



Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Hearing Toolkit

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Situational Analysis

Under 3 DC supports Mayor Bowser's increase of the child care subsidy's eligibility level of 250% of the federal poverty level (or 75K) to 300% (90K). This increase will benefit 2100 District families with children 0-5. However, there are still several aspects of her budget that we find alarming. Mayor Bowser's proposed budget implements a \$7million cut to TANF, a \$5.4 million cut to the Pay Equity Fund, a \$8 million cut from American Rescue Plan to Back-2-Work Child Care grants, a repeal of dedicated funding from sports betting, and a lack of Home Visiting investments show a decreased investment in the Birth-to-Three law. Mayor Bowser's proposal threatens the District's goal of creating an equitable, robust system that serves all young children and their families.

The Under 3 DC team is available to answer any questions you may have about the budget process and the toolkit contents. Feel free to contact anyone on staff directly.

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Template Opening Paragraph -- Please Personalize

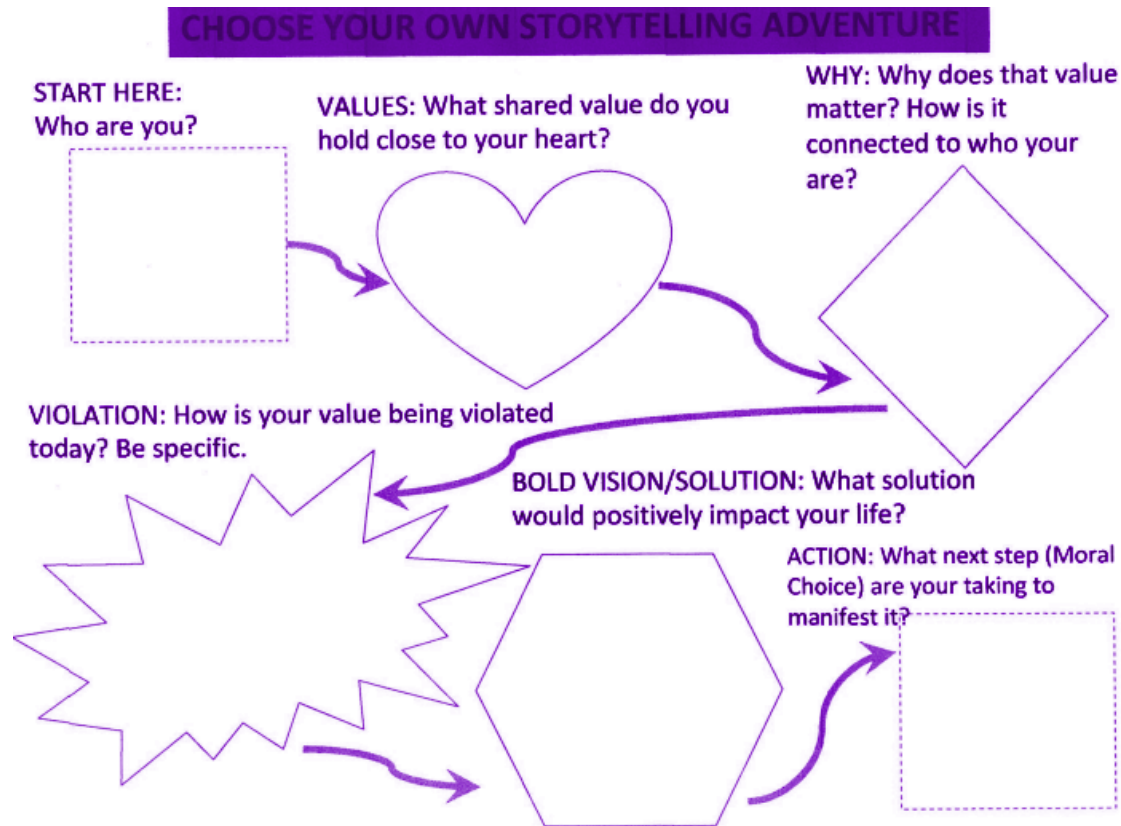
Good afternoon Councilmember **[Committee Chair Last Name]** and members of the committee. My name is **[Full Name]** and I am **[Title + Organization/Business, a resident of Ward X, a member of X organization]. [I am or Organization/Business Name is]** a member of Under 3 DC, a coalition which is committed to securing a strong start for @every infant and toddler in DC. My testimony today will focus on the importance of **[Specific Program/Service (e.g. Pay Equity Fund, Home Visiting, etc)]** for a strong, effective, and connected early childhood system in the District.

Testimony & Storytelling Tips

- Hearing testimonies will be limited to **3 minutes for oral remarks**, equivalent to ~1.25 pages of single spaced written content.
 - You can submit a separate, longer written testimony if you would like.
- Practice reading your testimony out loud a couple times to make sure it is within the time limit and reads/paces well.
- Sample testimony outline ([more detail in this guide](#)):
 - Introduction; include a clear ask up front in first paragraph
 - Personal story/connection to the topic you're testifying about
 - Why should DC prioritize the topic you're testifying about
 - Why should DC ...
 - Closing; reiterate your ask



- Helpful tool for identifying/outlining the personal story in your testimony:



Committee of the Whole Hearing: April 5, 2023

Under 3 DC Focus: Early Childhood Cuts

Talking Points:

- Despite Mayor Bowser’s claim that her \$5.4 million cut to the Pay Equity Fund are meant to “right-size” the new program, it sends the wrong message and could stunt the development of our history-making compensation program.
- Other localities and states point to the District’s early childhood system as a model to follow for creating an equitable, robust early childhood education system that serves all young children and their families. **The Mayor’s budget proposal undermines this progress.**



- **Increasing the income cap that allows more families to qualify for the child care subsidy program is a good thing**, but it shouldn't come at the expense of other early childhood programs.
- **Cuts to TANF child care funding, the Pay Equity Fund, and Back-2-Work Child Care grants could be extraordinarily problematic for a sector trying to re-establish more solid footing after a pandemic**—just like other District businesses..
- **The financial squeeze on working families is very real, evidenced by increasing rates of food insecurity and requests for rental assistance.** It's too soon to cut TANF child care dollars and Back-2-Work Child Care grants—which will affect our most vulnerable families and child care providers who serve them.
- **Mayor Bowser's Pay Equity Fund cut sends the wrong message to early childhood educators.** Many are now able to actively practice self care habits like visiting a dentist or managing a nagging health concern that most of us here today take for granted.
- It's also **too soon to cut the Pay Equity Fund this year because OSEE has not yet created the permanent compensation structure**, and the cuts undermine the District's ability to add directors of child development facilities in the fund and grow the HealthCare4ChildCare program.
 - While the overall participation rate in the Pay Equity Fund was high in FY22, the percentage of assistant teachers who received a payment was much lower.
- **The Mayor's proposal to repeal the sports betting provision** that allocates partial funding for early childhood education results in a recurring \$3.3 million cut. This is not money early education programs have ever seen, but it further limits the ability of the early learning community to meet its charge of educating and caring for our youngest before they enter our nationally recognized Pre-K program.
- **Other localities and states point to the District's early childhood system as a model to follow** for creating an equitable, robust system that serves all young children and their families. **The Mayor's budget proposal stagnates this progress.**

DC Health – April 10

Under 3 DC Focus: Home Visiting and Healthy Steps

>> Learn more about [Home Visiting](#) and see additional messages<<



Talking Points:

- *Message framing should include:* Stronger Investments in home visiting offer more families the chance to take good care of themselves and increase protective factors.
- The pandemic continues to impact families. Home visitors are seeing more demand and urgency for services, supplies, and resources.
- Home visiting grants have remained stagnant despite increased pressure from the pandemic and the rising inflation rates.
- Home visitors, like child care teachers, have been some of the most dedicated, yet underpaid professionals working with District families and children for years. The competitive labor market has driven many working for underfunded programs to seek higher-paying jobs in other industries.
- HealthySteps continues to deserve your support because it funds early childhood specialists who work with families during their well-child visits.
 - We ask you to maintain funding at current FY23 levels.

Child and Family Services Agency Hearing – April 11

Under 3 DC Focus: Home Visiting

>> Learn more about [Home Visiting](#) and see additional messages<<

Talking Points:

- Message framing should include: Stronger Investments in home visiting offer more families the chance to take good care of themselves and increase protective factors.
- The pandemic continues to impact families. Home visitors are seeing more demand and urgency for services, supplies, and resources.
- The financial squeeze on all but the highest-earning District families is very real, evidenced by increasing rates of food insecurity and requests for rental assistance. Family support services available at little or no cost, like Healthy Futures, Healthy Steps, and Home Visiting can be critical lifelines and an opportunity for families to thrive.



- Home visiting grants have remained stagnant – despite increased pressure from the pandemic and the rising inflation rates.
- Home visitors, like child care teachers, have been some of the most dedicated, yet underpaid professionals working with District families and children for years. The competitive labor market has driven many working for underfunded programs to seek higher-paying jobs in other industries.
- Increasing wages for home visitors will help retain a workforce critical to achieving a District goal of reducing maternal mortality and building a first-class early childhood system.

Twitter Hashtags and Handles

[Mayor Bowser](#), [OSSE](#) and a majority of the [DC Council](#) follow us on Twitter. They see what we say and what our national early childhood partners amplify. It is important for the early learning community to stick together and advance policies that make a healthy start possible for all young children in the District of Columbia.

Don't forget to include our coalition in your tweets! This hashtag populates the Twitter feed on the Under 3 DC website.

#Under3DC

Handles to follow & retweet

- @Under3DC
- @JUFJ
- @DCAEYC
- @DCELCCollab
- @DCFPI
- @WeAreDCAction

DC Policymaker Twitter Handles		
Name	Ward	Twitter Handle



Mayor Muriel Bowser	Districtwide	@MayorBowser
Chairman Phil Mendelson	At-Large	@ChmnMendelson
Anita Bonds	At-Large	@AnitaBondsDC
Christina Henderson	At-Large	@CMCHenderson
Kenyan McDuffie	At-Large	@CM_McDuffie
Robert White	At-Large	@CMRobertWhiteDC
Brianne Nadeau	Ward 1	@BrianneKNadeau
Brooke Pinto	Ward 2	@CMBrookePinto
Matt Frumin	Ward 3	@CMFrumin
Janeese Lewis George	Ward 4	@CMLewisGeorgeW4
Zachary Parker	Ward 5	@CMZParker5
Charles Allen	Ward 6	@CMCharlesAllen
Vincent Gray	Ward 7	@VinceGrayWard7
Trayon White	Ward 8	@trayonwhite

Sample Tweets and Social Media Graphics



S1: @councilofdc Increasing the income cap that allows more families to qualify for the #childcare subsidy program is a good thing, but it shouldn't come at the expense of other #washingtondc early childhood programs. #Under3DC

S2: The \$\$\$ squeeze on working families is real. #Foodinsecurity rates & requests for rental assist. are 📈. Cutting TANF child care dollars & Back2Work Child Care grants will affect #DC's most vulnerable families & the #childcare providers who serve them #Under3DC

S3: #TheDistrict is looked at as a model for the #earlychildhood system. We must cont. creating an equitable and robust early childhood edu system that serves all young children and families. @MayorBoweser's budget pro undermines this progress. #Under3DC

We support the Mayor's proposal to increase of the income eligibility limit for the child care subsidy from 75K to 90K. This increase will benefit 2100 families with children age 0 - 5. However, there are several aspects of her budget we find alarming.



These aspects include:

- A \$7 million cut to TANF
- A \$5.4 million cut to the Pay Equity Fund
- A \$8 million cut from American Rescue Plan to Back 2 Work Child care grants
- The repeal of dedicated funding from sports betting
- The lack of Home Visiting investments



These cuts to Birth-to-Three programs will set us back in creating an equitable, robust system that serves all young children and their families.

