Cherry picking+vaccines, with a stop for Paris (Hilton)

Reconciliation: Cherry picking should be saved for pie

President Biden’s sweeping plan to secure America’s future by prioritizing children has hit the skids in Congress. Surprise, surprise. The overall package likely will be pared to below $2 trillion and the worst part is that many of the cuts may be taken from our kids. Congress has before it the opportunity to:

- Slash child poverty through investments like the child tax credit.
- Prioritize children’s health by funding the Children’s Health Insurance Program the same way we do every other healthcare program
- Reverse the dramatic spikes in food insecurity seen during the pandemic
- Save the struggling child care system and give our economy the crucial boost it needs
- Prevent youth homelessness
- Invest in school infrastructure
- and much more.

First Focus on Children is calling on lawmakers to pass all child-related items in the reconciliation package. These provisions are not separate policies to
choose from. They are a collective that when enacted together will improve the health and well-being of our children, our economy and our country’s future.

**Vaccine plan marks victory for little kids:**

Federal regulators will soon decide whether children 5-to-11-years-old can receive the COVID-19 vaccine and the Biden Administration has announced a plan — a plan!! — to get shots into those little arms. First Focus on Children began calling for a comprehensive, clearly articulated plan to vaccinate the nation’s children in April 2021.

**Among our current recommendations:**

- Create a public education and communications campaign to enable families to make informed decisions and to fight back against misinformation that they may be seeing
- Use all available federal resources and existing programs for sharing information and reaching families
- Hold listening sessions for caregivers to learn about their concerns and effective ways to address them
- Establish an explicit goal of eliminating racial and other disparities in children’s vaccinations.

We never want to say “I told you so,” but….

**Find our press release at this link.**

**All aboard for Paris (Hilton):**

First Focus on Children’s Aubrey Edwards-Luce joined influencer Paris Hilton this week to urge oversight of the “troubled teen industry,” a congregate care system that has institutionalized trauma and abuse of many children who land there. Reps. Ro Khanna (D-CA), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Adam Schiff (D-CA) and Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) expect to introduce a bill shortly that will create a bill of rights for children in congregate care. Meanwhile, see Aubrey’s remarks here.
Remembering Gen. Colin Powell, Champion for Children:

Many people will focus on Gen. Powell's accomplishments as a military leader and as Secretary of State. But we will always know him — and hope that others will too — as a true Champion for Children. Find out why in our remembrance.