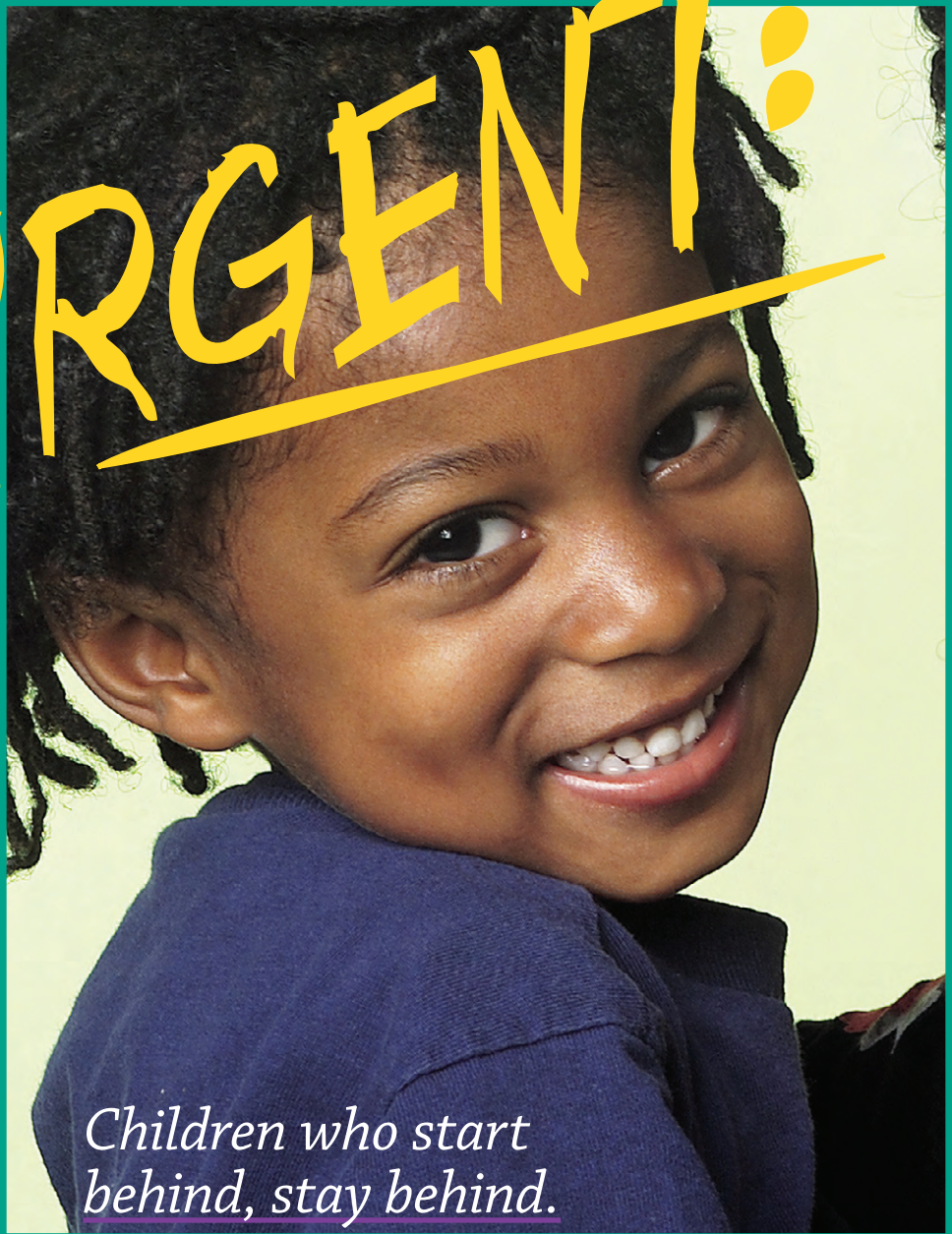


URGENT!



Children who start behind, stay behind.

It's time to give every child in New York State a winning beginning.

Four keys to a winning beginning:

- » **QUALITYstarsNY**
- » **A Stronger Workforce**
- » **Early Care and Learning**
- » **Home Visiting**

Winning Beginning NY



an early care and learning coalition

A Message to Candidates from Winning Beginning NY



A Message to Candidates from Winning Beginning NY:

Invest in a winning beginning for life.

The next Governor of New York State will stand at the threshold of an extraordinary opportunity: affording every child a winning beginning. This landmark step will strengthen New York's future by ensuring that children are ready to learn and families are able to work.

Tapping the expertise of the Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Governor can create a winning beginning for every child in the first term by taking action in four key areas:

- » **QUALITYstarsNY:** Implement this comprehensive and widely-endorsed quality rating and improvement system to support program excellence, offer parents tools to assess quality and encourage more effective use of public resources.
- » **Stronger Workforce:** Create a professional development system to ensure that all children are learning from highly-qualified, properly-compensated, well-supported early care and learning professionals.
- » **Early Care And Learning:** Invest in the expansion of early learning opportunities – especially for low-income, at-risk children – by increasing infant and toddler services and keeping the promise of Universal Pre-K.
- » **Home Visiting:** Adopt a comprehensive home visiting strategy that connects expectant and new parents with the knowledge, support and resources they need to get their children off to a good start.



QUALITYstarsNY

Every day, more than 1.5 million New York State children under age five are cared for by someone other than a parent. And while millions of federal and state dollars are invested in early care and learning each year, New York State has no uniform standards or systems in place to assess or improve the programs that care for our children.



Quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) are currently being used in more than 30 states. A QRIS sets universal standards for all early care and learning settings and links them to “star ratings.” QUALITYstarsNY, a QRIS currently being field-tested in communities across New York State, should be fully adopted to provide the following benefits to both parents and caregivers

- » Provides information to help parents choose the best care for their children
- » Sets clear standards and establishes a data system to ensure accountability
- » Ensures tax dollars are being invested in programs that work
- » Creates a universal system to assess, improve and communicate the quality of early childhood programs
- » Provides struggling programs with a roadmap, support and resources to ensure improvement.

To give children a winning beginning:

New York must invest in high-quality learning environments through full implementation of QUALITYstarsNY, a statewide system of quality assurance.

Stronger Workforce

More than 4,000 child care centers and 13,000 family child care providers are currently operating in New York State. Yet there is no system of professional development to attract, retain and educate the 65,000+ workers entrusted to care for our children.

To create a winning beginning, New York State must take three key steps to strengthen the early care and learning workforce:

- » ***Professional Development System:*** Create universal, statewide access to high-quality, credit-based sequential training for all individuals caring for and educating our children. The system will provide a clear pathway for achieving specific credentialing and create a registry of certified trainers.
- » ***Comparable Pay:*** Ensure that early care and learning professionals with similar credentials earn the same wage – whether they teach in a community or school-based setting. Eliminating salary disparity has helped other states retain highly-skilled professionals in low-income, high-risk communities.
- » ***Scholarships and Loan Forgiveness:*** Establish scholarship programs such as Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) and loan forgiveness options to help attract students to careers in early care and learning.

To give children a winning beginning:

New York must invest in universal access to highly-qualified, properly-compensated, well-supported early childhood professionals.



Compensation for child care workers lags behind other careers:

\$35,000: Child care worker, median salary, 20+ years experience.

\$60,000: Dog walker, median salary, 5-9 years experience.

\$45,000: Doorman, median salary, 1-4 years experience.

\$30,000: Pizza delivery, median salary, 5-9 years experience.

Data on salary disparities from Payscale.com

Early Care and Learning

Every dollar invested in quality early care and learning programs for children generates \$1.86 in additional spending in New York State, creating jobs and supporting local economies.

Research shows early care and learning – including child care, Prekindergarten and after school programs, as well as federally-funded Early Head Start/Head Start – is vital to a child’s development. It is also one of the most effective tools to close the achievement gap for low-income children:

Numbers to Know

- » **500 vs. 1,100:** the difference in the size of a three-year-old’s vocabulary. Low-income children typically master 500 words, while those with college-educated parents are using 1,100. High-quality early learning programs can close this gap, so that children start school on equal footing.
- » **700:** the number of new neural connections formed every second in a young child’s brain. Early learning strengthens this foundation – upon which all future learning, behavior and health depend.
- » **200%:** the jump in a child’s likelihood of attending college, when he/she attends a quality early care program.

To give children a winning beginning:

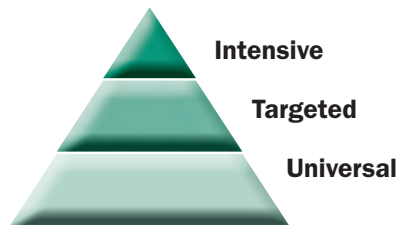
New York must invest in early care and learning opportunities, including child care, Prekindergarten and afterschool programs, as well as federally-funded Early Head Start/Head Start.

Home Visiting

Home visiting programs connect social workers, educators, nurses, and other well-trained, competent staff with young families. While these programs report dramatic drops in premature, low-weight births and significant improvements in school readiness, most children are missing out.

About half of the 250,000 babies born in New York State each year live in low-income, at-risk households – yet just 12,000 families are receiving regular home visits. Expanding home visiting in New York State will strengthen families while reducing their long-term dependence on expensive, high-level services.

A cost-effective home visiting model would exist in three tiers:



- » **Intensive:** concentrated services for families and children at high risk for issues such as abuse, neglect, homelessness and school failure.
- » **Targeted:** specific services for families and children with identified needs, such as mental illness, substance abuse, speech and language issues or physical disabilities.
- » **Universal:** wellness services for all expectant and new mothers and families, including prenatal health, “Welcome Baby” contacts, referrals, parent education and paid family leave.

To give children a winning beginning:

New York must invest in comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care, paid family leave and a comprehensive home visiting system to help parents get children off to a healthy and successful start.



A child with a quality early learning experience has an advantage.

The child with quality early learning is:

30% more likely to graduate high school.

200% more likely to go on to college.

40% less likely to need remedial services.

What does it cost to educate a child?

\$6,700: average undergraduate tuition and fees at a State University of New York campus.

\$12,147: average market rate for a two-year-old at a child care center.

\$9,776: average market rate for a two-year-old at a family or group family child care.



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Visit www.winningbeginningny.org for data, reports, expert sources
and other helpful material about important issues facing our children.

If we can be of help, please contact Jenn O'Connor at:
518.463.1896 x 131 or joconnor@scaany.org

Winning Beginning NY





Winning Beginning NY is a statewide coalition working to inform policy makers and the public about the many benefits of early care and learning including home visiting, child care and Pre-K.

The coalition aims to build a broad-based constituency to make investment in quality early care and learning a top public priority in New York State.

Winning Beginning NY is co-convened by the Center for Children's Initiatives, the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, the Early Care & Learning Council, and the New York State Association for the Education of Young Children.



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