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## Statement by Child Center CEO and Executive Director Traci Donnelly on the Appointment of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education

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"In an already challenging time for our country, and for social impact organizations like The Child Center of NY, the appointment of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education is disheartening. When graduation and attendance rates are consistently low, as we see all too often in many of our communities in Queens and throughout the City, we need a champion of public schools in this important post – one who has a proven familiarity with the current state of the education system in this country, who appreciates the importance of separation of Church and State as espoused in our Constitution, and particularly, someone who would not let those schools which are failing fall further by the wayside.

When not merely disheartening, DeVos' statements are extremely alarming. As the United States Education Secretary, she must support legislation to prevent guns in schools with our children, and her position should be unwavering, without hesitation or caveats. Schools are no place for guns.

This moment is especially critical for those of us deeply involved in efforts to provide guidance through public education venues, and we share the concerns over this appointment that many of our colleagues in government and not-for-profit sectors have expressed. At The Child Center of NY, we believe that every child has the potential to succeed, and it is our mission to provide children and families with the skills, opportunities, and emotional support to do so. Despite the setbacks we must currently endure, we look forward to continued work with elected officials and civil staff in New York City and State to safeguard our promise to provide the tools necessary for the health and wellbeing of our children."

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