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## **Child Welfare & Foster Care Coalition CHAMPS NY Responds To NY State Budget**

*Restorations To Crucial Child Welfare Programs Maintain Funding at Pre-Pandemic Funding Levels That Are Historically Insufficient*

*Key Supports for New York Children & Families Missing During COVID-19 Recovery*

**Albany, NY** -- In response to the final New York State FY2022 Budget, [CHAMPS NY](#), composed of child welfare advocates, service providers and parents from across New York State, released the following statement:

“We are thankful to the State Senate and Assembly for restoring Governor Cuomo’s proposed cuts to services that prevent entry into the child welfare system, the foster care block grant, and programs that support kin caregivers. At the same time, we must acknowledge that these restorations only prevent exacerbation of an already dire situation. Since state funding for child welfare services was already insufficient prior to the pandemic, bringing us back to pre-pandemic levels wholly falls short for thousands of families and children in need. As a result of COVID-19, more than four thousand New York children have tragically lost a parent or caregiver and roughly [325,000 children](#) have been pushed into poverty, New York leaders must prioritize their well-being in the year ahead.

“Additionally, state leaders neglected to pass legislation enacting the Office of the Foster Care Ombudsman, an effective and publicly accountable resource that would help the state address racial inequity and strengthen families who are under extraordinary stress due to the pandemic. The Office would help families and young people navigate foster care policy and practice, providing families with a level of support that is sorely needed during this crisis and beyond. While the budget for fiscal year 2022 avoids deep cuts, it is not a budget that delivers for kinship families and youth in or at-risk of entering foster care. We remain committed to working with our elected officials to institute the Office of the Foster Care Ombudsman and ensuring that federal dollars for child welfare are distributed quickly and efficiently so every child in foster care has the support they need and opportunity to find a permanent, loving home,” **said Paige Pierce, CEO for Families Together in NYS and Kate Breslin, President & CEO of the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy on behalf of CHAMPS-NY.**

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[CHAMPS-NY](#) is a statewide group of advocates and providers working to promote state policy and practice change that ensures that when children must enter foster care, they are placed into family-based settings whenever possible, and that their caregivers are supported so that children experience the best possible permanency and well-being outcomes.