

New York Leads on the First 1,000 Days

Here is what the science says:

- Early life experiences affect lifelong health.
- Healthy brain development requires protection from toxic stress, not just enrichment.
- Achieving breakthrough outcomes for young children facing adversity requires supporting the adults who care for them to transform their own lives and strengthening the capacity of communities to support families raising children under difficult circumstances.
- We need more investment in effective interventions and connections across systems within communities, especially in the prenatal period and first 3 years after birth for the most disadvantaged children and families.

(adapted from presentation by Dr. Jack Shonkoff, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, at the at the Rockefeller Institute, March 2018)

The early years of life present a radical opportunity to reduce lifelong disease by mitigating the effects of early adversity. Keeping young children healthy and on track developmentally, can prevent future disease and other problems, and the costs associated with them.

Nearly 60% of children under three years of age in New York are covered by Medicaid. Many young children are not connected to other formal systems (child care, education, etc.), but data show that most young children do see a primary care doctor, especially when they are young, for recommended immunizations and well-child visits. These visits present a great opportunity to connect young children and families to resources to help them thrive.

New York State Medicaid is implementing big changes in how Medicaid works, focusing on improving outcomes and lowering costs. These initiatives have been focused on high-cost, high-need adults in an effort to save costs. But it is important that Medicaid and its resources focus on young children to drive long term outcomes.

In the summer of 2017, the then-Medicaid Director, Jason Helgeson, announced a new focus for Medicaid's transformation efforts: improving the health and well-being of low-income children ages birth to three, or roughly the first 1,000 days that a child is insured by Medicaid. The initiative was intended to identify new ways that the Medicaid program can set a foundation for lifelong health and reduce health inequities by focusing on social determinants of health, optimizing brain development for every child, and driving cross-sector systems improvements.

The result is a set of ten projects that were developed and selected through a robust, intensive stakeholder process that included practitioners spanning health, education, child welfare, and beyond.

Although this was a Medicaid driven effort, the Medicaid Director invited the State Education Commissioner and former State University of New York Chancellor to chair the initiative,

highlighting the critical nature of working across sectors for healthy child development. The workgroup included more than 200 participants from multiple sectors.

New York’s 2018-19 enacted budget included \$2.9 million (\$1.45 million State) in Medicaid funds toward the First 1,000 Days initiative in 2018-19, growing to \$11.6 million (\$5.8 million State) in 2019-20.

First 1,000 Days Executive Budget Proposal			
\$ in millions			
		FY 18-19	FY 19-20
1	Braided Funding for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultations		
2	Statewide Home Visiting	\$0.5	\$2.0
3	Preventive Pediatric Care Clinical Advisory Group		
4	Expand Centering Pregnancy	\$0.1	\$0.4
5	Promote Early Literacy through Local Strategies	\$0.1	\$0.2
6	Require Managed Care Plans to have a Kids Quality Agenda		
7	Developmental Inventory Upon Kindergarten Entry		
8	Pilot and Evaluate Peer Family Navigators in Multiple Settings	\$0.2	\$1.1
9	Parent/Caregiver Diagnosis as Eligibility Criteria for Dyadic Therapy	\$0.4	\$1.8
10	Data System Development for Cross-Sector Referrals	\$0.1	\$0.3
	TOTAL	\$1.4	\$5.8
<i>Implementation costs begin 1/1/19</i>			

This is just the start. It is important to ensure that the projects move forward, funds flow to the projects, results are analyzed, improvements made, and the seed investment grows. Investments we make **now** generate opportunity and outcomes that will bear fruit long into our collective future.

Additional detail is available at https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/first_1000.htm