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# Candidates debate "the future" yet ignore children and issues affecting them

***New report reveals little debate time has involved children's issues***

Madison, Wisconsin –With just 11 months until Election Day 2012, presidential candidates appear eager to debate the future *except* when it comes to the future generation or issues affecting them. The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families (WCCF), a member of Voices for America's Children nationwide child advocacy network, is working to change this.

Despite representing a quarter of the country's population and 100 percent of its future, children's issues commanded scarcely two percent of the attention in the first 10 presidential candidate debates. A report released today by the Child and Family Policy Center in Iowa, Moving America's Children Into the Spotlight: The Presidential Election As An Opportunity for Dialogue About America's Future highlights that in presidential forums, questions about how candidates will work to improve the health, safety and well-being of children or how government can promote good outcomes for children and our future have been few and far between. The analysis also shows that, with rare exception, there is no mention of such policy issues as early childhood education, child welfare, juvenile justice, family economic security, or best ways to address the needs of children with disabilities.

"Today, Voices for America's Children's civic engagement project, and WCCF, call on all presidential candidates, debate moderators, and state and local campaigns across America to put our 74 million children into the spotlight," said Ken Taylor, Executive Director WCCF. "In what is likely to be an election-filled 2012 in Wisconsin, we want to make sure that all state and federal candidates are asked and respond to questions about how their positions will impact the future of our children ."

The report was sponsored by Voices for America's Children, a nationwide network of multi-issue child advocacy organizations, as part of a larger civic engagement effort. "The report clearly shows that children and the policy issues that affect their well-being have been relegated to the shadows of the presidential debates so far. Yet Americans think children are far too important to stay in the shadows for long and we are urging candidates and the media to change this conversation in upcoming debates," said Voices for America's Children's President and CEO Bill Bentley.

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