

Reginald Milton

Child Impact Statement

The condition and wellbeing of our youth is a litmus test to the stability of our City. If this is the case, Memphis is doing poorly.

As a community organizer I have spent the last 15 years witnessing first hand the impact an unstable household has on the life on a child. Learning, health, and emotional development are all impacted.

As an elected official my focus will be to support initiatives that work to address the underline reasons for families being in crisis – such as unemployment and underemployment, the lack of access to services that can improve ones life. We must find more effective ways of moving individuals from a state of dependence to a place of greater self-sufficiency. I am a strong advocate of “one-stop assistance centers.” These **Centers** are designed around the clients. They are created based on improving client-social service interaction. These **Centers** are structured to reduce the barriers, such as: logistics, usability, and trust that all too often deter clients from seeking assistance.

These **Centers** should be designed to address the often multiple social issues that clients present. We must move from providing patch work assistance to a more holistic service approach. It is useless to offer job training when a person is dealing with persistent emotional problems; or how effective is a program that works to put life-long renters into their first home when they lack basic financial and money management skills?

This City will move forward only when we are prepared to address these issues.

RANKING	CURRENT PROBLEMS FACING CHILDREN IN MEMPHIS
3	Low literacy rates among Memphis parents hampers child development.
2	Too many parents in Shelby County are young, single and under-educated.
5	Infant mortality and low birth weight are among the highest in the country.
1	Toxins in the environment harm children in Memphis and hinder brain development.
6	Poor child care options undermine both early childhood development and parental job stability
4	Many children in Memphis do not have health insurance.

Janice Fullilove

Child Impact Statement

Having grown up here in Memphis, as a child, my family didn't have much, but they stressed to me the importance of education. Knowledge is power, and as an elected official I would work towards, number 1, the infant mortality rate here in the city, by forming public/private partnerships to educate young women on the hazards of not getting pre-natal care, early in the pregnancy, and nutritional inadequacy. While I understand my role as a Council member would be limited, I am more than willing to step outside of the box, when it comes to early childhood education. Research has shown that the earlier a poor child receives health and education services, the better for our communities as a whole. I would like to work in conjunction with The Urban Child Institute to see what community efforts need to be done to help our children and their families. Children and their families need affordable health care, many need to get out of neighborhoods where drug use and violence has become the norm. Uninsured Americans are often forced to delay medical care, suffer from more illness and sometimes die as a result of not having health coverage. I would love to work with groups or organizations that would push for coverage (Medicaid or other alternatives for those individuals). I am still an advocate for education, I believe that you don't just give a person a fish to eat, but show them how to fish in order that they can eat for life. I am well aware, that children in lower-income families are placed at a greater risk due to basic needs that can't be provided to them through their parent, or parents, and as an end result they are at a greater risk due to unmet basic needs. These conditions place them at a disadvantage in many areas of greater quality of life. Improving the employment stability of their parents and other caretakers contributes to a more stable family economic environment and greater opportunities for child development and educational achievement. I would love to form a partnership with the business community to seek employment of said individuals and also encourage vocational and other skills training to prepare them for the workforce.

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Ed Vaughn

Child Impact Statement

I have always been and will continue to be committed to children's issues in Memphis. I served as an interim school board commissioner in 2000 and I work with elementary and high school children at several Memphis City Schools. My tenure as an elected official will improve the lives of very young children and their families by implementing and advocating several initiatives.

I will address the problem of environmental toxins by designing a program to meet this need in low-income communities. I will use my environmental background and professional contacts to help develop this initiative.

I will work to acquire adequate funding to address the issue of poor childcare options. I emphatically agree that we need qualified teachers to provide quality child care.

I will work to acquire funding to expand access to prenatal care and parental education. The infant mortality and low birth weight rates in Memphis are unacceptable.

I will address the issue of a lack of health insurance for many children in Memphis. I will work to ensure that all children born in Memphis who are eligible for TennCare and Cover Kids are enrolled.

I currently mentor students in Memphis City Schools and I advocate abstinence. I will work to reduce teen pregnancy through educational programs.

I will work to increase the literacy rate among Memphis parents. We must invest in early literacy if we expect to prevent future academic problems among our children. The lack of academic achievement is a key issue in Memphis City Schools and it must be aggressively addressed.

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Mary Wilder

Child Impact Statement

How will my tenure as an elected official improve the lives of very young children and their families? Memphis provides matching funding through its Public Services division for many children services program. I would continue that support. The City of Memphis also funds the Emergency Services Program at MIFA which provides emergency help for families. City of Memphis funds housing programs which address the need for safe, habitable housing in Memphis. I have worked as the director of children's programs at United Methodist Neighborhood Center for 11 years. I understand the needs of working mothers and the value of early childhood intervention. As council member I will be supportive and mindful of the services the city provides and their impact on families and young children.

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Joe Saino

Child Impact Statement

Your recently completed Child Well-Being Data Book makes it clear that due to poverty and other factors, many children receive inadequate brain stimulation and nourishment in the early years of life, leading to limited educational and vocational opportunities in later life. We must address this problem with a requirement for early child development programs for these children.

Poor education leads to poverty and only improved education can help in this. Preschool classes are critical and are being expanded thanks to state funds and the governor's initiative. Preschool development should be a Memphis priority, and the city should urge the Shelby County delegation to the state legislature to push for a law to make preschool attendance mandatory.

As a City Councilman for the City of Memphis, I will have limited resources to address this problem as education is basically a County and State responsibility. However, the City of Memphis does provide millions of dollars to the Memphis School system, which I think should be redirected to early childhood education and single parent counseling as this is the core of the problem.

I am not quite sure about your ranking request as your listed six current problems are all part of parcel of the result we see arriving at the door of the formal school door. Without assistance in the first 5 years, the outcome is almost always the same, low education, poverty, crime and failure. If I am forced to rank them, I would choose low literacy rates for the parents and single under-educated parents as the top two and then the lack of health care following those two.

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Kemp Conrad

Child Impact Statement

For such an important issue, the essence is simple...Our Children Are Our Future. If we do not rebuild Memphis to be a city that is safe, ripe with opportunity, with adequate healthcare and good education at every level, how can we expect to give our children what they need to become strong, healthy, successful adults?

I want to thank the Center for Urban Child Policy for advocating that the issue of the well-being of our children begins even before the child is born. Our children's future hinges upon whether or not they have the healthcare, education, and opportunity.

This means, educating parents and future parents...This means, making sure every newborn has good healthcare...This means, making sure that our children receive a good education not only in the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic but also learning how to live a healthy lifestyle.

I have a 3-year-old son and a newborn daughter and they mean the world to my wife and me. We work every day to make sure they have every opportunity to grow up and succeed in the great city of Memphis. This is one of the main reasons I am running for City Council of Memphis...to ensure that every child not only gets the support and guidance they need in the home but in schools and healthcare facilities. Our local, state and national governments have a responsibility to us and our children. That responsibility is to make sure that the next generation is even stronger than the last.

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Desi Franklin

Child Impact Statement

As a mother, I know how important it is for our children to be well cared for, from conception through adolescence. Unfortunately, far too many children in Memphis have not had the lucky circumstances my son has had, to be born into a financially secure family where his needs – his health, safety and education - rank as a high priority.

It is hard to rank the issues raised by the Urban Child Institute. They are all very important issues. But I did so based on my thought that we must intervene from the beginning to assure that our children, who are our future leaders, workforce and citizens, have the best chance to grow into contributing and satisfied Memphians. And this means working for healthy babies first, followed by working to keep teenagers from becoming parents and helping those who do to become good parents, who are assisted in becoming working parents who are able to achieve a safe, stable environment for their children.

I promise to make our children a high priority. I am running for the City Council because I care deeply about the future of our city, so naturally that includes a focus on how to enhance what we do for our city's future – our children.

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Frank Langston

Child Impact Statement

I focused on education policy while getting my degree in Public Policy from Princeton University. I know that early childhood development and education comprise the foundation of any child's lifelong learning opportunities and outcomes.

Having recently met with the Mid-South Reads Coalition, I know we have a broad-based group that is working hard on the ground to encourage literacy among children and – just as importantly – their parents. I will support those efforts on the Council and facilitate integration with complementary City Departments, such as the Office of Children and Neighborhoods.

I will also follow through on the Council with the execution of the People 1st component of the Fast Forward Plan, supporting it at the City level specifically as it relates to early childhood education and development. I will always keep the big picture in mind. The City Government should adopt the Child Impact Statement policy with respect to new ordinances and, especially, the approval of the budget. In the absence of Council consensus that we should take that action, I will be sure to write one on matters that directly and indirectly relate to the education and overall development of young children.

There are a number of City services related to early childhood development, from adult education to home visitation support programs. We must be ever mindful of the ripple impact these programs will have on our community in the long-term. As your next City Councilman, Frank Langston, I will bring that big-picture mentality, combined with hard work and on-the-ground execution, to the City Council.

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Lester Lit

Child Impact Statement

To be quite honest until I received your letter I was not aware of the relationship between the city council and child well being. I know about federal, state and county programs, but if the council is working in these areas I am unaware. Having said that, however, if we are not involved in these areas, we should be. My youngest daughter is a Pre-K public school teacher in Norfolk, VA with a Master's degree in Early Childhood and we have had many discussions about the issues raised in your priority list because each item seemed to deserve a #1 ranking. I have two grown children, two grandchildren and another one due on Election Day. Thank God, our family never had to deal with these issues. But, that is one of the primary reasons I am seeking public office – to give back to a community that has been so good to me and my family. The issues we hear about the most during this campaign – crime, poor education, corruption, drugs, gangs, poverty, low or no wages – all can be traced to early childhood development or the lack thereof. I want to be an advocate for the disadvantaged. My strength as a businessman is spending money wisely. Spending money on children between the ages of birth and three years is an investment for the future of all our children and grandchildren.

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Tiffany Lowe

Child Impact Statement

I am specifically running for city council because I am a role model to many inner-city youth and their families who have similar backgrounds, who are at risk of having to navigate the juvenile and/or criminal justice system. Having done so myself, I am committed to giving back to the community as an exemplary model of what can occur when one makes an adjustment and perseveres. In my district, families are faced with poverty and drugs due to lack of education, which results in lack of employment. These stressors are somehow connected to societal structures that affect many children and youth which is particularly critical for felons, individuals with criminal records, and juvenile delinquents. In my tenure as an elected official, I will strongly advocate for applicable programs that meet community needs that enables prevention of activities that break down the family structure and their ability to obtain empowerment. I will also put in place stronger codes, regulations and enforcement to enhance the environmental quality of life in low and inner-city communities, starting with eliminating the dilapidating homes that these children and their families are forced to live next to. The city of Memphis is in no better condition family-wise than it was 10 or 15 years ago when I was kicked permanently out of Memphis City Schools at age 16. In and out of juvenile court and jails, I had to overcome these obstacles. I earned my GED in 1991 and today am working on a PhD in Social and Community Development.

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CENTER FOR URBAN CHILD POLICY

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The Center for Urban Child Policy
600 Jefferson Avenue, Suite 417
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Dear Friend,

The strength of a society is measured by how it treats its children.

As a prospective policymaker in the city of Memphis, you have a great opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children. What you do during your tenure as an elected official will impact children now and in the future. You can use your position to advocate for practical and meaningful solutions that will enrich the lives of children and families in our community. This letter is a call to action to be a champion of children's issues in our community.

- 1. The first years of life are critical for children's development.** What happens in those first years literally hardwires a child's brain. Eighty percent of brain development occurs between birth and age three. Investing in the well-being of young children and their families makes a significant difference for the future of our community. The enclosed documents from The Center for Urban Child Policy introduce key information on issues affecting children in our community. They include:
 - a. A brief summary of the findings of the Child Well-Being Data Book.** The full data book is also available online at http://www.theurbanchildinstitute.org/data_book/processor.php.
 - b. Perspectives on Improving the Well-Being of Young Children in Tennessee.**
- 2. Young children in our community are in trouble.** As the data book makes clear, too many children in Memphis start life at a disadvantage. As a result their health, well-being, safety, school performance, and – ultimately – their future contributions as adults are affected.
- 3. Public officials make a difference in the lives of children.** How will your election improve the well-being of young children and their families in Memphis and Shelby County?

After reviewing these materials, we would like to learn about your priorities concerning the well-being of children. Please complete and return the following materials to us:

- a. First, review the attached list of concerns facing young children in Memphis and rank these concerns as priorities for your tenure in office.**
- b. Second, please share with us a brief Child Impact Statement for your campaign.** Shelby County government has adopted the practice of attaching Child Impact Statements to proposed legislation to detail the exact benefit of that legislation to very young children. Modeled after Kansas City's Number One Question initiative, child impact statements ensure that every piece of legislation takes into consideration the well-being of children and families and shows the community's support for making child well-being a priority. How will your time in office improve the well-being of young

children in our community? Please return your responses to the Center for Urban Child Policy no later than September 21st. You may send your responses by mail to The Center for Urban Child Policy, fax them to 901-678-1483 attention Leah C. Wells, or you can request an electronic copy by emailing cucp@theurbanchildinstitute.org.

- c. We will compile the child policy-specific responses for all of the candidates into a **Who's For Kids Guide to the election** which will be distributed to the public and the press on September 26th.

The Center for Urban Child Policy is a nonpartisan organization committed to improving the well-being of very young children in Memphis and Shelby County. We advocate public policies and community interventions based on data-driven research in order to improve the lives of children from birth through age three.

The Center for Urban Child Policy does not support or endorse any candidates for public office.

Please contact The Center for Urban Child Policy at cucp@theurbanchildinstitute.org or (901) 678-1647 for more information.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Leah C. Wells
Research Associate
The Center for Urban Child Policy

Doug Imig, Ph.D.
Fellow
The Center for Urban Child Policy

YOUR RANKING	CURRENT PROBLEMS	HOW THE PROBLEMS AFFECT CHILDREN
	Low literacy rates among Memphis parents hamper child development.	A third of parents in Memphis have trouble reading. This is a problem because children whose parents read to them do better in reading and math, have better critical thinking skills and higher self-esteem. Investing in early literacy can prevent future academic problems by teaching children to become lifetime learners. We know that children from low-income families reach school much less well prepared than children from middle-income families. Low-income parents have fewer books, are much less comfortable reading and have less time to devote to reading with their children.
	Too many parents in Shelby County are young, single and under-educated.	These parents will earn less, these families will be less stable, and their children are more likely to reach school at a disadvantage. Home visitation programs help new mothers who face issues like poverty and single parenthood by providing a stable, continuous and educative support system for the first few years of their child's life and teach best practices such as breastfeeding and alcohol and smoking cessation which lead to better outcomes for babies. Nurses and practitioners work with mothers to encourage sustained well-being for the family. These programs lead to better outcomes for children and their families across many dimensions of well-being, including fewer future pregnancies, longer spacing between having children and increase healthiness.
	Infant mortality and low birth weight rates are among the highest in the country.	Low birth weight and very low birth weight babies face tremendous cognitive and physical difficulties and obstacles in school and life. Good prenatal care and maternal health are critical in combating these problems. We must expand access to prenatal care and parental education through effective programs like home visitation to improve the lives of children.
	Toxins in the environment harm children in Memphis and hinder brain development.	Environmental toxins are a problem particularly for children in low-income communities because their environments are more likely to be contaminated by lead and pesticides, and they are also less likely to be tested and treated for exposure. Children in low-income families are also more likely to be exposed to cockroach allergens which exacerbate conditions like asthma. Children with chronic health problems tend to miss school more frequently, which influences their learning as well as causes parents to miss work and rearrange their schedules to care for their sick child.
	Poor child care options undermine both early childhood development and parental job stability.	Affordable and high quality child care requires qualified teachers who encourage healthy social, emotional, cognitive and physical development in young children. Children most in need of affordable and high quality child care are the least likely to have access to it because of the cost. Parents are more stable and productive workers when their children are in quality care environments.
	Many children in Memphis do not have health insurance.	127,000 children in Tennessee are uninsured, and many of them are in Memphis. Health insurance is an important safety net for children and families. Insurance increases the likelihood that children will receive needed care, including immunizations and healthy child check-ups. All children born in Memphis who are eligible for TennCare and Cover Kids should be enrolled.

