



DC Action for Children

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New *KidBits* report looks to use data to drive policy and better outcomes for Washington's children and youth

WASHINGTON, DC—March 22, 2007 -- On Wednesday, March 28, DC Action for Children (DC ACT) will release *KidBits: Using data to drive better outcomes for children and youth*, a 36-page report created by the Children's Advocacy Roundtable (CAR). CAR is a group of almost 40 organizations convened by DC ACT to collectively address myriad issues facing the city's youth. The report offers a snapshot of data in six key areas: school readiness, school success, healthy children and youth, youth opportunity, children and youth in stable families and youth transitioning to adulthood.

“When you have 30% of our children living in poverty compared to 17% nationally, you’ve got to wonder what the city has been doing. Really this is unacceptable. The data clearly shows that poverty is growing, and becoming more concentrated in the areas of the city where there are the most kids,” said DC ACT’s Executive Director Angela Jones Hackley.

Primary author and DC ACT Policy Analyst Beth Jamieson said, “The report includes a number of important statistics, but more than that it offers sound and meaningful recommendations, translating data to better outcomes for children and youth.”

In addition to critical data *KidBits* offers several key recommendations to local policy makers:

- End child poverty in the District of Columbia.
- Create a citywide public awareness campaign to help parents understand the importance of routine, preventive care and kept appointments.

--Page 1 of 2--

- Aggressively address the growing truancy issue by expanding the current court initiative to more schools and institute real time and immediate notification of parents and other caregivers.
- Add HPV and herpes to the list of reportable sexually transmittable diseases (STD) and provide treatment at the city's STD clinics.
- Direct additional resources to young people not in school and not connected to other services and supports with a specific emphasis on Wards 7 and 8.
- Create and implement comprehensive plan to end child abuse and neglect. Direct resources for prevention efforts.
- Recommit to implementing the city's Effective Youth Development Strategy

The hope is that the data furnished in this document will be used to guide future decision making and make a significant difference in how data informs policy to create better outcomes for children and youth in the city.

KidBits is funded in part by the Annie Casey Foundation and the Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation. Copies of the report will be available at the CAR meeting on March 28, from 1 – 3 p.m. The meeting will take place at the Public Welfare Foundation, 1200 U Street, NW, in the Marsh Room. *KidBits* can also be obtained on the DC ACT Web site's home page the day of the meeting at 1 p.m.

ABOUT DC ACT

Since its inception in 1992, DC Action for Children has served as an independent, non-profit, multi-issue advocacy organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for children living in the District of Columbia. DC ACT's work is guided by its vision that each child in the District of Columbia should be afforded the opportunity to reach his or her full potential. For more information, visit www.dckids.org or call 202-234-9404.

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