



Schuyler Center's *First Look* at the NYS 2026-27 Executive Budget as It Intersects with Our Policy Priorities

Schuyler Center's *First Look* is an initial assessment of New York State's 2026-27 proposed Executive Budget and how it advances priorities that improve the health and wellbeing of all New Yorkers, especially those living in poverty.

In 2026, New York State faces significant headwinds from federal actions pushing against New York's movement to end child poverty. **That makes New York's commitment to children all the more important.** When New York enacted the Child Poverty Reduction Act in 2021, our state leaders committed to cutting child poverty in half by 2031; to prioritize the State's children in good times and in times of challenge. To stay true to this promise, we urge state leaders to act with intention to pass a final 2026-27 NYS Budget that protects children and families from harm inflicted through cuts to federal funding, while continuing to advance a poverty-fighting agenda.

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

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

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes an appropriation (spending authority) of \$959 million for preventive, protective, independent living, adoption, and aftercare services. This is an increase of \$59 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget.

Background

New York State invests State dollars in services that aim to keep families together, minimize their involvement in the child welfare system, and support young people in state placements and the caregivers who support children and families. The State provides a match to counties for these expenditures (62% state/38% county). This open-ended funding has contributed to an over 75% reduction in unnecessary family separation 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. In the 2023-24 New York State budget, the appropriation was increased by \$290 million to support increased claims for these services by counties.

Human Services Workforce

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes funding a 1.7% cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for staff providing certain State-funded human services programs, totaling about \$11.7 million. For programs contracted to provide services through the Office of Children and Family Services, the COLA is funded by:

- The Foster Care Block Grant: proposed funding at \$421.9 million, an increase of \$7.6 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget;
- The adoption subsidy: proposed funding at \$244.1 million, an increase of \$4.1 million compared to last year's Enacted Budget; and
- Supportive housing for transition-age and former foster youth: proposed funding at \$2.5 million, an increase of \$42,000 compared to last year's Enacted Budget.

Background

The cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) varies considerably year-to-year and is not guaranteed. For instance, last year's COLA was 2.1%. According to providers, a history of low base wages and COLAs that do not keep up with inflation has been the primary driver of persistent staffing shortages and program reductions.

Counties use their Foster Care Block Grant (FCBG) allocations to pay for foster care and the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program (KinGAP, subsidized guardianship).

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.

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.

Kinship Navigator and Kinship Caregiver Support Services

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** 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 Permanency Resource Centers (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 avert foster care entry and out-of-home placements.

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 supports.

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 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 \$8.4 million, which included \$483,000 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, and medical and personal expenses. FYCSI also supports young people with advisement and tutoring.

CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION & AFFORDABILITY FOR FAMILIES

Child Tax Credit

What's in the Executive Budget

The State of the State Briefing Book includes a proposal for outreach on the expanded child tax credit. Specifically, the Book proposes to take a “whole-of-government approach” to ensuring that eligible New Yorkers access the full credit. We look forward to more details about how this outreach will be undertaken.

Background

In 2025, New York expanded the Empire State Child Credit (ESCC), increasing the maximum credit amount from \$330 to \$1,000 per child per year for children under age four; and, beginning in 2026, from \$330 to \$500 per child per year for children ages four to sixteen. The expansion also made important structural changes to the credit by eliminating the minimum income phase-in, which means families with the lowest incomes are now eligible to receive the full credit amount.

Income transfers to families—even modest ones—can improve outcomes for children in all areas of wellbeing, 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 (EITC)

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. New York 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.

People who would benefit from the credit but are excluded from it include: 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.

Protecting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Recipients from Fraud

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** includes funding to transition New York's SNAP recipients' benefits to chip-enabled EBT cards to prevent the theft of SNAP benefits from New Yorkers who rely on them.

Background

Theft of SNAP benefits resulted in a loss of up to [\\$80 million in New York State between August 2023 and December 2024](#). Since December 2024, federal reimbursement for victims of SNAP theft is no longer available.

Skimming theft of SNAP benefits has a devastating impact on New York families, leaving them without funds to buy essential groceries and other necessities. Skimming exacerbates food insecurity and financial stress for already vulnerable households, making it harder for them to meet their basic needs and maintain stability.

Bolstering New York's Emergency Food System

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes approximately \$72.8 million for the Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP), an increase of \$15 million compared to the \$57.8 million in last year's Enacted Budget.

The **Executive Budget** proposes approximately \$55 million for the Nourish New York (NNY) program, level funding compared to last year's Enacted Budget.

Background

HPNAP provides funds to about [2,700 Emergency Food Relief Organizations](#) across New York State, including food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters, to purchase nutritious foods.

NNY was launched in May 2020 as an emergency relief program during the COVID-19 pandemic to reroute surplus agricultural products from New York farmers and food processors through the state's emergency food network.

Healthy School Meals for All

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$395 million in funding for universal school meals. This represents an increase of \$55 million over funding in last year's enacted budget, reflecting high levels of participation in the program.

Background

The NYS 2025-26 Enacted Budget included \$340 million in funding to establish universal free school meals for students across New York State.

Healthy School Meals for All is a proven strategy that reduces food insecurity and eases financial burden on families. Providing universal free school meals is the best way to ensure equitable access to meals during the school day, without stigma, for all students.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND AFTERSCHOOL

Child Care Access

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes approximately **\$3.03 billion** for child care assistance (subsidies or CCAP), with **\$2.4 billion** for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2027 base CCAP, \$475 million for FFY 2026 and 2027 for NYC, and \$155 million for FFY 2026 for counties outside of New York City according to the Executive Budget Briefing Book. Specifically, the **Executive Budget** allocates (1) \$2.2 billion from the State General Fund; (2) Up to \$576 million from federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) funds; and (3) \$497.9 million from federal TANF funds.

The **Executive Budget** proposes funding for two types of universal child care projects: **\$73 million** “for services and expenses of a contractual-based child care program to serve two year olds” in New York City; and **\$66 million** for services and expenses of Dutchess County, Monroe County, and Broome County for pilot projects to provide child care services to children aged zero to three,” with the state reimbursing no more than 90% of the pilot projects outside of New York City.

The **Executive Budget** proposes **\$1.5 million** to create a new “Office of Child Care and Early Education.” According to the Budget Briefing book this office will “coordinate the implementation of universal child care, continued investments in 3K, the launch of 2-Care, and workforce supports.” Also proposed is **\$35 million** for the Office of Children and Family Services to enhance child care agency operations including by supporting an additional 54 full-time employees for FY 2027.

Background

Child care assistance (subsidies or CCAP) is the principal public support for helping families meet the high costs of quality child care. 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, and due to significant new state investment in CCAP, participation in the program has dramatically increased.

Unfortunately, demand for the program still exceeds investment—so much so that currently, as of January 2026, [33 counties and NYC](#) have closed enrollment or started waitlists, leaving thousands of eligible families across the state scrambling to patch together care for their children, with some having to reduce their work hours, or leave the workforce altogether. The Executive Budget’s proposed \$1.2 billion in new, recurring funding for CCAP would be the largest single year increase to CCAP in New York State history, and would enable thousands more eligible families to access high-quality child care. The Executive Budget’s proposed investment in universal care models outside of New York City, and 2-Care in New York City would mark a significant first step toward creating a new model of child care—where child care is available to all, without subjecting families to income, immigration status, or activities tests.

Child Care Workforce Compensation

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes no funding for compensation for the child care workforce.

Background

Child care educators, with an average annual salary of under [\\$38,000](#), earn \$30,000 **less** than the median annual salary for full-time New York workers (of approximately [\\$68,000](#)). These low wages contribute to high staff turnover as well as staffing and capacity shortages. A March 2023 [survey of child care providers](#) found that among **1,600** respondents, **28,462** licensed or registered slots were left empty due to insufficient staffing because of low wages.

	FY 2026 Enacted Budget	FY 2027 Executive Budget
Child care assistance (CCAP / subsidy)	Approximately \$2.2 billion, with \$50 million available to counties outside of NYC for 100% reimbursement for CCAP spent during FFY 2025 (ending September 30, 2025) (with amounts available to counties varying based on population); and \$350 million available to NYC for 50% CCAP reimbursement for FFY 2025 and 2026.	Approximately \$3.03 billion, with \$155 million available to counties outside of NYC for 100% reimbursement for CCAP spent during FFY 2026 (ending September 30, 2026) (with amounts available to counties varying based on population); and \$475 million available to NYC for 50% CCAP reimbursement for FFY 2026 and 2027.
CCAP expanded eligibility	Income eligibility ceiling maintained at 85% of State Median Income (SMI) since October 1, 2023.	No change.
CCAP Co-pays	Maintained limits on family co-pays to 1% of income over FPL beginning October 1, 2023.	No change .
CCAP payment to child care providers for absences	Maintained coverage of costs for up to 80 absences per year per child beginning October 1, 2023.	No change.
CCAP reimbursement rates	Maintained at 80th percentile of the market rate; legally exempt providers receive 65% of the family child care rate.	No change.
Child care assistance/scholarships for families ineligible for CCAP	Sustained investment in Facilitated Enrollment pilot project available to families without regard to immigration status; to parents who are episodic workers. \$5 million for NYC; \$5 million for outside NYC.	No funding proposed (added last year by the Legislature).
Universal child care	No funding.	\$73 million to launch 2-Care in New York City; \$66 million for universal child care pilots for children 0-3 in Dutchess, Monroe, and Broome Counties.
Workforce compensation	No funding. The FY 2024 and FY 2025 budgets included funding for stabilization / workforce retention grants for providers that allowed the payment of small, but meaningful bonuses to the child care workforce. (FY 2024 - \$500 million; FY 2025 - \$300 million.)	No funding proposed.
Child care related tax credit	Employer child care tax credit: \$25 million for the second year of 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.	Proposes reforms to NY's child and dependent care tax credit (a credit that provides reimbursement to eligible families for a percentage of costs incurred for eligible child care expenses). The Executive Budget Book indicates the reforms will make the credit simpler to calculate and more progressive. The financial plan projects costs of expansion at \$65 million beginning in FY 2028.
Infrastructure	\$100 million in capital funds to be distributed in grants of no less than \$50,000 to child care centers. \$10 million of federal funds for family-based child care programs.	No funding proposed.

Pre-Kindergarten

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes a \$431 million increase for universal pre-K aid for the 2026-27 school year, as well as \$131 million to fill in the gaps for pre-K for three-year-olds in New York City, for a **total increase of \$561 million for pre-K**, bringing total proposed state pre-K investment to approximately \$1.761 billion. The proposal includes raising rates for all school districts to \$10,000 per child or their selected Foundation Aid per pupil amount, whichever is higher.

Background

In 2013, New York State set a goal to provide full-day pre-K for all 4-year-olds that year. Yet, 13 years later, tens of thousands of 4-year-olds outside of New York City—more than 50%—still do not have access to full-day pre-K. The Executive Budget Book states a commitment to achieve universal pre-K for 4-year-olds outside of New York City by the start of the 2028-29 school year.

Afterschool Programs

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$116,060,000 for the Learning and Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAPS). This is an increase of \$6,320,000 from last year's Enacted Budget. The proposal makes funding available to extend or expand current Advantage Afterschool or Empire State Afterschool contracts; to award new contracts; and for technical assistance to afterschool grant recipients. The additional \$6,320,000 is to cover increases in the state minimum wage.

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. The 2023-24 Enacted Budget combined the two existing state afterschool programs—Advantage Afterschool and Empire State Afterschool—into one program (Learning and Enrichment Afterschool Program) beginning Fiscal Year 2025.

Early Intervention

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes an allocation of \$205 million for the Early Intervention (EI) program. This proposed funding is level with last year's Executive Budget and Enacted Budget.

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.

Community Schools

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes level funding for community schools at \$250 million. These funds are set aside within Foundation Aid.

The **Executive Budget** proposes to maintain \$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

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes an allocation of \$3 million for Nurse-Family Partnership, \$1.2 million less than the 2024-25 Enacted Budget—but level with the 2025-26 Executive Budget.

The **Executive Budget** proposes an allocation for Healthy Families NY of \$26 million, and includes language for funding from a supplemental line. The \$26 million is level with funding from the 2025-26 Executive Budget.

The **Executive Budget** proposes to maintain funding at \$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.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** does not propose additional funding for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Last year, the Executive Budget proposed an additional \$9.5 million to support increased participation, but that funding, while also proposed in both one-house bills, was not included in the Enacted Budget.

Background

WIC is a cost-effective federal program that provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health care and social services to [nearly 440,000 people](#) in low-income families across New York State. [Research shows](#) that participating in WIC leads to healthier infants, more nutritious diets, better health care for children, and later to higher academic achievement for students. Despite these positive results, [only 62.4% of eligible New Yorkers](#) participated in WIC in 2023, according to the most recent U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) annual estimates.

Keeping Kids Covered

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes to repeal continuous eligibility in Medicaid and Child Health Plus from birth to age six. Continuous coverage would end July 1, 2026.

Background

In 2024, New York received [approval from the federal government to enact multi-year continuous eligibility](#) in public health insurance coverage for its youngest residents. This meant children in New York from birth to age six could stay on Medicaid and Child Health Plus without having to renew their coverage every year. The federal government, in 2025, announced it would be rescinding all waivers that allow for continuous coverage following the enactment of H.R. 1, the federal budget reconciliation law passed in July 2025, though the expectation at the time was the provision would continue until March 31, 2027.

Community Health Advocates

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** proposes \$2.5 million specifically for the Community Health Advocates (CHA) program. Last year additional funding was included in other sections of the budget and an additional \$1.7 million was added by the Legislature.

Background

The CHA program helps people with any type of health insurance access in-network care, manage billing problems, avoid medical debt, appeal coverage denials, and manage other problems that might prevent them from obtaining affordable medical care. Since 2010, the CHA program has saved consumers over \$250 million.

Adult Homes

What's in the Executive Budget

The **Executive Budget** zeroes out funding to support residents of adult homes.

The **Executive Budget** proposes no funding for the Enhanced Quality of Adult Living (EQUAL) Program. The program was funded at \$6.5 million in the 2024-25 Enacted Budget.

The **Executive Budget** proposes no funding for the Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled (CIAD) which provides advocacy services to residents of adult homes, \$75,000 less than last year's Executive Budget and \$225,000 less than the Enacted Budget.

The **Executive Budget** eliminates \$230,000 in funding through the Adult Home Advocacy Project and the Adult Home Resident Council Program that help adult home residents who receive services from a mental hygiene provider understand and protect their legal rights. The funding is used to support Resident Councils in adult homes to promote community and collective actions that improve the lives of residents.

Background

Adult home residents are low-income adults, many struggling with mental and other health concerns that can make it difficult for them to live on their own without support. This leaves these individuals particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

EQUAL enables adult home residents to address 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.

CIAD helps ensure adult home residents know and are able to exercise their rights to achieve modest—but tremendously meaningful—improvements in their living conditions.

About the budget process

The Governor's Executive Budget proposal was released on Tuesday, January 20, 2026.

What happens next?

- ✓ In late January and February, the Senate and Assembly hold a series of joint legislative hearings on the governor's proposed budget.
- ✓ 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).
- ✓ 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 (referred to as one-house bills).
- ✓ 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 accepted, amended or intentionally omitted by both the governor and legislature.