

Invest in Kids Campaign 8 Questions for Election '08

1. Foster Care: Missouri has approximately 9,600 children in foster care. The State of Missouri is their parent while a child is in foster care.¹

What is your plan for providing adequately for Missouri's foster children?

2. Adoption: On average there are between 1,800 and 1,900 children in foster care waiting for adoptive parents each month?²

What is your plan to encourage more adoptions in Missouri?

3. Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: According to a 2008 Citizens for Missouri's Children report about 266 youth age out of foster care each year.³

What is your plan to provide these youth with the resources they need to become productive citizens?

4. Early Childhood Care: Every day in Missouri, over 42,000 children receive child care services and many more are left alone after school.⁴

What is your plan for supporting child care and keeping kids safe after school?

5. Foster Care & Education: Children in foster care are more likely to repeat grades, to be in special education, and to leave school without a high school diploma.⁵

What is your plan to improve educational outcomes for youth in foster care?

6. Food Insecurity: Since January 2007, Missouri has over 13,000 more families relying on food stamps to provide adequate nutrition to their children.⁶ 36,000 more children are enrolled in the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program since 2002.⁷ Food prices have increased nearly 6% from a year ago.⁸

What are your plans to help families cope with high food prices?

7. Health Care Access: 127,000 Missouri children do not have health insurance.⁹

How do you propose to ensure that children grow up healthy and have access to comprehensive health care?

8. Housing Insecurity: Nearly 2 million American children will lose their homes due to the current foreclosure crisis – and these children are more likely to do poorly in school.¹⁰

How do you propose to help Missouri children remain in their homes?

¹ Missouri Department of Social Services. (2008). *Caseload Counter Historical Data*. Retrieved August 21, 2008, from <http://www.dss.mo.gov/mis/clcounter/counter.xls>

² *Ibid.*

³ Citizens for Missouri's Children (2008). *What is Missouri Doing to Help Youth Aging Out of Foster Care?* Retrieved August 28, 2008, from <http://www.mokids.org/pdfs/AgingOut1.pdf>

⁴ Missouri Department of Social Services. (2008). *May 2008 – Block Grant Child Care Monthly Management Report*. Retrieved September 7, 2008, from <http://www.dss.mo.gov/re/pdf/oecmmr/0508.pdf>

⁵ The California Education Collaborative for Children in Foster Care. (2008). *Ready to Succeed*. Retrieved September 8, 2008, from <http://www.cftl.org/documents/2008/FCfullreport.pdf>

⁶ *Ibid* at 1.

⁷ Citizens for Missouri's Children. (2008). *Kids Count in Missouri Data Book 2007*. Retrieved August 21, 2008, from http://www.mokids.org/pdfs/2007_Kids_Count_Databook.pdf

⁸ Bloomberg. (August 20). *Meat, Dairy May Push Food Inflation to 28-Year High*. Retrieved August 21, 2008, from <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=aGZ5wqFMmUS4&refer=home>

⁹ Every Child Matters. (2008). *Missouri Ranking*. Retrieved August 21, 2008, from <http://www.everychildmatters.org/National/Resources/Missouri-Ranking.html>

¹⁰ First Focus. (2008). *The Impact of the Mortgage Crisis on Children*. Retrieved August 21, 2008, from <http://www.firstfocus.net/pages/3401/>