The State of New York’s Children
A Data Briefing
January 18, 2023

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#StateofNYKids

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Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
Allowing children to live in poverty is a policy decision.
Child poverty in New York exceeds national average & disproportionately impacts Black & brown children

- Child poverty nationwide reached record lows in 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic relief: food, housing, expanded child tax credits; since these programs have ended, child poverty has increased
- Black and brown children continue to experience poverty at higher rates
- Poverty negatively impacts children's well-being, increasing family stress, homelessness, food insecurity, adverse health effects, and child welfare involvement
Children in Black, Hispanic/Latino, and multi-racial families experience poverty at much higher rates than non-Hispanic white children—results of longstanding racial inequities

- American Indian: 17% below poverty, 40% below 200% poverty
- Asian and Pacific Islander: 17% below poverty, 40% below 200% poverty
- Black or African American: 28% below poverty, 49% below 200% poverty
- Hispanic or Latino: 26% below poverty, 48% below 200% poverty
- Non-Hispanic White: 13% below poverty, 26% below 200% poverty
- Two or more races: 19% below poverty, 35% below 200% poverty

*Children under 18 in families experiencing poverty and below 200% of poverty (FPL), by race/ethnicity, NYS 2021*
The temporary expanded federal child tax credit, by itself, cut child poverty nationally by 43%

National Academy of Sciences report overwhelmingly concludes it is possible to cut child poverty and identifies evidence-based solutions

New York’s Child Poverty Reduction Act commits the State to cutting child poverty in half in the next decade
Robust, refundable tax credits are one proven strategy for reducing child poverty

- A child tax credit targeted to the lowest income, youngest children yields the greatest bang for the buck, but NYS’s child tax credit is flawed, leaving out 40% of the highest need children who would benefit the most.

- To most effectively cut child poverty, child tax credit should:
  - Include children of all ages; some make credits for young children larger
  - Provide a meaningful, impactful credit amount
  - Direct the maximum credit to the lowest income tax-filers
  - Be available to immigrant families & families in deep poverty
  - Be paid out monthly/quarterly to smooth income, help cover monthly expenses
Policy decisions matter for children experiencing poverty

- Assess public policy’s impacts on poverty over time
- Robust refundable tax credits
- Increase & index minimum wage
- Child care, health coverage, housing, family supports
True child welfare is achieved when New York’s children and families can easily access resources and supports of their choosing, provided by and for their community.
Child Welfare

In 2021, New York’s child welfare system:

- Received **145,684** reports
- Provided **75,088** children and **37,516** families with preventive services
- Had **14,358** children in foster care

At each step of the child welfare process, disparities exist.
Black children in NYS are over five times more likely to be in child welfare placement as white children; Hispanic children are twice as likely

New York Disparity Index: Rate of Black, Hispanic, Native American children in child welfare placement relative to comparable rate for white children, 2015, 2021
In 2021, New York began implementing Family First, a federal law.

Most children who are separated from their families and placed in the child welfare system are removed from their homes without receiving preventive services.

Preventive services status of children at time of admission to foster care, 2021

- Received preventive services: 61%
- Did not receive preventive services: 39%

Too often child welfare “Prevention Services” are provided too late or not at all.
Transform Child Welfare in New York

End Child Poverty

Improve transparency and accountability

Invest in affordable housing

Expand access to child care
High-quality, culturally-responsive, child care, pre-K, and afterschool strengthen families and communities.
Broad access to high-quality early childhood and afterschool programs matters

- Reduces economic and environmental stressors that can lead to child welfare involvement
- Cuts child poverty
- Boosts parents’ workforce participation, particularly women’s
- Improves academic achievement, health, social-emotional skills, future workforce engagement
- Improves business productivity
New York expanded access to child care assistance in 2022, making more than 265,000 children newly eligible.

New York’s recent increase in income eligibility for child care assistance stands to sharply reduce child care costs for tens of thousands of newly eligible families.

Cost of child care and afterschool are too high for most families to cover without assistance.

New York family with one infant and a 4-year-old in center (price $33,945) – family of 4, two adults earning $15/hr:

- child care expenses before August 2022 and after

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Another hurdle: inadequate child care capacity

| licensed Child Care Capacity in New York State by Modality: 2019 and 2021 |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|----------------------|
|                                 | 2019 | 2021 | Change in capacity (number) | Change in capacity (percentage) |
| Center-Based Child Care         | 313,951 | 314,327 | +376 | +0.1% |
| Family Child Care (include school age) | 26,340 | 22,081 | -4,259 | -16.2% |
| Group Family Child Care (include school age) | 123,034 | 114,323 | -8,711 | -7.1% |
| Center-Based School-Age Child Care | 327,578 | 325,290 | -2,288 | -0.7% |
| **Total**                       | 790,903 | 776,021 | **-14,881** | **-1.9%** |
Key to access and quality: a well-compensated, well-supported child care workforce

In New York State, the number of jobs in child-care services are still lower than pre-pandemic numbers, down by 5,400 in October 2022 compared to October 2019, an 8% decline from pre-pandemic levels. Nationally, in the same month, child-care services industry was down 64,800 workers, a 6% decline from pre-pandemic levels.
While NY is making improvements, families still face barriers to accessing child care assistance

- Long processing times
- Waitlists
- Frequent recertifications
- Assistance limited to exact hours of work
- County variations in programmatic eligibility
  - During unemployment (duration)
  - Parents with disabilities
  - Foster families; families experiencing homelessness (State of State proposes to require counties to prioritize statewide.)
Universal child care, afterschool and pre-K

- Raise workforce wages and benefits
- Keep breaking down access barriers
- Set subsidy levels based on the true cost of high-quality care
- Coordinated systems
Health: Complete state of physical, mental, and social-emotional well-being. Not just the absence of disease or infirmity.
Social determinants and pandemic recovery

- Children who experience poverty are at higher risk for adverse health and developmental outcomes through their life

- The pandemic brought additional adverse health and social determinants for children, with short-term and long-term implications
NYS child insurance rate better than US average

Percentage of children 0-18 without health insurance coverage by year, 2010-2021

- National
- NYS
Mental health critical to overall health

Many children unable to access services

Parents, especially mothers, not receiving diagnosis or services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Received Counseling or Treatment</th>
<th>Did Not Receive Counseling or Treatment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-11 years old</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-17 years old</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
<td>39.9%</td>
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Investment in child health lasts a lifetime

End Child Poverty

Invest in mental health services and workforce

Provide two-generation services

Provide robust coverage
Medicaid Matters

There are now over 7.7 million people enrolled in Medicaid in New York

Medicaid and Child Health Plus cover

43% of all kids and

78% of children whose families have low income
Kids should have continuous coverage, starting with children birth to age 6

- State enrollment systems would mark a child as enrolled until age six
- The burden of reenrolling a child in those early years would be lifted from parents
- Families could focus on keeping their children up to date on preventive services and care during critical years of growth and development
- Continuous enrollment throughout the federal public health emergency proves this can be done
Several states have received federal approval or have submitted applications for approval for continuous coverage for children.

- Oregon received approval in September 2022
  - According to the Oregon Health Authority, in 2019, the monthly average percentage of children ages 1-18 enrolled in Medicaid and CHIP who were disenrolled because they were over income is less than one percent.

Let's make New York next!
Strong Medicaid policy is part of the solution

End child poverty

Continue to remove barriers to coverage

Reach greater health equity

Emphasize the intent of the program
The policy and budget choices we make in 2023 will impact our children for a lifetime.