



Schuyler Center's *First Look* at the NYS 2023-24 Executive Budget as It Intersects with Our Policy Priorities

Schuyler Center's *First Look* is an initial assessment of New York State's 2023-24 proposed Executive Budget and how it advances priorities that improve the health and well-being of all New Yorkers, especially families impacted by poverty.

In 2022, New York State enacted the **Child Poverty Reduction Act**, committing the State to reducing child poverty by 50% in the coming decade with attention to racial equity. The law creates an expectation of public accounting for progress over time and assessment of budget actions with regard to their impacts on child poverty. We urge partners in and outside of government to systematically evaluate each and every budget decision as to its impact on child poverty and overall child and family well-being.

CHILD WELFARE AND YOUTH JUSTICE

Preventive, Protective, Independent Living, Adoption, and Aftercare Services

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes an appropriation of \$900 million for preventive, protective, independent living, adoption, and aftercare services, an increase of \$289.9 million from last year's Enacted Budget. This increase in appropriation authority will support additional claims for these services by counties. It also aligns with the Federal Fiscal Year. In prior years, New York's appropriations have been six months behind actual claims.

The **Executive Budget** proposes to continue reducing the State share of funding for preventive, protective, independent living, adoption and aftercare services from the 65% written in statute to 62%. Counties pay the balance.

The **Executive Budget** also maintains funding at \$12.1 million for Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) programs.

Background

New York State currently invests state dollars in services that aim to keep families together, minimize/expedite their involvement in the child welfare system, and support youth in state placements and the caregivers who support youth and families. This is paired with a county funding match (62% state/38% county). This open-ended funding has contributed to a significant reduction of children in foster care over the last 20 years through supports that include housing assistance, child care, clinical services, home visiting, transportation, job training, education, and emergency cash grants. Many of these services are not eligible for federal reimbursement, making it a crucial NYS budget issue. State-funded, open-ended child welfare Prevention Services funding sustains of a broad continuum of supports.

Although New York law sets the State's share at 65%, since 2008 the State has in each budget reduced the State's share to 62%, leaving 38% to be covered by counties. When this fund was established in 1980, the State share was set at 75%.

Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS) are intended to help families where placement is not imminent, but where youth and/or families have circumstances that put them at an elevated risk of foster care placement. They are open to all families and include education, school-based and "therapeutic" programs, and home visiting. Since the program was cut in 2008, COPS funding has been limited to counties that were funded as of 2008, covering less than half of the state. Programs like COPS help get families the resources they need independent of the child welfare system, ideally preventing families from coming into contact with the child welfare system.

Preventive Services Housing Subsidy

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** does **not** propose any update to the monthly housing assistance offered by child welfare Preventive Services.

Background

The child welfare Preventive Services housing subsidy is currently funded at 62% State share. First implemented in 1988, this service offers \$300 a month in housing assistance to families involved in the child welfare system and youth currently in the system who are aging out. The subsidy amount never been raised; 35 years after this rate was set, \$300 a month is wholly insufficient to stabilize the housing of youth or families in New York State, where median monthly gross residential rent is about \$1,400.

Human Services Workforce

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$8.5 million to support a 2.5% cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for certain State-funded human services programs. This increase within the Office of Children and Family Services applies to the Foster Care Block Grant, adoption subsidies, and supportive housing for transition-age and former foster youth.

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$2.3 million for supportive housing for youth who are transition-age or have experienced foster care, an increase of \$55,000 compared to last year's Enacted Budget, related to the proposed 2.5% COLA.

Background

The cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) is one-time, aimed to provide the immediate fiscal relief needed to prevent program reductions in human services. If no action is taken in next year's budget, the rates will revert back to 2021 rates. According to providers, a history of flat funding has been the primary driver of persistent staffing shortages, program reductions, and burdensome debt for human services providers.

Supportive housing, also referred to as NY/NY III, provides permanent supportive housing for young adults ages 18 to 25 who are at risk of homelessness and are in or have experienced foster care for more than one year after their 16th birthday.

Foster Care Block Grant

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes funding the Foster Care Block Grant at \$395.5 million, an increase of \$4.8 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget. This increase will support a 2.5% cost-of-living-adjustment for the workforce.

Background

Counties use their Foster Care Block Grant (FCBG) allocations to pay for foster care and the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP, subsidized guardianship). The State imposed a deep cut to the FCBG of \$62 million in 2017-18 that has never been restored. The State's reduction in the FCBG results in counties assuming a higher share of spending for their foster care systems.

Adoption Subsidy

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$229.5 million in the adoption subsidy program, an increase of \$3.6 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget. This increase will support a 2.5% cost-of-living-adjustment for the workforce.

The **Executive Budget** does not include any new State funds to cover a court-required increase in foster parent reimbursement rates, leaving those costs to be covered entirely by counties. The budget once again reduces the State share of adoption subsidies to 62% down from the statutorily-required 65%.

Background

Adoption subsidies are monthly maintenance payments for adoptive families that may be available based on the special needs of a child. These subsidies continue until the child is 21. The State has paid a reduced 62% share of these maintenance payments since it first reduced its share from 65% in 2008.

The terms of a lawsuit settled in 2021, filed by the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York, require a modernization of the adoption subsidies and foster parent reimbursement rates to better reflect the true, current costs associated with raising children. This rate update is now more than a decade overdue.

Post-Permanency Services

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$29.8 million, an increase of \$7 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget.

Background

Post-permanency services are available to families after an adoption or guardianship arrangement has been finalized. These services are intended to help support families in permanency and to meet the needs of children and youth who had been in foster care.

These services are mostly funded by savings from a higher federal share of adoption assistance, invested into post-permanency services and services to prevent children from entering foster care.

Kinship Navigator and Kinship Caregiver Services

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes to fund Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) at \$338,750. This would redirect funding that for many years has gone to local kinship caregiver programs. This is a significant reduction compared to last year's Enacted Budget's \$2.2 million, which included \$1.9 million added by the Assembly.

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$220,500 in funding for the statewide Kinship Navigator information and referral network. This is a significant cut compared to the last year's Enacted Budget's \$320,500, which included \$100,000 added by the Assembly.

Background

Regional PRCs support adoption and kinship families by providing services and connecting families to resources such as peer support, mentoring, navigation for cross-system needs, therapeutic services, counseling, or respite care. PRCs also work to avoid foster care or out-of-home placements.

Local kinship caregiver programs offer support and services for people who care for children that they have a preexisting positive relationship with outside of formal foster care. Kinship caregiver programs provide information about caregivers' rights, support to meet children's education and health care needs, and assistance with obtaining benefits.

The Kinship Navigator is a statewide resource and referral network for kinship families, providing information and connections to important resources.

Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP)

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes to continue funding KinGAP within the Foster Care Block Grant.

Background

KinGAP provides children and youth who are cared for by kinship foster parents a key permanency option. In many cases, caregivers need financial assistance so they can care for children. With the financial support KinGAP offers, kin caregivers can provide a more stable, permanent home for children. Funding KinGAP outside the Foster Care Block Grant would allow more kinship families to provide a permanent home to children.

Foster Care and Higher Education

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$7.9 million in funding for the Foster Youth College Success Initiative (FYCSI) to support youth in foster care who pursue higher education to graduation. This is a reduction compared to the \$8.2 million in last year's Enacted Budget, which included \$241,000 added by the Assembly.

Background

FYCSI was created in 2015 and supports costs for youth who have experienced foster care and are attending college, including tuition and fees, books, transportation, housing, advisement, tutoring, medical expenses, academic support and personal expenses.

Youth Justice

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** maintains funding at \$250 million for services and expenses related to raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction. Based upon language included in the statute, it is unlikely that New York City will be eligible to receive any of the funding.

Background

In 2017, New York State enacted legislation to raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction to end the State's practice of treating most 16 and 17-year-old youth as adults in the criminal justice system. The legislation moved misdemeanors to Family Court, and created a new Youth Part of the criminal court for felonies, with the presumption that non-violent felonies would be moved to Family Court, unless the district attorney files a motion within 30 days showing "extraordinary circumstances" that the case should remain in the Youth Part. Family Court judges now also preside over the Youth Part of the criminal court. As part of the legislation, youth are expected to be provided with rehabilitative services.

MINIMUM WAGE

Indexing the Minimum Wage

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes automatic increases to the state minimum wage indexed to inflation. Once every region of the state reaches \$15/hour, the minimum wage would increase each year based on the Consumer Price Index for the Northeast Region that particular year. The proposal sets caps on the increases if inflation is high and includes several conditions under which the increase would be paused or delayed.

Background

In 2016, New York State increased the minimum wage in increments, by region, up to \$15/hour with the purpose of ensuring workers earn a livable wage. In 2023 the minimum wage in New York City, Long Island, and Westchester County is \$15; the minimum wage in the

rest of the state is \$14.20. Due to rapid inflation, the benefits of the law have quickly eroded. The failure of the minimum wage to keep up with the rising cost of living contributes to today's inequality and heightened economic insecurity, especially for women and people of color. Women are more likely to have lower wages and women of color, single mothers, and women working part-time in underpaid jobs are at high risk of experiencing poverty, especially as costs rise.

REFUNDABLE TAX CREDITS

Child Tax Credit

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** does not continue last year's supplemental Empire State Child Credit payment, which was added by the legislature. The **Executive Budget** would revert the Empire State Child Credit structure back to 2021-22 Enacted Budget levels and continue to exclude children under age four and very low-income families.

Background

New York's Empire State Child Credit provides eligible taxpayers a credit equal to 33% of the federal child tax credit at the levels that existed prior to the passage of the 2018 federal tax overhaul, or \$100 per qualifying child, whichever is greater, for children ages four through 17. The 2020-21 Executive Budget contained a proposal to begin to fill in the omission of the youngest children by extending the credit to children under age four. This proposal applied to taxpayers with a state adjusted gross income of \$50,000 or less. The proposal did not make it into the final budget.

Income transfers to families—even modest ones—can improve outcomes for children in all areas of well-being, from health, to educational achievement, and future earnings. Young children—the very children excluded from New York's child tax credit—are more likely to live in poverty and more likely to suffer far-reaching negative consequences as a result of experiencing poverty.

Emerging national data tracking the impacts of the temporary expansion of the federal child tax credit in 2021 as a form of pandemic relief confirms how effective refundable tax credits can be in reducing child poverty and its many negative and lasting impacts, particularly if targeted to reach the poorest and youngest.

The 2022-23 Enacted State Budget included a one-time supplemental Empire State Child Credit payment for those receiving the State child tax credit for the 2021 tax year. The supplemental credit was an additional credit equal to 100% of the current credit for families with federal adjusted gross income less than \$10,000, incrementally scaling down to a supplemental equal to 25% of the current credit for families with federal adjusted gross income equal to or greater than \$50,000. Eligible families could receive this supplemental payment only if they filed a timely tax return and if the payment was at least \$25. Notably, children under age four were still excluded from this temporary expansion.

Earned Income Tax Credit

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** does not include last year's supplemental enhanced New York State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which was added by the legislature and paid a supplement equal to 25% of the current credit. The **Executive Budget** proposes to revert the EITC structure back to 2021-22 Enacted Budget levels, continuing to exclude adults ages 18 to 25 and tax-filers that use an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN).

Background

The EITC is one of the best ways to "make work pay" for low-income families and individuals, and research shows that children of EITC recipients are healthier and do better in school. The State's EITC provides eligible taxpayers a refundable credit equal to 30% of the federal EITC. Non-custodial parents are also eligible for a credit.

A number of groups that would benefit from the credit are completely excluded from the State EITC. Among them: young childless adults ages 18 to 25 at exactly the period in their lives when they are struggling to gain their footing in the workforce and are more likely to live in poverty. Also excluded are many immigrant tax-filers. Experts estimate there are 107,000 children in households that do not qualify for EITC financial support solely because a parent files taxes using an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN).

The 2022-23 Enacted State Budget included a supplemental enhanced New York State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), alongside the current earned income tax credit, for the 2021 tax year to eligible individuals and families. The enhanced credit paid a supplement equal to 25% of the current credit.

EARLY CHILDHOOD WELL-BEING

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** maintains funding for Nurse-Family Partnership at \$3 million. The **Executive Budget** also maintains funding for Healthy Families New York at \$26 million and continues \$11 million in supplemental funding for this program that was included in last year's Enacted Budget.

No funding has been proposed for other evidence-based home visiting programs.

The **Executive Budget** also maintains funding for the Universal Prenatal/ Postpartum Home Visiting program, which provides funding for the Maternal Infant Community Health Collaboratives (MICHC) sites around the state, at \$1.8 million.

Background

Maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting, a proven strategy for improving maternal and child outcomes, is available to less than five percent of families with young children in New York State and is entirely unavailable in some areas. A significantly higher investment is needed if New York aims to serve all communities with families in need and endeavors to ensure the best health and developmental outcomes for mothers, infants, and families.

Child Care

What's in the Executive Budget

Child care subsidies are the principal public support for families to meet the high costs of child care. The **Executive Budget** proposes to increase child care subsidy funding to \$1.03 billion. Those funds are derived from: (1) the State General Fund with an investment of \$451.1 million, representing a \$128 million increase from last year; (2) \$336.6 million drawn from federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funds;¹ and (3) \$244.4 million drawn from federal TANF funds.

The **Executive Budget** continues to report an extraordinary amount of reappropriated child care funds (funds not spent during the last budget year.) These funds derive from the \$2.4 billion in federal COVID-19 child care stimulus funds New York received from the CARES Act, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, along with unspent recurring federal CCDF funds ("rollover" funds). The 2023-24 Executive Budget continues to reappropriate this funding. Specifically, \$487 million of re-programmed funds are appropriated to supplement recurring subsidy funding to expand income eligibility for child care subsidies to 85% State Median Income (SMI), maintain the child care subsidy reimbursement rate at the 80th percentile of the market rate, and to limit family copayments to 1% of income over the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), continue 12-month eligibility for subsidies, and to cover costs for up to 80 absences per year per child. The budget also re-programs \$389 million from last year's budget for a third round of stabilization grants to be used for workforce retention activities, including payroll assistance, sign-on bonuses and other expenses to hire new employees. Also fully reappropriated from last year is the \$50 million in capital funding for infrastructure expansion.

The **Executive Budget** proposes a two-year refundable tax credit for employers to create or expand licensed child care programs to provide their employees with child care for 2023 and 2024. Employers can create up to 25 new slots and the credit amount will be based on the number of additional slots created for infants and toddlers ages 0-3. The Executive Budget provides \$25 million, to be reflected in FY 2025 and FY 2026.

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$4.8 million to create an Employer Supported Child Care Program where the state, employers and employees would each pay a third for employees' child care. This program would be established in three regions of the state, rural, suburban and urban, and serve families with incomes between 85% and 100% of State Median Income.

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$1 million to create a Business Navigator Program for all 10 Regional Economic Development Councils to assist businesses in identifying child care needs of their employees, hire new staff and develop a statewide child care guidebook for employers.

The **Executive Budget** provides \$1.7 million for the expansion, establishment, renovations, and operations of child care centers on CUNY Campuses, a decrease of \$8.6 million from last year’s Enacted Budget. This decrease is attributed to \$8.6 million reappropriated from last year’s budget for the expansion of SUNY/CUNY child care centers.

The **Executive Budget**, drawing upon federal CCDF funds, maintains funding at \$7 million for the Infant-Toddler Resource Network, which provides training and supports to providers serving the youngest New Yorkers, and \$5 million for QUALITYstarsNY, the State’s quality rating and improvement system.

	FY 2023 Enacted Budget	FY 2024 Executive Budget
Subsidy expansion	300% FPL and at or below 85% State Median Income beginning August 1, 2022 (no mention of duration)	85% State Median Income beginning October 1, 2023 (no mention of duration)
Co-pays	Limits family co-pays to 10% of income over FPL (no mention of duration)	Limits family co-pays to 1% of income over FPL (no mention of duration)
Work/immigration status requirements	Child must meet immigration requirements and families must engage in work or educational activities	No change
Age of eligible children	6 weeks through 12 years	No change
Payment for absences	Covers costs for up to 24 absences per year per child for SFY 2021 and 2022	Covers costs for up to 80 absences per year per child (no mention of duration)
Subsidy reimbursement rates	80 th percentile – Beginning June 1, 2022	No change
QualitystarsNY	\$5 million	No change
Stabilization grants	\$343M – reprogrammed funds available for “a second round of stabilization grants, at least 75 percent of which must be used for workforce initiatives.”	\$389M – reprogrammed funds available for “a third round of stabilization grants,” for workforce retention initiatives
Subsidy funding	\$894.6M (baseline) plus \$670M (re-programmed) to expand subsidy eligibility to 300% of FPL; increase subsidy rate to the 80 th percentile of the market rate; cap co-pays at 10% of income over FPL; continue 12-month eligibility for subsidies; cover 24 absences per child per year for SFY 2021 and 2022.	Approx. \$1.03B (baseline) plus \$487M (re-programmed) to expand subsidy eligibility to 85% SMI; maintain subsidy rate at the 80 th percentile of the market rate; cap co-pays at 1% of income over FPL; continue 12-month eligibility for subsidies; cover 80 absences per child per year
Infrastructure	\$50M for infrastructure expansion	No new funding. The \$50M from last year is fully reappropriated.

Background

High-quality child care is proven to strengthen families and improve child well-being in many ways. It enables parents to work, attain an education or training or take care of caregiving, health or other issues. It provides children with early learning opportunities and socialization. It provides parents respite from the demands of child rearing. Unfortunately, due to decades of underinvestment, quality child care is not accessible for many New York families due to high costs (average annual tuition for an infant in a child care center is more than \$16,000), lack of availability, and bureaucratic hurdles a family must overcome to gain access to assistance.

While New York achieved historic, foundational steps forward on the path to universal child care in the 2022 Legislative Session—including raising income eligibility from 200% to 300% of the federal poverty level—child care capacity is down nearly 2% from pre-pandemic numbers, a significant decline given that New York went into the pandemic with 64% of families living in child care “deserts”—communities with less than one spot for every three children. One reason for New York’s declining capacity is that the child care workforce remains significantly smaller than it was pre-pandemic, down by 8%. The workforce shortage—which is compounding a shortage that pre-dates the pandemic—is due largely to low wages. Child care educators—96% women, and majority of color—are paid on average \$34,000 a year, a wage that is so low they live in poverty at more than twice the rate of New York workers in general.² Ninety-seven percent of job categories identified by the Department of Labor paid higher wages than the child care sector.³

Pre-Kindergarten

What’s in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$1.2 billion for Universal Prekindergarten, an increase of \$125 million from last year’s Enacted Budget. Of the \$125 million, \$100 million will be used to fund new slots, based on the Selected Foundation Aid formula, for all school districts to serve a minimum of 90 percent of 4-year-olds and \$25 million to fund slots at \$10,000 per slot through a competitive grants process.

The **Executive Budget** includes language requiring school districts to submit an annual report to the State beginning in the 2023-24 school year that includes the following information: number of 4-year-old pre-K students each school district intends to serve in full-day and half-day slots, number of 4-year-old pre-K students the district intends to serve in full-day and half-day slots in community-based organizations, number of 4-year-old pre-K students whose family applied for a seat but the local school district lacked capacity, total number of 4-year-old pre-K students who are eligible for a pre-K slot in each school district, total number of 4-year-old pre-K students who are eligible for a pre-K slot in each school district but are either not enrolled in a pre-K program or enrolled in a private pre-K program, and any other information needed to address the unmet need for pre-K in a school district. The intent is to determine how many pre-K-eligible students are unserved.

Background

More than 75,000 4-year-olds, or 78%, outside New York City are still waiting to attend full-day pre-K.

Early Intervention

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** maintains funding at \$205 million for the Early Intervention Program and does not include a vital provider rate increase.

Background

Early Intervention provides therapeutic and support services to eligible infants and toddlers under the age of three who qualify due to disabilities or developmental delays. Access to timely services is critical, yet even before the pandemic, one in four children did not receive mandated Early Intervention services within the required timeframe, with the most significant delays experienced by Black children.

Afterschool

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$28 million for Advantage After School, \$5 million less than last year's Enacted Budget and moves funding from OTDA to OCFS. If funding is not restored in the final Enacted Budget, 2,500 to 5,000 children will lose their current Advantage After School programs. The **Executive Budget** maintains funding at \$58 million for the Empire State After School Program and also moves funding from SED to OCFS. These two programs were moved to OCFS as they will be combined into one program beginning Fiscal Year 2025.

Background

High-quality afterschool programs have been shown to help close the achievement gap for low-income children and enable families to achieve economic stability. High-quality afterschool programs also are known to support the social, emotional, cognitive and academic development of children, increase children's future earning potential, reduce crime, and provide a safe and nurturing environment for children to learn and grow.⁴

PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH COVERAGE, ACCESS AND CARE

Essential Plan Waiver

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes language to expand the Essential Plan program to cover individuals up to 250% of the federal poverty level and include the Essential Health Benefits, 12-month coverage postpartum, vision and dental coverage. It would not include coverage for people without immigration documentation. This proposal would be subject to New York

State securing federal approval through a waiver. The Executive Budget also delays the implementation of Medicaid coverage to immigrants 65 and older without immigration documentation as a part of the proposed waiver.

Background

New York launched the Essential Plan in 2016 as an affordable option for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. Implementation of an affordable coverage option for people who are undocumented is something advocates have been working toward for several years.

Access to Primary Care

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$8.7 million to establish Medicaid reimbursement for community health workers who provide services to children and adults with health-related social needs, subject to federal approval.

The **Executive Budget** proposes changes that would authorize Medicaid reimbursement for licensed mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, and social workers who provide services in clinics, including community health centers.

Background

Access to primary care services, including mental health care, is essential to the well-being of families. Community health workers connect families to health care and social service systems. Because they understand the communities they serve, they are able to facilitate access to services and improve the quality of services through their cultural competence. In addition, it has long been recognized that New York and the nation need to expand and strengthen the mental health workforce.

Increased Support for HealthySteps

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$7 million in additional funding for the HealthySteps program.

Background

HealthySteps is an evidence-based, team-based, pediatric primary care program that promotes the health, well-being, and school readiness of babies and toddlers, with an emphasis on families living in low-income communities. HealthySteps is one example of dyadic services, an approach that treats the parent/caregiver and child (dyad) together. In the context of primary care, it includes screening babies and toddlers for healthy development and adults for behavioral health concerns and stressors, including depression and substance use disorders. Also included are screenings and referrals for intimate partner violence, unstable housing, and food insecurity, as well as referrals to family planning, all of which impact the well-being of the whole family.

School-Based Mental Health

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$10 million to create additional school-based mental health clinics.

The **Executive Budget** also includes a provision that would require commercial insurance plans to reimburse for school-based mental health clinic services at negotiated rates or, if there is no negotiated rate, at no less than the Medicaid rate, regardless of network participation status. Insured individuals would be held harmless to their in-network cost-sharing.

Background

The pandemic has taken a tremendous toll on the mental health of children and caregivers and mental health needs often go unmet. More than 100,000 New York youth with major depression did not get treatment and an estimated 78,000 New York children have private insurance that does not cover mental or emotional problems. School settings are an important contact point for services.

Expanding the Mental Health Workforce

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** includes a proposal to create a new Qualified Mental Health Associate credential. This will help expand the State's mental health workforce by developing credentials for paraprofessionals, creating a career trajectory for non-clinicians working in the mental health field. The **Executive Budget** also includes \$700,000 for its first year of implementation.

Background

There is a tremendous need for staff throughout the mental health field, including children's services.

Local Public Health Funding

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$230 million for Local Public Health Funding, an increase of \$41 million from last year's Enacted Budget. This includes an increase in the base grant and the addition of fringe costs as an eligible expense. The **Executive Budget** maintains the formula for local public health department funding.

Background

Local public health departments are an essential part of the infrastructure in protecting the health of communities—including preparing and responding to infectious diseases such as COVID-19. Public health programs maintain the health of populations and provide important services, such as preventing and tracking disease outbreaks, preventing injuries, and shedding light on why some of us are more likely to suffer from poor health than others.

Transfer of Oversight of Health Professions

What's in the Executive Budget

The Executive Budget proposes to transfer oversight authority for licensed health professions from the State Education Department to the Department of Health.

Background

Authority for the licensing of health professionals and for statutes governing scope of practice reside at the State Education Department. This change would shift oversight to the Department of Health for all health professions.

Assisting Consumers with Health Insurance

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** maintains funding at \$2.5 million for the Community Health Advocates program. The Executive Budget also proposes a small COLA increase for the Patient Navigator program, bringing that program to \$27.8 million.

Background

These important programs help consumers enroll in and use health insurance available on the New York State of Health, the insurance exchange. The end of the national public health emergency in May means that eligibility for all children and adults enrolled in Medicaid and Child Health Plus will need to be redetermined. This could create a disruption of care for children and adults who are deemed ineligible for one program and must move to another program. A robust assistance system is necessary to help consumers with reenrolling in programs.

Adult Homes

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** maintains funding for the Enhanced Quality of Adult Living (EQUAL) Program at \$6.5 million. The grants made available through the program support independent skills training, mental hygiene staff trainings and capital improvement projects.

Background

Adult home residents are low-income adults, many of whom struggle with mental and other health concerns that can make it difficult for them to live on their own without supports, leaving these home residents particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect. EQUAL enables adult home residents to identify specific needs, such as clothing, coats, air conditioners for resident rooms, better food, and other items. Core to the EQUAL funding is a requirement that adult home residents have a voice in how adult home operators spend these funds.

SCAA Priorities Not Included in the Budget:

- Expansion of the Empire State Child Credit to include young children and very low-income families and a meaningful credit amount.
- Housing assistance for young people aging out of foster care.
- Continuous health coverage for young children to age six.
- Expanded school health services through a Medicaid waiver.
- Funding for the Center for Health Workforce Studies to launch the health professions data law.
- School meals for all children in the state.

About the budget process

The Governor's Executive Budget proposal was released on Wednesday, February 1, 2023.

What happens next?

- ✓ The State constitution allows the Governor to submit revisions to the budget within 30 days of submitting the budget to the legislature (referred to as 30-day amendments).
- ✓ The Senate and Assembly hold a series of joint legislative hearings on the Governor's proposed budget.
- ✓ In early to mid-March, each house of the legislature presents and passes its own version of the budget, accepting, rejecting, or amending items in the Governor's proposed budget.
- ✓ An agreement on the final budget should be reached by April 1st, when the new state fiscal year will begin.

Budget legislation includes:

Appropriations bills: These contain the line-item appropriations. The legislature may not alter appropriations bills except to reduce or strike-out appropriations, or can add distinct, separate items ("legislative adds"). The Governor can line-item veto legislative additions (but not reduce or eliminate the provisions that the legislature did not alter).

Article VII bills: These include statutory provisions necessary to implement the budget as proposed. These bills are treated like any other legislation, and they are either be accepted, amended or intentionally omitted by both the Governor and Legislature.

¹ This is an estimate we have deduced from various budget documents. The exact budget line is found in Aid to Localities, 2023-24, p. 296, appropriating “up to \$550,000,000 of the state block grant for child care.” The actual appropriation is not explicitly stated in the budget bill.

² Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. The State of New York’s Children. Data Book: January 2023. [SONYC-2023-Data-Book.pdf \(scaany.org\)](#)

³ The Children’s Agenda, [Fixing New York’s Broken Child Care Market](#), December 2022.

⁴ Youth.gov. Benefits for Youth, Families, and Communities. <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/afterschool-programs/benefits-youth-families-and-communities#:~:text=Afterschool%20programs%20can%20support%20social,environment%20for%20children%20and%20youth.>