



WISCONSIN COUNCIL ON

**children  
& families**

Raising Voices to Make Every Kid Count

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### **WCCF Comments on Final Action on 2009-11 Budget**

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families is pleased that the biennial budget bill signed into law yesterday protects a number of key supports for vulnerable children and families.

“In a budget climate that is more challenging than anybody could have imagined just a year ago, the Governor and Legislature have managed to strike a balance between the needs of vulnerable families and painful economic realities,” said WCCF Acting Executive Director Jim Moeser. “We appreciate their willingness to prioritize kids and families in such a harsh fiscal environment.”

Key benefits for children and families that survived the budget process include these:

- Maintaining the child care subsidy program for low-income workers.
- Initiating annual adjustments to the Homestead Tax Credit to keep it from being eroded by inflation.
- Protecting the eligibility standards and cost-sharing policies for the BadgerCare Plus health insurance program for children and parents.
- Maintaining the state’s commitment to extend BadgerCare Plus to about 40,000 uninsured childless adults.
- Proceeding with the phase-in of the Family Care program, which provides more accessible and cost-effective services for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Those actions were made possible by measures to modernize Wisconsin’s tax system, which helped avoid much deeper budget cuts. Nevertheless, the budget does contain very substantial cuts that will have negative consequences for Wisconsin’s children and families. They include:

- Cuts in aid to most school districts that will reduce programs for kids and will probably result in larger class sizes.
- Across-the-board cuts for most state agencies that will curtail state services.
- Dramatic cuts for county governments, which will hamper their ability to deliver mandated social services, including critical services for abused children and the elderly.
- About \$600 million in cuts to Medicaid, which are likely to reduce reimbursement rates and could make it more difficult for participants to access services.

The final version of WCCF’s analysis of the impact of the 2009-11 state budget on children and families is available online at [http://www.wccf.org/pdf/budget\\_summary\\_2009-11\\_analysis\\_AB75.pdf](http://www.wccf.org/pdf/budget_summary_2009-11_analysis_AB75.pdf).