



# Taking Action on New York's Commitment to Reduce Child Poverty

## The Promise

No child in New York State should grow up enduring the hardships of poverty. Recognizing this, New York leaders enacted the landmark Child Poverty Reduction Act (CPRA), committing in statute to cut child poverty in half by 2031. At the end of 2024, the third year since the passage of CPRA, the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council released a strong set of policy recommendations for New York to implement to meet its statutory goal. Now is the time for New York leaders to move from recommendations to action.

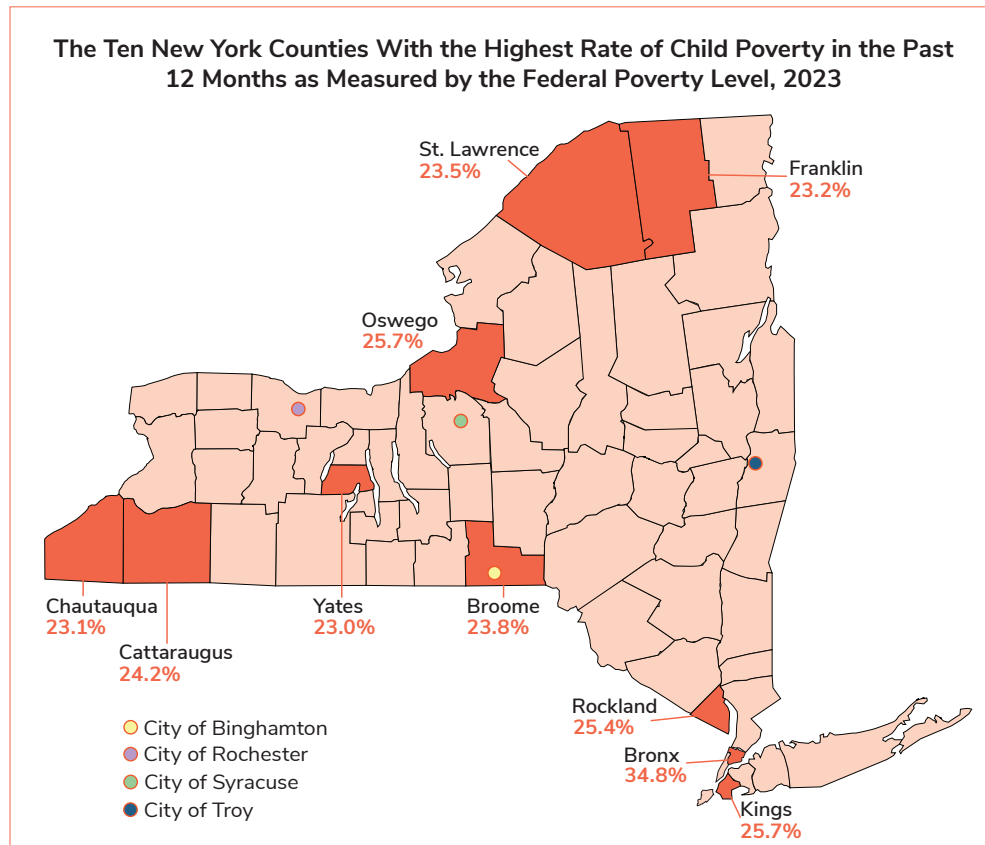
## The Challenge

New York State has repeatedly, over time, made the policy choice to allow hundreds of thousands of children to experience poverty, often justifying inaction for fiscal reasons. There are serious consequences to this choice: evidence shows a lack of economic resources for families compromises children's ability to grow and achieve adult success, hurting them, our communities, and our economy.

## What We Know

Child poverty in New York State continues to exceed the national rate, as it has for more than a decade. In 2023, approximately 731,672 New York children, over 18%, experienced poverty.<sup>1</sup> Those rates are significantly higher in many areas around the state—some urban, some rural, some suburban. Nearly 35% of children in Bronx County and more than 25% in Oswego County live in poverty.<sup>2</sup> Child poverty rates in many New York cities far exceed the state average rate, with the highest child poverty rates among large and moderate-sized cities reaching 46% in Syracuse, 42% in Binghamton, and 41% in both Troy and Rochester.<sup>3</sup>

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Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701.

### Children Under 18 Living in Poverty, 2023 (Federal Poverty Level)

<b>18.2%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>
New York State	United States

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701.

New York State ranks **40th** in the nation for child poverty.

Kids Count Data Center. 2024. Children in Poverty in United States.

Homelessness is among the most devastating poverty-related experiences, and one that a growing number of New York children face

Public school students experiencing homelessness has increased.



2022-23 School Year

113,000



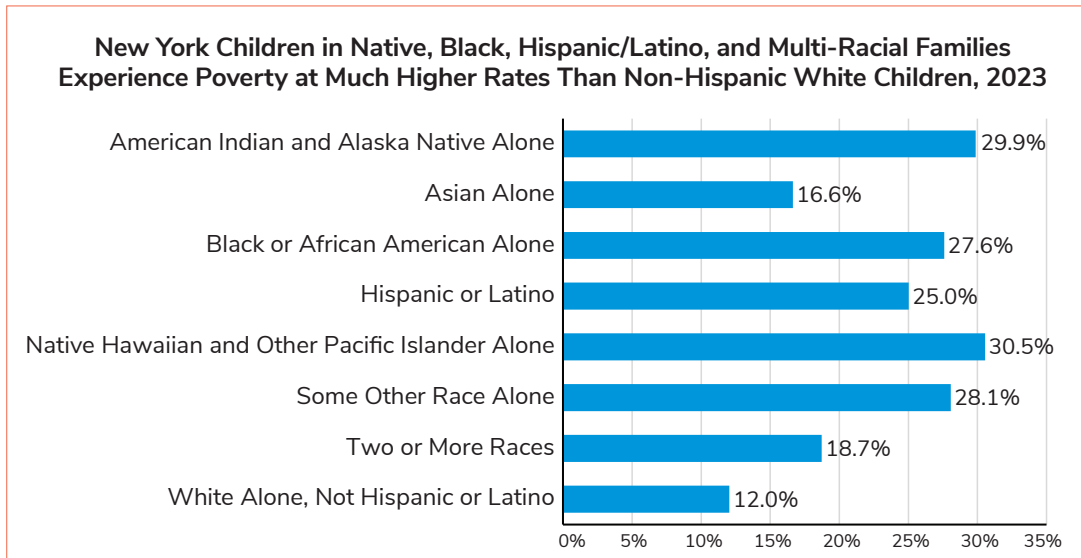
22%

2023-24 School Year

138,000

Source: New York State Education Department. (ND). Comparing Enrollments.

The impacts of systemic, historic, and ongoing racism embedded in housing, education, employment, and other systems is reflected in the rates at which children experience poverty based on their race. Public policy solutions must be shaped with intention to address the root causes of these disparities and bring an end to poverty for all children.



Source: Computations by Schuyler Center based on U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables.

## The Policy Solutions

Government has the capacity to quickly and sharply reduce the number of children experiencing poverty.

New York State must take the lead to meet its child poverty reduction goals, and to make the state affordable and welcoming to all the state's families.

“

People with multiple jobs work themselves to the bone year after year just to barely scrape above the poverty line.”

—Survey respondent, *Schenectady County*

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Proven solutions to support families and combat child poverty include providing:

- ▶ Robust, refundable tax credits and cash assistance;
- ▶ Housing and nutritional supports for all families, no matter where they were born;
- ▶ Child care assistance to all families that need it, regardless of immigration status, work hours, or minimum earnings; and
- ▶ Resources and services for families that are free from unnecessary, overly-intrusive, administrative burdens, and are structured to phase out gradually to minimize benefits cliffs that too often send families right back into economic insecurity upon receiving a modest income bump.

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). [Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701 \[data set\]](#).

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). [Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701 \[data set\]](#).

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). [Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months. American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701](#).

\*For all sources and computations, go to <https://scaany.org/sonyc-sources-2025/>