



## Schuyler Center's *First Look* at the NYS 2024-25 Executive Budget as It Intersects with Our Policy Priorities

Schuyler Center's *First Look* is an initial assessment of New York State's 2024-25 proposed Executive Budget and how it advances priorities that improve the health and well-being of all New Yorkers, especially those living in poverty.

In 2021, 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. In the third year since enactment, and with the work of the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council well under way, all of us, in and outside of government, must systematically evaluate each and every budget decision as to its impact on child poverty and overall child and family well-being. We must act with intention to ensure each of those decisions is moving us closer to a New York where no child experiences poverty.

### CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

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

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##### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes an appropriation (spending authority) of \$900 million for preventive, protective, independent living, adoption, and aftercare services. This is level funding compared to last year's Enacted Budget.

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

##### ***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 New York State budget issue. State-funded, open-ended child welfare Preventive Services funding sustains a broad continuum of supports. In last year's budget, the appropriation was increased by \$290 million to support increased claims for these services by counties.

Although New York law sets the State's share at 65%, the State has in each budget since 2008 (including this one) reduced the State's share to 62%, leaving 38% to be covered by counties, many of which are under-resourced. When this fund was established in 1980, the State's share was set at 75%.

## Preventive Services Housing Subsidy

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### **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, as described above. This service allows counties to offer up to \$725 a month in housing assistance to families involved in the child welfare system and youth currently in the system who are aging out. The monthly amount was raised for the first time in last year's budget, but was not indexed to inflation to ensure the subsidy keeps pace with rising costs. Before the increase, the subsidy had been \$300 a month since 1988. The subsidy is available to young people age 18-21 who have exited foster care into independent living who need help in that transition. It is not available to young people after the age of 21, and therefore not available to assist with the transition to independent living for those who age out at age 21.

## Human Services Workforce

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The **Executive Budget** proposes funding a 1.5% cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for certain State-funded human services programs, totaling about \$8 million in funding to support workers providing programs/services described below. For the Office of Children and Family Services, the COLA applies to:

- The Foster Care Block Grant: proposed funding at \$401.3 million, an increase of \$5.8 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget;
- The adoption subsidy: proposed funding at \$233.8 million, an increase of \$2.2 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget; and
- Supportive housing for transition-age and former foster youth: proposed funding at \$2.4 million, an increase of \$33,000 compared to last year's Enacted Budget.

### **Background**

The cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) is one-time and not permanent, aimed to provide 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 before the proposed COLA. 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.

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 subsidies are monthly maintenance payments for adoptive families that may be available based on the 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 decade-plus overdue increase of the adoption subsidies and foster parent reimbursement rates to better reflect the true, current costs associated with raising children. The State has increased funding for the increase in adoption subsidies but has not increased funding for the increase in foster parent reimbursement rates, leaving it to counties to pay 100% of the increase in foster parent reimbursement rates.

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 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Kinship Navigator and Kinship Caregiver Support Services

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes to fund Permanency Resource Centers (PRCs) at \$338,750, level funding compared to last year's Enacted Budget.

The Executive Budget does **not** propose to fund local kinship caregiver support programs. This amounts to a significant cut compared to last year's Enacted Budget's \$1.9 million, which was added by the Assembly.

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

### ***Background***

Regional PRCs support adoptive 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. For the first time, last year's enacted budget redirected some funding to PRCs that for many years had gone to local kinship caregiver programs. This practice is continued in this year's Executive Budget.

Local kinship caregiver programs offer support and services for people who care for children with whom they have a preexisting positive relationship, 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.

## Foster Care and Higher Education

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### ***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 who are or were in foster care to pursue higher education to graduation. This is a cut compared to last year's Enacted Budget's \$8.2 million, which included \$241,000 added by the Assembly.

### ***Background***

FYCSI was created in 2015 and supports young people who have experienced foster care and are attending college, including by covering costs such as tuition and fees, books, transportation, housing, medical and personal expenses. FYCSI also supports young people with advisement and tutoring.

## CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION & AFFORDABILITY FOR FAMILIES

## Child Tax Credit

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** contains **no** proposals to expand the Empire State Child Credit (ESCC), eliminate the income phase-in, or otherwise strengthen this credit.

### ***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 17 and younger. The 2023-24 Enacted Budget corrected a long-standing error that had previously excluded the youngest children, under age four, from receiving the credit.

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. Tax credits that are structured to be fully refundable and direct the largest credits to the lowest income tax-filers, and are available to those who file taxes with Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITINs), have greater poverty-reduction impacts. 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 broadly inclusive, and targeted to reach the poorest and youngest.

## Earned Income Tax Credit

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes no changes to the current EITC structure, continuing to exclude childless adults ages 18 to 25, and tax-filers that use an 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, and some tax-paying immigrant New Yorkers who file using an ITIN.

## Addressing Child Poverty in Upstate Communities

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** contains a proposal to direct \$50 million in unspent TANF funding to “services, assistance and/or supports” for families with children living below the federal poverty level in Rochester, Syracuse, and Buffalo. This one-time funding would be allocated as follows: \$25 million for Rochester, \$12.25 million for Buffalo, and \$12.25 million for Syracuse, with local social services districts submitting a plan for use of the funds.

The Budget proposal specifically notes that assistance received through this initiative “shall not be considered income or resources for purposes of eligibility for public benefits or other public assistance.”

### ***Background***

In 2021, the New York State Legislature passed, and Governor Hochul signed into law, the Child Poverty Reduction Act. The Act committed the State to reducing child poverty by half over the following decade and established the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC), which is tasked with monitoring the State’s progress and making policy recommendations to move the state toward its goal.

Child poverty in New York State exceeds the national rate, as it has for more than a decade. In 2022, approximately 734,756 New York children, over 18%, experienced poverty, as measured by the Federal Poverty Level. The rate of child poverty is significantly higher among children of color and is concentrated in some communities due to longstanding systemic inequities based on race and other factors. CPRAC, now entering its second year as an advisory council, has recognized that progress toward a statewide reduction in child poverty requires sustained and systemic approaches that uplift children and families in all New York communities—rural, urban, and suburban.

## Paid Medical Leave

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** contains a proposal to expand Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) to more adequately cover paid sick or medical leave for working New Yorkers. Under the proposal, TDI would increase from its current level of \$170 per week to 67% of an employee's average weekly wage (not exceeding 67% of the state average weekly wage). The proposal also includes job protection, protection against retaliation, and health insurance continuation.

### ***Background***

Paid medical leave is critical to the health and well-being of New York families. Working New Yorkers need to be able to take time off during illness, or for medical reasons, without worrying about lost wages or job loss. Under the current State-administered programs, workers can receive better paid time off to care for a sick family member than they can to recover from their own illness.

## Healthy School Meals for All

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes sustained funding for last year's partial expansion of free school meals but does not include new funding to establish universal free school meals statewide.

### ***Background***

Healthy School Meals for All is a proven strategy that reduces food insecurity and helps lift families out of poverty. In the FY 2024 State Budget, lawmakers took a critical step in this direction, investing in the expansion of an existing federal provision—the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)—that allows high-poverty schools to provide free meals at no cost to all students. However, CEP does not reach all children. CEP eligibility is tied to participation in means-tested programs such as SNAP and Medicaid, presenting barriers for many families, including immigrant families. Schools in rural and suburban communities and areas with stark economic inequalities also struggle to qualify for CEP. Providing universal free school meals is the best way to ensure equitable access without stigma for all students.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND WELL-BEING

### Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting

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#### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes an allocation of \$3 million for Nurse-Family Partnership, in line with the 2023-24 Executive Budget. The allocation for Healthy Families NY is also maintained at \$26 million, as well as supplemental funding of \$11 million for a total of \$37 million. No additional funding is included for other evidence-based programs.

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

### **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 to serve all communities with families in need and ensure the best health and developmental outcomes for mothers, infants, and families.

## **Child Care**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

For child care assistance (subsidies)—the principal public support for helping families meet the high costs of quality child care—the **Executive Budget** proposes appropriating \$2.023 billion, with the actual cash amount announced in the Executive Budget Briefing Book to be **nearly \$1.8 billion**. Specifically, the Executive Budget allocates (1) \$995.6 million from the State General Fund (\$863 million cash amount according to the Executive Budget Financial Plan); (2) \$550 million from federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funds (cash amount to be determined); and (3) \$477.2 million from federal TANF funds (cash amount to be determined).

The **Executive Budget** allocates \$5 million for QUALITYstarsNY, the State's quality rating and improvement system—level with last year. The **Executive Budget Briefing Book** states that the Executive Budget also creates an increased differential payment rate for high-quality accredited providers and/or providers that have completed OCFS Non-Patient Epinephrine Auto-Injector Initiative training.

The **Executive Budget** allocates \$5 million to support a pilot of staffed Family Child Care Networks in regions around the state, focused on supporting and growing the capacity of family and group family child care providers.

The **Executive Budget** allocates \$9.7 million drawing upon federal CCDF funds, for the Infant-Toddler Resource Network, which provides critical training and supports to providers serving our youngest New Yorkers. This allocation is up from \$7 million in last year's budget. The **Executive Budget Briefing Book** indicates the increased cash value is \$1.7 million.

	FY 2024 Enacted Budget	FY 2025 Executive Budget
<b>Child care assistance (subsidy)</b>	Approx. \$1.42B	Nearly \$1.8B
<b>Child care assistance expansion</b>	Income eligibility ceiling raised to 85% of State Median Income (SMI) beginning October 1, 2023	No change
<b>Co-pays</b>	Limits family co-pays to 1% of income over FPL beginning October 1, 2023	No change
<b>Work/immigration status requirements</b>	Small pilot program through Facilitated Enrollment will expand access to children regardless of immigration status and episodic workers	No new funding proposed
<b>Payment for absences</b>	Covers costs for up to 80 absences per year per child beginning October 1, 2023	No change
<b>Subsidy reimbursement rates</b>	80th percentile of the market rate; legally exempt providers receive 65% of the family child care rate	No change
<b>Stabilization / workforce retention grants</b>	\$500M - reprogrammed funds allocated for “a third round of stabilization grants for workforce retention initiatives”	No new funding proposed; Executive Budget Briefing Book indicates that reprogrammed funds remaining from the third round of stabilization will be distributed as another round of grants for workforce retention
<b>Employer child care tax credit</b>	\$25 million, to be reflected in FY 2025 and FY 2026 creating 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.	No new funding
<b>Infrastructure</b>	\$50 million in capital funds to be distributed in grants of no less than \$50,000 each by a joint process created by the dormitory authority and OCFS capital costs	No new funding. The \$50M from last year is fully reappropriated.

### **Background**

Due to historic expansions in child care assistance since July 2022, child care is financially within reach for the first time for many New York families. Yet, many families are unable to use the assistance because they cannot find a child care program that meets their needs with capacity to care for their child due in large part to a child care workforce shortage caused by low wages. [Child care educators](#), with an average annual salary of \$35,000, earn less than 96% of occupations in New York State. A [March 2023 survey](#) of child care providers found that staffing shortages greatly diminished programs’ ability to operate at full licensed capacity, with 28,462 licensed or registered slots empty statewide from 1,600 respondents due to



insufficient staffing from uncompetitive wages. Other families still struggle to qualify for child care assistance due to inequitable rules that make access difficult for some immigrant families and families where parents work in the gig economy or non-traditional hours.

## Pre-Kindergarten

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes to maintain similar levels of funding as the 2023-2024 school year, allocating \$1.177 billion for Universal Pre-Kindergarten, including \$100 million drawn from last year's Enacted Budget. The \$100 million will be available for districts to expand their pre-kindergarten programs from a prior year.

The **Executive Budget** includes language requiring the Commissioner of Education to provide school districts with instructional best practices for the teaching of evidence-based and scientifically based reading that is aligned with culturally-responsive-sustaining framework, for pre-kindergarten through grade three.

### ***Background***

In 2013, then-Governor Cuomo promised full-day pre-K for all 4-year-olds. Yet, tens of thousands of 4-year-olds outside of New York City—more than 50%—are still waiting to attend full-day pre-K. New York has continued a slow but steady expansion of pre-K outside of New York City, with new investments in the prior two school years: \$125 million in the 2022-2023 school year and \$150 million in the 2023-2024 school year.

## Early Intervention

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes an allocation of \$205 million for the Early Intervention (EI) program, level funding from last year's Enacted Budget. The **Executive Budget** also allocates \$13.9 million to support a 5% Early Intervention rate increase and a 4% rate modifier targeted to support rural and underserved areas.

### ***Background***

EI 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 one in four children do not receive mandated EI services within the required time. Racial disparities have widened. The long-overdue rate increase and modifier may not be enough to stem the loss of providers, but a positive step.

## Afterschool Programs

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** combines funding for Advantage After School and Empire State After-School into a single program with a total of \$100,755,000. This is an increase of \$12,755,000 over last year's Enacted Budget. The proposal makes funding available to extend or expand current contracts, to award new contracts, and for technical assistance.

## **Background**

High-quality after school programs have been shown to help close the achievement gap for low-income children and enable families to achieve economic stability. The 2023-24 **Executive Budget** had proposed to combine both after school program (Advantage After School and Empire State After-School) into one program beginning Fiscal Year 2025.

## **Community Schools**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The **Executive Budget** proposes level funding for community schools at \$250 million. These funds are a set-aside within Foundation Aid. In addition, the Executive continues \$1.2 million in funding for Community Schools Regional Technical Assistance Centers.

### **Background**

Community Schools are public schools that emphasize family engagement, community partnerships, and connecting students and families to community-based resources.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH, HEALTH COVERAGE, ACCESS AND CARE**

## **Continuous Public Coverage for Children Up to Age 6**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The **Executive Budget** includes continuous Medicaid and Child Health Plus coverage for children from birth to age six at a cost of \$7.6 million in the budget year, growing to \$30.3 million in SFY 2025-26. To implement this provision, New York will seek authority from the federal government.

### **Background**

Data has shown children who churn in and out of public health insurance coverage almost always lose coverage due to administrative barriers, like burdensome paperwork. Other states have been approved or applied to the federal government to keep children enrolled in Medicaid and the child health insurance program until they reach age six. Having stable health insurance coverage helps ensure young children have comprehensive, affordable care. Access to health care in the earliest years also helps identify developmental delays that are best addressed as early in a child's life as possible. This all contributes to better outcomes outside children's health, including kindergarten readiness and success in later years.

## **Oral Health**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The **Executive Budget** contains several provisions designed to increase access to dental care. Additional funding of \$1.5 million is allocated to school-based health for dental services. Also proposed is an increase in funding for dental services in the American Indian Health Program. The **Executive Budget** also contains language to expand the scope of practice for dental

hygienists that would increase their ability to perform certain procedures and expand settings where they can practice with a cooperative agreement with a dentist.

### **Background**

Dental caries remains the most common chronic disease of childhood and the highest unmet health need of children. Oral health problems disproportionately impact young children, uninsured children, children living in poverty, non-Hispanic Black children, children from non-English-speaking households including immigrants and refugees, and children with special health care needs—all of whom are less likely to receive needed preventive oral health care. These disparities relate to many of the same social and economic factors that drive other health disparities. Access to medical and dental care, along with factors such as poverty, racism, education, access to healthy foods, culture, and physical environment, influence oral health status in the same way these factors influence overall health.

## **Adverse Childhood Experiences Screening for Adults**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The **Executive Budget** includes \$1 million to expand coverage for Adverse Childhood Experiences Screening to all adults enrolled in Medicaid.

### **Background**

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can impact health and well-being into adulthood. ACEs may include physical or emotional abuse or neglect, a family member's mental illness, substance abuse, incarceration of a relative, domestic violence, or divorce. Nearly 64% of adults report experiencing at least one ACE before they turned 18, and nearly 1 in 6 reported experiencing four or more ACEs. Studies have shown a significant correlation between adversity experienced in childhood and negative effects on health and well-being well into adulthood, including increased risk of cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and substance abuse, as well as reduced educational attainment and employment. However, ACEs are preventable and can be mitigated through Protective Factors, including concrete supports and social connections.

## **Maternal Mental Health**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The **Executive Budget** proposes an appropriation of \$1.5 million to expand Project TEACH (Training and Education for the Advancement of Children's Health) to provide specialized support for mental health and substance use treatment for individuals during pregnancy and postpartum. The funding will enhance provider education, consultation, and awareness of mental health and substance use resources for: therapists; lactation consultants; Women, Infant and Children (WIC) staff; home visiting nurses; and other frontline practitioners working directly with the perinatal population.

## **Background**

Parental mental health is a serious condition that affects 1 in 5 women in the United States. A woman's mental health can be affected at any stage of the pregnancy and up to at least one year after. One in five women are affected by anxiety, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder and substance abuse disorder and other maternal mental health conditions during pregnancy or the year following pregnancy. These illnesses are the most common complication of pregnancy and childbirth.

## **Children's Mental Health**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The **Executive Budget** provides \$4 million for the Office of Mental Health to support recruitment and retention of licensed mental health clinicians serving children and families in Office of Mental Health and Office of Children and Family Services licensed settings.

The **Executive Budget Medicaid Scorecard**, produced by the Department of Health, allocates \$7.6 million to increase rates for children's mental health provided in integrated settings. It also allocates \$4 million for new community-based mental health teams and \$4 million to establish new Youth Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams statewide.

### **Background**

Mental health challenges are the leading cause of disability and poor life outcomes in young people. Recent years have brought a significant increase in certain mental health disorders among youth, including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Mental health needs often go unmet due to the lack of access to providers.

## **Data-Matching to Identify Families Eligible for the Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)**

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### **What's in the Executive Budget**

The State of the State Briefing Book contains a proposal to implement data-matching between Medicaid and WIC to help identify, and subsequently enroll, WIC-eligible New Yorkers who do not currently receive WIC benefits. We look forward to learning more about the State's plan for implementation of this work.

### **Background**

WIC is a cost-effective program that provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health care and social services to more than 400,000 people in low-income families across New York State. Research shows that participating in WIC leads to healthier infants, more nutritious diets and better health care for children, and later to higher academic achievement for students. Despite these positive results, only slightly more than half—52.7%—of eligible New Yorkers participated in WIC in 2021, according to the most recent U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) annual estimates.

## Adult Homes

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### ***What's in the Executive Budget***

The **Executive Budget** proposes to **eliminate** the Enhanced Quality of Adult Living (EQUAL) Program, which was funded at \$6.5 million in SFY 2023-24. The **Executive Budget** also **eliminates** a \$100,000 legislative add to fund the Coalition for Institutionalized and Aged Disabled (CIAD) which provides advocacy services to residents of adult homes.

### ***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. This leaves these individuals 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 EQUAL funding is a requirement that adult home residents have a voice in how adult home operators spend the funds.

## Center for Health Workforce Studies

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The **Executive Budget** does **not** propose funding for the Center for Health Workforce Studies (CHWS). \$350,000 is the amount necessary to implement the Health Professions Data Law that was enacted in 2021.

### ***Background***

The Health Professions Data Law, enacted in December 2021, requires all licensed health professionals (inclusive of nurses, therapists, social workers, technicians, etc.) to answer a small number of questions as part of the tri-annual re-registration process, providing information on demographics, education, and practice activities to assist the State in health planning. Consistent and on-going funding in the form of a minimum annual allocation is needed to launch, manage, and sustain the successful collection of data and continued analysis for the State's licensed health professionals.

## **About the budget process**

The Governor's Executive Budget proposal was released on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.

### **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 1<sup>st</sup>, 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.