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NYC mayoral candidate Garcia joins calls to boost foster youth mentorship funding

Child welfare advocates want the city to commit \$20 million to the Fair Futures initiative.

New York City mayoral candidate Kathryn Garcia joined child welfare advocates at a rally held on Wednesday in calling on Mayor Bill de Blasio to increase funding to a city program that provides mentors to foster youth.

The mayor's proposed budget allocates \$2.7 million to the Fair Futures initiative, which supporters have said should be increased to \$20 million and made permanent. Foster youth, nonprofits and elected officials who have backed the initiative say access to coaches and mentors provides those in the foster care system with valuable guidance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"When we make these types of investments, when we give people the coaches they need, the mentors they need, you know what?" Garcia said at the rally. "They don't get involved in the criminal justice system. They finish their education."

Garcia has emphasized her child welfare proposals on the campaign trail, which she said draw on her own experience as an adoptee with a sibling who spent seven years in the foster care system. Other mayoral candidates have also been supportive of the Fair Futures initiative. Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams appeared at a virtual rally earlier this year calling for more funding, and Maya Wiley has pledged to commit \$20 million to the initiative.

By Kay Dervishi

TODAY'S BUZZ

Power of Two's virtual fundraiser, held Tuesday, surpassed the nonprofit's fundraising goal of \$250,000, which would allow its parenting program to get 100 more families. The event featured a conversation with Heather McGhee, the author of the book "The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together."

The Child Welfare Fund, which helps organizations focused on preventing childhood trauma, welcomed Susan Baer as its new executive director; she will start July 1. She has served as the executive director of the Joseph H. Flom Foundation, which is concluding its grantmaking and is sunsetting next spring. Baer is succeeding Frank Wolf, who is starting a small consultancy to help social service organizations and educational institutions with finding senior-level leadership.

All Stars Project: The New York-based nonprofit raised nearly \$2.3 million during its virtual gala held on May 13, breaking the event's record. More than 1,100 viewers tuned in nationally to watch the event, which honored Marc Ganz, a principal at EY, Drew Williamson, a partner at Cooley LLP, and Hilco Global.