



2023 Policy Guide for Child and Family Well-Being Resources and Priorities

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

*Fighting for Policies that Strengthen New York's
Children and Families Since 1872*

Who We Are

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA) works to ensure that New York's policies benefit everyone, not just those with money or power. We are a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan policy analysis and advocacy organization. Our advocacy and data analysis shapes policies to improve health, welfare, and human services for all New Yorkers. We are especially focused on children and families impacted by poverty and inequity.

Founded by Louisa Lee Schuyler in 1872, Schuyler Center takes a data-driven approach to identify problems, generate solutions, and hold government accountable. We focus on evaluating public policies and their impacts and proposing improvements.

We Assess the Data.

At Schuyler Center, we believe that data tells a story about policies that work, and those that don't. We use that story to inform our positions on policies that impact New York's children and families.

We Advocate for Policies that Work for Children and Families.

SCAA is singular in our focus on advocating for children and families who have been underserved. We bring that perspective to policy priorities in health, child welfare, child care and reducing child poverty.

We are a Trusted Partner.

When NYS legislators consider bills related to child care, refundable tax credits (CTC, EITC), child health, poverty, child welfare, and family support, they turn to our policy team for analysis and expertise. And we are there with the data and insight they need, standing with and for New York's children and families.

Connect with Schuyler Center

Sign up for our email list at scaany.org/get-updates/. The *Schuyler Insider* newsletter typically goes out twice a month and includes updates on our policy priorities, budget analysis, publications, and events.

You can also find @SchuylerCenter on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Policy Priorities: Centering Child Well-Being in NYS

Schuyler Center advocates for the youngest New Yorkers, especially those impacted by poverty and inequitable systems. **Schuyler Center urges New York leaders to prioritize New Yorkers who are struggling to make ends meet, with a special focus on children and families, in its 2023 Legislative Session.**

Centering these New Yorkers is more important than ever given that low-income, Black, brown and immigrant New Yorkers, and families with children, continue to be among those hardest impacted by the COVID pandemic and its after-effects, and are struggling to meet the high costs of necessities due to rising inflation.

2023 Policy Goals

Schuyler Center's 2023-24 policy goals are below, and our full *Policy Priorities for Child and Family Well-Being* document is included in this packet, with detailed legislative steps for achieving each goal.

Goal 1. Move toward achieving New York's codified commitment of cutting child poverty by 50% in a decade, with attention to reducing racial inequities. Then finish the job and end child poverty in New York State.

Goal 2. Continue to make substantial, and concrete progress toward achieving high-quality, culturally-responsive, universal child care.

Goal 3. Transform the Child Welfare System by investing in family strengthening programs that prevent system-involvement: kin and family supports, and transparency and accountability of the system.

Goal 4. Strengthen investment in child and family health.

Schuyler Center Resources to Support Policymaking

Data, Publications, Reports, Testimony, and Analysis

Schuyler Center regularly publishes and contributes to reports related to public policy. Please visit www.scaany.org for the latest resources.

Each year, Schuyler Center publishes analysis of the NYS Executive Budget (**First Look**), One-House Budget Proposals (**Next Look**), and the final Enacted NYS Budget (**Last Look**).

Schuyler Center's policy staff regularly provides **testimony** at Senate and Assembly hearings on topics related to our work.

Every January, Schuyler Center publishes the **State of New York's Children Data Book**. This report is a snapshot of New York State's children, from demographics to poverty rates, from child care access to insurance coverage. This data guides our policy advocacy and focus and is presented during a data briefing in mid-January.

Schuyler Center's research, reports, analysis, and testimony can be found on our website and are easily searchable at scaany.org/resources/.

We Look Forward to Working Together for Child and Family Well-Being.

Our Policy Team is always available as a resource for policymakers and legislative staff. Contact information can be found on the following pages.

We encourage you to reach out with questions, and we are eager to discuss shared goals and priorities.

Enclosures:

- 2023-24 Policy Priorities for Child and Family Well-Being
- Analysis of Senate, Assembly, and Executive Child Care proposals (2022)

Meet Our Team of Policy Experts

Schuyler's Policy Team has decades of experience and deep expertise in public policy related to **child poverty, early care and education, public health, Medicaid, child and maternal health, health equity and access, child welfare, oral health, and systemic inequities that impact families.**

We are here to support policymaking through data, analysis, education, and background information.

Kate Breslin

is the **President & CEO** of the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. With Kate's leadership, Schuyler Center is building upon its long history as a strong, independent voice and coalition-builder that holds government accountable and helps shape public debates around social policies that affect New Yorkers. Kate has spent her career analyzing and advocating in support of thoughtful policy solutions that improve the lives of people in the U.S. and abroad.

Kate plays a leadership role in statewide policy initiatives and serves on several advisory bodies, including the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council, Value-Based Payment (VBP) Workgroup, and other health care financing and delivery oversight bodies. Kate also leads and coordinates coalitions of advocates, service providers, and community-based organizations advancing policy solutions.

Kate previously served as the Director of Policy for the Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS), where she directed public policy initiatives to improve access to high-quality primary care in underserved communities. Kate worked in county government in northern California; was a Project Director for the California Budget Project, analyzing state budget and tax policies; and has led and worked on relief and development programs in several African nations, including serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Sierra Leone. Kate earned Masters Degrees in both Public Health and City and Regional Planning from the University of California at Berkeley and a Bachelor of Science from Northwestern University.

Kate can be reached at kbreslin@scaany.org or by phone at (518) 463-1896, ext. 125.

Crystal Charles

is a **Senior Policy Analyst**. She conducts policy and data analysis, leads and participates in coalitions, and advocates on behalf of the Schuyler Center in the areas of **child welfare, child poverty, home visiting, and other related issues**.

Prior to joining Schuyler Center, Crystal was a Public Administration & Policy PhD student, Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant at the University at Albany. Her research focused on how collaboration between nonprofit organizations and government agencies, the internet, and social media can be employed as vehicles for social change, increased civic participation, and government transparency. Before coming to Albany, Crystal was a Tow Policy Advocacy Fellow at the Fortune Society.

Crystal holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in Humanities and Justice from John Jay College.

Crystal can be reached at ccharles@scaany.org or by phone at (518) 463-1896 ext. 130.

Dorothy (Dede) Hill

is the **Director of Policy** for the Schuyler Center. In this role, Dede coordinates the Schuyler Center's policy team and conducts policy analysis and advocacy in the area of **economic security as well as overseeing child welfare, child care, and health policy**. Dede is one of the founders and leaders of the Empire State Campaign for Child Care, New York's powerful statewide campaign for universal child care and is an appointee to New York's Child Care Advisory Task Force. Prior to joining the Schuyler Center, Dede was a Professor of Law at Albany Law School, where her teaching and scholarship focused on labor and employment law. While in academia, Dede was active in local and statewide efforts to aid working families by increasing the minimum wage and organizing for stricter enforcement of labor and immigration laws to prevent wage theft in low wage and immigrant worker sectors.

Dede previously practiced law as an Assistant Attorney General and Labor Counsel for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, an Assistant Solicitor General for the New York State Attorney General's Office, and as an associate for a New York City labor law firm. Dede earned a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin Law School, where she was a member of the Wisconsin Law Review, and a Bachelor of Arts from Vassar College.

Dede can be reached at dhill@scaany.org or by phone at (518) 463-1896, ext. 138.

Lara Kassel

is the Coordinator of **Medicaid Matters New York**, a statewide coalition of over 100 individuals and organizations representing the interests of New Yorkers served by the Medicaid program. In her role as Coordinator, Lara organizes all the activities of this diverse coalition, which works to ensure that Medicaid consumer interests are included, understood, and met in any and all discussions on Medicaid in New York. She was a member of the original Medicaid Redesign Team, and she served on the DSRIP Project Approval and Oversight Panel. Lara has been recognized by peer organizations for her role as a consumer advocate, including the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Association and Health Care for All New York. Prior to joining Medicaid Matters, she served as legislative staff to former Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard Gottfried for nearly seven years, working on a wide range of health issues.

Lara has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the State University of New York College at Geneseo, where she majored in Sociology.

Lara can be reached at lkassel@medicaidmattersny.org or by phone at (518) 463-1896, ext. 124.

Alea Simons

is a **Policy Analyst** for the Schuyler Center. She conducts policy research and analysis related to the New York State Budget and the issue areas of **Health, Medicaid, Early Childhood Development, Poverty and Economic Security**. Before joining the Schuyler Center, Alea was a Legislative Budget Analyst for the Ways and Means Committee at the New York State Assembly. In this role, she participated in negotiations for the New York State Budget and conducted fiscal and policy research and analysis for child care, child welfare services, public employee and labor relations, retirement systems, and collective bargaining agreements.

She also was a Senior Research Aide for the SUNY Research Foundation, where she conducted research for the 211 program and how to improve access and usage of the program. She previously interned for United Way of the Greater Capital Region and Vanderheyden, Inc., non-profit organizations that serve children and families.

Alea holds a Master's of Social Work from the University at Albany and a Bachelor's of Arts in History from Quinnipiac University. She can be reached at asimons@scaany.org.

Bridget Walsh

is a **Senior Policy Analyst for Health and Public Health**. She leads Schuyler Center's policy analysis and advocacy in the areas of **maternal and child health, oral health, early childhood health, nutrition, and health care access**. She represents the Schuyler Center on numerous boards both in and out of government, that advance health policy and improve access to health services. Bridget has been recognized nationally for her work in early childhood oral health.

Prior to joining Schuyler, Bridget served as staff on health policy issues in several positions in State government, including the New York State Assembly Majority Leader's Office and the Executive Chamber. She also held the titles of Legislative Director and Health Policy Director at several non-profit organizations.

Bridget earned a Masters in Public Health from the University at Albany and a Bachelor of Arts from Ithaca College where she majored in politics.

Bridget can be reached at bwalsh@scaany.org or by phone at (518) 463-1896, ext. 129.

Policy Priorities for Child and Family Well-Being

January 2023

The Schuyler Center urges New York leaders to **prioritize New Yorkers who are struggling to make ends meet, with a special focus on children and families -- this year.** Centering these New Yorkers is more important than ever given that low-income, Black, brown and immigrant New Yorkers, and families with children continue to be among those hardest impacted by the pandemic and its after-effects, and are struggling to meet the high costs of necessities due to rising inflation.

Goal 1. Move toward achieving codified commitment of cutting child poverty by 50% in a decade, with attention to reducing racial inequities. In 2023, New York leaders should:

1. **The Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council should immediately** identify and advance budget strategies to significantly cut child poverty this year and measure the Executive and Enacted Budgets with regard to their impact toward New York’s commitment to cut child poverty and reduce racial inequities.
2. **Strengthen New York’s child tax credit** by (a) securing a robust credit for children under age four (a group currently excluded altogether from New York’s credit); (b) restructuring the credit so the highest credit goes to the lowest income families – by ending state’s regressive minimum income requirement and phase-in; (c) increasing the credit amount to provide families meaningful support; and (d) ensuring the credit continues to be available to as many immigrant families as possible.

Goal 2. Continue to make substantial and concrete progress toward achieving high-quality, culturally-responsive, universal child care. Among the steps New York should take this year:

1. **Establish a Quality Child Care Workforce Compensation Program.** This wage enhancement program would offer significant and sustained wage supplements to all licensed and registered providers in New York State as an interim strategy while the NYS Child Care Availability Task Force develops a compensation scale and structure. (By way of example, in Washington D.C., the municipal government in 2022 directly paid eligible providers \$10,000–\$14,000 supplements; payments in subsequent years will be determined by a compensation scale based on education, experience, and responsibilities.) *Critically, the supplements would be paid to all providers; they would not be tied to children receiving subsidized care.*
2. **Continue to incrementally expand access to high-quality child care to more families, prioritizing low-income families; families from historically underserved communities, and families facing complex needs.** Among the concrete steps New York should take this year:
 - a. Create a state-financed Excluded Families Child Care Subsidies fund to provide child care subsidies to immigrant families whose children are barred from accessing federally-financed subsidies on the same terms as other families to help pull immigrant families into the economic mainstream so they can achieve self-sufficiency, help address the state’s workforce shortage, and grow our economy.
 - b. Adopt categorical child care assistance eligibility for families enrolled in other public assistance programs (SNAP, Medicaid, WIC, etc.) and for children with disabilities.

- c. Invest in and support child care programs that serve families during non-traditional hours and children with special needs by increasing the subsidy rate differential and/or provide a monthly per-child supplement for non-traditional hour care and care for children with special needs.
3. **Ensure the New York State Child Care Availability Task Force is convened** and acts quickly and boldly to develop and implement a plan for Universal Child Care in the state.

Goal 3. Transform the Child Welfare System by investing in family strengthening, prevention of system-involvement, reducing institutional placements, and transparency and accountability of the system. It is imperative that New York:

1. **Invest in community-based primary prevention services.** Primary prevention services address basic economic, health, housing, child care, education, and social needs, and do not require a family to be involved in the child welfare system to gain access. New York must create a new fund to strengthen and expand these community-focused services.
2. **Increase New York State's portion of funding for child welfare preventive services from 62% to 75%.** For the children and families already involved in the child welfare system, child welfare preventive services provide support to exit the child welfare system quickly, reunite, or live independently once youth reach the age of 21. One example is the **preventive child welfare housing subsidy.** This year, New York should increase the payment to better reflect the true cost of housing and **build-in ongoing automatic increases to the subsidy** tied to inflation and rising housing costs.
3. **Reduce the number of children in institutional placements,** including emergency placements, and expedite reunification.
4. **Collect, publicly report, analyze, and take action to address systemic complaints in the child welfare system.** New York State should take an intentional, methodical approach to supporting the needs and addressing concerns of children and families who become involved in the system.

Goal 4. Expand and increase investment in child and family health.

New York is recognizing the impacts and costs associated with our youth mental health crisis and a multi-year disinvestment in public health. In addition, evidence mounts about the importance of investing as early as possible in prevention and early intervention to mitigate future illness and cost. The State's pending Medicaid waiver, if approved, will bring new resources and opportunity to invest in children and youth and address inequity. This year, New York should:

1. **Implement continuous Medicaid coverage for children from birth through age six.**
2. Focus investment and payment on **family-oriented/two-generational care; mental health care/preventive mental health; and social determinants of health.**
3. **Improve access to maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting,** making it available to all families who would like to receive services and ensure health insurance covers it.
4. **Expand access to services and supports for young children with developmental delays and disabilities and reduce racial inequities** in service delivery in **Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education.**
5. **Strengthen and expand the mental health workforce** with new models of care, adequate reimbursement, and robust managed care expectations.
6. **Expand availability of oral health services** by expanding/improving the oral health workforce.

For more details on Schuyler Center's research, analysis, and policy priorities, visit www.scaany.org.



Child Care in the 2022-23 NYS Budget Proposals Key Aspects of the Executive, Senate and Assembly Proposals

	Executive – Total for 2022-23: \$1.185B	Senate – Total for 2022-23: \$2.4B	Assembly – Total for 2022-23: \$3B
Subsidy Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 225% FPL – Oct. 2022 • 265% FPL – April 2023 • 300% FPL – April 2024 *Cty option to expand 300% FPL Oct. 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300% FPL – Aug. 1, 2022 • 400% FPL – Aug. 1, 2023 • 500% FPL – Aug. 1, 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 260% FPL – Aug. 2022 • 325% FPL – April 2023 • 400% FPL – April 2024 *Cty option to expand to 400% FPL in 2022
Co-Pays	Maximum – 10% of income over FPL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below 300% FPL – free as of Aug. 1, 2022 • 300-400% FPL – no more than 10% of income over FPL beginning Aug. 1, 2023 • 400-500% FPL – no more than 10% of income over FPL beginning Aug. 1, 2024 	Maximum – 10% of income over FPL
Work/immigration status requirements	Retains current work/activity/ immigration requirements	None	Retains current work/activity/ immigration requirements
Age of eligible children	6 weeks through 12 (current eligibility)	5 years of age and under (approximately)	6 weeks through 12 (current eligibility)
Subsidy reimbursement rates	69 th percentile – FY 2022-23 (current rate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75th percentile of market rate – SFY 2022-23 • 85th percentile – SFY 2023-24 • 100th percent of the true cost of care – SFY 2024-25 and thereafter 	90 th percentile – SFY 2022-23
Workforce supports	\$75 million for continued stabilization funds to go to workforce compensation	\$3,000 per year, for two years to full-time workers beginning 60 days after enactment; paid out monthly. Other limitations apply	\$500M for continued stabilization funds; to access, providers must agree to maintain or increase wages
Subsidy funding	Approximately \$50M to expand subsidy access; \$125M to maintain reimbursement at 69 th percentile after new rates go into effect; \$75M for stabilization grants	\$2.2 billion: covers expanded subsidy eligibility; subsidy rate increase; workforce bonuses	Total cost of subsidy not entirely clear; \$370M for subsidy rate increase; \$500M for continued stabilization grants
Infrastructure		\$200M for infrastructure expansion	\$200M for infrastructure expansion