is in crisis because of decreased revenues and increased demand for services. How would you ensure that the most vulnerable children aren't sacrificed as decisions are made for how to address the budget shortfall?
- Many Americans think kids are in trouble today, and they tend to blame parents for it. Yet parents need support from their communities to give them the resources they need to do a good job. What steps would you take to help support families in their tough job of raising children?

Child Welfare

- Research has shown that children's risk of abuse or neglect increases when their parents face extreme economic stress, and when they lack access to such needed services as substance abuse treatment, quality health care, mental health services, and parenting support services. If elected, what will you do to foster and expand services to prevent child neglect and abuse?

Early Care and Education

- Studies show that zero to five are critical years for brain development. What steps would you take to ensure that all children enter kindergarten ready to learn?
- Given that recent studies show that not all child care is created equal, how would you describe quality child care? If elected, how would you improve the current quality of child care in Minnesota and ensure that low-income parents can afford quality child care for their children?
- Quality child care is important to the success of children throughout their lives. Do you support increasing child care subsidies to reflect the current costs of quality child care, and to allow all low income, working parents earning up to the state's median income to choose quality care for their children?
- Small businesses struggle with providing the child care needs of parents. What role, if any, should the Minnesota government have in working with employers to address child care needs of employees?
- Finding qualified child care providers who remain in the business is becoming increasingly difficult. What would be your strategy to address the high turnover rate among child care providers?

CDF Minnesota
University National Bank Bldg.
200 University Avenue W.
Suite 210
St. Paul, MN 55103

Telephone (651) 227-6121
Fax (651) 227-2553
cdf-mn@cdf-mn.org
www.cdf-mn.org

Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Telephone (202) 628-3510
Fax (202) 662-3510





a child's voice

Child Health

- 58,000 children in Minnesota lack health insurance. If elected, how would you address the issue of health care for children?
- What are some actions that you think would make it easier for businesses to provide health insurance for their employees and families?

Income Supports

- Research suggests that adolescents in low-income families do worse when their parents go to work. What policies do you support to help these adolescents who need supervision and parental involvement?
- What policies do you support that will specifically help children growing up in low-income working families?
- Because of the economic recession, welfare caseloads have begun to climb after years of declining. What changes in our unemployment insurance system and welfare system do you support to help these families that can't find jobs?
- Through July of 2003, 2700 families and more than 7,000 children in Minnesota will begin to reach their five-year lifetime limit on cash assistance paid with federal funds. What should Minnesota do to protect and serve children in these families?
- Research shows that college graduates are much more likely to earn a living that raises their families above the poverty level. Should parents be able to receive post-secondary education, such as attending community college, while on welfare, and what supports should the state provide these families?

Juvenile Justice / Prevention

- Do you support increasing state funding to address prevention of youth violence? If so, where would you invest expanded funding?

These questions were adapted from those provided by the National Association of Child Advocates.

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