

Highlights in this issue:

Poverty Guideline Update..... p1
 Safety Net Services..... p2
 Proposed Federal Budget p3
 Proposed Connecticut Budget..... p3

CABHN FEVER

Safety Net Services in Connecticut

Do You:

- Have low or no income?
- Need housing or help with rent, food and utilities?
- Need help finding and keeping a job?
- Need help finding child care?
- Need transportation?

If you:

Have at least one child under 18 living with you, or are under 19 and still a full-time student, and no longer receive cash assistance, and would like help meeting your goals...

Safety Net Services Can Help You:

Call 1-800-505-9000

Safety Net Services Is:

- Free
- About your needs.
- Provided by workers in your community, in your home.

The Safety Net Services program is funded by the Connecticut Department of Social Services and provided by the Connecticut Council of Family Services Agencies and the Connecticut Association for Community Action.

Update: Criminal Justice Reform

On January 23, 2008, the CT General Assembly passed Public Act 08-1, Senate Bill 1700, An Act Concerning Criminal Justice Reform. This legislation was enacted in response to the tragic events in Cheshire this past summer, which highlighted significant issues within our criminal justice system. The final bill included:

- Creation of the new crime of home invasion as a Class A felony, which carries a penalty of 10 to 25 years;
- Provisions to increase the penalty for burglary of a dwelling at night by making it a 1st degree burglary;

(See Reform p. 2)

Health & Human Services 2008 Poverty Guideline Update

Household size	Income Limit
1.....	\$10,400
2.....	14,000
3.....	17,600
4.....	21,200
5.....	24,800
6.....	28,400
7.....	32,000
8.....	35,600

*Guidelines for Alaska and Hawaii differ from above.

For family units with more than 8 members, add \$3,600 for each additional member. (The same increment applies to smaller family sizes also, as can be seen in the figures above.)

These guidelines went into effect on January 23, 2008. For more information, go to <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/08poverty.shtml>



Applications Due for Magnet Schools

Applications for All Choice and Magnet Schools are due March 7, 2008. Applications may be downloaded from www.hartford-schools.org.

For students interested in magnet schools, parents MUST attend the remaining district open house scheduled for February 6, 2008, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., at the Breakthrough Magnet School, Hartford, 290 Brookfield Street, Hartford, CT (snow date, February 13, 2008, 6:00 -8:00 p.m.) or schedule an appointment to meet with the magnet school principal. Information on all of the magnet schools will be available at the district –wide open house on February 6th. In addition, some of the magnet schools will host their own open houses, which parents may attend: February 2nd, Classical Magnet, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm; February 6th, University High School of Science & Engineering, 6:00 – 8:00 pm; February 9th, Hartford Magnet

Middle School, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm; February 9th, Pathways to Technology, 10:00 am -12:00 pm; February 21st, Mary Hooker Environmental Sciences, 1:00 – 2:40 pm.

For more information, please call CREC at 860-524-4096 or visit www.crec.org and click on Magnet Schools, or call Hartford Public Schools at (860) 695-8839, (860) 695-8876, or (860) 695-8699.

Eighth grade students are invited to attend one of the Hartford System of Schools' 9th Grade High School Choice Fairs at Rawson Elementary School, February 12, 2008

4:30 p.m. ~8:00 p.m., 260 Holcomb Street, Hartford, CT 06112; or Hartford Board of Education, February 23, 2008, 10:00 p.m. ~2:00 p.m., 960 Main Street, First floor Atrium, Hartford, CT 06103. For more information, please call the Registrar's office at:

(860) 695-8876 or 695-8699.



When it Comes to Households' Assets, Connecticut Gets a "C"

In spite of its high median wealth and income, dense pockets of concentrated poverty hobble Connecticut's cities. Hartford has one of the top-ten child poverty rates in the country, and income, health, homeownership, and education vary dramatically along race/ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic lines.

The Connecticut Family Asset Scorecard, a new report by Connecticut Voices for Children done in partnership with the D.C.-based Corporation for Enterprise Development, shows that economic disparities in Connecticut are even more extensive than generally understood. The report gives Connecticut a "C" overall in household assets and asset opportunities, down from an "A" on the previous scorecard in 2005. This year's mediocre grade reflects Connecticut's wide racial and economic disparities and high household debt, in spite of high overall levels of median household net worth (\$116,000) and education (36.5% of households are headed by someone with four years of

college or more).

The significance of this new scorecard hinges on its use of assets as a measure of financial health instead of income. Assets measure the financial resources a household currently owns—including interest-earning assets, stocks and mutual fund shares, real estate, own business or profession, mortgages held by sellers, and motor vehicles—minus any liabilities. Poverty measured using assets is much higher in Connecticut than poverty using income.

Connecticut has a larger racial disparity in assets than 25 out of 28 states where data is available, and a larger racial disparity in homeownership than 42 of 50 states. This places our minority families at enormous financial risk, and constricts the opportunities for their children to achieve a better life.

See the full report upon which this article is based at www.ctkidslink.org
Submitted by Joachim Hero, Research Fellow – Connecticut Voices for Children.

CT-KASA

Connecticut Kids as Self-Advocates (CT-KASA) is an organization for youth, run by youth. Its goal is to help kids with disabilities, their siblings and peers, to learn how to be self advocates through information and support.

CT-KASA is always looking for new members who want to socialize and share new ideas.

Anyone between the ages of 13 and 24 is welcome to join. For more information, go to www.ctkasa.org, call (860) 769-1561, or write to CT-KASA, c/o. UCONN Center for Disabilities, 263 Farmington Ave. MC-6222, Farmington, CT 06030-6222

HUSKY Update

For a review of HUSKY program changes, go to the CT Voices for Children website at <http://www.ctkidslink.org/>

Save the Date: March 4th



Supportive Housing Lobby Day Tuesday, March 4, 2007 at The State Capitol, Hartford, CT

Join housing advocates from across the state to advocate for funding for 650 new units of supportive housing in the upcoming legislative session! Visit the Reaching Home Website to learn how you can "Take Action!" now.

Supportive Housing Lobby Day is co-sponsored by the Reaching Home Campaign, CT Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), NAMI-CT, Keep the Promise Coalition, and Connecticut AIDS Resource Coalition (CARC.)

Questions? Contact Kate Kelly, Reaching Home Campaign Manager, kate@ctpartnershiphousing.com or 860-244-0066.

Reform (cont. from p.1)

- Makes someone convicted of 2nd degree burglary or home invasion ineligible for parole until he or she has served at least 85% of the sentence imposed;
- Alters the composition, qualification requirements and appointment process for the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) and requires the BPP to hire a psychologist;
- Increases the number of reentry, diversionary and staff-secure sexual offender beds;
- Requires the Judicial Branch to post certain arrest warrant information on the Internet
- Requires global positioning system monitoring of 300 more parolees;
- Appropriates money for reentry and diversionary services in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven;
- Requires DOC, BPP and the Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division to develop a risk assessment strategy for offenders in DOC custody.

CABHN Announcement

CABHN and LARCC welcome Ellen Small, who has just joined our staff. Ellen received her Masters in Social Work from the University of Connecticut in 2007, with a concentration in Policy Practice, and worked last year with the Office of Child Advocate. Ellen will be working to make sure that service providers and low-income people in Connecticut are informed of and involved in policy discussions on issues that affect their lives and work. She will also explore ways to improve our electronic communications with CABHN members. She will be in touch with many of you soon to talk about how CABHN can be most helpful to you. We are very excited to have this new resource and energy for CABHN's work.

How does the President's Proposed Budget impact you?

Although President Bush suggests that his recently released FY09 Proposed Budget will succeed in balancing the budget by 2012, his expansion of tax cuts disproportionately benefitting the nation's wealthiest will diminish funding for programs providing vital services for low-to-moderate income Americans, Americans with disabilities and other health care needs, America's elderly, and America's children.

Tax cuts enlarge deficits and cut funding for domestic programs

The budget would enlarge deficits by \$547 billion over the next five years, due to the extension of tax cuts enacted in 2001 and 2003 and the addition of new tax cuts. These tax cuts cost the federal government more than \$900 billion within five years and an estimated \$2.4 trillion over the next ten years.

The impact of these tax cuts on low and moderate-income Americans is grim. Not only do the tax cuts favor the nation's wealthy, but also they come at the expense of vital domestic programs. In fact, this plan would reduce expenditures for domestic programs by \$23 billion in 2009 and an additional \$474 billion over five years.

In 2009, funding would be cut from domestic discretionary programs outside of homeland security by nearly \$15 billion after adjusting for inflation. This funding fuels programs ranging from education, including early childhood programs such as Head Start, to veterans' health care.

Specific Programs Impacted:

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program would experience funding cuts of \$570 million – or 22%. This would result in cutting more than one million low-income families and elderly persons off from the program entirely.

- Child Care Assistance Programs providing child care assistance to low-income families would have funding frozen for the seventh consecutive year, resulting in 200,000 fewer children receiving federal child care assistance in 2009 than did in 2007.
- Section 8 Housing Voucher Program would provide rental assistance to 100,000 fewer low-income households.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would experience drastic cuts in funding for the detection and control of infectious disease and preventive health services with a cut of \$433 million.
- Federal Medicaid expenditures would be cut by \$18.2 billion over five years, resulting in a shift in cost of Medicaid to the states without lowering costs of care.
- State program cuts or tax increases would be necessary to close state budget gaps increased by the reduction of federal funds.
- Medicare reductions over the next ten years could result in health care providers limiting the number of Medicare patients they will see or dropping out of the program, negatively impacting tens of millions of Americans, namely the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- SCHIP Programs providing health care coverage to children will not receive the needed \$21.5 billion over the next five years needed to maintain current programs. The President's budget only proposes an additional \$19.7 billion.

(for more details on President Bush's budget proposals, go to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' website - www.cbpp.org)

Governor Rell Announces Budget Proposal

Governor Rell announced her proposal for FY09 on Wednesday, February 6, the opening day of the 2008 legislative session.

There are several areas under her proposed budget that would impact persons of low-income. Some of these proposed changes are positive, while others reduce funding to vital programs serving our communities.

Significant changes include:

Health Care

- Eliminate funding for Medicaid Interpreters. This would result in a savings of \$4.7 million. The Department of Social Services will not amend the state plan to cover these services under Medicaid fee-for-service.
- Reduce funding for certain non-entitlement programs, resulting in a savings of \$4.235 million. This would impact services to the elderly, nutrition assistance, housing/homeless services, school readiness, community services, and human services infrastructure/community action programs. This would also reallocate \$1 million that was earmarked for CHOICES last year to the Charter Oak Health Plan.
- Increase access to Medicaid breast and cervical cancer coverage by \$850,000.
- Provide additional DSS staffing. \$825,000 would be allocated to fund four positions to meet deferral payment error rate requirements for Medicaid and HUSKY, two positions for internal audit unit and one position to perform quality review in child support unit.
- Expedite eligibility for SAGA medical for persons leaving prison (\$50,000).

(See Gov's Budget p. 4)

Gov's Budget

(Cont. from p. 3)

- Provide hospice benefit under Medicaid.
- Develop media campaign to encourage Medicaid and HUSKY recipients to seek out primary care providers instead of going to hospital emergency departments (\$100,000).

Energy

- Begin intake for CEAP (Connecticut Energy Assistance Program) early – in mid-August (\$350,000)
- Enhance Weatherization Assistance Program (\$1.9 million)
- Fund Energy Assistance Programs at \$2.25 million

Families and Children

- Increase child support passed through to families on Temporary Family Assistance from \$50 to \$100 per month.

- Increase Child Care Services by \$10.6 million to \$103.7 million.

Housing

- Reduce Housing/Homeless Services by \$417,878 to \$42 million

Other

- Reduce Human Services Infrastructure/Community Action by \$748,496 to \$3.7 million

Walk Against Hunger

Join CT Food Bank in one of its Walks Against Hunger:

Sunday, April 27, 2008 at Library Park, Waterbury, CT or Sunday, May 4, 2008 at East Rock Park, New Haven, CT

Registration for both walks begins at 1PM and walks start at 2PM

Pre-registration is requested online, email: walk@ctfoodbank.org or tel: (203) 469-5000.

CABHN Meetings

Upcoming Meeting

CABHN/FESN Meeting

Friday, April 4

9:30-11:30 am

CRT

**555 Windsor Ave.
Hartford, CT**

The Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs (CABHN) is a statewide network of individuals, community groups and organizations which supports and promotes advocacy on low-income issues. For more information, please call (860) 278-5688.

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Legal Assistance Resource Center of CT and
CABHN (Connecticut Alliance for Basic Human Needs)
44 Capitol Ave., Suite 301
Hartford, CT 06106

CABHN FEVER

E-Extra

Save the Dates!



Connecticut Voices for Childrend State Budget Forum

When? Tuesday, February 26,
10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
(lunch will be served)

Where? Old Judiciary Room
State Capitol, Hartford

Speakers at Connecticut Voices for Children's annual informational State Budget Forum will discuss Connecticut's growing economic inequality that is now leaving not only poor, but also middle class families behind, and how to create an "opportunity agenda" that helps to close these economic gaps in the state.

Topics will include trends and causes of economic inequality, and how inequality affects opportunities and outcomes for all Connecticut residents. The forum will also address and forecast some major, emerging state budget issues.

Speakers confirmed so far include:

Jared Bernstein, Economic Policy Institute; author of *State of Working America 2006/2007*

Professor Tom Shapiro, Institute on Assets and Social Policy, Brandeis University; author of *By A Thread: The New Experience of America's Middle Class*

Robert Genuario, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management

For more information, see www.ctkid-slink.org or call (203) 498-4240.

Making Women Visible Day

The Connecticut Legislature's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), the state's leading force for women's equality is marking the start of its 35th anniversary year on Making Women Visible Day, February 21, 2008.

The day will begin with the traditional Making Women Visible Day Press Conference attended by state officials at 10 AM in Room 1D of the Legislative Office Building. The PCSW will release its legislative agenda and announce the winners of the annual high school essay contest sponsored by the its Young Women's Leadership Program.

Stacey Tisdale, on air financial journalist and writer of the book, *The True Cost of Happiness: The Real Story Behind Managing Your Money*, released in September, will keynote at 11 AM that day. Ms. Tisdale's journalistic career began at Dow & Co. where she produced, wrote and eventually reported and hosted programming for Wall Street Journal Television, now known as CNBC. She continued her career reporting for all of the CNN networks. She has appeared on the Today Show and "The Oprah Winfrey Show" as an expert on the financial issues facing women.

After her keynote address Ms. Tisdale will conduct a workshop on *The True Cost of Happiness*. There is no cost for the program, it is open to the public and her signed book will be available for purchase. All activities that day will take place in Room 1D of the Legislative Office Building in Hartford.

Permanent Commission on the Status of Women: 860-240-8300 www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw