

TheChildren'sAgenda

The Children's Agenda Recommendations for New York State FY2018-19 Budget

The FY2019 Executive Budget proposes several promising reforms and initiatives that will benefit New York children, such as funding for the First 1000 Days on Medicaid initiative and implementation of Raise the Age juvenile justice policy. There are more proposals, though, that signal a reduced commitment to meeting the needs of New York's children.

We appeal to the Senate and Assembly to reject funding cuts and changes in policy that will hurt our youngest residents.

We are concerned about the Governor's proposal for a very small increase in funding for child care subsidies, which are an essential dual-generation support that keeps parents employed and children safe and learning. The Executive Budget does not adequately address the gaps in the Early Intervention system that result in children under age 3 with concerns about their health and development often waiting weeks and sometimes months for services. Proposed cuts to child welfare and juvenile justice programs in New York City create precedents that undermine implementation of Raise the Age across the state.

We urge the Legislature to stand firm in support of smart investments that keep New York parents working, children growing up healthy and developmentally on track, and older youth supported on a path toward success.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Child care:

- Increase funding for child care subsidies by \$31 million in order to restore the child care subsidy program to the funding level established in 2016, adjusting for both the 2017 cut of \$7 million and two years of inflation.

First 1000 Days on Medicaid:

- Add \$1.45 M to support the First 1000 Days on Medicaid initiative, investing in services and programs to improve outcomes among children ages 0 – 3.

Early Intervention:

- Increase reimbursement rates for Early Intervention providers by 5%.
- Reject the Governor's proposal to require that providers take on more responsibility to appeal commercial insurance denials.
- Support the Assembly's proposal for a \$25 M covered lives assessment on commercial insurance companies.

Raise the Age:

- Support the proposed \$100 M for implementation of the new policy raising the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18 in New York State. The state must follow through on its commitment to reimburse localities, including New York City, for all expenses related to Raise the Age implementation.

Community Optional Preventive Services (COPS)

- Reject the proposal included in the Governor's 30-day amendments to change the COPS funding stream by opening it up to the entire state. These targeted dollars have supported important services for children in Monroe County through the Building Healthy Children home visiting program.

Child Welfare/Juvenile Justice

- Reject the Governor's proposal to eliminate state funding for New York City's successful Close to Home juvenile justice program, particularly in light of the fact that Close to Home services will be an important part of New York City's Raise the Age implementation.
- Reject the Governor's capping of New York City's preventive services funding that sets a troubling precedent for limiting access to these vital services for children at risk of out-of-home placement throughout the state in the future.

After-school programs

- Support the \$10 M increase in Empire State After-School Program funding and the change in eligibility criteria, allowing community-based organizations to apply for grants.
- Restore Advantage After School Program funding to the FY17 appropriation level of \$22.3 M. Funding for this program was cut by \$2.5 M in last year's state budget.

Children's Mental and Behavioral Health:

- Reject the Governor's 2-year delay in implementing \$15 million to expand children's mental health services.

Education

- Support the Governor's \$50 M increase in Community Schools funding to raise state support to \$200 M. The community school model can be used to support academic success, social-emotional supports and family/community engagement in struggling schools.

Pre-K

- Move New York's Pre-K funding toward a single, integrated funding stream with funding distributed by an allocation aid formula that will create sustainable, predictable financing for Pre-K.
- Support and add to the Governor's addition of \$15 M for expansion of Pre-K access in high need districts.

Home Visiting

- Increase funding for Nurse-Family Partnership to \$6 M as a step toward bringing this evidence-based program to capacity in New York State. This small investment will save the state money in the long run through decreased need for special education, juvenile justice and health care services among participating families.
- Invest \$3 million in new funding for the Parents as Teachers program to expand capacity to an additional 1,000 families.

Runaway and Homeless Youth:

- Increase funding for Runaway and Homeless Youth programs, particularly in light of the 2017 policy change that increased the maximum age for youth shelters. The state should also expand the Safe Harbor program that provide services to youth who are victims of sex trafficking.

Youth Employment:

- Support the Executive Budget proposal to add \$4 M to last year's appropriation, bringing the total to \$40 M, to cover the costs associated with increases in the minimum wage.