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Parents Evaluate Public Programs during Michigan's Children FamilySpeak Event at National Black Child Development Institute Conference in Detroit

Exploring Two-Generation Strategies: Programs that Help Parents While Helping Children Give Families the Best Chance for Success

DETROIT – With poverty affecting one in four children born in Michigan – and worse, half of African-American children in the state -- public policies are needed to better support the distinctive challenges faced by struggling parents and their children.

Families dealing with homelessness, chronic childhood illnesses, foster and adoptive parents, and others will provide frank testimony on the impact of public programs on **Monday, Oct. 13** at a special **Family Speak®** event from 10:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the Detroit Marriott in the Renaissance Center. The event will be held before state- and local-level policymakers and elected officials appearing at the national gathering of **the 44th Annual Conference of the National Black Child Development Institute in Detroit.**

FamilySpeak is sponsored by Michigan's Children, the only statewide, multi-issue advocacy organization focused solely on public policy in the best interest of children from cradle to career, in partnership with the **Detroit Chapter of the Black Child Development Institute.**

FamilySpeak will highlight multiple **two-generation programs** that serve families – ranging from programs that focus on health needs, housing support, parent engagement, and others.

“This FamilySpeak event offers an important opportunity to hear from the families impacted by the policy decisions made in Lansing and Washington, D.C.,” said Michigan's Children President & CEO Matt Gillard. “This is about lessons learned from those who have the most at stake in public policy actions, and then shifting our policies to offer families the best chance of success.”

Gillard said there's been a new focus on two-generation strategies that have caught the attention of policymakers and philanthropists interested in supporting innovative anti-poverty programs across the country. The issues forum will touch on these types of programs.

Policymakers will hear from parents involved in multiple Wayne County-based programs including the **Coalition of Temporary Shelters of Detroit (COTS-Detroit)**, which provides temporary and transitional housing for families moving toward self-sufficiency, **Families on the Move**, which offers supports to adoptive and foster families, **Neighborhood Services Organization (NSO)**, which provides innovative human services, **Stand Up Parents! Great Start Wayne County Parent Coalition**, a group of Wayne County parents and guardians of children dedicated to improving the responsiveness and performance of child and family serving organizations, and the **Wayne Children’s Health Care Access Program (Wayne CHAP)**, a proven medical home model that works to improve child health outcomes in Detroit-Wayne County.

“We’re bringing together a number of families eager to share their candid stories about how two-generation approaches have made a difference in their lives by helping parents get ahead while their children thrive,” said Michigan’s Children Senior Policy Associate Mina Hong.

Among critical components of two-generation strategies are:

- Education and/or job training that leads to family-supporting employment
- High-quality early childhood care and education
- And comprehensive wrap-around services including access to basic needs, health and mental health services for children, adolescents and their parents, and developmental screening and other assessment in child care, early education and K-12 settings.

Gillard’s article, “**Ensuring Children Thrive While Parents Move Ahead: How Public Policies Can Lead to Increased Opportunities for Michigan’s Families**,” was published in the national convention’s program book for 500 visiting members.

Michigan's Children is the only statewide, multi-issue advocacy organization focused solely on public policy in the best interest of children from cradle to career and their families.

Michigan's Children is eager to work with partners around the state on public issues affecting children, youth, and families.



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