Kids can't vote. *You can.*

2026 VOTER GUIDE

From Albany to Washington, elected officials make decisions that determine whether New York's children grow up healthy, supported, and secure.

How to use this guide

Candidates are asking for your vote and asking them questions is part of the job interview. Pick the issues you care about, and ask at the door, at a forum, or on social media. Ask every candidate the same questions.

Listen for specifics: a number, a timeline, legislation, or a funding source tells you more than a slogan.

TIPS FOR ASKING

- ☑ Keep it short. Share a sentence of context, then ask one clear, open-ended question.
- ☑ Make it personal. A story about your own family or neighborhood is more memorable than a statistic.
- ☑ Listen for policies and investments that align with Schuyler Center's Policy Priorities.
- ☑ Share what you hear. Tell your neighbors, post the answers you get on social media (and tag @SchuylerCenter!), and encourage your friends and family to vote!

QUESTIONS BY TOPIC

STATE BUDGET

No matter how visionary a policy is, it will fail without adequate public investment.

Ask: What would you prioritize for children and families in the state budget, and what would you protect if state resources are tight?

FAMILY ECONOMIC SECURITY

New York has committed in law to cutting child poverty in half by 2032. As of 2024, 18% – nearly 1 in 5 – of New York children live in poverty. Hunger impacts nearly the same number of children: roughly 1 in 5 New York children experienced food insecurity in 2023.

Ask: What specific steps will you take to keep the state on track to meet its poverty-reduction goal?

Ask: What would you do to ensure no children in NYS experience hunger?

EARLY VOTING

OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 1

Hours and sites vary by county.

ELECTION DAY

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

Polls open 6 a.m. – 9 p.m.

To vote, you must be registered by Saturday, October 24th!

Applications must be received by this date.

OTHER RESOURCES

- Check your registration, find your early voting site and polling place, and request an early mail ballot at elections.ny.gov or your county Board of Elections.
- To learn more about how to vote, key dates, and voter registration: 2026 NY Election Guide from New York Focus
- For information on this year's races and your ballot: Ballotpedia's Voter Toolkit.

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UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE

Across New York, child care costs more than most other household expenses, including housing. Center-based infant care can be higher than in-state public university tuition. At the same time, child care providers are among the lowest paid workers in the state. Families need affordable, high-quality child care options in family-based and center-based settings, and child care educators need pay that reflects the value of their work.

Ask: What is your plan to make child care available to every family that wants it, and how will you fund it?

Ask: How will you ensure that the child care workforce is paid a thriving wage?

TRANSFORMING CHILD WELFARE

Children thrive in safe, nurturing, permanent families. Families with easy access to economic supports and trusted resources in their neighborhoods thrive, even on low incomes.

Ask: What would you do to help families stay together safely and keep children out of the child welfare system?

EARLY CHILDHOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Nearly half of New York's children are covered by Medicaid or CHP (45%), and New York is ranked 8th in the nation for child health. Health and wellbeing includes physical, mental, social, and emotional wellbeing. Investing early costs less than intervening later.

Ask: How will you protect children's and caregivers' access to health coverage and care, including mental health services and early intervention?

ORAL HEALTH EQUITY

Kids should grow up free of dental pain, but tooth decay is the most common chronic disease in children. Kids with decay have trouble eating, concentrating in school, or focusing beyond their pain. Poor oral health in childhood often means a lifetime of disease and expense.

Ask: What would you do to expand access to dental care for kids, especially in communities with the fewest providers?

Stay involved after Election Day

Voting is just the start. Schuyler Center has worked for more than 150 years to make New York State a better place to grow up: Join our advocacy network at scaany.org/advocate-with-us to learn more about advocating together for New York's kids.

Explore the data on how New York's children are doing at scaany.org/data.

Nonpartisan disclaimer

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy is a nonpartisan 501(c)3 organization. This guide is intended to educate voters on issues affecting children and families. No endorsement of any candidate or party is given or implied.

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