



Schuyler Center Statement on the FY26-27 Enacted NYS Budget

Key investments will support children experiencing poverty but are not bold enough to protect families from the full impact of federal cuts and rising costs.

June 1, 2026

As advocates for policies that support children and families experiencing poverty, [Schuyler Center](#) welcomes this budget's meaningful investment in child care, including record funding for child care assistance, pre-K, and universal child care pilot programs.

The right state investments can ensure family wellbeing and make New York State the best place for a child to learn, play, grow, find their passion, and participate in a vibrant future for our state.

New York State is in a unique moment. The federal government has taken many significant actions causing low-income and immigrant New Yorkers to lose access to health care, food assistance, rental assistance, and due process. If there is a time for New York to step up and protect low- and middle-income New Yorkers, especially those in immigrant families, it is now.

While the budget agreement includes new protections for immigrant families, along with some funding for legal services, it largely neglects to cushion families and communities across our state as they lose health coverage, nutrition supports, and housing, while facing rising costs for basic needs, like transportation and groceries. Young children with developmental delays and disabilities will continue to miss precious early opportunities for remediation through Early Intervention because of the state's decision to keep reimbursement rates so low that children age out of eligibility for services before receiving them. Thousands of pregnant women, new babies, and low-income parents are at-risk of poorer birth outcomes and challenged development, as they miss out on nutritious foods, breastfeeding support, and nutrition and health education, because of WIC funding and staffing shortages that the state chose not to invest in.

Universal Child Care

[Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy](#) celebrates this budget's monumental progress toward a vision of universal child care with its record, recurring investments in child care assistance for low- and moderate-income families, and significant pre-K and 3-K expansions. This budget also includes funding for the state's first-ever universal child care pilot projects outside of New York City, and 2-K in New York City. *Unfortunately, the budget makes a significant misstep in failing to include any funding for child care workforce compensation.*

In addition, while it contains historic levels of funding for the child care assistance program - the foundation of universal child care and a powerful tool for reducing child poverty- *it still falls short of what is needed to end child care assistance waitlists around the state.*

Nonetheless, these historic investment is a testament to the unflagging efforts of parents, child care educators, grassroots organizers, and advocates from communities across the state.

We applaud the leadership of Governor Hochul, who has championed child care for decades - long before it was a widely popular policy -- and Mayor Mamdani, who has made this a top priority of his new administration. We are grateful for the support of legislative champions: chief among them, children and family committee chairs, Senator Jabari Brisport and Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi, who have been tireless leaders in advancing universal child care for all New York State families and a thriving wage for the child care workforce.

As New York proceeds toward a goal of universal child care and pre-K, it is essential that it is built upon a solid foundation comprised of two non-negotiables: a well-compensated workforce and prioritizing low-income families in the rollout.

- [Read Empire State Campaign for Child Care's Statement in Response to the 2026-2027 New York State Budget](#)

Reducing Child Poverty – *stalled progress:*

- Participation in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is up 28% since 2020, yet local agencies have been essentially flat-funded over the past decade. *The final budget misses the opportunity to provide the additional funding needed to ensure all eligible families can access WIC's vital services.*

- **Child Poverty Reduction Act progress** - Beyond child care assistance, *the final budget includes no intentional or significant investment to reduce the number of children experiencing poverty.*

New York State has 5 years remaining to meet its [statutory deadline to reduce child poverty by 50%](#). We are disappointed that this budget is missing any significant investments in [the policies recommended by the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee](#). While last year's state budget made [important investments](#), intentional action must be taken every year if New York is to meet its goal. As the federal government disinvests from anti-poverty programs, a lack of action by New York State means backsliding on the state's progress toward poverty reduction goals.

Protecting Immigrant Children and Families

Schuyler Center welcomes the budget's actions to protect immigrant New Yorkers, which are an important step toward ensuring the safety of immigrant children, families, and communities. No matter where they were born, all New Yorkers should feel safe in their homes, their schools, their child care centers, their places of worship, and their communities.

In particular, the budget codifies the right to free public education for all children, regardless of immigration status, and takes steps to ensure that children and their families are safe in "sensitive locations" like schools, child care centers, and houses of worship by limiting access to those locations by immigration enforcement.

While the budget takes critical steps to limit interaction between local law enforcement and immigration enforcement by ending formal agreements, *it misses the opportunity to clearly ban informal collusion between local police and ICE and Border Patrol that can lead to harmful family separations.*

When immigrant New Yorkers do become detained, they urgently need access to legal representation. The detention of a caregiver is devastating for children and can cause families to experience significant financial stress. The budget recognizes this urgent need by increasing investments in legal services, but additional funding is required to meet significant need.

We look forward to partnering with Governor Hochul, the Legislature, and partners across the state to ensure that our immigrant neighbors can safely access the resources, legal services, and protections they need to live, thrive, and feel at home in New York State.

Essential Plan - left unfixed:

The Essential Plan provides public health insurance coverage to people with low incomes who are just above Medicaid income limits. Last year's federal budget reconciliation bill, HR1, forced the State to make the difficult decision to change eligibility for the Essential Plan. This preserved coverage for over

one million New Yorkers, but it will leave 450,000 people uninsured. There was a chance to include a solution in this year's budget and secure an affordable coverage option for the nearly half a million people about to lose coverage. *Despite significant support from the Legislature, this coverage option was **not** included in the final budget.*

Child and Family Wellbeing:

Schuyler Center welcomes incremental increases in funding to key services that support children, young people, and families involved in New York's child welfare system, and notes that more investment is needed for transformational change.

The Foster Youth College Success Initiative and legal services in Family Court both received modest increases in funding that do not reach the levels needed to fully fund either program. The Child and Family Wellbeing Fund remains a missed opportunity for New York State to invest in the communities impacted by decades of Child Protective Services interventions.

- [Read the Child and Family Wellbeing Action Network Statement in Response to the 2026-27 New York State Budget](#)

Effective and Timely Implementation is Necessary to Support Children and Families

Schuyler Center stands ready to support the state in swiftly implementing the policies and investments included in the budget to deliver the relief and support children, families and communities need. These include:

- **Making the supplemental CCAP funds for counties outside of New York City available to be accessed immediately**, along with longer term allocation information that will give counties the certainty they need about their CCAP funding over time, so 32 counties that have closed enrollment due to inadequate funds can immediately reopen CCAP enrollment. Families are running out of time to enroll their children in summer programming that is essential for working parents.
- **Ensuring the success of the three universal child care pilot projects** in Broome, Monroe, and Dutchess Counties. Successful pilots must be truly universal - without means testing, immigration or activities testing, and must pay the workforce a just wage.
- **Ensuring New York SNAP recipients can utilize their benefits to access the food they need by protecting New York SNAP recipients from having their benefits stolen.** The state should act swiftly to upgrade New York's SNAP benefits to secure chip-based EBT cards.

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Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy is a leading statewide, nonpartisan, policy analysis and advocacy organization based in Albany. For over 150 years, Schuyler Center has worked to shape policies to improve health, welfare, and human services for all New Yorkers, especially those impacted by poverty and inequitable systems. Schuyler Center is focused on statewide policy related to universal child care, family economic security, family wellbeing, and child health. Learn more at scaany.org.