

Empire State Campaign for Child Care

Talking Points: Early Childhood/Child Care Advocacy Day February 4, 2020

Who we are: Empire State Campaign for Child Care, along with our partner, Winning Beginning NY, are statewide coalitions representing more than 75 child advocacy organizations, child care providers, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, and unions, along with parents, educators, and faith leaders. Together we are: ***Fighting for universal, equitable access to quality child care in New York State.***

Key messages:

A. The New York State Child Care System is in Crisis!

1. A Crisis for Parents

- a. The cost of child care is unaffordable.
- b. Finding convenient, quality, affordable care is becoming harder.
- c. Finding child care for non-traditional hours and for children with disabilities or challenges is almost impossible.
- d. More parents are forced to rely on a patchwork of informal – and often unreliable or unsafe – provider arrangements or latchkey environments.
- e. More parents who want and need to work have dropped out of the workforce, because child care costs exceed their potential job income.

2. A Crisis for Providers and the Workforce

- a. The amount the state reimburses for providing care to children who qualify for subsidies is too low to retain quality staff and a quality environment.
- b. Child care workers are increasingly forced to work longer hours with fewer resources, and lack opportunities for further training and education.
- c. With low pay, inadequate benefits and too few paths to advancement, more child care workers are leaving the field.

3. A Crisis for Our Children

- a. Too many children are missing the personal attention and trusted environment that fosters health and growth in their earliest years.
- b. Children who attend quality early care and learning programs benefit tremendously throughout their life as they are more likely to succeed in school and in their adult life.
- c. The lack of quality care for low-income, black and brown children reflects and continues racial and economic inequality.

4. A Crisis for Our Communities

- a. Local businesses cannot attract, recruit, and retain the workers they need when a community lacks high-quality child care.
- b. Communities without child care are unable to support families with young children, contributing to population loss in some parts of the state.
- c. When a child care program closes, it no longer contributes to the success of other local businesses.
- d. As child care providers are forced to close their doors, localities lose tax revenue and an important sector of the small business economy.

B. We are deeply concerned that Governor Cuomo included no new state investments in child care in his Executive Budget.

1. The state had made no meaningful new investment in child care in five years.
2. Recognizing the child care availability crisis, the Governor signed legislation creating a Child Care Availability Task Force in December 2017.
3. Even as the Task Force has been working hard to find solutions to the crisis over the past year, the system has been falling into further decline – providers closing, educators leaving the field, families scrambling to find safe, quality care they can afford.

C. Universal, Quality Care for All Our Children is the Path to A Better New York.

Our children are the future. When children experience a world that is healthy, stable, caring, and stimulating, they thrive. Imagine a world where all children had this start in life.

Our Request: To prevent New York’s child care system from falling into further decline, and to lay the groundwork for the state to develop a model child care system that provides all New York families access to quality, affordable child care, New York must take the following steps in 2020:

- 1. Commit to achieving universal access to quality, affordable child care by 2025;**
 - 2. Invest \$40M to create a fund to increase workforce compensation and improve child care quality; and**
 - 3. Invest \$60M to the state’s child care subsidy program to expand access to more working families by making eligibility levels and co-pays more fair and uniform across the state.**
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Advocacy Day Agenda:

9:00am: Registration begins – Third Floor Terrace, Legislative Office Building

10:00am: Kickoff

10:00am - 12:00pm*: Advocacy Visits

12:00pm - 12:30pm: Rally at Million Dollar Staircase in Capitol (press invited)

1:00pm - 4:00pm: Advocacy Visits Continue

Please tell @NYGovCuomo NY must #FundChildCare in the 2020-2021 Budget! @EmpireStateCCC, @WinBeginNY