



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES

## **VULNERABLE CHILDREN NEED ADEQUATE NUTRITION TO PREVENT DIMISHED HEALTH THAT CAN LEAD TO DISABILITY**

*Public schools should assess and take action to provide entitled school nutrition to the many eligible-non-participating children of poor health and disability.*

A forum was held by the Urban Institute on “Help Wanted: Mitigating the Recession’s Toll on People Most at Risk”. Presenters at the forum were staff from the Urban Institute, a labor economist, researchers on economic condition of the elderly and a disability advocate.

### **Summary**

Data indicates that 20% of children in America are of poor health and children and youth with disabilities disproportionately of poor health. One aspect of poor health of children and youth is inadequate nutrition, which is supposed to be addressed through federal entitlement programs of school lunches and breakfasts to children from low-income families. There is information that indicates that 30% of eligible children for school lunches are non-participants of the program, of which a disproportionate number are children with disabilities.

### **Disability Prevention Issue**

Inadequate nutrition of children of poor health and disability promote risks of diminished health that can lead to disability and secondary disabling conditions. One of the problems with implementation of school nutrition programs is that funds are provided through the Agriculture Department and programs are implemented through the public schools. There is need for collaboration between these two administrative entities.

### **Intervention**

A letter was written to a representative from a local school district requesting initiatives to assess and take action to provide entitled nutrition to the many eligible-non-participating children of poor health and disability.

### **Recommendation**

Vulnerable school children should be provided with adequate nutrition through federal child nutrition programs.