



Empire State Campaign for Child Care

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Winning Beginning NY and Empire State Campaign for Child Care Statement in Response to the State of the State Address

Winning Beginning NY and the Empire State Campaign for Child Care are deeply disappointed that the Governor made no commitments to expand access to quality child care in today's State of the State address. The coalitions had recommended that New York commit to achieving universal access to quality, affordable child care by 2025, and make immediate, building block investments this year. Our disappointment is particularly sharp given the tremendous work undertaken by the Governor's Child Care Availability Task Force over the past year to address the state's significant child care availability shortage.

Make no mistake: New York is facing a child care crisis. The State's persistent lack of attention to this crisis is undermining the economic security of New York families; depriving low income children of quality early education opportunities; and destabilizing the largely women-owned and staffed child care industry. Investing in our child care system means investing in women, in women of color, and in our youngest New Yorkers. That's what a progressive state should do.

The cost of child care in New York is unaffordable for nearly all low- and middle-income families and fewer than 20% of low-income New York families eligible for child care subsidies are receiving them. Child care educator salaries are so low that many live in or near poverty (the average median wage is \$12.38 an hour or \$25,760 per year). Child care providers, unable to meet rising costs, are closing their doors in rising numbers.

To lay the groundwork for universal access, New York needs to take bold steps this year and invest at least \$40M to create a fund to increase workforce compensation and improve child care quality, as well as an investment of at least \$60 million to incrementally increase guaranteed eligibility levels and decrease family co-payments. New York children and families cannot wait another year.