



Protect Our Children Committee Questionnaire

- 1. What three specific fiscal or policy strategies would you enlist within your administration to prevent child abuse and build the confidence and competence of parents?**

While the next administration will be tasked with restoring fiscal discipline in state government, I will continue my record of prioritizing the protection of our most vulnerable citizens as a core function of government. Eliminating wasteful and unnecessary discretionary spending will permit the reallocation of resources toward line items which support programs involved in direct service delivery. I believe that to be effective, child abuse prevention efforts demand a comprehensive approach through which state government and individual communities work together to provide Pennsylvania families with the support they need. As Governor, I will ensure that all stakeholders – service providers, nonprofit organizations with a direct interest, and affected families – are involved in policy development to help inform state-level decision-making on issues of child welfare. In cooperation with these stakeholders, I will identify which strategies have been successful in achieving meaningful performance measures and where our efforts in recent years would benefit from improvement. Finally, I believe education and outreach efforts should focus upon strategies to maximize the knowledge resources available for new and expectant parents.

- 2. How do you plan on increasing the availability of and access to high-quality voluntary home visiting services for families most at risk?**

I strongly support high-quality voluntary home visiting programs, such as the Nurse-Family Partnership, which was supported by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency during my tenure as Chair. I firmly believe that resources invested during a child's early and most vulnerable years generate a high rate of future return in terms of reduced incarceration rates, healthcare costs and academic success. I recognize the demonstrated success of the Nurse-Family Partnership and am committed to building upon the success of voluntary home visiting services to the extent possible given current budget realities.

- 3. Will you establish and adequately fund a state-level independent Child Protection Ombudsperson? If not, please outline strategies you will put forth to improve accountability and transparency within Pennsylvania's child welfare system.**

I believe that to bring accountability and transparency to Pennsylvania's child welfare system, we need to cut the administrative red tape to allow child welfare workers in state, county and local agencies to come together and place the needs of at-risk children first. By streamlining administration of the child welfare system, we can foster understanding of the interconnectedness attending the system at the state, county and local levels and better enforce accountability at all levels. I have spent my career ensuring that government effectively fulfills its primary role of ensuring public safety, and I will take that experience to the Office of the Governor to conduct a comprehensive review of the best practices needed to make Pennsylvania even more of a national leader in the protection of children. I will pursue accountability and transparency in the child welfare system by eliminating costly administrative barriers and maintaining open lines of communication throughout all channels. Before creating any new bureaucracy, it will be necessary to ensure that the one we have now works in the best possible interest of our children.