

CHILDREN: AN ELECTION ISSUE?

Children don't vote
But are they an election issue?

Here's some reasons why they should be:

- 2 in 5 citizens are under 18
 - 2 in 3 children live below the poverty line
 - 1 in 3 children have no running water at home
 - 2 in 5 children don't have proper toilets
 - 1 in 5 children have no electricity at home
 - 1 in 3 teens travel long distances to school
 - 2 in 5 schools don't have adequate sanitation
- (www.childrencount.ci.org.za)
- 4 in 5 children only develop basic literacy by Grade 5
 - 3 in 5 schools have no libraries

(The Progress in International Reading Literacy study 2006)

Piercing the Promises: Election Accountability Pack

1. How much would you spend on children, for what and what difference will this make?

What are the parties' specific plans around the spending of the ring-fenced local government infrastructure and urban housing, and transport grants announced in the budget to improve the lives of children specifically in terms of access to transport; improved roads; water and sanitation and other infrastructure spend?

2. Where will children appear in your 'integrated development plan'?

Each municipal area has to develop an integrated development plan – if you are elected what children's issues will you ensure are included in municipal integrated development plan.

3. What are your plans for safe supervised spaces for our children? It's a must for municipalities!

The Children's Act (Chapters 5,6 & 13) requires municipalities to provide safe partial care facilities for children, crèches, after care school care centres, as well as support for drop in centres and recreational facilities. How do you plan to make these available in your municipality?

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4. There's a budget especially for our youngest children – what have you in mind for ECD?

Each Municipality has a dedicated budget for ECD (Early Childhood Development). How and where will this be spent in our community as it is an Apex Priority?

(The Apex Priorities were announced by President Thabo Mbeki's State of the Nation Address on 8 February 2008. These priorities were to be incorporated into the Government Programme of Action)

5. What are you going to do for our poorest children? We want specifics!

What are the parties proposed pro-poor programme interventions to support vulnerable children and households at municipal level?

6. Safety is not child's play! How will you ensure our children play safely?

Children need safe places to play and for sport. How will you try to ensure that safe parks and sports fields are developed and maintained in your community?

7. Reaching MGDs locally – How to half poverty by 2015?

How does the party propose to contribute to reducing food insecurity and poverty as part of our countries commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goal target of halving poverty and reducing hunger by 2015?

8. How can you make local government count? Don't higher powers hold the purse strings?

How does your party plan to improve communication between local government and provincial and national government to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to provide service to children?

9. 100,000 children at risk because the system is failing them. What's your parties plan?

As of April 1st, 100,000 children who qualified for the foster care grant were dropped from the South Africa Social Security Agency (SASSA) System. As a result these children are unable to avail of these grants. What is your party doing to correct this?

10. Great legislation – but where's the money?

South Africa has some of the most progressive child centred laws in Africa, and indeed the world, including The Children's Act, the Child Justice Act and the Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act. However, legal commitments are useless without money to make them a reality. What are you going to do to lobby your party, and National government to ensure these legal obligations are realized in your municipality?

