



## It's Time to Stand Up for Children and Families

*In this historic moment, New York takes major steps to fund universal programs, yet leaves behind the children, young people, and families involved in the child welfare system*

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**Albany, NY (May 12, 2025)** – This year's state budget, which exists within a challenging federal context, takes some steps to address longstanding gaps in child and family investment by expanding the Empire State Child Credit and establishing Universal School Meals. However, New York's leaders have missed a timely opportunity to protect children and families from socioeconomic threats by choosing not to invest in the Child and Family Wellbeing Fund. The Foster Youth College Success Initiative (FYCSI) is funded with an additional \$121,000 at a total \$8.4 million this year, which is still significantly below the \$10 million needed to fully fund the 10-year running, proven successful program.

There's still time for New York's leaders to empower children, young people, and families in this trying year, by:

- 1. Passing Family Miranda Rights: A.1234 (Walker)/S.551 (Brisport).** Require caseworkers to advise parents and caregivers of their rights at first contact—verbally and in writing.
- 2. Passing Anti-Harassment in Reporting: A.66 (Hevesi)/S.550 (Brisport).** Require reporters to the State Central Register (SCR) to provide their name and contact information, which can only be accessed by the Office of Children and Family Services and counties, to prevent reports being used as a form of harassment.
- 3. Passing the Maternal Health and Dignity in Consent Act: A.860 (Rosenthal)/S.845 (Salazar).** Require medical providers to seek the informed consent of pregnant people and new mothers before they or their babies are drug tested.
- 4. Ending Automatic Referrals to Child Support Collection: A.1036 (Kim)/S.3660 (Hoylman-Sigal).** Prohibit automatically referring parents of children who enter foster care to child support collection.
- 5. Passing A.5658 (Zinerman)/S.378 (Brouk),** which requires OCFS, SUNY, and CUNY to post signage of higher education funding opportunities and their eligibility requirements, including FYCSI, available to youth with a foster care background.

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The [Child and Family Wellbeing Action Network](#) (CFWAN) is an expanding group of advocates, providers, and people impacted by New York's child welfare system. We are working towards a [vision](#) of New York where the state prioritizes investing in and implementing policies that strengthen and support children, youth, and families.