The State of New York’s Children

DATA BOOK
JANUARY 2020

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

for Analysis and Advocacy
Shaping New York State public policy for people in need since 1872

www.scaany.org
**INTRODUCTION**

Since 1872, the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy has advanced policies that improve child health and well-being, enabled families to achieve economic security, and augmented quality early childhood opportunities so that all New York children have a fair opportunity to thrive. Among our strategies: elevate the concerns of children, of low-income and disenfranchised families. Hold government to account.

2020 marks our fourth State of New York Children event – an event we created to complement the Governor’s State of the State and draw specific attention to the status of the state’s children.

With the mid-year budget report showing New York State facing a substantial budget shortfall, releasing this year’s *State of New York Children Data Book* feels particularly important. It presents a chance to educate New York leaders about the many challenges threatening the well-being of the state’s children and families, and to call upon them to prioritize New York children and families – in good times and bad.

Perhaps the challenge that looms largest for New York children is the state’s persistently high rate of child poverty. For more than a decade, the percentage of New York children living in poverty has lingered at 20%. While New York boasts the 11th biggest economy in the world (just after Canada), our children are more likely to live in poverty than in 31 other states.

One of New York’s greatest strengths is our rich diversity. Our children reflect that strength: 36% reside in immigrant families; more than half are black or brown. Historical and ongoing racial discrimination in employment, housing, education, and other realms cause New York children of color to experience poverty and near poverty at nearly twice the rate of white children. At the same time, damaging federal policies that disproportionately impact immigrants and people of color, weaken civil rights and labor protections, diminish access to health care and nutrition supports, are making it even harder for hundreds and thousands of New York children and families to thrive.

The answer to New York’s most recent fiscal challenges cannot be to delay, or reduce, investments in children. The damaging impact of (continued) underinvestment in programs critical to child well-being, like early intervention services, high-quality child care and pre-K, innovative child welfare preventive and family strengthening services, and refundable tax credits, would follow our children – and haunt our state – for decades to come.

*Report has been updated February 12, 2020 to make a correction to the State Earned Income Tax Credit chart on page 5.*
One of New York’s greatest strengths is our rich diversity. Our children reflect that strength: 36% reside in immigrant families and more than half are black or brown.

NEW YORK STATE OVERVIEW

4,068,102
NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18, 2018

21%
PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN NYS POPULATION, 2018

1,140,442
NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5, 2018

36%
[1,500,000]
CHILDREN IN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES, 2017

CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN NYS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2018

- American Indian and Alaskan Native [<0.5%]
- Asian [8%]
- Black [15%]
- Hispanic or Latino [25%]
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander [<0.5%]
- White [48%]
- Two or More Race Groups [4%]
For more than ten years, New York’s child poverty rate has hovered at 20% despite a strong economy.

How poverty affects children:
- Poverty affects the social, emotional, and cognitive well-being of developing children and babies.
- Poverty creates and widens achievement gaps.
- Poverty increases the likelihood of child welfare involvement.

The younger the New York child, the more likely the child is to experience poverty, with babies experiencing poverty at the highest rate—at exactly the time in their development when they are most vulnerable to poverty’s impacts.

Children bear the brunt of extreme poverty.

- **9%** of children under 18 live below 50% of the Federal Poverty Level, 2018.

Immigrant children are as likely to live in poverty as children with native-born parents.

- **21%** [315,000] Children in immigrant families living below the poverty threshold in New York, 2017

Children in deep poverty are at greater risk for:
- poor academic achievement
- abuse and neglect
- behavioral & socioemotional problems
- physical health problems
- developmental delays

Children under 18 living in poverty, 2018

- **19%** [743,000]

Children 0 to 5 living in poverty, 2018

- **20%** [260,000]

Infants & toddlers living in poverty, 2019

- **23%**

4 in 10 [1,538,000], 2018

Children under 18 living below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level

- **Infant & toddler living in poverty, 2019**

- **20%** [743,000] [260,000] [209,000] [25,000]
Historical and ongoing racial discrimination in employment, housing, and education, among other realms, cause New York children of color to experience poverty, near poverty, and insecure parental employment, at approximately twice the rate of white children.

Children depend on their parents’ incomes for economic security. Regardless of education level, age, or occupation, women are paid less than men. When mothers are exploited at work, child poverty rises, particularly for the 35% of children who live in single-parent households.

Working mothers are paid $0.75 for every $1 paid to working fathers. That translates to a loss of $15,531 per year (2017). Black mothers earn $0.55 for every $1, for a loss of $33,855 annually (2017).
In many regions of New York, housing is unaffordable, causing thousands of babies and children to experience homelessness or to live in crowded or unstable housing.

State and federal income and food supports protect hundreds of thousands of New York children from some of the harshest impacts of poverty.

Children in families receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), cash public assistance income or SNAP [1,045,000], 2018

- **$135** Average monthly SNAP benefit per participant, 2019
- **$636** Average monthly SSI benefit per individual, 2019
- **$789 (NYC)** Average monthly TANF benefit for a family of three, 2019
  - **$259-447 (NYS)**

New York’s young adult poverty rate continues to be far higher than the poverty rate overall.

- **19%** Poverty among young NY adults
- **14%** NYS overall

New York’s refundable tax credits — among the most effective strategies for reducing poverty—exclude some of the very New Yorkers most likely to live in poverty.

**Empire State Child Credit, 2017**

- **1,418,452** Total number of families receiving credit
- **$443** Average claim amount
- **$0** Excluded: children under age 4

**State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), 2017**

- **1,548,212** Total number of EITC claims
- **$1,113** Average credit for family with 2 children
- **$0** Excluded: young childless adults 18 through 24
New York State leads the nation in income inequality.

Income inequality contributes to negative outcomes for children in lower-income families over and above those associated with poverty, including less equality of opportunity and sharp disparities in kindergarten readiness and the extent of the summer learning gap between children in lower-income families relative to higher income families.
New York is among the nation’s leaders in the percentage of children with insurance. But, in a disturbing new trend, coverage has eroded for New York’s youngest children.

All children in New York are eligible for health insurance; focused outreach can close enrollment gaps by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

Disease prevention and health promotion programs are designed to keep children healthy and enable families to increase control over their own health. Structural barriers keep children from getting preventive care or participating fully in healthy activities.
Often overlooked, oral and behavioral health are critical to healthy development, but it can be difficult for families to overcome financial and structural barriers to get their children care.

The groundbreaking Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study established a strong correlation between early childhood trauma and health, social-emotional, and well-being outcomes in adulthood.

Developmental screening looks for signs that a child’s development may be delayed and, if identified, connects the family to services. Identifying disorders early means a child can receive appropriate services to prevent falling behind and suffering long-term disadvantages.

The percentage of children aged 9 to 35 months who received developmental screening in the past 12 months, 2018:

- 2016-2017: NY 31.1% (US 33.5%)
- 2017-2018: NY 27.1% (US 33.5%)

The percentage of children 1-17 who have decayed teeth or cavities within the past 12 months, 2016:

- Medicaid: 11.7%
- Private: 5.7%
- Total: 8.4%

The percentage of children 1-17 who had both a medical and dental preventive care visit in the past 12 months, 2016:

- Medicaid: 74.7%
- Private: 81.0%
- Total: 77.6%

The New York State children and adults with one or more Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE), 2016:

- Children ages 0-5 experienced at least 1 ACE: 38.7%
- Children ages 0-17 experienced at least 1 ACE: 45.3%
- Adults experienced at least 1 ACE: 59.3%
- Adults experienced at least 4 or more ACES: 13.1%
Timely prenatal care reduces risks for mothers and infants. While the percentage of women receiving prenatal care early in pregnancy has increased, disparities persist.

Mothers of color in New York and their children experience unacceptably poor maternal and child health outcomes. Structural racism and other systematic barriers, such as income inequality, access to care, and higher rates of preventable and chronic health conditions contribute to these poor outcomes.

### Infant mortality by race and ethnicity (rate per 1,000), 2017

- Black or African American: 7.8
- Hispanic or Latino: 4.3
- Non-Hispanic White: 3.4
- Asian and Pacific Islander: 2.8

### Low birthweight births by race and ethnicity (<5.5 lbs.), 2016

- Black or African American: 12.2%
- Asian and Pacific Islander: 8.3%
- Hispanic or Latino: 7.7%
- Non-Hispanic White: 6.4%

### Births with early (1st trimester) prenatal care by race and ethnicity, 2016

- Black or African American: 64.5%
- Hispanic or Latino: 69.6%
- Asian and Pacific Islander: 76.7%
- Non-Hispanic White: 81.8%

### Percentage of women receiving early prenatal care by insurance type, 2016

- Medicaid: 72.9%
- Private Insurance: 89.8%
- Uninsured: 38.3%

**Premature babies are more likely to struggle with learning and physical, social, and emotional development.**

8.8% Percentage of preterm births (or <37 weeks gestation), 2016

Disparity in prenatal care by payer type is still evident.
By strengthening birth, kin, and foster families, New York can improve outcomes for children.

New York has reduced the number of children in foster care by 71% in 23 years, thanks in part, to substantial investment in preventive services. A similar level of investment in and attention to family-based services can improve health, safety, and well-being outcomes for children in foster care.

![Percentage reduction of children in foster care, 2018](chart)

Black children continue to be disproportionately represented in New York's foster care system.
Children experience better health, safety, and well-being outcomes when they are cared for by supportive families.

The Family Assessment Response (FAR) track can be a helpful resource for parents in need. FAR, a preventive approach, provides a solution-focused option for families to partner with CPS to keep their children safely at home.

Most CPS reports are unfounded, but the investigation process can be traumatizing for children and families.

While New York State places more children in need of foster care in residential settings, and fewer with kin and in family-based care than the national average, New York City does better than the national average on these measures.

Children in family-based foster care

- NYC, 2019: 33.5%
- Rest of state, 2019: 32%
- National average, 2017: 44.4%

Children in congregate care

- NYC, 2019: 12.9%
- Rest of state, 2019: 19.3%
- National average, 2017: 11%

Direct kinship placement, 2018*:
- Rest of state: 1,764
- NYC: 223

*Placement with relatives without financial support of foster care subsidies
Too few children in foster care in New York State are placed with kin even though children placed with kin do better. When children are placed with kin, they experience less trauma and are more likely to stay in their communities of origin and with siblings, resulting in better mental and behavioral health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement Type</th>
<th>New York State, 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congregate care</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster boarding homes</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved relative homes</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
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</tbody>
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KinGAP is an underused avenue to a permanent home with relatives or close family friends for children unable to return safely to their families of origin.

Children in foster care waiting for adoption by amount of time waiting, 2017

- Under 12 months: 4% (NY), 14% (National)
- 12 to 23 months: 16% (NY), 33% (National)
- 24 to 35 months: 22% (NY), 25% (National)
- 3 to 4 years: 31% (NY), 19% (National)
- 5 or more years: 26% (NY), 9% (National)

Sources: www.scaany.org/state-of-new-york-children/
High-quality early childhood experiences can improve school readiness and reduce inequalities, but due to underinvestment, many families cannot access them.

New York is home to many evidence-based home visiting programs, but many families are not able to participate due to lack of availability.

Home Visiting capacity in New York State, 2019

Children 0 to 5 living in poverty, 2018

20%
260,000

The high cost of child care creates economic hardship, pulls parents out of the workforce, and deprives children of access to quality early education experiences.

The average cost of child care in New York State exceeds rent and college tuition. Yet, fewer than 20% of families with income below 200% of poverty receive subsidies.

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Annual Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average monthly cost of child care center in NYS</td>
<td>(2018) $1,252</td>
<td>$15,028</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median monthly cost of rent and utilities in NYS</td>
<td>(2018) $1,240</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SUNY's monthly in-state tuition and student fees</td>
<td>(2019-20) $732</td>
<td>$8,780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Child care in New York is "unaffordable" for most families with young children according to federal guidance pegging affordability at no more than 10% of family income.

Even if a family can afford quality child care, it is difficult to find an opening in a licensed facility.

To afford the annual cost of center-based child care, a family with one child must earn a minimum of $150,000; a family with two children in care, close to $300,000.

64% New York State residents that live in a child care desert, 2018
A family’s eligibility for a child care subsidy and the family’s co-pay vary substantially from county to county. Variability in eligibility levels can cause a family to lose their child care subsidy if they move across county lines, throwing the family into financial turmoil.

Even if a low-income working family can access a child care subsidy, co-pays in some counties are so high many families cannot afford to accept the subsidy.

Child care providers face dire fiscal challenges trying to keep up with rising costs, but cannot ask parents to pay more.

Providers indicated their biggest challenge was providing competitive salaries and benefits.

27% of family child care providers and 17% of center child care providers surveyed reported running a deficit (2019).

At the current rate of investment, it would take decades to make pre-K truly universal. Multilingual learners, children with special needs, and homeless children are left behind despite being entitled by law to quality education.

Nearly 77,000 four-year-olds outside of NYC are still denied the opportunity to attend full-day pre-K.

Of the more than 94,600 four-year-olds in seats statewide, more than 73,000 are in NYC.

76% of four-year-olds outside NYC are still waiting for a full-day seat.

Sources: www.scaany.org/state-of-new-york-children/
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