



## **For Immediate Release**

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Contact: Jack Kresnak

(517) 485-3500 office

(313) 550-6497 cell

[jack@michiganschildren.org](mailto:jack@michiganschildren.org)

# **Detroit Students To Debate Issues Affecting Youths**

## *Youth Legislative Day Scheduled for Nov. 18*

*LANSING* – More than 80 youths from the Detroit area will take over the floor of the Michigan House of Representatives on **November 18** to debate gang violence, school safety, dropout rates, and foster care issues during **Youth Legislative Day 2010** at the state Capitol.

The program of Michigan's Children, a nonpartisan voice for children and families, teaches young people about the legislative process by immersing them in it through role-playing. With the help of select legislators and professional lobbyists, the students will receive training in drafting, researching, debating and voting upon legislation. They then will participate in committee hearings in actual House committee rooms and a full debate of the mock bills on the House floor.

Since 2001, Michigan's Children has offered Youth Legislative Day as a hands-on approach to teaching the legislative process to youths. Through participation in these activities, youths from around the state gain a heightened awareness of public policy and deeper interest in civic involvement.

“This is an invaluable opportunity for students to examine Michigan’s lawmaking process up-close and to engage in civic life,” Michigan’s Children President & CEO Jack Kresnak said. “These young people will walk away with a keen understanding of how laws are made and the interests that must be weighed when making important decisions.”

This second Youth Legislative Day of 2010 is supported by Detroit foundations and organizations to strengthen youth leadership and voice in Michigan’s largest city. It is co-sponsored by the Detroit Parent Network, New Detroit, and Western Michigan University.

**News media are invited to attend Youth Legislative Day 2010.** Times of particular interest are:

Committee Work

**Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.**

**Location: 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Committee Rooms (424, 426, 428)**

Young people will work with current and former legislators through a legislative committee format to discuss introduced legislation, prepare their legislative testimony on the issue with professional lobbyists, and make recommendations for improvement, acceptance or rejection of the proposed legislation.

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Floor Debate

**Time: 2:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.**

**Location: House Chamber**

Young people will convene on the House Floor to debate the issues that they discussed in committee, and bring each piece of legislation to a vote.

News media wishing to attend at other times of the day can view the full agenda at [www.michiganschildren.org](http://www.michiganschildren.org)

Michigan's Children is a statewide, independent voice for children and their families. We work with lawmakers, business leaders and communities to make Michigan a place where all children have the opportunity to thrive. We believe that it is critically important to provide forums for children and youth to share their perspectives of the problems they face directly with leaders who have the ability to impact their situation.

WMU is a student-centered research university focused on delivering high-quality undergraduate instruction, advancing its growing graduate division and fostering significant research activities. Founded in 2002, Detroit Parent Network is a citywide nonprofit organization dedicated to developing powerful parents and caregivers who are equipped to get the best education for their children. The New Detroit Coalition is a diverse group of nearly 100 regional leaders from civil rights and advocacy organizations, community based organizations, businesses, foundations, education, media, and the clergy working to improve race relations in Southeast Michigan.

Michigan's Children, DPN, New Detroit Coalition and WMU offer this event as a non-partisan activity.

This event is made possible through the generous support of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, The Kresge Foundation and The Skillman Foundation.

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